

FOCUS ON THE FAMILY

boundless

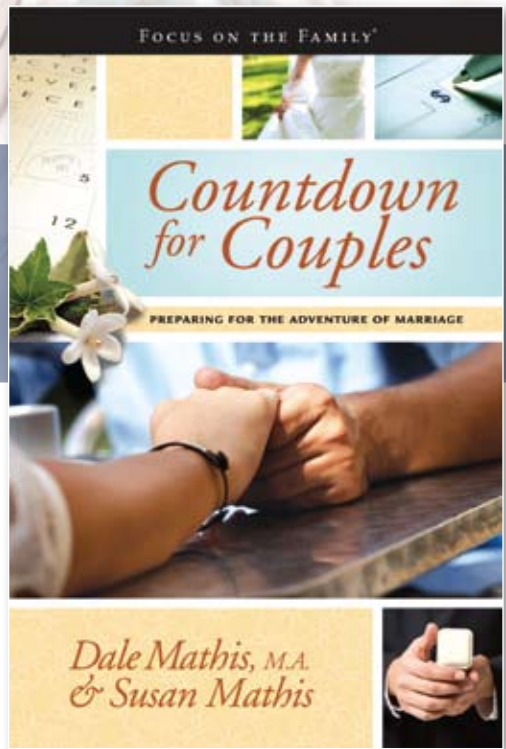
a magazine for 20-somethings

boundless on relationships

Debbie Maken:
Help Dad, I Need a Husband

Scott Croft:
Brother, You're Like a Six

Candice Watters:
Boundless Help Desk



Who needs premarital counseling?

Any married couple can attest to the benefits of premarital counseling. But with today's hectic schedules and the stress of wedding-day plans, planning for *married life* is often overlooked.

If someone you know is preparing for the adventure of marriage, give them tools for the journey! *Countdown for Couples* delivers time-tested guidance and honest answers to the big questions . . . before the big day.

- Are you ready for a lifelong commitment?**
- What should you expect in your marriage?**
- How do you deal with conflict?**
- How do you manage finances?**
- And more!**

\$14 Countdown for Couples
Suggested donation* (paperback)
Item Code: F00863B

FocusOnTheFamily.com • 800-A-FAMILY (232-6459)

*For specific terms and conditions, see the order form in this publication.

FOUNDRIES

Boundless

a magazine for 20-somethings
from Focus on the Family®

EXECUTIVE EDITOR
steve watters

MANAGING EDITOR
lotte brown

EDITOR
ted slater

PRINT PRODUCTION
kevin shirin

VICE PRESIDENT
rich bennett

BOUNDLESS MAGAZINE
©2008 Focus on the Family
All rights reserved.
International copyright secured.

Published by Focus on the Family, a non-profit organization, recognized for tax-deductible giving by the federal government. Boundless is a registered trademark of Focus on the Family, 8605 Explorer Drive, Colorado Springs, CO 80920. Scripture quotations are from the New International Version unless otherwise stated. All photos and illustrations are © istockphoto.com unless otherwise noted.

IMPORTANT NOTICE:
By submitting letters and other materials to Focus on the Family, you agree that the materials submitted are the property of Focus on the Family and will not be returned, and you agree that Focus on the Family, its assigns and licensees, have been granted the non-exclusive rights to use and/or reproduce the materials in any manner and for any purpose. Our agreement is made in Colorado and governed by Colorado law.

PRINTED IN THE USA

CONTENTS



page 10

Parental Involvement in the Marriage Search:

Help Dad, I need a Husband!



page 6

For Such a Girl as I



page 18

BROTHER, YOU'RE LIKE A 6

Features

Help Desk with Candice Watters.....	22
Boundless Chat with Voddie Baucham	24
Office Hours with J. Budziszewski	28
Uncommon Knowledge.....	32

Columns

The Way Home by John Thomas.....	16
The Finish Line by Tom Neven	34

A message from
Executive Editor,
Steve Watters

boundless® Growing With You

Ten years ago, *Boundless* Webzine launched on the heels of popular shows and magazines such as *Adventures in Odyssey*®, *Focus on the Family Clubhouse*®, *Brio*® and *Breakaway*®. As a weekly Webzine, *Boundless* initially targeted college students with articles on worldview, relationships and spiritual growth.

Within a few years we started getting e-mails from readers saying they had already graduated from college, but still read *Boundless*. Later, we surveyed our readers and found that half were college graduates still sticking around.

Some told us that they found themselves in a time of life where they didn't quite fit into any of the college, career, young adult or singles ministries available in their area.

We finally got the hint and expanded *Boundless* to be a service for young adults seeking to make the most of the time after high school and before forming a family.

Since expanding our target, we've found that not only are our readers at various places in their education, career, spiritual formation and relationship paths, but they also have various media preferences.

