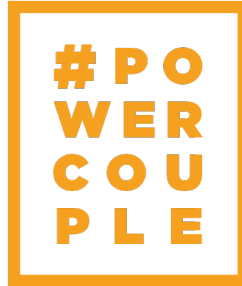


WHEN  
CHARACTER



& CHEMISTRY  
COLLIDE

**#powercouple** | *She's Worth It* | Jessie Davis | 2.19.17

LG Weekly

## START

To get things started, go around the circle and answer these two questions:

**What is the funniest, or most embarrassing thing that has ever happened to you on a date?**

## SHARE

*Welcome to our series "**#PowerCouple.**"*

Every year at Red Rocks Church, we go through a series on relationships because God has so much to say to us about them. Relationships affect our lives in powerful ways. Who we surround ourselves with matters. Character matters. What we are looking for in a potential spouse matters. How we continue to date our spouse matters. Most importantly, knowing God's design for marriage can change everything, whether we are single, divorced, married, or remarried.

The tag-line for this series is "when chemistry and character collide." Regardless of your marital status, character will take you places that just plain chemistry can't. Chemistry with the opposite sex happens naturally, but it is only the kindling that starts the fire. What keeps the fire ablaze into marriage is character. Godly character is the logs of the fire that keeps the love burning during the ups and downs of life.

As we journey through the book of Ruth, we are going to see how chemistry and character collide, how doing the right thing matters, and how God can redeem any situation, even if it might seem hopeless. Our

prayer is that this series will point to the God who can restore those of us who have drifted far from him, that we would experience forgiveness and restoration, and then turn around and live with a renewed commitment to follow Jesus. We hope going through the book of Ruth would give hope to the single, divorced or widowed. We hope you are reminded that it is God who sees, redeems, and gives us purpose. Finally, for those who are married, we pray that God would rekindle a fresh fire in your lives to put God at the center of your relationship.

This week, Jessie took some time to focus on women, and unearth the wealth of knowledge and wisdom we all can glean from Ruth. Men and women both have particular struggles unique to them. This uniqueness is important as males and females within the church body, so we are going to examine what the word of God has to say about it. Fellas, fear not; we will get to you next week. As Jessie mentioned, whether you are single, married, divorced, male or female, each week in this series will have something for all of us to learn from.

Let's read Proverbs 31:10 and Proverbs 31:25

We do not live in a society that necessarily cultivates and celebrates the dignity and strength of women. Boys are often brought up to pursue the most attractive girl. In turn, girls quickly learn what gets the attention of the boys and engage in the race to be noticed. How often do you overhear high school or college guys gawk over the dignity of a girl? The answer is: very rarely. When we don't focus on what the word of God says about women and men, we put in its place the unspoken and hurtful rules of worldly society.

Society does not necessarily favor women with dignity and strength; instead it favors those who play within the unspoken rules. We all desire to be wanted. To be accepted. To be noticed. Yet when we start to find those answers anywhere else but the word of God, we adopt lies that erode who he has called us to be.

**What are some societal lies you have adopted about either being a female, or about females in general?**

**What does it mean to you for women to be "clothed in strength and dignity?"**

**The enemy of our soul, Satan, has distorted our view of women. Why do you think there is such effort by the enemy in this area?**

## G R O W

Let's read Ruth 1:11-14

Ruth had just lost her husband.

We do not pass carelessly by this, as some of you can relate to this pain – the deep and aggressive pain of losing a spouse or loved one. It is a relentless pain. As we sit with the heaviness of this topic, we must understand this was the world that Ruth was now forced to be in. She was with other women who were hurting as well, each one trying to figure out the next best step, amidst the blinding pain of grief. This is precisely why Ruth's next step was so astounding. She *was* a woman of character. Her character was not fickle or conditional. Ruth saw through her own pain to love her mother-in-law the best she knew how in that moment. *She clung to her.*

We all desired to be loved, and to be loved well. Even if that desire has been trampled on, we know deep down that we were created to be truly known and loved. In friendships and romantic relationships, we often spend much of our time thinking of all the ways we desire to receive love. But how many of us seek to champion a friend with love that sees them, right where they are, and makes them feel known and cared for? Life is messy and unpredictable. If you haven't noticed already, life can sometimes bring out the worst in us. And that is when we need to be loved the most. When you are at your worst, the unconditional love of a friend or spouse can often help break down the walls. If we need to be loved when we are at our worst, we need to be willing to offer love to those we care for, at their worst.

The ability to love our spouse or friend through their toughest and most vulnerable times is ours for the taking. We can do it, because Jesus did it for us. God was not afraid of our mess, but loved us through it. Knowing God was unshakeable in his affections toward us makes it less scary to love others in their pain. We get to play a tangible and powerful part in the redemptive story of the people God has placed in our lives by loving them well.

**Ladies, what is unique about how God wired you as a woman in terms of how you can offer love to those in your life?**

**Men, what are tangible ways that you can foster and build up the innate strengths of the women in your life?**

**What holds you back from extending love and acceptance to others when they are at their worst? What do you fear or what are you protecting yourself from?**

## **M O V E**

It's no secret that the church has a unique opportunity in the area of relationships to live as set apart from the world. A #powercouple is made up of a man and woman committed to growing in godly character. But while such potential to reflect God's love in relationship is most obvious in a marriage, isn't it true that any relationship provides an invitation to extend love and acceptance? Think of our responsibility as parents, daughters and sons, friends and neighbors. The opportunities to love strong and accept are all around us.

**Sit for a minute and think about the relationships in your life right now. Is there one in particular in which God might be prompting you to extend more love or offer more acceptance?**

**What are the first steps you might take this week in offering love and acceptance to that specific person?**

Imagine the possible influence if we, as Christians, considered the effect our relationships had on the world. What if the church were known for our acceptance rather than our rejection? Imagine how powerful Christian women would be if we were freed from the societal lies we allow to define us.

Remember the wife of noble character mentioned in Proverbs 31:10? The Hebrew word King Lemuel uses for "noble" is most often translated in the Old Testament as *valor* and sometimes even rendered as *mighty*. Conveyed like this - "a woman of *valor* who can find?" - we get a new picture of biblical femininity as confident and courageous. We see the character of Ruth.

**Who in your life would you consider a woman of valor? What is it about this woman's character that leaves the impression she is clothed with strength and dignity? Share these examples with your group.**

## **P R A Y**

As a group, spend some time praying for each other and the struggles we all face. If you are in a co-ed group, consider breaking up into men and women's groups to talk more freely.

## T O G O

### **Matthew 5:14-15**

*You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house.*

**Challenge for the week:** *In the last question, we asked you to think of a woman that represented valor and strength to you. We want to challenge you to reach out to that woman, or if that is not possible, another woman that represents this to you, and send her a quick text, letter, or phone call, thanking her for her influence in your life, and for displaying strength and dignity in her life. Be creative and have fun! Too often we think to ourselves how appreciative we are of others, and don't invite them in to know the impact they truly have made.*