DeVon Franklin & Meagan Good’s
The Unwritten Rules to Dating and Waiting
How to Wait for Your Soul Mate

It was the first time we held hands, and we'll never forget it. It wasn't romantic. We weren't gazing longingly into each other's eyes. We just grabbed each other as we shouldered through a Hollywood mob that blocked our way like the Red Sea. But it was a moment that we'll both remember for the rest of our lives.

It was the spring of 2011 in Los Angeles, and it was our second date. Sort of. On our first date we talked for hours about life, family, career, goals, and the Lord. It was nice, but when it was over it felt . . . platonic. We had known each other professionally for four years at that point, and although we felt attracted to each other, we weren't sure that there was really anything going on. Then came the Prince concert at the House of Blues on the Sunset Strip. The place was so thick with fans, celebrities, media, and security that there was barely any room to breathe. We decided to make a mad dash through the throng to reach some people we knew, clasped hands so we wouldn't get separated . . . and it hit us.

A physical-spiritual concussion, like a jolt of electricity to the heart. It was like something from a rom-com script so cliche-ridden that it gets sent to turnaround (the film industry term for a project that a film studio decides not to develop further). Our eyes met, and it was clear that we had both felt it. It was as though two souls that God had been guiding toward each other for years had navigated all the plot twists and jumped all the obstacles to come together at last. In fact, that's exactly what happened. After the concert, we stood outside and talked, oblivious to everyone and everything else.

MEAGAN: Some people had labeled me a wild party girl because of what they read on blogs or in the tabloids. But that night, DeVon told me that wasn't the person he saw. He said he could see my heart. I was in tears. I felt like somebody
other than my family was finally seeing me, not the person people were quick
to judge me to be. Then he said, “God doesn't show your heart to everybody. He
only shows it to people He can trust with it.”

DEVON: That wasn't planned; it was straight from the heart. It was like God
had spoken those words to my spirit and they just flowed out of me. I remember
over the years seeing Meagan in the media, and there was always something
about her that I knew was more than meets the eye. But even though the sparks
were flying, we didn't kiss. The timing wasn't right. Why force it?

On our third date, we caught a movie at the Sherman Oaks Galleria. Afterward,
we ended up sitting in Meagan's car for an hour and a half talking about how
young people needed positive influences from Hollywood. We watched funny
YouTube videos and looked at old pictures. Then we got out of the car and
talked for another hour, standing in the partially vacated parking lot. Then we
hugged for what felt like an eternity. Finally, as we said good night for what
must have been the tenth time, we had our first kiss. As our lips touched, we
could feel the Spirit of God surround and embrace us. Instantly, we were both
euphoric in the Spirit, miles high. It was like a confirmation that this was right.

You can talk about God being in your life, but there is nothing like actually
feeling God's hand moving in your life. This was God moving in our lives, and
it was incredible.
However, even with all that electricity flying, we were cautious. We didn't lose our heads. We didn't dash off to Las Vegas for a ten-minute ceremony at a drive-through chapel. It wasn't just about gushing to friends and family members that we'd finally found “the One.” And as millions of people know from our many post-wedding magazine interviews, radio and television appearances, and live talks, we waited until after we got married to have sex.

When we began talking publicly about our courtship and our celibacy, people would ask the obvious: How did we stay strong? How did we resist temptation? There was a desire, a hunger, behind the inquiries. The unspoken message was: We want to have real love. Is it really possible? Your love appears to be so real. If it is, tell us how you got it, please.

So we started looking at the choices that had taken us from being two coworkers in the entertainment business to being a blissfully happy husband and wife. As we did, a pattern revealed itself.

Again and again, faced with the choice between instant gratification and delaying our own satisfaction to pursue something better, we chose the latter. When we weren't even together but were coming out of unhappy relationships, we each chose not to be intimate (intimacy isn't just about sex; it's also about sharing emotionally) with anyone for a time. When we grew closer but were unsure whether we were really right for each other, we waited for clarity from God. When we felt those incredible second- and third-date connections, we waited and got to know each other.

But why? Why did we consciously delay the gratification—not just sexual but emotional and spiritual—that would have come with diving headfirst into a
passionate relationship? The answer is simple: we wanted God’s very best for our lives, collectively and individually, and we wanted it in whatever way He intended. This required patience.

In the past, we’d both been burned in unpleasant relationships because we acted impulsively, leaped before we looked, or let our emotions overwhelm our judgment. We got tired of doing things the same way but expecting a different result (this is the classic definition of insanity). Maybe there was a way God wanted us to date that would bring us peace and what we wanted most: authentic love.