So we added a blog. *Boundless Line* (www.boundlessline.org) launched in the fall of 2006 and quickly cultivated a community of readers who enjoy frequent posts and an opportunity to be a part of the conversation. The blog also gave us a chance to weigh in on time-sensitive culture and news events, and topics like global warming that we never could get to in the form of articles.

Next, we added the "Define the Relationship™" assessment (www.boundless.org/DTR) as a free tool for anyone looking to analyze the relationship they are in and to determine if they need to further define that relationship.

At the beginning of 2008, we launched *The Boundless Show*™ (www.boundless.org/podcast), a weekly podcast that we record in the same studios that Focus on the Family® uses to produce the award-winning broadcasts heard by millions of people around the world. *The Boundless Show* gives us a chance to dive into our favorite topics in a more casual and conversational format. *The Boundless Show* is consistently featured in the top 100 Christian podcasts on iTunes® and is also included in the regular lineup of Focus on the Family Web Radio.

The magazine you're holding now is our latest media expansion effort. For all the great new technology breakthroughs, that you're reading this shows that print is still alive and well. When it comes to portability, scanability and tangibility, there's still a lot of value in a magazine format. If this promotional version goes well and Focus on the Family finds it to be a viable effort, then our hope is to keep this magazine going as at least a quarterly update.

Who knows what opportunities might lie ahead in the next ten years as *Boundless* continues to grow alongside our favorite group of people in the world?



Who is God? Why am I here?

Are there absolutes? "Do you really believe that what you believe is really real?"SM Does God care?

Is there something more? Do I really matter?

Where did evil come from?

What is truth? Do heaven and hell exist?

FOCUS ON THE FAMILY'S

The Truth project

An In-Depth Christian Worldview Experience

© 2008 Focus on the Family

Participate **ChangeLead**

For more information, or to register for
The Truth Project Training Conference, visit:
thetruthproject.org

For Such a Girl as

by Rachel Starr Thomson



Recently, I spent an evening with some good friends. We drank tea, downed chocolate, and discussed dead languages. We laughed a lot. Then one of the girls made an interesting observation.

“You know,” she said, “I realized the other day that not only am I not married yet, but I have no prospects. None. And not only that—none of my friends do, either.”

We looked at each other and realized she was right. In our mid-to late 20s, we are one and all past the age we thought we’d be at the altar. Yet here we are, without so much as an altar on the horizon! We were further discomfited by the unspoken understanding we all share. We suspect we’re still single because, let’s face it, we’re a little different. We’re geeks. We spend time discussing dead languages, for pity’s sake!

Those of us who’ve read stories set in the Austen/Bronte era have an irascible old woman in our minds: the society lady who declares that this girl or that shall never marry because she’s too skinny, too forward or, worst of all, too smart.

the size of your vocabulary may be scaring men away? When you’re a little eccentric? We all have areas in which we need to grow, but I’m not talking about character flaws here. I’m talking about personhood. What do you do when you just don’t fit the mold?

Next, take the perfect Christian couple off its pedestal. What do I mean by that? In the past few decades, many Christians have started to fight back against the world’s warped ideas of family. One way in which we fight is to hold up an

When stereotypes cause us to despair, it’s a sign that we’re thinking inside a box God didn’t design.

Hers are not easy accusations to ward off. For Christian singles, marriage is a religious desire as well as a physical and emotional one. We understand that God “created them male and female” for a purpose. Eve was taken out of Adam to be a help meet for him. Man without woman is incomplete; woman without man isn’t doing what she was created to do. Is it any wonder we’re frustrated by prolonged singleness?

Into our frustration chimes the voice of the irascible society woman. If you’re not married, ye saucy wench, there’s likely something wrong with you.

Most of us have an image in our minds of the quintessentially marriageable woman. What do you do when you’re just not her? When your hope chest contains hiking boots instead of fine china? When

Hollywood has an answer: Transform yourself, a la *The Princess Diaries*. Be yourself, of course—just change yourself first.

The Bible has an entirely different answer. Begin with faith. You can’t come at life—or marriage—as though it happens by accident. Begin where Scripture begins: “In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.” More recently, He created you. It didn’t happen in some hands-off, mediocre way. David declares, “For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother’s womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made” (Psalm 139:13-14).

You are who you are—personality, body type, mind and all—because God fashioned you that way. Start with that truth.

ideal, complete with husband and wife stereotypes who may have more in common with Barbie and Ken than with real people. Ideals are important, but we get into trouble when we start to believe that only one persona is really godly—that only one type of woman makes a good wife, and



we're not her. God is creative! He loves variety. When stereotypes cause us to despair, it's a sign that we're thinking inside a box God didn't design.

Back in the garden, God created woman as a "help" for man. And the bald fact is that not every man needs the same brand of help! "The perfect marriage" does not look the same for everyone because no two people are the same. One woman helps her man by keeping his castle warm and his bathroom scrubbed. Another helps hers by translating the New Testament from Greek into hitherto untouched tribal tongues. Marriage is not an institution with a dress code and its own version of Robert's Rules of Order. It's a living, breathing, creative organism.

