

Scriptures and Doctrine :: Dating**Dating - posted by PreachParsly (), on: 2005/6/20 16:36**

Here is a thought the Lord gave me: A woman is not a trophy, you do more than just look at her. You have to live with her.

There is some wisdom. (It could also go for guys too) I've seen people get so wrapped in dating that it will carry them from one church to another and then eventually when the relationship is over the person either leaves the church and doesn't find another one or stops going, all because of the uncomfortableness.

My personal belief is that dating is an epidemic that is sweeping singles in the church, which will build lust. What I mean by dating is the casual "dating" of another person with any physical intimacy at all (yes even kissing). So many people are like "I will not kiss on the first date" but then 2 months later they are sleeping with the other person. What good is that? You may say that you have self control but if you sit around with someone of the opposite sex and lay around on each other while watching movies alone you will see that self-control leave. Temptation, lust, then sin. You will watch it form before your eyes if you do not watch yourself.

1 Timothy 5:2 The elder women as mothers; the younger as sisters, with all purity.

This is far from the mindset of church-people today. It's closer to treat the women as a game so maybe you can win the prize. Do you treat others in the faith as brothers and sisters or playboy playmates? God is not impressed with the game so many singles play.

And I am by far saying that being with someone of the opposite sex is wrong. What I am saying is that it should be more of a courtship. I see nothing wrong with intimacy, but only in conversation and pouring out your soul to the other, but not physical! Sex and intimacy is for marriage. It should be something that strengthens the relationship after marriage because marriage is more challenging than a courtship.

Re: Dating - posted by PreachParsly (), on: 2005/6/20 16:38

What does everyone think about dating vs courtship? I would like to hear thought about it. What about scripture? Does scripture rule out what is called "dating?"

Re: - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2005/6/20 16:52

Check out Josh Harris's "I Kissed Dating Goodbye" as well as the sequel that followed it. Take his advice with a good pinch of salt though. The principles behind his advice are pretty sound.

Re: - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2005/6/20 19:02

Josh Harris can be a little confusing sometimes, but basically he advocates that one "date with intent." That is, you should only consider dating somebody if you think it has the potential for marriage. If you are just dating for the sake of dating, then Josh Harris says you are basically playing a game with somebody's heart, which is not a Christian thing to do.

To some degree, I have personally embraced Josh Harris's philosophy. I have only sought relationships with girls that I first had friendships first. Of the female friends I've had, and having tried to be "more than friends" once, I've only had one official girlfriend, my current girlfriend.

I think one major downside of Josh Harris's books are what he says on hugging and kissing, and in general, showing affection. He almost comes across as saying that there should be as little emotion and affection shown in these "courtships" as possible, because if the relationship doesn't work out, then you will protect your girlfriend from being seriously hurt and having to recover from a painful breakup.

Such seems like good advice, but I think a little naive perhaps. If a couple comes to truly love each other, then there are going to be emotions involved. There is always a risk involved with love. The Lord loved Judas Iscariot even until the very end, yet in the end Judas betrayed Him. I bet that hurt bad.

Also, there is nothing wrong with kissing, even deeply, before marriage. Not all arousal and passion is lust. Don't get me wrong though, I'm not advocating inappropriate touching. Mere physical attraction is a form of arousal, only differing in degree. As is romantic feelings. Holding hands, hugging, and kissing are simply forms of this. Such is one topic I don't think Josh Harris handles too well. One crosses the line from arousal to lust only when one starts imagining what that person you are deeply attracted to would look like naked. In fairness to Josh Harris though, he does make some pretty strong arguments that are highly profitable to meditate on and consider. Harris doesn't say all hugging and kissing is wrong, he simply raises a very high standard, and makes some room for personal convictions.

However, the principles he advocates are good. Christian dating should be one of serious intent built on friendship and respect for the other person. One should not aimlessly date, and should look to honor the Lord and their girlfriend, as well as involving their parents and Church as much as possible in the relationship. He's highly concerned with integrity with in relationships... so few are these days.

Re: - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2005/6/20 19:04

By the way, the method of dating/courting most people in the Bible practiced is if a man were interested in another woman, he would approach her father and essentially buy her from him. Such is never something taught as the command of God, it was simply the culture of much of the ancient world, and still many cultures today.

Re: dating, on: 2005/6/21 6:10

I have a take on an aspect of this topic, which at one time I would have said was only for the ears of *men* in the Church, with regard to their conduct with women.

Now I would have to add that women in the church have just as much responsibility in the way they bring up both their sons and their daughters (by which I mean how they how they treat them and what they tell them to do or to expect with a man from the opposite sex) as the men and fathers in the church do to their sons and daughters, and those of other men.

