

DATING

Even though the Bible doesn't specifically mention the dating relationship, it does give us principles that Christians are always to live by, including the time before marriage. As a Christian, the goal in all relationships should be to love God and to love others. If God is excluded, the result is a selfish and unhealthy relationship. Dating is a time to spend with someone of the opposite sex in order to get to know that person for the sole purpose of building a relationship that will lead to marriage. It is dating with a purpose. Dating is an important act that will affect both you and the person you date, for the rest of your lives. Every relationship, whether it is long or short term, affects us. Therefore, the decision to date someone should be taken seriously.

When considering whether or not to date someone, be honest with yourself about your motives. The Bible tells us that we should not do anything out of selfish ambition or vain conceit and that we should consider others better than ourselves. Marriage is a covenant based on serving and selflessness, both of which we should exercise in our dating relationships. If you are dating to fill your own needs or insecurity, chances are you are not in a good place to start a healthy relationship.

It is important that we honor our dating partner physically as well. The Bible is very clear about sex outside the bonds of marriage: "Flee from sexual immorality. All other sins a man commits are outside his body, but he who sins sexually sins against his own body. Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your bodies." (1 Corinthians 6:18-20)

It is important to learn about the character of a person prior to making any commitment to them. The ultimate goal of dating is to find a life partner. The Bible tells us that as Christians we should not marry, and therefore should not date, an unbeliever (2 Corinthians 6:14-15) because this would weaken our relationship with Christ and compromise our morals and standards.

SCRIPTURE RESOURCES

But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me. II Corinthians 12:9

How can a young person stay on the path of purity? By living according to your word. I seek you with all my heart; do not let me stray from your commands. I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you. Psalm 119:9-11

Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path. Psalm 119:105



It is God's will that you should be sanctified: that you should avoid sexual immorality; that each of you should learn to control your own body in a way that is holy and honorable, not in passionate lust like the pagans, who do not know God; and that in this matter no one should wrong or take advantage of a brother or sister. The Lord will punish all those who commit such sins, as we told you and warned you before. For God did not call us to be impure, but to live a holy life. Therefore, anyone who rejects this instruction does not reject a human being but God, the very God who gives you his Holy Spirit. 1 Thessalonians 4:3-8

SUGGESTED READING

- *The Ten Commandments of Dating* by Young & Adams
- *Dating With A Purpose* by Anthony McComb

