

# FamilyLife Today® Radio Transcript

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## Seeking the High C's

Guest: Dan Chun  
From the series: How to Pick a Spouse (Day 2 of 2)  
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**Bob:** A lot of people, when they're dating, find themselves praying, "Lord, is it Your will that I should marry this person?" Dan Chun says they ought to be asking about God's will in other aspects of their relationship.

**Dan:** Oftentimes, we say, "What's the will of God?" Well, right there it says, "For this is the will of God your sanctification, that you abstain from fornication," which means sex outside of marriage. So what happens is—sex blinds us and binds us. It blinds us to the person's faults; and it binds us, emotionally and physically, way too early, before there's any commitment.

**Bob:** This is *FamilyLife Today* for Friday, October 31<sup>st</sup>. Our host is the President of FamilyLife®, Dennis Rainey, and I'm Bob Lepine. We have some principles for you on how to pick a spouse—some do's and don'ts today. Stay tuned.

And welcome to *FamilyLife Today*. Thanks for joining us. Did you notice the guest has a Mickey Mouse watch on? Did you notice that?

**Dennis:** You know—I didn't.

**Bob:** Wearing a Mickey Mouse watch.

**Dennis:** I was admiring his golf shirt, which is a prestigious golf club in Hawaii.

**Bob:** A beautiful golf club that your church just bought; right?

**Dan:** Our church bought it about eight years ago. It's a wonderful 242-acre golf course, and the clubhouse is three acres under roof.

**Bob:** I have to talk to my pastor about how we go do that—how we go find that golf club. [Laughter]

**Dennis:** How we play church.

**Bob:** Yes.

**Dan:** Yes. You are welcome to come—Koʻolau Golf Club.

**Dennis:** Yes. That's Dan Chun, who is with us from Honolulu. He has been a pastor for 35 years. He and his wife Pam have three adult children, and he has a lot of experience in working with singles around the issue of selecting a mate. It really is a result of, I think, what God did in your own life. You kind of used a personal wound of something that took place in your life to ultimately bring help and hope to others. Explain what happened to our listeners and how you and Pam got together.

**Dan:** Well, Henri Nouwen talks about being wounded healers, and I'm certainly a wounded healer. Many, many years ago, before seminary, I went through an unwanted divorce. Out of that, I learned of God's grace / went to seminary. I basically said to God, "If the Word is true, it has to be true for me."

Lo and behold, I ended up at Menlo Park Presbyterian Church—ran a singles ministry that really grew rapidly. They trusted me because they knew I had gone through their pain. Whether they were never married, or divorced, or widowed, they knew the pain of break-up and loss. Out of that matrix came this book and some principles to really help people in their separations.

**Bob:** The book is called *How to Pick a Spouse: A Proven, Practical Guide to Finding a Lifelong Partner*. Five years after your first wife left you, and the unwanted divorce, you married again; right?

**Dan:** Yes. By God's grace, I married Pam. We've been married for more than the 32 years—it's going to be our 33<sup>rd</sup> this year.

**Bob:** What was different the second time around in the dating, and the getting to know one another, and thinking about marriage process than had been true in the first marriage?

**Dan:** Well, I think the second time—I was a lot more picky. I was a lot more aware of some of the building blocks that need to be there. And Pam's faith was very fervent, and very real, and very personal. As it proved over the years, she was willing to be a teammate in ministry and was entrepreneurial and a visionary in creating ministries that would help people in a deep way—so whether working with me, as a pastor, or in our para-church organization, Hawaiian Island Ministries, she was there, every step of the way.

**Dennis:** And so, she was there at Menlo Park as you were building this ministry to single people?

**Dan:** Yes. Yes, she was—she was.

**Dennis:** How big of a risk was it for you to venture out and ask her to marry you? I mean, I've heard from divorced people that the wound goes deep, and the rejection is life-altering.

**Dan:** Sure. I think it was a risk—well, mathematically, it's a risk because those in the second marriage—it's a little higher divorce rate—but also you had to overcome some past hurts and not fall into insecurity or trying to prove that somebody really loves you. But Pam was just so gracious, and so loving, and so forgiving that it was actually relatively easy to move into the marriage.

**Dennis:** So there weren't a lot of fears that you brought into that new relationship?

**Dan:** I think, after five years, you really work on the luggage—what I call the luggage. If you don't know what went wrong in the first marriage, you're going to bring that luggage into the second marriage.

