The Ghetto Preacher

"Preachin' da WORD like they aint neva heard!"
Pastor Willy Ramos is capturing the hearts of youth everywhere.

Living the Dream!
A conversation with Karla Boston, owner of Go-Go Chic (A Mobile Boutique)

* Let My People Vote
* iPress ft. Pseanna Barnes
* 3 Things that will get you to your Career Goal
Based in Atlanta, Georgia, Higher Ground Artist Management Group specializes in building and maintaining careers of Christian artist. We are now accepting applications for the 2012 Summer/Fall time. You can go to our website to fill out the first part of the application: www.highergroundmanagementgroup.com or call 256-797-4134
Flowing from my heart

To take something for granted means to expect something to be available all the time and forget that you are blessed to have it. This very life we have is no guarantee. In this issue, Pastor Willy Ramos, better known as the Ghetto Preacher, encourages us to “live life to the fullest, but live it in fear of the Lord.” So many times I find myself losing sight of what’s important, and that is recognizing the opportunities God gives us to get it right day after day. This is the time of year when we come together and say prayers of thanks and host special thanksgiving celebrations. Business owner, Karla Boston, shares her story of stepping out on faith and fully trusting God to make her businesses truly successful. My prayer is that we keep a prayer of thanksgiving in our hearts year round and know that we are blessed knowing all the things He has done in our lives. Not taking people or things for granted is easier said than done. Make it your challenge to count your blessings, concentrating on all the good things in your life instead of the negative ones.
Living the Dream!

A conversation with Karla Boston, owner of Go-Go Chic

(A Mobile Boutique)

by Narda Bailey-Hunt
Imagine sitting at home and having your favorite store come to you. Imagine no more long trips to the mall where you have to fight for a parking spot; no more crowded stores with inadequate customer service; and no more waiting in long checkout lines!

Go-Go Chic is that dream made a reality by the entrepreneurial genius of Karla Boston, a proud graduate of Oakwood University. The premise behind Go-Go Chic is “convenience for the everyday woman who is always on the go.” Karla’s innovative idea has resulted in an increasingly successful business that provides a unique yet very affordable shopping experience for busy women.

Karla and her husband, Pastor John T. Boston II, were inspired with the idea for their mobile boutique while she was pregnant with their daughter, Riley Madison. Karla would often visit thrift stores in search of maternity clothes. Even though the clothes she liked didn’t fit due to her pregnancy, Karla bought them anyway. Her entrepreneurial mind led her to resell them to friends on Facebook which proved to be very successful.

Success on Facebook soon led to a website. Although the website was fairly successful, Karla felt like she needed to do more. She wanted to take this business to the next level. All her life, this natural born business woman has been self-employed from making and selling bracelets at age eight, to doing hair in college, to the photography business she owned right before starting Go-Go Chic.

But with all of her previous ventures, Karla’s fear of failure kept her from stepping out on faith and fully trusting God to make her businesses truly successful. She wanted to stop that pattern with Go-Go Chic, so she asked her husband and mother to pray with her. She believed that God would show her how to move forward.

Not long after asking for prayer, John, whom Karla calls her “inspiration” because “he is driven, determined and doesn’t accept defeat,” told Karla that she should “go mobile.” She immediately began searching the internet for a vehicle that would be ideal. This was the inception of Go-Go Chic, a mobile boutique and the first ever of its kind.

Coming up with the idea was the easy part. Everything after that has been a journey of faith and perseverance for the Bostons. Most notably is the story of how they managed to purchase a vehicle that cost thousands of dollars with only about $200 in the bank. You can read all about it at Go-GoChic.com. They have made a lot of sacrifices including selling all the furniture in their home, a bold move of faith by anyone’s standards.

When I asked Karla if she would do things differently if she was given the chance to do things over, she replied, “No. Every step [of this journey] has been a leap of faith. God was totally in control. There is no reason I should have this [except for the grace of God].”
While on this journey, Karla’s faith has certainly been tested. She tells the story of the time a local television station wanted to do an interview about her business. She was very excited until she learned that the interview would be on the Sabbath. She told them very clearly about her religious beliefs and that she would not do the interview on the Sabbath. They tried to get her to compromise, but she would not. When the conversation ended, she was disappointed but trusted that God would make a way if it was His will for her to do this interview. Within minutes, she received a second phone call from the television station informing her that they worked it out for her to do the interview on a Wednesday instead of the Sabbath! Karla states, “I will do whatever is necessary to make my business succeed, but I will not compromise my beliefs. I will do whatever is pleasing to God. “ God has certainly been rewarding her faithfulness.

