

# Meet Lisa Anderson

As director of young adults at **Focus on the Family**, Lisa Anderson's focus—and expertise—is helping 20- and 30-somethings to “grow up, own their faith and date with purpose to prepare for marriage and family.” Her voice has anchored a weekly podcast for several years and, as an outgrowth of the popularity of that work, Focus has launched the new weekly half-hour broadcast “**The Boundless Show**”—ideal for stations who want to provide strong content for this target demographic.

**So ... what is it about 20- and 30-somethings that has made for such a thorough life commitment to speaking to them?** Young adults are in a season involving some of the most important decisions of their lives – decisions involving education, career and marriage, among other things. To be biblical and intentional in your 20s and 30s is to set yourself up for success for the rest of your life. Let's just say I wish I'd taken my own advice when I was in my 20s!

**You just hosted the first “Boundless” Conference with over 400 young adults in attendance. Learn anything new in this setting?** I was encouraged to see so many young adults committed to honoring God with their lives right now in the season they're in. We're seeing a generation of Christians rise up who are serious about their faith, their relationships and their impact on the world around them. I was also moved to see that they often feel forgotten in the church, and that solid community with other like-minded single adults is critical to them. Attending “Pursuit 2014” was for many a lifeline to feeling loved and accepted for who they are as well as who they're becoming.

**What do you sense is perhaps the greatest concern of young adults when it comes to the idea of a strong marriage and family?** There are probably two. First is, “Can I really do this?” As the product of the largest divorce generation in history (the Boomers), Millennials are fearful of failing at marriage. They grew up with poor examples or no examples at all. They're gunshy, and for good reason. A second concern is around marrying the “right person.” Trying to reconcile our Hollywood ideals with a healthy, biblical construct for relationships has left many confused. As a result, many young adults are dating with little direction, dating indefinitely, or non-dating (yes, it's possible to non-date). We need to help them break these crazy cycles.

**Let's ask the proverbial one ... if you could give one piece of advice to a single Christian man or woman—what would that be?** If you want to be married someday, the time to start preparing is now. Begin by admitting you want to get married. Admit it out loud. Honor marriage as a single person. Grow up,

get your stuff together, and get serious about your relationship with Christ. Everything you're doing now is building into the person you'll become. Don't wait for life and marriage to “happen” to you. Travel the journey toward maturity and marriage with purpose, and with Christ at the center.

## **Tell us about your own journey with Christ.**

**Did you grow up in a Christian home?** I grew up in a wonderful Christian home with parents who loved each other and stayed married until my dad died of cancer in 2001. They were missionaries in the Philippines before I was born; my dad also pastored several churches across the U.S. As the youngest of six kids, I had a front-row seat to all the craziness and love that comes with a big family. I also quickly became an overachiever, and was obsessed with success by the time I was in high school. A missed opportunity to go to Yale University moved me in the direction of a private Christian college. Due to the prayers of my parents and the example of my roommate, I renewed my commitment to Christ and His lordship of my life. In recent years I've developed a much fuller picture of the love and grace of God, and have seen myself shed the performance-centered faith I clung to for so long and instead adopt a “God loves me, and I'm his daughter!” understanding of my place in God's heart.

**How did you get to Focus on the Family?** Not long after college, I moved to Colorado with no job and no plan, and soon (miraculously) landed a job as a writer at Focus. After two years, I left to pursue opportunities in the corporate world and on Capitol Hill. I returned to Focus 14 years ago as a member of the public relations team. About six years ago, those running Boundless.org at the time said they were starting a weekly podcast for singles, and because I was single and liked to talk a lot, would I be interested in hosting it? I agreed, and haven't shut up since. I started managing Boundless full-time in 2010.

## **When you aren't creating content for “Boundless” ... what do you like to do for fun?**

Hey, I'm a super fun person. ☺ I hang out a lot with friends, whether hiking, BBQ-ing, playing poker, doing Bible studies (to counteract the poker playing; currently doing Beth Moore's *Beloved Disciple* with a rockin' group of ladies), or pretty much whatever. I'm addicted to travel, and am in love with our national parks, Norway, England's lake district and anywhere in the Caribbean. I'm a self-proclaimed expert on Walt Disney World (especially maximizing meal credits on their dining plan), and I randomly sing sentences. I also run, but it is NOT fun; I get annoyed by people who run six miles a day because it's “such a great way to clear your head.” That's sick. If I want to clear my head, I play Candy Crush Saga.



**What's on your “nightstand reading stack” right now? (Or is it on your Audible downloads?)** No joke, I have over 30 books stacked by my fireplace right now, waiting to be read. Among them: *David and Goliath* by Malcolm Gladwell, *Wherever the River Runs* by Kelly Minter, *Is Everyone Hanging Out Without Me?* by Mindy Kaling, *Passion and Purity* by Elisabeth Elliot (scandalous that I've never read this), *One Way Love* by Tullian Tchividjian, and a few Anne Perry novels.

**Before long we may see a book with your name on it, right? What are you going to say in it?** Yes, the book is *The Dating Manifesto: A Drama-Free Plan for Pursuing Marriage With Purpose*, due out next August with David C. Cook. It's basically everything I learned too late about dating, relationships and preparing for marriage. It's a defiance of today's dysfunctional dating culture followed by non-nonsense strategies for dating with purity and purpose, and maximizing your singleness while you wait. There will also be a chapter directed toward the church. No idea what to “do” with all those singles standing in your narthex? No worries; I'll give you some ideas.

**So ... which do you use the most—Facebook, Twitter or Instagram?** Facebook. I love that everything's in one spot and neatly contained. I've been a slow adopter of Twitter and Instagram, but I'm getting there, largely out of necessity.

**If you could invite three people, living or dead (and not including Jesus) to dinner—who would be at the table?** John (the apostle), Jane Austen and Martin Luther. I'd also invite Beyonce and Bill and Gloria Gaither to provide dinner music.

**Favorite verse or life scripture?** Romans 1:16 and Psalm 77:19. When I was in Hong Kong last year, one of my hosts heard me say how much I love Psalm 77:19, and she made me a leather cuff bracelet with that verse inscribed inside. It's a gift I'll never forget.

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