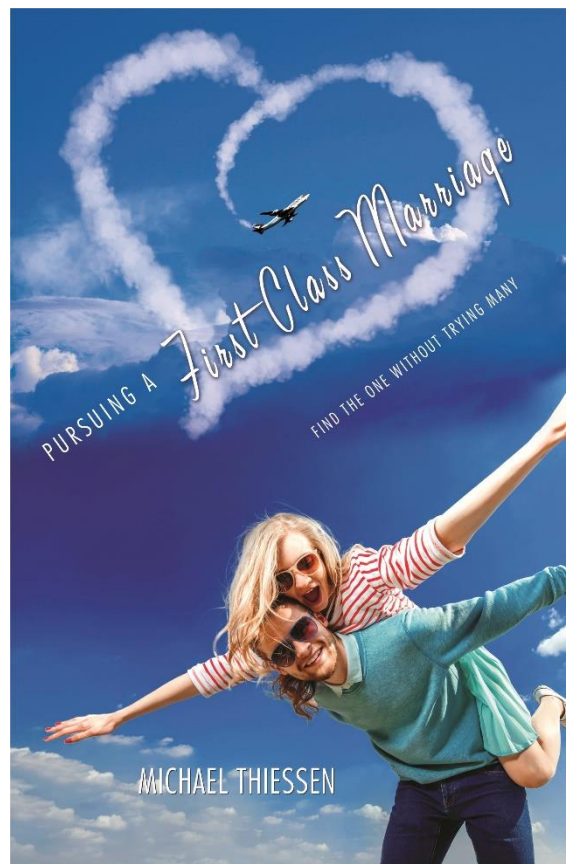


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Pursuing a First-Class Marriage

Find the One without Trying Many

Michael Thiessen



When you're young, life can be like a travel adventure—everything is new and exciting. And hopefully, the trip takes you somewhere good. The same could be said for the excitement of dating, which can lead a young person to find a spouse that is “first class”—God’s best for them in every way. But how does that happen? Young adults may be tempted to look for their one true love by dating early, or dating too many people. It can be easy to go along with the current model of casual hookups, or living together before marriage. And too many young adults finally arrive at marriage hurt, frustrated, and afraid to trust.

Michael Thiessen began outlining this book as he took the night shift in the hospital beside his two-year-old son, Gabriel, who was receiving chemotherapy for cancer. In this difficult place, he realized how much he loved his wife, and he and Sarah would often say to each other, “I can’t imagine going through this without you.” Thankfully, their son recovered, but later, Michael reflected on the power of their committed, Christ-centered marriage and was struck by its profound influence and strength.

In *Pursuing a First-Class Marriage*, Michael shares godly and practical principles for young adults who are either just beginning to date, or who are ready to pursue a first-class marriage—one that will hold them and their families throughout life’s often unexpected adventures.

For more info please contact media@deepriverbooks.com

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About the Author

Michael David Thiessen



Michael David Thiessen graduated from Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary in 2002 with an MA in religion. Michael served as a college and adult ministries pastor for the next seven years near Toronto. After this, he and his family served in Mozambique, Africa, as missionaries. Their time in Africa lasted for only one year as Michael and Sarah had to

return to Canada because one of their sons was diagnosed with cancer. While they were in the hospital with their son, God drew Michael and Sarah so close together that Michael became awakened to write about dating, marriage, and family. Mike now serves as senior pastor of Grace Baptist Church in Alliston, Ontario, Canada.

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What Others are Saying About **Pursuing a First-Class Marriage**

Our modern-day obsession with “instant gratification” is mass producing a society marked by personal self-absorption and relational brokenness. Michael Thiessen convincingly shows how friendship, commitment, and sex suffer as a result. With relevant honesty, biblical application and keen pastoral insight Michael has written a powerful guide for young people, parents, and spiritual leaders. This book is your invitation to experience the resurgence of happy marriages, blissful friendships, and healthy families.

-Daniel Henderson, president and founder of Strategic Renewal, author of *Fresh Encounters*

Mike Thiessen has written an uncommonly common-sense book on male-female relationships that honors and celebrates God’s distinctive design for marriage between a complementary man and woman. Using accessible, real-world experiences and the truth of Scripture, he treats the subject of marriage and sex with the warmth and dignity it rightly deserves.

-Rev. Joe Boot, senior pastor, Westminster Chapel, Toronto; founder of the Ezra Institute for Contemporary Christianity; author of *The Mission of God: A Manifesto of Hope*

In a culture in which instant-sexual-gratification-without-commitment is promoted as the pinnacle of human happiness, Pursuing a First-Class Marriage helps young adults (and the parents who love them) think through questions about dating and relationships in an authentically Christian way. Honest, wise, and practical, Michael Thiessen is not afraid of tackling the difficult questions head-on and as he does, offers a beautiful and biblical vision of what marriage can really be.

-Dr. Andy Bannister, director and lead apologist, RZIM Canada; author of *The Atheist Who Didn’t Exist*

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Followers of Jesus Christ are called to resist conformity to the wider culture, and nowhere is this more crucial than in the area of dating, courtship, and marriage. All around us, Christians are failing in the area of sexual ethics. But perhaps the greater problem is the failure of pastors and teachers to talk candidly about sex. In this book, Mike Thiessen helps us think biblically and realistically about the way we move toward marriage. The book is true both to Scripture and to the realities of human experience. I hope this book will help people who are headed toward marriage, and stimulate pastors to talk about the topic courageously.

-Dr. Stan K. Fowler, professor of theological studies, Heritage College and Seminary; author of *Rethinking Baptism: Some Baptist Reflections*

Michael Thiessen has provided us with a refreshing and thoroughly biblical alternative to our sexually supercharged culture. Michael helps us rethink dating, marriage, sexuality, and commitment by taking us to God's blueprint and illustrating his themes in a creative manner through the image of flight. If you are a church leader, an educator, a parent, or a person who thinks you are ready for a relationship, this promises to be an important read.

-Dr. Michael Pawelke, president, Briercrest College and Seminary; author of *Disciple: A Catalyst to Transformation*

*To a culture that promotes variety over value, tinkering over thinking, and fun over faithfulness, *Pursuing a First-Class Marriage* offers a biblical trajectory for navigating the often turbulent process of finding "the one." Michael Thiessen simultaneously entertains and instructs, making this book an ideal gift for high school graduates and college students.*

-Dr. Mark Scott, assistant professor, Thorneloe University; author of *Pathways in Theodicy: An Introduction to the Problem of Evil*

Mike Thiessen provides an easy-to-read, easy-to-understand book on the biblical view of marriage. But that doesn't mean Mike shies away from the more difficult and delicate issues in contemporary culture. Not at all; Mike deals with pertinent and meaningful facets of twenty-first-century courtship and marriage by carefully examining biblical truth, applying it to current trends, and expressing it in a thoughtful and sensitive manner.

-Randall Spacht, international church development, One Mission Society

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Suggested Interview Questions

For Michael Thiessen, author of *Pursuing a First-Class Marriage*

- How do you respond when someone thinks the ideas in the book are antiquated and impractical for modern young adults?
- What's so bad about 'hooking up'? What could someone possibly lose if they have sex before marriage? What could they possibly gain if they wait to have sex until after marriage?
- What are some advantages of long-term marriage?
- When should parents allow their son or daughter to date?
- In principal, what is the parent's responsibility in their child's process to find a spouse?
- How can parents talk with their child about sex and dating in a meaningful and persuasive way?

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