Go-Go Chic is a star on the rise. She credits her success not only to God but to her husband whom she says “supports my dreams 100%” and to her daughter, Riley, whom she says is her motivation because she “wants a better life for her.”

Her family is extremely important to her, and she says that being an entrepreneur “has brought my family closer because we had to come together and depend on God.” Go-Go Chic is a family venture, and in five to ten years, they hope to see Go-Go Chic become a franchise, an idea that they have already been approached about doing. But that is just one of many goals for the Bostons.

I asked Karla what advice she would give to a young person seeking to go into business for themselves. She responded “I would tell them to go after your dreams. Never let anyone or anything stop you from doing what God has put on your heart to do. Be prepared to accept ups and downs, and always have a fallback plan or steady income to support your dreams.” Lastly she said, “Having people in your life who support you and your dream is very important, but make sure God is your main support.”

After speaking with Karla, her exuberance and positive attitude inspired me to step out on faith and begin making my dreams a reality. I am certain that God is using her and her business to minister to others and that He will take her to heights beyond her own expectations.
OK, so everyone and their mother knows about the importance of goals. I’m sure you can go to Barnes & Noble’s and spend the day just skimming through the myriad of titles on goal setting and related topics. From Zig Ziglar to Tony Robbins, hundreds of people have given their perspective and guidance on the subject. Even the Author of the bestselling book of all time gives his two cents, “…Where there is no vision (goal) the people perish…”-God, The Bible. Goals give you a focus, a sense of direction, a purpose for why you are doing whatever it is you are doing.

However, I didn’t put pen to paper to ramble about things you probably already know. I’m writing to share a discovery I made in my journey of actualizing my own career goal. After reading a ton of books, watching hours of TED talks and following all the heavy hitters on Twitter, I came to the conclusion that there are 3 main things that everyone is talking about. Specifically in the case of career goals, at a high level all you need is EDUCATION, EXPERIENCE and NETWORK.

**EDUCATION: “To School or Not to School”**

Let’s say that a dentist is going to pull your molar out. There are two things that he will need: 1) the necessary tools and 2) he’s going to need to have a pretty good idea on how to properly pull a tooth. In a sense, that’s what education is; the tools and knowledge-base for whatever career path you want to excel in. Now, when I say ‘education’ what’s the first thing that comes to your mind? School right? However, contrary to popular belief, not all education comes from school. Larry Ellison (Oracle billionaire that just bought an island in Hawaii) Bill Gates (you know him) and a healthy list of other very successful people were high school or college dropouts. But does that mean that they weren’t educated? You had better believe that they took the time to educate themselves in their respective areas outside of the traditional classroom.

Nevertheless, separate from the few exceptions, equipping yourself with the theory and applications behind your specific field allow you communicate at a much higher level with your audience. Formal education takes the knowledge, discoveries, experiments and results of pioneers in your industry, groups the information into ‘edible’ modules and delivers it in a setting that allows for feedback and assessment. Formal education is also a way for individuals to quickly identify that you have the academic wherewithal to practice what you are doing or to qualify for their attention. Example: You and your lovely fiancé are looking for pre-marriage counseling. At pure face value you have a choice between Mr. So So and Dr. Reely Good. Dr. Good just sounds like he’ll know what he’s talking about.

“Education is not the answer to the question. Education is the means to the answer to all questions”
- William Allin
EXPERIENCE: “Just Do It”-Nike

Now I know I just talked about the importance of educating oneself, but separate from formal education or book knowledge, hands-on experience is often the best teacher. Time is the most valuable asset available to anyone and everyone. So the more time you invest in the area that you are trying to see success in, the better. Often times you just have to do it. Some people call it field time, others call it ‘paying your dues’, but however you classify it, the longer you do something, the better you get at it. At face value, is Larry Ellison a better CEO than Mark Zuckerberg? Or has he just been doing it longer? Ask any graduate school admissions staff, “Oh you have 8+ years industry experience? We’ll waive that silly GMAT test.”