In short, we quit trying to make things happen for our short-term pleasure and let God take the wheel. Because we waited, we exchanged immediate gratification for what we really wanted and who we really wanted to be. Because we waited, God was able to reveal things that we would have missed if we had been blinded by the white-hot light of lust, desperate to fulfill our own desires. Because we waited, we were eventually ready.

That was the beginning of *The Wait*. 
The Wait is not just about sex, but it begins with sex. How could it not? We live in a time when books like the Fifty Shades of Grey trilogy have sold more than 100 million copies and the corresponding movie has grossed over half a billion dollars at the worldwide box office. Almost every popular magazine on the newsstands has some headline dealing with sex. “I Like HighEnd Sex Parties and I’m Not a Weirdo” was an actual headline from one of the biggest magazines in the world. Well, how about “We Waited to Have Sex and We’re Not Weirdos Either”?

The moment the two of us announced we were working on this book, a prominent blog published a post titled “Meagan Good, DeVon Franklin & the Danger of Promoting ‘The Wait’.” We had no idea that talking about our story and trying to provide a positive, healthy dialogue about relationships and sex would be deemed dangerous!

We actually think it’s dangerous not to talk about sex and advocate the idea that it’s okay to wait. How can you learn to date in a way that promotes physical, spiritual, and mental health if you don’t talk about the emotional, spiritual, and physical risks of sex? Is it really okay for the majority of songs and music videos to market an oversexualized way of life to the masses - but not okay for us to talk about an alternative way of thinking that might actually help someone become a healthier person and lead a better life?

Like it or not, waiting for sex is in the conversation and a lot more people are recognizing that it’s an idea that’s at least worth talking about. But does it matter what the two of us say? From a spiritual standpoint, what does the Bible say on this matter? Here are two key scriptures we find to be extremely compelling:

**YES, THE WAIT IS (SORT OF) ABOUT SEX**
God’s will is for you to be holy, so stay away from all sexual sin. (1 THESSALONIANS 4:3, NLT)

You know the old saying, “First you eat to live, and then you live to eat”? Well, it may be true that the body is only a temporary thing, but that’s no excuse for stuffing your body with food, or indulging it with sex. Since the Master honors you with a body, honor him with your body!

There’s more to sex than mere skin on skin. Sex is as much spiritual mystery as physical fact. As written in Scripture, “The two become one.” Since we want to become spiritually one with the Master, we must not pursue the kind of sex that avoids commitment and intimacy, leaving us more lonely than ever the kind of sex that can never help us become one. Sexual sins are different from all others. In sexual sin we violate the sacredness of our own bodies, these bodies that were made for God-given and God-modeled love—“becoming one” with another. Or didn’t you realize that your body is a sacred place, the place of the Holy Spirit? Don’t you see that you can’t live however you please, squandering what God paid such a high price for? The physical part of you is not some piece of property belonging to the spiritual part of you. God owns the whole works. So let people see God in and through your body. (1 CORINTHIANS 6:13,16-20, MSG)

However, despite what Scripture says, people (Christian or not) are going to have sex. We find our reasons and justifications. The faith-minded might rationalize that waiting doesn’t apply if you’re dating the one you believe you’re going to marry. Physically, we need and want sex, and it’s just hard to resist those hormones. Socially, even the mention of going without sex is met with snickers and stares.

There’s nothing wrong with sex or sexuality. God created both for the enjoyment of married couples. But for too long, there’s been an ugly stigma associated with sex, the church, and where it all fits in the reality of the world we live in. Our hope is that we can finally open up a healthy dialogue that resonates with you and everyone who reads it.
When we took sex off the table, our minds were clearer, our access to God was crisper, and we were able to make better decisions in other important areas of our relationship that weren't related to sex at all. Once we did that, we saw that applying *The Wait* to other aspects of relationships could really be beneficial, too. *The Wait* is about getting control of your life, reducing the dating drama, and avoiding desperate relationship choices so that you can make better decisions about your future.
So you’ve embraced the idea of The Wait. You’ve seen the light: getting your head clear and getting your life in order so God can bless you means, first, giving up sex. Good for you. It’s a proud move, taking back your power.

Too bad you’re miserable, right?