**Dennis:** Yes; let's talk about that for a moment. How long would you advise someone, who's been divorced, to wait before considering engaging again—if they are free to remarry?

**Dan:** Well, this is anecdotal and not statistical. For me, it was five years. I would say—for other people, I would say, at least, three years because you just need enough to know who you are / what makes you tick—"What are your weaknesses? What are your failings?"

Because—in a real way, whether you've been married before or not—when people say, "Here's what I want in a guy:" or, "Here's what I want in a girl: I want her to be spiritual, a prayer warrior, someone who loves worship, someone who's evangelistic, someone who has a heart for children." I oftentimes say to the guy: "Okay, let's step back a bit. So—do you say you're spiritual? Are you into prayer?" "Well, no." "Are you into witnessing to others?" "No." "Do you like going to church?" "Well, if I have to." "So you're trying to marry somebody who you're not." Then I switch it and say, "You need to become the person you want to marry because you'll never find that person—if that's what's important for you."

**Dennis:** Yes. Anytime you begin this conversation about preparing for marriage, you get into the issue of co-habitation because that is the preferred method of marriage preparation in the culture today.

**Bob:** I'm guessing it may even be a little higher per capita in Honolulu than it is in other parts of the country. I'm guessing that co-habitation just kind of happens over there.

**Dan:** I don't know that for a fact, but I would say that many people using a worldly logic—not necessarily a Scriptural logic—a worldly logic—will say: "Well, shouldn't you take the car for a test run? Shouldn't you kick the tires? Shouldn't you find out what it's

like?” But *all* the statistics / *all* the research shows that, if you co-habitate, you have a higher chance of divorce, not a lower chance. You think, “That doesn’t make sense!”

Well, it makes sense—one, because there’s a Scriptural principle behind that—but number two is because you can’t practice commitment. They’re practicing commitment / they’re practicing to see what it’s like to be with each other—but either you are fully-committed or you’re not. I think that’s why there’s a higher divorce rate for those who live with one another—it’s just a time bomb waiting for it not to work out.

**Bob:** Dan, you know there are some young women who have met a guy—they’ve fallen in love and now they’re afraid: “If I don’t— maybe it’s not move in—but if we’re not, at least, having sex in our relationship, I’m going to lose this guy. It’s been a long time since I’ve had any guy have any interest me, and so I just feel like I have to do this to get him to the altar.”

**Dan:** Yes, and that’s probably the devil’s lie for that—it’s just the wrong poison putting in there. And this whole myth of co-habitation—I mean, whether you look at the binary part, or The National Marriage Project, or even the RAND Corporation has done research—it all shows co-habitation has a higher divorce rate.

**Dennis:** You know, when speaking about co-habitation, Dan, you have to discuss, I think, even a bigger issue—which is sex before marriage. At our *Weekend to Remember*® marriage getaways, we used to have a session to prepare engaged people for the honeymoon night. It’s really interesting—that’s really changed over the last, almost, four decades. It used to be we were preparing, not all as being virgins, but a number of them were really going in, inexperienced. But now, we have these couples—well, some are coming, having co-habited—but others are coming, having already had sex or been having sex for a number of months.

**Bob:** “We’re trying to figure out how we’re going to get childcare for the honeymoon,” because—they not only have had sex but they have one or two children—and they still haven’t gotten married. How do you counsel a young couple that comes and says, “Look, I know we’re not supposed to; but everybody does, and we just can’t help ourselves”?

**Dan:** Well, I counsel them, “Please do not have sex before marriage.” The reason for that—and again, we’re battling so-called “worldly wisdom” that: “This is the way you test out the relationship. This is one form of communication.”

But you can’t get around God’s principles. Only twice in all of the New Testament does it say, “This is the will of God.” They’re both from 1 Thessalonians—one is 5:18—it says: “Rejoice always; pray without ceasing; give thanks in all circumstances.” But the other one says, “This is the will of God, your sanctification; that you abstain from fornication.”

Oftentimes, we say, “What is the will of God?” Well, right there, it says, “Abstain from fornication,” which means sex before marriage—because what happens, when we have sex before marriage, it’s really more like an escalator than an elevator—you just get more and more physically involved. It’s not like an elevator—where you can go from the third floor down to the first floor and up to the eighth floor and get down to the second floor and be less involved. It gets more and more involved.