All that I’m saying is that as you trek towards your dream career position, know that you will more than likely have to put time in. Example: My personal goal is to become a Management/Organizational Leadership Consultant for small to large businesses. However, I know that mentoring, training and teaching are vital skill sets to have. So, in addition to going back to school and getting an MBA or Organizational Leadership Masters, I’m dedicating 2 years to Teach for America to gain related experience.

NETWORK: “It’s not about what you know, but who you know”

If you have been paying attention to the anything within the last 10 years, you would have caught on to the ‘social’ hype. The world, through Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter and others, has seen the immense value in human connections. A 2009 Mashable article stated that when it comes to the job seeking scene, the days of investing a majority of time in submitting a blanket of resumes and cover letters is a thing of the past. That approach has been replaced with a focus on finding connections within the company or industry you are interested in.

When it comes to realizing you career objective, having a good network of mentors, leaders and supporting peers is the difference between getting there in good time or taking forever by yourself (or with the wrong people). Networking is my personal favorite because I’m lazy. I would rather leverage and learn from the person that has already done (or is doing) what I want to do. It saves me that much time and effort. When it comes to your career it’s ok to be a copycat; just as long as you’re copying the right cat. In addition, there’s the added value of being able to benefit from your network’s resources. As an aspiring corporate lawyer it would probably come in handy to know someone that serves as Legal Counsel in a company.

I have found that it is crucial to be very pro-active about networking. Sony Pictures Production Executive, DeVon Franklin says it best in his book Produced By Faith:

“A Hollywood casting director doesn’t sit around the office waiting for the right actors to walk in. He or she makes calls, pounds pavement, and gets aggressive in finding the best talent. You have to do the same. If you’re missing key people from your cast, get out and make contact with them. You can influence the casting decisions by doing something that many people, Christians and Non-Christians have trouble doing, reaching out and meeting important individuals.”

By no means are these the ONLY things needed! My goal is to put what it’s going to take into a high level perspective. Know your ultimate career goal, get educated, put time in and surround yourself with people that are ‘getting er done’.
What is one of your favorite quotes?
“Treat people the way you want to be treated.”

What would you name the autobiography of your life?
“Life is hard and times are rough.”

If you could learn to do anything, what would it be?
Speak every single language in the world!

When you have 30 minutes of free-time, how do you pass the time?
Well, my friends are always there to hang, so we would probably go to Walmart and do dance dares.

Have you ever had something happen to you that you thought was bad, but it turned out to be for the best?
Joining Pathfinders. I thought it was whack because I was the oldest kid. Only me and my sister would be there, but now I see that it is easily the most beneficial activity for young Christians and bored teenagers. Even though the honors and class work seem either arbitrary or boring, you always end up using what you learn. Not to mention the leadership skills I have obtained. I feel like I can handle many challenges thrown my way no matter how difficult.
What is your number one priority?
Of course I would love to say it is God, but I can't truthfully say that. Seriously my family, brother and sisters are the most important thing to me no matter how agitated they make me. I love them.

What was the last experience that made you a stronger person?
At the end of my sophomore year I got in trouble at school over a comment I made and the situation quickly escalated. This happening made me realize that getting worked up over the small stuff is so not worth it. It's like God lets these things happen so that I can learn from them and grow to do better. Not only for myself, but the people I encounter.

What's the #1 most played song on your iPod?
I don't have an iPod, but my favorite kind of music right now is Hip Hop because the songs I choose to listen to are so much deeper than what the radio shoves at us.

What did you realize during the 2012 "I Am the Church" Youth Congress event?
I realized that I have yet to prove myself. Yeah I do community service, but my efforts have barley made a difference. As young people and a church, we need to step our game up tremendously and set goals to exceed them.