The irascible old woman in your head is wrong. You are not a mistake. The qualities that make you different from everyone else have not disqualified you for marriage. If God has created you and ordained that marriage be part of your life—as, for most of us, He has—then you are exactly what some man out there needs.

What does that mean for me today? Foremost, it means I can stop feeling sorry for myself. Woe is not me. God's plans for my life will not be prevented because I make sonnets better than I do flapjacks. Truth trumps worry yet again.

Second, it means I can get my

eyes off myself and back where they belong—on God! Surprisingly, Jesus doesn't call us to Self-Improvement as the ultimate way to happiness. He calls us to love others unselfishly. To serve them wholeheartedly. And to walk with Him.

Realizing that I don't have to fit a stereotype gives me a lot of freedom. If we're wise, we who wish to marry will prepare for marriage. And while that *does* mean learning to do things like cook and keep a decent house, submit graciously and communicate well, it doesn't mean that we're wasting our time by doing anything else. We have the freedom to develop our gifts and pursue our passions, unusual though they may be.

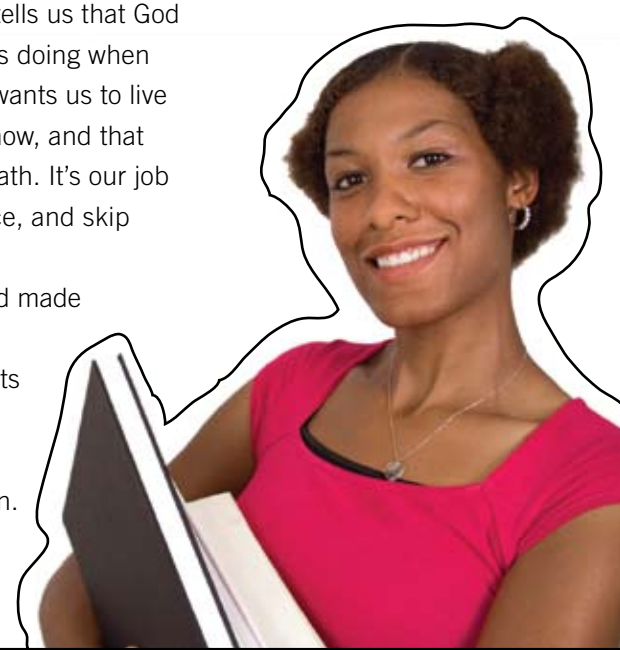
Fear tells us to stop that right this minute; to go the *Princess Diaries* route and make something more manageable out of ourselves before we lose every chance at happiness. Faith tells us that God knew what He was doing when He made us. He wants us to live joyfully and fully now, and that He'll lay out the path. It's our job to walk, run, dance, and skip along it.

After my friend made her observation about our prospects for the future, we companions sank into quiet reflection. We're in the same boat. We all feel

like we're outside the culture's marriageable mold in one way or another, yet we each desire biblical marriage. Sometimes fear raises its head, crying "Panic! Something's wrong with you!" But faith rises up to beat it back down.

Will I ever have a spouse? God just hasn't told me. What I do know is that I needn't go the path of self-blame, worry, and fear. My future is in His hands, so I can quit wringing mine. If I trust Him with my present—my quirks and unusual character included—He'll use it to prepare me for whatever tasks await.

The Jewish hero Mordecai told Esther that God "had called her to the kingdom for such a time as this." Her gifts made her the perfect fit for her task—the saving of Israel. Even so, God has made such a girl as you for a purpose. Go with God as you discover yours.



AVAILABLE NOW FROM resources.family.org



The eagerly awaited sequel to the bestselling *LADY IN WAITING*

"In a world obsessed with speed dating and quick-fixes, Jackie Kendall provides a refreshing road map for young women to confidently take the time to find 'Mr. Right' instead of 'Mr. Right Now.' Without a doubt, this is a book I will pass on to my daughter when she begins her journey."
—Elisabeth Hasselbeck, cohost of ABC's *The View*

"Jackie Kendall's follow-up to *Lady in Waiting* speaks intimately to faithful single women in the voice of our loving Father. She reminds all of us to be true to ourselves, to trust in God's plan and perfect timing, and most importantly, not to settle for anything less than God's best—ever!"
—Kristin Armstrong, author of *Happily Ever After: Walking with Peace and Courage Through a Year of Divorce*

"Jackie Kendall gets the world you struggle in, and she gets you. Even more amazing, she shows you, with the rockin' power she is known for on the speaking platform, how to live in that real world in purity, in passion, in love with Jesus Christ. Forget the bookmark—you won't put this one down."
—Nancy Rue, award-winning, bestselling author of 105 Books for Girls

For the thousands of single readers who devoured *Lady In Waiting*, author Jackie Kendall has crafted this natural sequel that defines what kind of man ladies should wait for.

Visit Jackie Kendall at www.jackiekendall.com

