

## God Time Day 1: Pursue My Two



We begin this week in our series by looking at the second vow: The Vow of Pursuit.



Read Genesis 2:24.

*This is why a man leaves his father and mother and bonds with his wife, and they become one flesh.*

Underline the word “*bonds*.”

In the original Hebrew, the word for “bond” is *dabaq*, which means to cling or to catch by pursuit. We pursue those things that we desire, and it is the pursuit that helps us appreciate those desires once we have achieved them. The effort we invest demonstrates how much we value what we are pursuing.

What is one good thing you have pursued in your life that took significant effort?



Pray and give thanks to God for this pursuit.

## God Time Day 2: An Example of Pursuit



As we continue to explore what it means to take a Vow of Pursuit, let’s take a moment to look at a biblical example. In the story of Jacob and Rachel, Jacob arranged to marry Rachel by serving her father for seven years. After those seven years, Rachel’s father tricked Jacob into marrying Rachel’s older sister, Leah, instead.



Read Genesis 29:27.

*Complete this week of wedding celebration, and we will also give you this younger one in return for working yet another seven years for me.*

Jacob ended up working an additional seven years to earn Rachel’s hand in marriage. Jacob continued to pursue Rachel through it all because of his love for her.



When pursuing anything in life, adversity is bound to come. Pray for God to give you endurance and courage to pursue through the adversity.

## God Time Day 3: Be The Difference



Pursuit requires moving beyond simple intentions and taking practical action. You can intend to pursue a goal but if you take no action towards it, you are actually only wanting or wishing for something rather than pursuing.

The first step in pursuing a change in a situation or person, especially in pursuing your spouse, is to be the difference you want to see. In other words, focus on change in your own life, not on trying to change your spouse.



Read Matthew 7:3-4.

<sup>3</sup>*Why do you look at the splinter in your brother’s eye but don’t notice the beam of wood in your own eye?* <sup>4</sup>*Or how can you say to your brother, ‘Let me take the splinter out of your eye,’ and look, there’s a beam of wood in your own eye?*

Underline the word “*splinter*” in each of these verses.



Now, circle the word “*beam*” in each of these verses.

It is easy for people to see the shortcomings and faults in others, and even easier to be critical and hurtful out of a sense of self-righteousness. After all, you are trying to help, right?

Criticism and negativity do not repair relationships. They both come from a place of control. Relationships cannot thrive in an environment of control and manipulation. When we try to force change on someone it puts us in the place of God, with an authority we were not intended to carry (see Week 1, Day 1).

But we do have the ability to institute change in our own lives. And a strange thing about change is that it has a way of inspiring change in others, not in a manipulative way, but as a matter of relationship and choice.



Write down two personal changes God is calling you to make in your life and pray for God to help you take steps toward those changes today.



1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_

## God Time Day 4: Think and Say



As discussed on Day 3, if we want to live in passionate pursuit of our “two” (our spouse), it begins by making changes in our own lives. One of the easiest and potentially most powerful changes we can make is in how we speak.



Read Proverbs 11:9 & 12.

*<sup>9</sup>With his mouth the ungodly destroys his neighbor, but through knowledge the righteous are rescued.*

*<sup>12</sup>Whoever shows contempt for his neighbor lacks sense, but a person with understanding keeps silent.*

Throughout Scripture, there are plenty of passages that address the destructive power of our words. Yet, despite that truth, we tend to be careless with our words, especially with our family.

Underline the words “*knowledge*” and “*understanding*” in the verses above.

Showing contempt, being negative, and harshly criticizing people is all too easy. Unfortunately, the painful, negative experiences tend to be the ones people remember and dwell on. But if we make positive words our normal language, hearts can be softened, and healing can occur.



Read Hebrews 3:13.

*But encourage each other daily, while it is still called today, so that none of you is hardened by sin’s deception.*

Think about the last time you could have said something encouraging but didn’t. What’s your biggest excuse that prevents you from encouraging those closest to you?

\_\_\_\_\_



Identify two areas you know that your spouse or a close friend could use some encouraging, supportive words.

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_



Pray for God’s encouragement in your life to help you speak encouragement into those two areas of their life.

## God Time Day 5: Think and Do



We have explored how pursuing our spouse begins with first changing ourselves. Then we looked at how we must speak uplifting and encouraging words into their life. Finally, we look at yet another practical step, which is to act. In other words, if you think of something kind or special, do it.



Read Proverbs 11:17.

*A kind man benefits himself, but a cruel person brings ruin on himself.*



Now read Acts 20:35.

*In every way I’ve shown you that it is necessary to help the weak by laboring like this and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, because he said, ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’*

Doing something kind to bless others is not something to be done in a manipulative way to get something in return. But just as speaking kind words can lead to an improved relationship, acts of kindness have the potential to make a huge impact on any relationship, especially a marriage.

It’s easy to get caught up with life, busy with all the obligations we carry, and often the marriage relationship ends up suffering the most. Pursuing our spouse means making our relationship a priority and taking the time and effort in that pursuit doesn’t have to be elaborate or expensive – little things can make a big difference.



Write down three simple acts of kindness you could bless your spouse with. (Guys, flowers should be on the list.)

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

Choose one of them to do this week... and do it! Next week, do two.



Make it a weekly habit to come up with something nice to do for your spouse... and do it!

Take a vow of pursuit on page 24.