

*Amy's story, continued...*

Steve and I went our separate ways to college, and for the next two and a half years, I continued to wrestle with feelings for him. Back and forth it went between thinking I was "over" him, then seeing him and having those feelings get stirred up again.

Finally, by the summer of 2002, I would have said I was completely over Steve. In fact, I was interested in someone else. But as the new guy started pursuing me in the fall, my life suddenly filled with confusion. I had thought a relationship with this other guy was exactly what I wanted--and had even been pretty confident in God's leading--until out of nowhere, my feelings for Steve came rushing back full force.

I didn't know what to do. After agonizing over the situation for several weeks, I finally told the new guy that I couldn't begin a relationship with him. I knew it wouldn't be fair, since I still had such strong feelings for Steve. Yet I wondered, "Am I crazy? Here's this wonderful, godly guy who cares about me and wants to pursue me...and I'm saying no to him for what? Another wonderful, godly guy who I have no reason to believe cares about me in that way, and probably never will."

During this time, several well-meaning friends advised me to confess my feelings to Steve. They suggested that I needed "closure" so that I could "move on" with my life--that I needed to know once and for all where he stood. And part of me wanted to heed their advice--from a worldly point of view, it seemed to make sense. Yet in the end, I couldn't get away from the strong conviction (the Holy Spirit at work in me!) that I could never go to Steve and confess my feelings. I knew that if anything was ever going to happen between us, it had to be initiated by him. I knew I couldn't pursue him--it would never work.

(Plus, when all was said and done, I didn't want to be the initiator--I knew that wasn't the role God had designed for me! To echo Carolyn's words, "Don't you ultimately want a guy who is attracted enough to pursue you, without needing hints from you?" Not only that, but I would also add: "Don't you want a man who will take the lead in your relationship and marriage and be strong as the spiritual head of the household?" It's hard enough for men to do that without you starting things off by taking the lead. If you initiate in the beginning, you'll be establishing a pattern that more than likely will be incredibly hard to break.)

And so, although it seemed crazy, I ended things with the other guy and kept my mouth shut. Rather than take matters into my own hands, I stepped back and realized that I didn't "need" answers, as some had said. I needed to trust in the Lord.

Little did I know that for the last few months, God had been working on Steve's heart. About three weeks later, while Steve and I were both home for Christmas break, he called and asked if we could talk. He explained that he was interested in taking our relationship beyond friendship. He prayed with me and talked with my parents, and thus began my relationship with my husband. We were married last July!

Of course, Steve knows all the back-story now. He knows how long I wrestled with my feelings, how many times I wondered what God was up to and whether he and I would ever be together. And I can't tell you how many times he has thanked me for not chasing him.

Steve has said over and over that he's glad I was patient and waited for God to lead him to pursue me. He says that if I had pursued him, he would have run like crazy in the opposite direction. We're both tremendously glad that didn't happen!!

Looking back, I'm so thankful that God didn't give me the confirmation I sought in advance! Though He surely could have told me, "You and Steve will be married someday, so be patient and wait for my timing," I'm so glad He didn't. I know I would have been tempted to take matters into my own hands--to manipulate situations and try to bring about in my own way what was supposed to happen! I'm unspeakably grateful that instead, He gave me the grace to wait upon Him.

And of course I can tell you that the wait was worth it. All those tears and all that uncertainty seem a distant memory now that I'm married to the man of my dreams. God used that time to draw me to Himself and to teach me to hope in Him. He used it to prepare both Steve and me. And our relationship unfolded in His perfect way and in His perfect time--resulting in a love story that has His fingerprints of grace and goodness all over it.