There is also the matter of demonstrating purity in one's relationships with all other adults and dealing with any chemistry which arises between people for whom it would be inappropriate to respond to that 'chemistry'.

First, it is good to be discussing this openly, as I believe sexual mores are seriously missing in the mindset of the gospel as it is being preached. Like the discussion on whether hell should be mentioned, (and it should), the fact that God has specific commands relating to sexual behaviour, should not be neglected in the defining of the gospel.

At the same time, it is unrealistic to suggest to unbelievers that the moment they turn to faith in Christ, they will no longer have a battle with their sexual desires or to overcome previous thought patterns or behaviour. However, that there are standards and that these are for the promotion of emotional and sexual health, should be clearly understood.

However, because all this is much easier to discuss realistically with some degree of failure in one's past, let it never be that we are unforgiving of one another's confusion and experience. The whole point is, that God can restore your soul. The *last* thing He is planning, is to cut you off from His supply of grace and the Spirit, because of sexual sin.

He knows better than us all, that this area of human experience is at the heart of the effect of the Fall. That's why sexual practices form the bulk of the list of 'do not's' in Leviticus 18 - which is not to say that apparently abstract sins such as the perversion of justice or avarice, are *less* sinful; those also are aspects of idolatry associated with cultish sexual behaviour and attitudes.

Within the context of this whole discussion, the thing that amazes me most (as a woman) is that men (whether Christian or not) engage in wrong behaviour with women whom they know they do not want to marry.

For some reason I cannot fathom, it seems to be *accepted* between men (and now, women) that it is ok to pollute the future bride of some other man. Even though the same men harbour hopes of marrying a virgin and living happily ever after, the damage they do to their own and the potential for others to find a suitable life partner / soulmate, is not a great enough prize for them to do whatever it takes to preserve this mutual aspiration *respectfully*, as they search.

Secondly, I'd like to leave a phrase with you, (which may not be original) but which crystallises into a few words, all that is wrong with going too far, physically, in a relationship before marriage, especially in any relationship in which one has taken part, *knowing* that marriage is never going to come of it.

This should bring whizzing to mind, the ultimate aim of the Lord to be married to the Church as His Bride, and what He had to do that He might present her to Himself, a pure and spotless spouse. That phrase is 'erosion of virginity'.

Re: - posted by PreachParsly (), on: 2005/6/21 15:46

Very good posts. Thanks for the replies. I guess my next question is are there any scriptures that promote a certain way of finding a mate? Dating vs courtship? I know for sure that both must be in the faith. But is there more?

Re: dating, on: 2005/6/21 17:38

I guess I must know a dozen stories of people who either knew or someone else did, who they would marry, but, for a long time the other person did not know or, was determined to wait for their own confirmation from the Lord, before even beginning to talk to the first person. From people who were in love with each other for years before the first conversation to a couple of whom I read who were convinced the other one didn't like them and left the room every time they entered - there is a rich vein of Christian experience to tap. Over all these, 'wait' is written loud and clear. There are scriptural parallels, too, which one or another may adopt as the Lord lays it on their heart. For example, one young man came to believe that he was not to move church to find a wife. God would bring her to him, just as He had brought Eve to Adam. (He did, by the way.) This cannot happen when you meet the girl of your dreams at a conference and both of you are from somewhere else... Sorry. This is not much about scripture, but I hope it is encouraging.

Re: Dating - posted by roman, on: 2005/6/28 5:08

Quote:

wrote:

"I think one major downside of Josh Harris's books are what he says on hugging and kissing, and in general, showing affection. He almost comes across as saying that there should be as little emotion and affection shown in these "courtships" as possible, because if the relationship doesn't work out, then you will protect your girlfriend from being seriously hurt and having to recover from a painful breakup."

"Also, there is nothing wrong with kissing, even deeply, before marriage. Not all arousal and passion is lust. Don't get me wrong though, I'm not advocating inappropriate touching. Mere physical attraction is a form of arousal, only differing in degree. As is romantic feelings. Holding hands, hugging, and kissing are simply forms of this. Such is one topic I don't think Josh Harris handles too well. One crosses the line from arousal to lust only when one starts imagining what that person you are deeply attracted to would look like naked."

My opinion in the above view is this, "Yes, there is nothing wrong in simple kissing, holding hands, hugging and even watching movies together (what happens in the cinema is another thing) **BUT WHY PUT YOURSELF IN A PLACE WHERE YOU COULD FALL.**"

Let's be honest, male have a different hormones... you know what I mean.

Webster defines courtship - "to seek the affections of; especially : to seek to win a pledge of marriage from"

Such a high standard the "world" defines courtship; **should we not have a higher standard than the world?**

This calls for maturity, strength in God & patience, it is best that you hear from God who is the life partner (if He have one) He prepared for you. This will spare anyone from emotional rollercoaster of hurts & pains; ups & downs.