Do you have any ministry projects you’d like to share?
I have decided that before I start reaching out to other people, I need to straighten myself out first and take more time to get to know God.
“I believe we need to go back to the basics and back to the heart of worship like the song says. Everything else is superficial. King Solomon says it as well. Live life to the fullest, but live it in fear of the Lord. Don't be afraid to say sorry. Don't be afraid to start over. Don't be afraid to say I love you. Life is too short.”

- Willy Ramos AKA The Ghetto Preacher
Willy Ramos is an international evangelist, author and co-author of several books including: 4GVN, 2 Catch a Thief, Changed, & Changed Too. He’s also a song writer, recording artist and now movie director!

He just finished writing, producing and directing a short film entitled, “SINtroduction” and is currently in pre-production on his next film.

The youth call him, “The Ghetto Preacher!” He confidently reveals an accurate depiction of the Gospel to everyone and anyone. Ramos, who was raised in the streets of South Florida, says, “I was ultimately rescued by a Jewish Carpenter named Jesus.” Pastor Willy shares his life’s testimony, conviction and knowledge about the one true God through ghetto style poetry, sermons and a touch of humor.

If you knew Willy 10 years ago, you would find it hard to believe that he calls himself the Ghetto Preacher now. Willy used to live a life that involved running the gangs, being trained to be a gang leader. Pastor Willy does not name the gang or give the devil any credit. He always had the seed of God planted in him by his mom. So even when he lived the gangster life and did bad things at night, he would pray to God and ask for forgiveness. “I was a thief. I was homeless as well. Every other word that came out of my mouth was the "f" bomb. I had no respect for the law or any authority figure at that. I was kicked out of high school for fighting as well,” says Willy.

While Willy Ramos was a member of a gang from an early age, he shares that he was “ultimately rescued by a Jewish Carpenter named Jesus.” After dropping a loaded gun that he planned to end his life with, Willy received his answer to a prayer he called his last. He began to understand that he was certainly a prodigal son returning to the unfailing love of Christ. Without a shadow of doubt, Willy Ramos is a true miracle. From his home town to as far as Slovakia, he loads up his Bible to proclaim the name that placed his heart back together again.

“I live my life like John Newton, the writer of Amazing Grace. He said "I'm not where I need to be spiritually, no I'm not where I want to be spiritually, but by the grace of God I am not who I was in the past." I thank God for what he did in my life, therefore, I want to give my whole life to Jesus with all my talents and my testimony,” says Willy. He continues, “my goal right now is to keep writing books. I'm writing three books as we speak. Steps to Christ, the Willy Ramos Remix, Underdogs and Tears of a Clown, my life story.”

Pastor Willy does not stop at speaking and writing. He turns his words in to lyrics in the studio and has two CDs out, the latest is called Un-fadeable. To add to his life, Willy is also filming a movie called "To Catch a Thief.” It's all to glorify God's name to give him the credit and the honor that he's due. It’s a message to the youth that if you have a talent, you put it to use for God's kingdom.

“I remember I didn't want to wake up and hearing the birds sing was a mockery to me. I hated my life. Now I have this hope that is Jesus. Before, Now it's like, "Wow! I can't wait to see what God has planned for me next." The next phone call, the next invitation, the next whatever is so exciting to me. When I wake up I ask God “what do you have planned for me today as your ambassador?” It's awesome for me now!”
Questions and Answers

What is your idea of heaven?
My idea of heaven is going to be the biggest family reunion. I remember meeting Al Pacino and Jennifer Lopez and even LL Cool J. I was so excited because I've seen their work all my life and I love their acting. I was bombarded with this feeling of admiration. I imagine heaven being the same times one thousand. To meet David and Sampson that I've preached about and not only that, but just to see Jesus and put my fingers through his nail-scarred hands. I just can't wait for that family reunion to see these bible celebrities that I preached about and I was inspired by. And to live happily ever after and I'm going to be skinny in heaven if I'm not already by the time Jesus comes. And I'm going to grow an afro!

