

1

INTRODUCTION

“I’ve pretty much decided I’ll never get married,” I announced to my long-time friend Bart. It was September 1992, and we were at a youth convention-planning meeting in Denver, Colorado.

Single with no attachments and twenty-eight years old, I was ten days away from leaving the United States, on my way to language school. From there I would go to Mexico for two years to serve as an educational consultant.

Bart and I met ten years earlier at a Christian college. Working together in a number of venues, including Student Government helped us develop a friendship in college. The friendship had survived a decade, even as we led separate lives as single professionals in different parts of the country, with Bart investing his time in pastoral ministry and me working in college student development.

Youth convention planning had reconnected us across the years, and on a memorable September night we found ourselves “catching up.” The rest of the planning team had decided