Maybe that’s overstating it, but you’re thinking about sex a lot, aren’t you? Most of your friends are still having it and talking about it. You’re trying to be strong, but your body is craving sexual satisfaction. You’re used to pursuing sex when you want it, so curtailing the drive is tough. You know this is the right thing for you, for your life, but . . . man. Temptation is everywhere, and staying strong is brutal.

Believe it, we feel you. We fought the natural desire for more than a year from the time we started dating to the time we married. Some days were better than others, but staying celibate was never easy. We were in love and we were attracted to each other. Very, very attracted. Sometimes the sexual chemistry was so hot that we simply couldn’t be in the same room together and keep our commitment to celibacy. That’s okay; sometimes wisdom means knowing when you’re not strong, so that you don’t have to be strong. It means seeing that a situation has the potential to pack some serious sexual tension and changing your plans. It means not testing your willpower when you know it’s not at its strongest. It means knowing that when you wear that dress and he wears that suit you can’t keep your hands off each other, so you wear something else.
We did all that, but we definitely had moments when it would have been so simple to play the “just this once” game and surrender to what we were feeling. But we didn’t. We wanted to remain in control. We wanted to see if we could do what others deemed impossible. We wanted to see if there really was something to be gained by waiting.

We’re living, married proof that you can resist temptation and remain celibate even when you’re in a committed, marriage-minded relationship with someone you’re madly in love with. You can do the same, but not if you don’t plan and prepare. You have to accept that temptation is coming for you pretty much 24-7. You’ve got to have strategies for dealing with it—for bolstering your will when you’re weak, for avoiding the triggers that set off your desire, and for getting the heck out of the room when resistance is futile.

How will you handle it when dates offer to take you out somewhere that you know might weaken your commitment?

What will you do when you’re close with someone who’s clearly ready to get it on with you?

How can you change your physical environment to manage things that will get you thinking, fantasizing, and obsessing about sex?

Like a Boy or Girl Scout, you’ve got to be prepared. Nobody’s willpower is bulletproof. If you’ve already had sex and are used to getting it, going without it will feel unnatural at first. You can’t wing this… If you’re going to make a promise to yourself and God, do everything in your power to keep it. That means preparing to deal with and repel temptation, confident that God is going to hold up His end of the deal.

“No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it” (1 CORINTHIANS 10:13, NIV).
If your faith is strong, the hunger to be better and do more can be reason enough to keep you committed to celibacy. It’s simply not worth it to fail. The possibility that we might miss out on what God had in store for us was a big part of what kept us on track.

When you find yourself motivated by a strong desire to grow into God’s purpose, reminding yourself of that goal can help you remain committed. Here’s a prayer that will help you overcome temptation:

## The Lust Prayer

God, please help me get control over this beast called Lust. I will not let it destroy me or disrupt the destiny you have set for my life. You said you would provide a way of escape when temptation appears, so show me the exit sign right now, Lord, because I’m about to do something that will please my flesh but harm my spirit. I’m tired of continuously falling prey to lust. I keep falling, getting back up, and falling again.

Give me the victory today! I claim authority over my body, my heart, my mind, and my sexuality. You made me sexual but give me the tools to manage this sexuality in a way that pleases you! You said you’d never leave nor forsake me so I’m trusting in you, Lord.

You have authority over this lust and I claim that authority now. Be my strength when I am weak and deliver me from this flesh that threatens to destroy every good thing you’ve planned for my life. I pray this prayer in the mighty name of Jesus, Amen!
WHAT TEMPTATION LOOKS LIKE

But how are you likely to be tempted to break your celibacy pledge? Some scenarios seem obvious: the second-date makeout session that becomes a little too hot and heavy, the beautiful person you just met who invites you to come in after you’ve had one drink too many. But honestly, how often does that sort of thing really happen? Genuine temptation, we’ve found, is more insidious. It doesn’t seem like you’re in trouble until you’re more than halfway there. That’s when you have to be careful.

For example, what if you’re dating someone and he or she dresses for an evening out in something incredibly provocative? Now you’ve got to spend hours being hot and bothered by how sexy your date looks. You might even start thinking about how good he or she would look out of those clothes. That’s a danger zone.

Another one is when you or someone in your circle is in emotional turmoil and just needs “someone to be with.” You know how it goes: a fight or breakup, tears, a call asking, “Could you come over for a while?” Now, if you and this other person have no physical attraction to each other, you’re probably safe. But if you do, whether you’re the crying caller or the one riding to the rescue with ice cream and tissues, watch out. Vulnerable, lonely people just want someone to hold them . . . until that holding turns into something else.