What would you like to add to your life?
First I would like me to be more disciplined with my health. I believe in the health message, but I have been struggling all my life. My parents in their ignorance (in a good sense) would reward us with food. "If you guys be good, we'll take you to Dunkin' Doughnuts or we'll take you to McDonalds. So I adopted that way of life and of course it's bad for us, so I would like better health. I know I can do all things through Christ, but sometimes I think "all things, but lose weight." I know it's not true, it's lies from the devil. Better discipline is what I want. Money is always good and not because I'm a money hound. Right now we are struggling to film my movie because of lack of funds. I wish I had more money to minister. To have a studio to do all Christian movies. I would like the prayer of Jabel, for God to expand my character that way.

What do you think about when there is nothing you have to think about?
To be honest, I'm always thinking about something. My mind is always thinking about the next project or the next person or the next place. It's non-stop for me!

Do you have faith in the next generation?
Oh yes. I tell the youth all the time, life is short. You have to live it, but live it in fear of the Lord and you will live forever in the kingdom of heaven. I see their potential. I see what they're doing with technology. In fact, the government uses 18-year-old kids to go to Afghanistan and go behind the scenes and get behind tanks, so they know what they are capable of and their potential. I see that as well and I can't wait to see that army of youth that Sister White speaks about. In fact, I'm going to film my movie with a 20-year-old kid as cinematographer. I see his talent and his potential. They are waiting for an opportunity. Us older folk need to back off and let them run with the baton and they'll do us proud. The energy of the youth and the mentality of the older generation together will finish the work!

Pastor Willy lives in Orlando with his wife, Lynette and their son, Christian.

Willy Ramos is available for speaking engagements.

Contact: ghettopreacher.info@gmail.com
We Will Not be Intimidated at the Polls:
The Role of Faith Members as Poll Monitors

Election Day is almost upon us. In the next few days leading to November 6, we all will again exercise our right to vote, one of the most basic responsibilities of people in a democratic society. However, Colorado is being targeted by interest groups who are actively working to suppress the vote, attempting to confuse eligible voters or even to kick them off the rolls.

Some of the tactics these groups could use is to examine the authenticity of voter registration rolls and voters who appear at the polls. There is a pattern of voter intimidation tactics on polling day such as: questioning citizenship, those without proper identification, telling voters that they are at the wrong polling place or challenging and intimidating individual voters.

Because groups will be targeting minority communities, Let My People Vote, a movement led by African American and Latino congregations and Together Colorado, is recruiting community members and faith members to be volunteer poll monitors to identify and eliminate voter intimidation tactics that may occur at the polls on Election Day.

**Faith members are trained in these areas as poll monitors:**

- Answer voter questions and direct them to the bilingual hotline 1-866-OUR-VOTE
- Provide bilingual Know Your Voting Rights materials
- Observe and document poll site set-up, accessibility, voter activity outside the polls and problems/issues faced by voters
- Identify problems affecting voters and report problems to the legal call center
- Record experiences of voters to use as a basis for improving election practices in the future

For more information contact info@togetherco.org.

Let My People VOTE is a movement led by African American and Latino congregations and Together Colorado.

Together Colorado is a non-partisan, faith-based organization that empowers people to strengthen and form communities through congregation-based community organizing. Together Colorado is a member of the PICO Network.
Jesus Crave  by Pastor Donald Rolle

“Anticipation Ultrasound”

Jeremiah 1:4-9
“...Before I formed you in the womb I knew you. Before you were born I set you apart: I appointed you as a prophet to the nations.” “Ah, Sovereign Lord,” I said, “I do not know how to speak; I am too young.” But the Lord said to me, “Do not say, ‘I am too young.’ You must go... do not be afraid of them, for I am with you...” Then the Lord reached out his hand and touched my mouth and said to me, “I have put my words in your mouth.”

It is absolutely mind-blowing that modern man has garnered the ability to see, things once unseen, completely through sound. Let me explain. My wife was in the third trimester of her pregnancy, and we are just itching to know what or who our baby boy looked like. Sure, we had gone through the routine check-ups and standardized black and white ultrasounds that shows an outline of the child (fingers, heart, bones, etc.), but we wanted to know what he really looked like! We decided to get a 3D ultrasound. With bated breath we waited and then, we saw him! A little brown ball of handsome goodness. This moment seared in my mind this passage in Jeremiah 1.