What happens is—sex blinds us and binds us. It blinds us to the person’s faults because we’re so much into the sexual communication we’re not having those good conversations over dinner. It binds us, emotionally and physically, way too early before there’s any commitment.

There is this hormone called oxytocin that is emitted during sex. That actually makes you more addicted to wanting to do sex over and over again. It’s the same hormone that is emitted when a mother’s nursing a child—there’s this bonding experience. In sex, oxytocin and dopamine, but oxytocin especially, is emitted. It makes you want to have it more and more, and we have to be aware of that.

But the reality today is—if we decide to have sex before marriage, we put our bodies in peril with all the sexually-transmitted diseases. HPV has 79 million people in the USA with that.

**Dennis:** Hold it—you said how many people?

**Dan:** Seventy-nine million people in the USA have some form of HPV.

**Bob:** That’s 25 percent of the population.

**Dan:** Yes. It’s really, really, really huge. They claim there’ll be 14 million more every new year, according to the CDC.

**Dennis:** Let me stop, too, before you move off of that. What do you advise young couples, who are getting married today, to do in terms of testing?—because you have some people who are carriers of this virus, right here, who don’t know it.

**Dan:** Well, see, again, I had said, earlier, that if they take a lap around the track—a year / winter and summer with each other—in that year, they will see if the symptoms come up. They should get tested if there’s a question of their spouse-to-be or their girlfriend’s/boyfriend’s fidelity earlier than when they met.

**Dennis:** Yes. Someday, you’re going to be raising kids; and you’re going to be raising kids to, hopefully, abstain from sex. I want to tell you—it’s going to help you in raising your children if you have abstained as well.

**Dan:** I would want to add one thing for the listeners out there, who have realized they're in a relationship, right now, that is more physical than spiritual. I would say, "Then start today as a new chapter, and live a new life." For those who have already had sex before marriage and you're saying, "I wish I didn't do that," we all need to know the wonderful forgiveness of God—His grace and His mercy—and that we are completely forgiven. Today can be a new day—a day of health, a day of spiritual direction, and a day of hope. I would hope people don't think: "Well, I blew it. I can't turn around now." We've all "blown it"; and through God's grace, we can turn around.

**Dennis:** Dan, you, in your book, *How to Pick a Spouse*, you choose the letter in the alphabet—"C." I love these because, interestingly, we pick employees, here at FamilyLife, around some of the same C's that you list in terms of picking a spouse. I want you to share those seven C's with our listeners.

**Bob:** Are these the high seas?—is that what they are?

**Dan:** Yes, that's what everyone should sail on before they make their choice.

**Dennis:** No, these are the high seas to avoid the rough seas—

**Bob:** Yes, there you go.

**Dan:** Oh, that's good.

**Dennis:** —or hardships.

**Dan:** That's right.

**Dennis:** Okay. [Laughter]

**Dan:** Oh, wow!—I'll use that in my next book.

So, let me say them really briefly. The seven C's are: "There's character," first—that you really want to marry somebody of *tremendous* character. You have to test that out in a variety of ways.

**Dennis:** So what's character?

**Dan:** Character would be that this person has the integrity to really know between right and wrong. When no one's looking, it really shines. I remember—once, I said to my dad, when I was a young child, "Hey Dad, let's lie about my age; and we'll get a cheaper movie ticket." My dad said, "No, we're not going to do that because that's not the right thing." I *always* remember that—here it is, you know, 50 years later, I remember this. That's the kind of character we want—that whether people are watching or not—they're doing what's the right thing, and they're thinking in the right way.

**Bob:** You have to make sure you're marrying somebody you can rely on—somebody you can trust / somebody who's going to be honest, dependable—these kinds of character qualities. If they're absent and you're saying, "But I'm still in love with her," or, "I'm still in love with him," well, you're going to have a lot of challenges in how you relate to another person who's undependable and doesn't tell you the truth; right?

**Dan:** Well, I know somebody, right now—this girl who's dating a guy who's been unfaithful with three other relationships—unfaithful. And so I think, "What are you thinking?"

