



I. REVIEW/INTRO

A. Picture perfect

Lamentations 3:19-20 (NIV) ¹⁹ I remember my affliction and my wandering, the bitterness and the gall. ²⁰ I well remember them, and my soul is downcast within me.

Lamentations 3:21-23 (NIV) ²¹ Yet this I call to mind and therefore I have hope: ²² Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. ²³ They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.

B. Having

- **The right FOCUS**
 - Seek first the kingdom of God all these things added
 - **The right focus – God is my “#1” my spouse my #2**

But sometimes things get ...

- **Out of Focus** Conflict is unavoidable but doesn't have to be destructive
 - **We don't see things as “they” are – but instead as “we” are**

The #1 mistake we make is to assume that we know the motive of the other person

Once you begin to assume motive, conflict can take on a whole new dimension and you will become the prosecutor, judge, jury and executioner

II. GETTING IN FOCUS

A. Your life is more than just a stroll or a walk

Amos 3:3 (NKJV) Can two walk together, unless they are agreed?

Amos 3:3 (NIV) Do two walk together unless they have agreed to do so?

Amos 3:3 (Message) Do two people walk hand in hand if they aren't going to the same place?

- You have agreed to walk together, but, where are you going?
 - How are you going to get there?
 - What will be the priorities of your life?

B. The problem

The problem is - You can't commit or promise your way past your lack of preparation

- **Saying “I do” doesn't make you capable it makes you accountable.**



III. COMMIT TO A PATH BEFORE YOU COMMIT TO A PERSON

A. Your life flows from your heart

Proverbs 4:20-23 (NKJV) ²⁰ My son, give attention to my words; Incline your ear to my sayings. ²¹ Do not let them depart from your eyes; Keep them in the midst of your heart; ²² For they are life to those who find them, And health to all their flesh. ²³ Keep your heart with all diligence, For out of it *spring* the issues of life.

Proverbs 4:26 (NKJV) ²⁶ Ponder the path of your feet, And let all your ways be established.

B. Commit to a path before you commit to a person

- Your direction more than anything else will determine your destination
- Your path and your ways are an indicator of your future

Proverbs 14:8 (NLT) ⁸ The prudent understand where they are going, but fools deceive themselves.

Proverbs 14:15-16 (NLT) ¹⁵ Only simpletons believe everything they're told! The prudent carefully consider their steps. ¹⁶ The wise are cautious and avoid danger; fools plunge ahead with reckless confidence.

C. Consider these "ways"

1. Work now to address unresolved childhood issues
2. Get out of debt
3. Break your bad habits

Whatever "their" issues are before marriage will eventually become your issue after marriage.

4. Postpone the physical part of your dating as long as possible
5. Get involved in church

The paths people choose trump the commitments they make

Psalms 92:12-14 (NKJV) ¹² The righteous shall flourish like a palm tree, He shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon. ¹³ Those who are planted in the house of the Lord Shall flourish in the courts of our God. ¹⁴ They shall still bear fruit in old age; They shall be fresh and flourishing,