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GWU Alum Clayton King Tagged by LifeWay to Pen Updated "True Love Waits" Curriculum

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Office of University Communications

November 11, 2013

"The True Love Project" to Hit Stores on Dec. 15

BOILING SPRINGS, N.C.—The most successful product ever released by LifeWay Christian Resources is being re-launched next month and officials have handpicked Gardner-Webb University alumnus Clayton King ('95) to develop and write the new curriculum.

Photo by Colin Mukri

True Love Waits, an international moral purity campaign designed to challenge teens and college students to commit to sexual abstinence until marriage, initially debuted in 1994, when King himself was a college student. As a traveling evangelist and speaker even during his years at Gardner-Webb, he remembers speaking at *True Love Waits* rallies all over the country. When LifeWay officials decided to relaunch *True Love Waits* in honor of its 20th anniversary, King was their first choice to rewrite the material.

"I was blown away, I couldn't believe that I would have an opportunity to do that," he shared. "I was very curious, you know, why me? There are many other people in America with bigger platforms and more success and a much bigger voice than I have. I wanted to know, 'Why would you choose me to write something so big and so important?'"

His answer came when he flew to Nashville, Tenn. earlier this year to discuss the project with the LifeWay development team. As he listened to LifeWay Vice President Eric Geiger, King discovered God had perfectly orchestrated his involvement in the new project more than 20 years ago.

"When I was 20 years old and a student at GWU, there was a church in Louisiana that brought me in to speak on the issues of sexual purity and abstinence until marriage," King explained.

In the audience that night, King learned, was Eric Geiger, then just a teenager. "He told me that God really convicted him through my message that he needed to give total control of his life to Christ, that he needed to straighten some things up in the area of relationships, and that he needed to practice sexual purity because he was a Christian," King recalled. Geiger's life path led him to pursue his doctorate, become a pastor and author, and eventually, a vice president at LifeWay.

When the president of LifeWay, Thom Rainer, was discussing the re-release of the *True Love Waits* material, he asked his team to offer suggestions on who should be contacted to write the curriculum. Geiger raised his hand and told them the story of what had happened to him as a result of Clayton King's message in Louisiana more than 20 years ago. Without hesitation, Rainer replied, "Go get him."



Watch Video At: <https://youtu.be/6yt1dUgDbBg>

Renamed *The True Love Project*, King—along with his wife and ministry partner, Sharie—has modernized much of the material which includes a video-based Bible study, member book, trade book and devotional. "We're changing the name. We're changing the focus," he offered. "We are still going to talk about sexual purity, but we're also going to focus more on sexual health."

With the goal of reaching the next generation with relevant information relating to sexual purity, King's message will also include topics such as forgiveness, sexual abuse, pornography, and how to establish and maintain sexual purity in a decidedly over-sexed culture.

"We're going to talk more about making wise choices at a younger age and also about receiving God's grace and God's forgiveness if you have made mistakes," King shared. "We're going to deal a lot with pornography because it is such an epidemic now among the younger generation. So we're dealing with the same temptations that I think I dealt with 20 years ago when I was a teenager, but those temptations are more evident and they are much more accessible than they used to be."

The opportunity to become part of the legacy of *True Love Waits* and the chance to touch the lives of teens in the next generation has been overwhelming for King. "I never dreamed I would have an honor like this," he said. "I'm just thrilled to be able to write something that has the potential to reach so many people and to really help people by preparing them for marriage and family. All of us who are married know that it's hard work to have a good marriage and we want to help teenagers be prepared for that."

The True Love Project by Clayton and Sharie King is available for pre-order at Lifeway.com. The materials will be widely available on Dec. 15.

*The **True Love Project** is an eight-session video-driven Bible study for all students. It focuses on how the gospel—as it leads to lasting heart change and transformation—is what serves as the catalyst for sexual purity in our lives. Students will take a look at how the world's distorted view of sex compares with God's true design for it. They'll learn that sexual abstinence is centered in a desire to honor and please God as a result of spiritual transformation and not just behavior modification.*

Clayton King is the founder and president of Crossroads Worldwide and Clayton King Ministries. He began his public speaking career at age 14 and has preached the Gospel to over three million people in 35 countries and 45 states. He serves as teaching pastor at NewSpring Church (Anderson, S.C.) and as campus pastor at Liberty University (Lynchburg, Va.). He is also a distinguished professor of evangelism at Anderson University and has authored eight books. He and his wife Sharie have been married since 1999 and live in Boiling Springs, N.C. with their two sons, Jacob and Joseph.

Located in Boiling Springs, N.C., Gardner-Webb University blends a liberal arts core curriculum with more than 55 major and minor professional programs of study, a comprehensive academic experience that flows from our Christian commitment to intellectual freedom, service and leadership.