Temptation will fit anywhere in your life that you make room for it: work flirtations, having contact with exes, pornography, you name it. In practicing The Wait, one of your goals is to create a lifestyle that acknowledges temptation by putting as many safeguards as possible in place.
That’s a lot easier when you can custom fit your antitemptation plan to your circumstances and triggers. For example, the desire for sex when you’re off the dating scene is very different from when you’re in a serious relationship.

When you’re alone and not dating, opportunities to act on your temptation may not be readily accessible. Maybe you have an office crush or an eye on somebody hot at the gym, but that’s about it. Staying strong is really about avoiding stimuli that get you focusing on sex, staying out of provocative situations, and remembering your commitment to God and why you’re waiting.

But the serious relationship takes the temptations of dating and ratchets them up. Now you’re seeing one person whom you really, really like. You’re thinking this could be the person you marry. You’re compatible in every way, especially physically. You’re spending a lot of private time together. This is torture, right?

No. Remember, the two of us did this, and it did feel like torture at times despite our deep faith and commitment. Besides, even when waiting is hard, at least you’re not in it alone anymore. And having a committed partner who will help you do it is a real blessing.
Now we get down to it. What tricks did we use to stay strong and remain celibate even when our bodies were screaming for sexual release? The most powerful tool for staying disciplined and keeping your commitment is your faith in and love of God. If you keep in mind that you're doing this as an act of obedience and to receive the fullness of what God has in store for you, you'll have an easier time avoiding sexual temptation. It's just as important that you take responsibility for yourself. Some people say, “Well, things just happen.” That's a cop-out. We let things happen if we're okay with them, even if we won't admit it to ourselves.

MEAGAN: When I was nineteen, I struggled with celibacy. But what I really did was abdicate responsibility for my celibacy. I would say, “This man could be my husband, so that would make it OK.” Or “Well, I'm not going to initiate sex, so if it happens it's not because I made it happen.” But I knew that I was putting the responsibility on the other person and not taking ownership of my commitment. It was hypocritical. Finally, I said, “This is not what the Lord has for me. I'm not going to go into another relationship trying to be celibate and then passively caving on the commitment.”

I had to make the commitment that sex was absolutely off the table. The crazy thing is that when I did that, God blessed me with somebody who was celibate before I was. It's incredible how things can work out when we're true to God and to ourselves.

Even if your faith has weak moments (which we all have), the most effective way to be successful in your commitment to celibacy is to know your triggers. Avoid setting yourself up for failure. It's not the act of sex that's the problem, but the moments leading up to it. Willpower is wonderful, but at the risk of
overdoing the diet metaphor, you don’t keep ice cream and chocolate-chip cookies in the house when you’re trying to drop fifty pounds. The Lord’s Prayer says, “Lead us not into temptation” (Matthew 6:13, KJV), meaning, don’t even go there.

So don’t just rely on loving the Lord and being strong. Know yourself. Not to put too fine a point on it, know what makes you horny. Take your triggers out of play, period. If going inside your date’s house is likely to lead to serious kissing and possibly other things, say good night at the door. If staying at someone’s house after midnight is dangerous for your willpower, agree in advance that everybody will part ways at eleven thirty. If kissing leads down the slippery slope, stop at a hug.

If you’re dating someone steadily and you’ve both agreed to wait, discuss how you’re feeling in real time, before you go out. How’s your willpower? Is what one of you is wearing pushing the wrong buttons? Is that movie you’re planning to see a little too hot? Check in with each other and talk.

Your spirit should be telling your body what to do, not the other way around. That’s why you have to keep each other strong. When you get weak, it’s your partner’s job to say, “No, remember what we’re committed to.” When your partner weakens, you bring the discipline. Know your limits, monitor yourself, and communicate. If you’re feeling particularly susceptible to the temptations of the flesh on a given day, there’s nothing wrong with admitting it and communicating about it. Remember, you’re both in this together for the long run.

Here are some major triggers to be mindful of:

- Late nights. Movie night on the couch in somebody’s apartment is fun, but it can lead to more.

- Emotional trauma. When you get in a fight with some one, get in trouble at work, or just feel bad, you’re vulnerable’ and want comfort. Be careful.

- Intimate contact. Be affectionate, but be mindful if that affection is making it difficult for you or the person you’re dating to resist temptation. If it is, dial down the intensity.

- Alcohol. Drinking and celibacy probably isn’t the best mix. Liquor reduces your inhibitions and makes you more likely to do something you’ll regret. If you’re waiting, consider doing it sober. Either that or make the choice not to
drink (or drink minimally) around the person you're dating.