**Dennis:** Yes.

**Dan:** "Where's the character of this man? He already has a track record that's going to be repeated again."

**Dennis:** Marriage is built on trust. The second one you say is "chemistry."

**Dan:** Chemistry—I won't spend a lot of time on that one, but chemistry is basically—there should be some physical attraction. I think, sometimes, even Christians can be so left-brained / so logical on it—there's just no emotion there. And yes, the chemistry is second to more important things; but it's still second and not like number 1,002.

[Laughter]

**Dennis:** Yes. "Competency" is your third.

**Dan:** Marry a guy or girl who is competent in the work force / competent in accomplishing tasks. You don't want to marry somebody who can't keep a job / who can't follow through on a project at home. They have to be competent.

**Bob:** This is a pretty practical skill you're talking about—but somebody who doesn't have the ability to hang onto a job—again, you're setting yourself up for a lot of challenges ahead; aren't you?

**Dan:** I'm just amazed—you're right—I'm just amazed how many women, for example, are dating guys and want to marry these guys who can't keep jobs or don't have a job.

**Dennis:** One thing else you mentioned in your book—you're talking about competency concerning life skills—just general skills around living that every man/woman needs to have—but we can't necessarily assume, going forward.

**Dan:** Yes. There can be a grave assumption that they know how to balance a checkbook, even, and have savings. I mean, that's all important.

**Dennis:** This next one ought to be with a capital "C"—Culture—where they come from.

**Dan:** Right. Culture—and I use that broadly—it could be ethnic culture, it could be a financial culture, it could be educational culture, and it could even be a religious culture. You just have to be very savvy in understanding the differences there are in, let's say, a multi-racial marriage. I'm obviously not against that—in Hawaii, we have it all the time—but you just have to be aware of how an Eastern or Western background would be different.

**Dennis:** You tell a story in your book, Dan, about a couple who went on their first date. It was to some kind of—not a music recital, but it—

**Dan:** It was a music recital. Yes.

**Dennis:** Okay. Share with them what happened because it's kind of funny.

**Dan:** That was so funny! I think it was a violin recital. The woman comes from this east coast culture background. The guy is from Hawaii—from a small town—and kind of just a “good old Joe.” During the concert, he starts humming with the musician up front.

**Dennis:** And there are only 30 people there.

**Dan:** Yes. So, the girl—now, they did get married in the end; and they have a great marriage—but she had to be aware of that.

And another one—a couple—the guy visits the house, and he's from Hawaii. He comes down for breakfast with just shorts and no shirt on because that's what you do in Hawaii.

**Dennis:** Yes—flip-flops; yes.

**Dan:** But he's on the east coast. He shows up, and the father has a tie on and a dress shirt and slacks, at breakfast, at his home!— completely different! [Laughter]

**Dennis:** Well, this next one is no laughing matter—Commitment.

**Dan:** And that's a big one. A lot of guys, especially, have a stuttering problem—they go, “C-c-c-c-commitment.” They can't say the word. If a person can't keep a commitment—and you've seen him break commitments quickly in jobs, or break up friendships quickly, or even other romantic relationships—something's wrong.

**Bob:** Well, that's because the foundation of every marriage is a life-long commitment. You are saying to one another, “I do, till death do us part.” If you have a problem with commitments, the commitment that's going to get tested throughout your life is your marriage commitment.



**Dennis:** And I'd just like to make a statement about prenuptials, at this point. There's only one prenuptial design—that's till death do you part.

**Bob:** Yes.

**Dennis:** That is the agreement between you and your spouse. Any other kind of prenuptial agreement doesn't need to be signed because it, ultimately, can be used as an escape hatch.

**Dan:** You know, it's funny you should say that, Dennis, because one of my appendices in the back of the book—I lay out my nine-page premarital information form that all couples have to sign. One question is, "Do you have a prenuptial agreement?" If any say, "Yes," I don't do the marriage / I don't do the wedding. Now, if it's—

**Dennis:** Good for you.

**Dan:** I just say: "Wait. Wait. If you build a back door, you're going to use it. If you're saying you're not sure if it's going to work out—'So I want to make sure she can't / or he can't have that,'—I just don't do the wedding."

**Dennis:** You and I are in a hundred-percent agreement because I won't do them unless they do sign a prenuptial agreement that's a marriage covenant for a lifetime. [Laughter]

**Dan:** Amen—but I'm betting you and I are in the minority.

**Dennis:** I would bet we are.

You have two more left. One is "Communication", and the last one, "Core values." Explain what those are.

