



**Personal & Group Study Guide:** February 20, 2022

**Message Series:** In Search of a Soulmate (Part Two)

**Message Title:** *Finding Romance in the Friend-Zone*

**Series Introduction:** Dating was hard enough for single people *before* Covid, social distancing, lockdowns, mask mandates, and the politicization of this pandemic rocked our world. But now, for many single people, it feels all but impossible. Under pressure from their friends and family inside and outside the Church, many single Christians who long to find love are quick to build a wall between their faith in God and their desires for romance and intimacy. The Bible, however, couldn't be clearer: those desires we all experience are from God, and as far as He is concerned, our universal longing for love and commitment is a feature, not a bug.

How can Christians learn to date, relate, and marry in ways that reflect God's design and intention for our lives? By choosing to tear down the walls we build between our faith and our desires, we will see more clearly how to seek, choose, and cherish true love according to the principles of the One who hardwired us for romance.

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Why is it so important, whether you're single or married, to have a VISION for your life that you're striving toward?

**ANSWER ONE** of the following two questions:

If a single person's *mental image of their preferred future* (aka *vision*) is to meet "the One," fall in love, and get married, what should their strategy be on the dating scene?

**OR:** If a married person adopts a *vision* to strengthen their marriage and stay married long-term, how might they change their approach to day-to-day life with their spouse?

What is the "friend-zone" and why is it widely considered to be *unromantic*?

**Read: Genesis 2:18:** *The Lord God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him."* What Hebrew word is translated as "helper suitable", and how is this word typically used throughout the Old Testament? (see: Exodus 18:4, 1 Samuel 7:12, Psalm 33:20)

# The STORY CHURCH

What is the significance of the fact that God, throughout the Bible, is called EZER - a helper, friend, and ally? How should this lead us to reconsider the role of **friendship** in our lives today?

**Read Genesis 4:6-9.** When Cain asked God, "Am I my brother's keeper," what Hebrew word is the root word that was translated into *keeper*, and how is it used throughout the Old Testament? (See Gen. 2:15 and Gen. 17:9)

*"A biblical friend is an \_\_\_\_\_ who chooses to \_\_\_\_\_."*

In the Gospel of John, chapter 15, Jesus called his disciples *friends* and said this: *This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends.* - Jn 15:12-13

In light of this message series on *romance*, what should it say to us that Jesus *literally* said there is **no greater love than friendship**?

In the same passage from John 15, Jesus commanded his followers not only to accept *him* as a friend, but to *become* friends who love others the way he first loved us. **How can we learn to become Christ-like friends?**

How should a biblical understanding of friendship change what single believers are searching for while dating? And how should it change the way that married believers strengthen and heal their marriages?

*Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil. For if they fall, one will lift up his fellow. But woe to him who is alone when he falls and has not another to lift him up! Again, if two lie together, they keep warm, but how can one keep warm alone? And though a man might prevail against one who is alone, two will withstand him—a threefold cord is not quickly broken.*

- Ecclesiastes 4:9-12