• Sexting and Snapchat. Provocative texts or video clips can send you over the edge if your willpower is wavering.

• Travel. Hookups on the road can seem like they don't count, kind of like calories from ice cream that you eat when nobody's watching. What? Of course sex when you're on the road counts. Don't fool yourself.
Hamlet said, “There is nothing either good or bad, but thinking makes it so.” When the subject is sex, truer words were never spoken. When we can't have something, we can't stop thinking about it. When that something is sex, the endless thought makes it harder to stay committed and tempts us to chase empty gratification. The solution: stop thinking about sex so much. Yes, we know that’s like an elephant sitting in the middle of a room while someone’s telling you, “Don’t think about the elephant!” But it can be done.

- Pray or meditate every day, multiple times a day. Both will help quiet anxiety and promote calm.
- If you know others who are practicing The Wait or who are celibate for other reasons, create a support group, even if it’s a virtual one on a site such as Google+.
- Carry a meaningful object or token that reminds you of your commitment to God and to celibacy.
- Write down a statement of why you’re choosing to wait and keep it in your phone. Reminding yourself of why you’re doing it is key to keeping the commitment.
- Ask friends who keep sending you sexual material to stop.

Is it over the top to avoid friends who talk about sex, music that promotes it, or movies with love-making scenes? It all depends on your triggers. Things that get one person obsessing about sex will have zero effect on another person. Figure out what gets you dwelling on those things that fuel your lust and take steps to avoid it. Remember, commitment is half willpower and half common sense.
We know many people who have struggled with finding not only lasting happiness in their relationships but also peace within themselves. The two are of a piece: until you know and love yourself, it’s hard to find anyone else to love you the way you deserve. The practice of waiting—choosing to wait for sex and denying instant gratification so that you can see clearly, make better decisions, and position yourself for blessings is the key to finding not just happiness but spirit-deep fulfillment.

The Wait isn’t just a matter of stopping, sitting on the couch, and saying, “Okay, Lord, bless me.” There’s a lot more to it. Waiting in other areas of life too has nothing to do with lying back and hoping that good things find you. It’s about putting aside distractions, using your gifts, and becoming someone God can trust to bless with great opportunities and wonderful people.

Discovering this powerful process has brought us the kind of authentic, deep joy that comes with knowing we are truly meant to be together in every way—that we see and appreciate each other for the fullness of who we are, flaws and all. That’s something we simply could not keep to ourselves. We hope we can give you a bit of insight into how God is working in your own life and help you ask the really important questions:

• Why haven’t I found true love yet?
• How are some of my habits working against the life I really want?
• What have I been spending my energy and attention on and why?
• What have I been compromising to do that?
• What am I ready to sacrifice to become my best self?
Do I need help making healthier choices for my life?

We wrote the The Wait to give you the answers to those questions. These are the types of questions we walk you through in The Wait Devotional as well. We offer specific advice for men and women and tell you what we’ve learned about the power of being still, working to become the best version of yourself, and allowing God to bring His vision of your life to fruition. In the end, we hope you’ll be entertained, moved, and most important, inspired to try this powerful tool for yourself. We think you’ll see that there’s nothing boring, passive, or docile about waiting. Done right, it’s actually the most potent force imaginable for creating the life you crave . . . the life God wants you to have.

God bless you!

DeVon & Meagan

* See the next page for the next step...
Get the New York Times bestselling book that will help you find the love of your life and the life you love! In The Wait, Hollywood power couple DeVon Franklin and Meagan Good, candidly share their courtship and marriage, and the key to their success—waiting.

President/CEO of Franklin Entertainment and former Sony Pictures executive DeVon Franklin and award-winning actress Meagan Good have learned firsthand that some people must wait patiently for “the one” to come into their lives. They spent years crossing paths but it wasn't until they were thrown together while working on the film Jumping the Broom that their storybook romance began.

Faced with starting a new relationship and wanting to avoid potentially devastating pitfalls, DeVon and Meagan chose to do something almost unheard of in today’s society—abstain from sex until they were married.

DeVon and Meagan share the life-changing message that waiting—rather than rushing a relationship—can help you find the person you're meant to be with. The Wait is filled with candid his-and-hers accounts of the most important moments of their relationship and practical advice on how waiting for everything—from dating to sex—can transform relationships, allowing you to find a deep connection based on patience, trust, and faith.

Purchase your copy today!