God too did an ultrasound on you. Only his was a pre-existence ultrasound, “before I formed you...I knew you.” Meaning God took a peek at you before you got here and was anticipating when you’d come. The Lord wanted you, because he formed (crafted, designed) you. He loved you before you were actually you, if that makes sense. Which makes me think, how could his love be based on what I do or don’t do, if he loved me before I was capable of doing anything, or better yet, before I was?

This not only gives a message of the Lord lovingly peeking in on us, but also a purpose destined for us, “I set you apart... I appointed you.” At times we feel useless. Our lives feel pointless, but the facts reveal the opposite. God has given you purpose. I crave to know my purpose and to fulfill it. Don’t you? Explore with me:

If God gave me the power to change something in this world, it would be

______________________________________________________________________________________________

Guessing or already knowing, What is your Purpose?

______________________________________________________________________________________________

My Jesus Crave today is

______________________________________________________________________________________________

Tweet this: “God made me on purpose and I have a purpose from Him” #JesusCrave
Let me tell you about my girl Virtuous.  
The girl has crazy value!  
She’s more precious than pearls, diamonds, and rubies.  
Thus it would probably be an insult to buy her jewelry.  
She’s trust worthy.  
And this truth her man would gladly repeat  
She told me to tell all the fellas here today that if the shorty you brought with you wasn’t her, You should probably change your seat!  
Virtuous will bring good to your life.  
She’s the kind of current or future wife who is already busy spinning wool and flax.  
Or in modern day terms, that means she’s already showing you she could nurture a happy home.  
She gets up before dawn with eyes still burning yet heart yearning to prepare breakfast devotionals for the Savior.  
She’s not one to wall out with unladylike behavior.  
She a hard worker.  
A women after God’s own heart.  
Modern day hustler, God’s apprentice.  
She knows when and where to invest her interests and she is not playing games with you.  
All her dealings are profitable!  
She’s unstoppable!  
I bet her cousin was Kim Possible!  
And if she was a track star, she’d jump hurdles over her obstacles.  
However, not on her own agenda because her business is her father’s.  
She’s feeding the poor and mending the sick with herself she rarely bothers.  
But you still won’t catch her walking around, dressed like a clown, spirits down, NO!  
She’s dressed in fine linen and purple gowns!  
See, she has it going on and on and on!  
Thick legs and lips, hips to her finger tips,
Don't Get Married Until...

Marriage was not designed to make us happy, but holy. Did that blow your mind? This idea is so countercultural to everything society tells us to believe about marriage. Girls grow up desiring to find their Prince Charming who will sweep them off of their feet and the two of them will live "happily" ever after. Guys, we grow up hoping to find that woman who is a perfect blend of beauty and brains. One that cooks, cleans, and always allows us watch the game. The fact is, once you get married, (more likely even before that) you realize how different that fairy-tale image of marriage is from reality.

In Genesis 2:18 God said it wasn’t good for man to be alone, so He created Eve as a companion for Adam. Proverbs 18:22 says, “He who finds a wife finds a good thing.” But just like anything worthwhile, you have to work for it; and marriage is hard work. If marriage were easy, a lot more couples would still be together, but as evidenced by the staggering divorce rate in this country, a strong marriage needs a lot more than just love.

Luckily for me, I had two wonderful parents that spent time with me imparting their wisdom on how to have not only a holy but also a happy marriage. I want to share with those that are considering marriage, are already married, or even have no desire to get married 5 things to prepare for before getting married. Some of these ideas may seem a bit cliche, but their importance can't be overstated. These tidbits of wisdom are things that I have picked up over my years in preparation and months enjoying my marriage.

1) Don't get married until you are ready to change

Although contrary to all the advice your friends left on your high school yearbook about never changing for anyone, this is one instance where you must forgo that advice. As humans, we are naturally selfish, so it’s not in our DNA to think that we should be the one to change if there is conflict. Yet, a successful marriage takes two introspective people willing to take a look at themselves and their decisions and decide what they need to do to make their relationship work.

When you think about it practically, a marriage usually consists of two people from two different backgrounds, raised by two different sets of parents, with two different sets of values, and two different ideas on life. And now the two of you are living together under one roof! The very idea seems to be the plot for how Wife Swap. Yet through the power of the Holy Spirit and the willingness for each partner to sacrifice their individual desires for the common good, a successful marriage can result.