**Dan:** Well, communication—just very clearly: "Can you identify your own feelings? Can you recognize the other person's feelings? Are you a good listener, or are you just a talker?" Those things are *incredibly* important.

And then the building blocks, again—in terms of faith, in terms of passion, about your purpose in life—are you even close to those core values?—or is one into money and one isn't?—is one into doing missions and the other one could care less?—does one have a heart for the saved or the unsaved, and the other one could care less? You need to have the right same core values. Of course, as a follower of Christ, I always say, "If Jesus Christ is your *best* friend, then you have to marry a Christian or else you're not sharing your best friend with your spouse-to-be."

**Dennis:** Well, in my opinion, Dan, your book is one of the best out there on how to pick a spouse because you're really tapping into more than three decades of ministry among singles—you have a lot to say, a lot of experience, and also a lot of authenticity in here.

I just appreciate you coming all the way from the islands, and I wonder if you need Bob or me to go back with you just to make sure you get back there safely?

**Dan:** That would be great—I wouldn't want to lose my luggage, you know—three different flights.

**Dennis:** Let me just go get my golf clubs so that I can make sure that I get back there with you. Thanks for being on *FamilyLife Today*, though.

**Dan:** Thank you so much for having me be here.

**Bob:** The book that Dan has written is called *How to Pick a Spouse*. Of course, we have copies in our *FamilyLife Today* Resource Center. You can go to our website, which is FamilyLifeToday.com—FamilyLifeToday.com. In the upper left-hand corner of the screen, when you get there, it says, “GO DEEPER.” If you click that link, it'll take you right to an area of the website where you can find out more about how to order a copy of Dan's book, *How to Pick a Spouse*. You can order, online; or you can call 1-800-FL-TODAY to order a copy.

Of course, there's also information on the website about our *Weekend to Remember* marriage getaways that are a great place for an engaged couple or a pre-married couple to go to explore the subject of marriage. And we have other resources—including a devotional guide that Dennis and Barbara Rainey have prepared called *The Preparing for Marriage Devotions for Couples*—designed for engaged couples to go through together—to build a stronger spiritual foundation in their relationship. Again, you'll find all of this when you go to FamilyLifeToday.com and you click the link in the upper left-hand corner that says, “GO DEEPER.”

Since we've talked about marriage and commitment today, I've just been struck again, Dennis, by the fact that what FamilyLife is all about is effectively developing godly families—first of all, because we want our families to reflect the greatness and the goodness of God. It's not just about what's going to make us happy—it's about what is going to honor and please Him.

That's our ultimate commitment, here at FamilyLife. We want marriages and families that show off the goodness of God in all they do. We also believe that godly marriages and families can change the world, one home at a time. I know some of our listeners believe that this mission is critical as well. The reason I know that is because some of them have pitched in to make what we do possible, and we're grateful for your financial support of what *FamilyLife Today* is doing.

When you make a donation today, we'd like to express our gratitude. We'd like to send you a resource Barbara Rainey has designed for families. It's a chalkboard in the shape of a house. Printed on the chalkboard it says, “In this home we give thanks for” and then

there's a place for you to write, in chalk, whatever it is you're grateful for. It's our gift to you when you support the ministry today with a donation.

Go to FamilyLifeToday.com. Click the link in the upper right-hand corner that says, "I Care." You can make an online donation that way. Or you can call 1-800-FL-TODAY to make your donation over the phone, and be sure to request the chalkboard when you do that. Or mail your request to *FamilyLife Today* at PO Box 7111, Little Rock, AR; and our zip code is 72223.

And we hope you have a great weekend. Hope you and your family are able to worship together this weekend, and I hope you can join us back on Monday for a history lesson. We have a professor of history from Wheaton College, who's going to be joining us, along with Barbara Rainey. We're going to talk about the Pilgrims, and we're going to talk about the Native Americans, and we're going to talk about the very first Thanksgiving—what's true / what's not—and how do we celebrate today in light of what happened almost four centuries ago, now. Hope you can tune in for that on Monday.

I want to thank our engineer today, Keith Lynch, along with our entire broadcast production team. On behalf of our host, Dennis Rainey, I'm Bob Lepine. We will see you back Monday for another edition of *FamilyLife Today*.

*FamilyLife Today* is a production of FamilyLife of Little Rock, Arkansas.  
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