



### I. INTRO/REVIEW

#### A. Picture perfect

**A great marriage is possible, but it's not likely and not probable if you do what everybody else is doing.**

#### B. From this day forward attitude

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

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

- God offers a fresh perspective

#### C. Sound bites from the last 3 weeks

- **The right FOCUS**
  - God is my #1 and my spouse is my #2
  - Single – I will seek the one while preparing for my two
- **Out of Focus**
  - **We don't see things as "they" are – but instead as "we" are**
- **Getting in Focus**

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

- **Commit to a path before you commit to a person**

#### D. Flip the script –

- Don't you hope that the person you're going to commit your life to has experienced growth and is emotionally stable and healthy?

### II. LONG RANGE FOCUS

#### A. Determine the story you want to tell

**Love doesn't give a person what they deserve – it gives a person what they need**

**Romans 5:8 (NIV) But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.**

#### B. Three things for a long range focus

##### 1. Long range focus starts with God's word IN you



**1 Thessalonians 2:13 (NLT)** <sup>13</sup> Therefore, we never stop thanking God that when you received his message from us, you didn't think of our words as mere human ideas. You accepted what we said as the very word of God—which, of course, it is. And this word continues to work in you who believe.

- ***Just because you have the ability to hear doesn't mean you will***
- The value that you place on what you hear, is the value it comes back to you at.

**1 Thessalonians 2:13-16 (NLT)** <sup>14</sup> And then, dear brothers and sisters, you suffered persecution from your own countrymen. In this way, you imitated the believers in God's churches in Judea who, because of their belief in Christ Jesus, suffered from their own people, the Jews. <sup>15</sup> For some of the Jews killed the prophets, and some even killed the Lord Jesus. Now they have persecuted us, too. They fail to please God and work against all humanity <sup>16</sup> as they try to keep us from preaching the Good News of salvation to the Gentiles. By doing this, they continue to pile up their sins. But the anger of God has caught up with them at last.

### 2. Long range focus is sustained by having God's people around you

**1 Thessalonians 2:17-18 (NLT)** <sup>17</sup> Dear brothers and sisters, after we were separated from you for a little while (though our hearts never left you), we tried very hard to come back because of our intense longing to see you again. <sup>18</sup> We wanted very much to come to you, and I, Paul, tried again and again, but Satan prevented us.

- God never intended for you to go down the rough roads of life alone

### 3. Long range focus is maintained by keeping the big picture in front of you

**1 Thessalonians 2:19 (NLT)** <sup>19</sup> After all, what gives us hope and joy, and what will be our proud reward and crown as we stand before our Lord Jesus when he returns? It is you!

- The more secure your hope of tomorrow is the less likely you'll be frustrated by today

**Psalm 127:1-3 (TLB)** Unless the Lord builds a house, the builders' work is useless. Unless the Lord protects a city, sentries do no good. <sup>2</sup> It is senseless for you to work so hard from early morning until late at night, fearing you will starve to death; for God wants his loved ones to get their proper rest. <sup>3</sup> Children are a gift from God; they are his reward.

**Determine the story you want to tell – and live it!**