1 Corinthians 7:28.
2) Don't get married until you want to be an example.

By our being Christians we understand that our lives are to be lived as examples and testimonies of God's power to change sinful human beings into holy vessels. It should come as no surprise that marriage should be an even deeper reflection of this truth. Marriage is supposed to be a reflection of Christ's relationship to the church. Jesus (the husband) is the head of the church and acts as the leader while the church (the wife) responds in humble submission.

Guy's, this implies that we are the spiritual leaders of our home, and if we aren't willing to do everything within our power to lead our wives into heaven we're not ready. Ladies, in the same vein, if you are not willing to act in humble submission to the headship of your husband, then you're not ready. It is important that as Christians we model God's ideal vision for marriage. Before you marry you should be ready to model the sacrifice/submission relationship that Christ and the church represent.

Ephesians 5:22-27

3) Don't get married until you are ready to forgive

Disappointment, heartbreak, and betrayal are inevitable in this sinful world of ours. While it may have be possible to ignore and avoid others who cause us pain, ignoring and avoiding a spouse is a slightly more difficult. Hurt feelings can't just be remedied by sending someone to sleep on the couch for one night. Marriage impacts much more than just your sleeping arrangements. It impacts your children, your finances, your health, your emotional health and ultimately your spiritual life.

How you choose to handle disappointment, heartbreak, and even betrayal will have a lasting impact on your life from now on. You can't just choose to ignore problems and hope that they will resolve themselves, but you must actively work to achieve harmony and unity between you and your spouse. The implication of this fact is that you will have to learn how to forgive. Grudges and going tit for tat have no place in a healthy marriage. Marriage needs to consist of two mature adults that can accept that mistakes will be made and feelings will get hurt, but there is a bigger picture outside of just feeling and emotion.

There is a quote that says that love is not an emotion, but it is a choice. That means that even though you may not always "feel" like it, you can still choose to love.

Romans 12:19

4) Don't get married until you are ready to learn

Most of us we have either reached or are nearing the final chapter of our educational pursuits. We’ve earned diplomas and degrees that indicate that we have achieved a certain level of knowledge. Regardless of the classes you’ve taken and the degrees you’ve obtained, they probably will have no impact on how much you know about having a successful marriage.
Those who are married or wishing to be married need to be willing to pick up a few more books or go to a workshop or two to learn more about this endeavor they’re embarking upon. It is important to realize that every marriage is different, but it never hurts to receive wisdom from people that are traveling along the same road as you and have encountered many of the same issues that you will face. Newly married couples, find an older couple that can serve as mentors to you and your spouse and give you Godly counsel.

Titus 2:1-8

5) Don't get married until you are ready to enjoy it!

There are so many negative connotations associated with marriage. Married life is dull or boring, it's a ball and chain, or it's like being on lockdown. It's no surprise that some people delay marriage as long as they can. When they finally do get married, they believe the end of their life has come and now they have to serve their time. This is a jaded and myopic view of such a beautiful and fulfilling relationship, yet our selfish viewpoints usually don't allow us to truly embrace the essence of marriage.

We're so accustomed to trying to fulfill our own desires that we neglect the desires of our spouse. In doing this we fail to realize the satisfaction that comes from putting someone else's desires ahead of your own. I have found that the days in which I look to put a smile on my wife's face are my most enjoyable. I get a thrill and a joy from surprising her with flowers, seeing her face when I've cleaned the house before she comes home from work, or giving her a massage after she’s had a long day in the classroom.

But even outside of those moments I try to enjoy the simple things like planning future vacations together, riding in the car to church, and even planning our budget together. It’s not necessary to go on extravagant vacations or buy expensive gifts, the important thing is that the two of you make time for each other and enjoy those moments together.

Ecclesiastes 9:9

By no means am I an expert, as I’ve only been (happily) married for 4 months, but I hope that some of the wisdom shared in this article will help someone gain a better insight into what it takes to have a happy, holy marriage. I pray that all those considering marriage or already married will honor God in their marriages by committing to live by godly principles.
Jesus
THANK
YOU!