I would suggest that any B&G relationship should be committed to God in words, heart, soul & spirit. Meaning, speak it out before God committing that relationship to Him.

If I may put it this way "Submit to God, resist the devil (temptation), then, it will flee."

How I wish I was a mature & strong Christian before I went to B&G relationship:oops:. It's too late now, I am married :-).

In Christ,
Roman

Re: - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2005/6/28 6:44

Quote:

My opinion in the above view is this, "Yes, there is nothing wrong in simple kissing, holding hands, hugging and even watching movies together (what happens in the cinema is another thing) BUT WHY PUT YOURSELF IN A PLACE WHERE YOU COULD FALL."

Harris brings this up too. It's something to seriously consider. However, I believe if both the guy and girl are truly committed Christians, who have purposed in their own hearts not to defile themselves, then it's not really an issue. Such was the case of Christ when the Holy Spirit drove Him into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.

In the case of my girlfriend and I, we are both deeply committed Christians who strive as ministers of the gospel to live a life above reproach in the sight of God and man. We both know that even should the other one decide they want to give into temptation and take things further than hugs & kisses, then the other person would very likely stop the advance. The Holy Spirit has spoken to us both on what is acceptable and not acceptable in our relationship. We love God and each other enough to know that things such as sex would only hurt the relationship we are in, not help it.

Quote:

This calls for maturity, strength in God & patience, it is best that you hear from God who is the life partner (if He have one) He prepared for you. This will spare anyone from emotional rollercoaster of hurts & pains; ups & downs.

Indeed. My girlfriend and I both diligently sought the face of God concerning each other when she had a crush on me, and I on her. It was only after having prayed for a month or so before I finally asked her out, and even then it was only as friends until after another month of prayer, we decided to become a couple. The intent behind the entire relationship has been to look into the possibility of marriage one day, something that looks like it very well may happen. We both believe that we are in this relationship together by the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Re:, on: 2005/6/28 10:14

Does someone have an issue with keeping yourself pure? I wish I had, but I didn't know the Lord before I was married. Why see how far to the edge of the cliff we can walk? Or how close to the fire we can get before getting burned?

I hate to use the "slippery slope" cliché here... but that's exactly what physical contact is between dating couples. Where do you draw the line?

Dating is an American phenomenon anyway... we try on different people like we try on shoes. I'm all for courtship, with lots of chaperones. I don't have a daughter, but if I did you can bet she wouldn't be going out with a different guy every weekend, and she sure wouldn't be left alone with anyone.

I have 4 boys... and it will be the same way for them. If they want to do differently, then once they move out of my house they are free to do as they will.

Krispy

Re: - posted by Welch, on: 2005/6/28 14:33

Highschool is a hard time for most... I personally don't think there's anything wrong with asking a pretty young Christian Female to go to the prom with you and have no intention to marry her but still try to kiss her. Sorry, but God gave us feelings and emotions for a reason. I'm 20 and married a year in August. There have been some struggles but my wife and I were both Virgins and I honestly didn't fall in love with her overnight. I dated her, well to be honest... just to date. We were engaged and again just to be honest while we were engaged I didn't think of our wedding night and wonder how nice the flowers would be at where we stay... NO! I was thinking about what usually happens on Wedding nights. This was who I was engaged to though so was I in the wrong? I don't believe so... had I allowed that to control me to the point of trying to make that happen before it would have been honored by God than yes it would be evil. Again, a life that is God honoring will survive the troubles of youth, adulthood, senior years... any troubles that a child of God goes through, He will be their strength and comfort. Remember, God has a sense of humor and he laughs with us when we remember the times we got that date to pizza hut and the local theatre turned down in our faces :lol: God bless you all! Have fun with this topic! I love you all.

Re: - posted by ginnyrose (), on: 2005/9/13 4:06

Preacher,

I have been thinking about your question: courtship vs dating. A lot has been written on this, or maybe it hasn't. Josh Harris wrote the book "Why I Kissed Dating Good-bye" which is a wonderful book, IMHO.

One time we had a visiting minister tell us how a young man wanted a wife and told him so, asking the minister's assistance in finding one for him. He went into detail how this was done. And it worked! Personally, I love this idea: asking a trust minister - one that gets around a lot - for assistance. He meets a lot of people and he could be on the alert for someone suitable. Much prayer must go into this in order for it to be successful. I must say this couple did meet to become acquainted and decided they were suitable for each other. This minister has matched a number of couples and they married.

Preach, I am going to post a testimony - Finding a Wife for Matthew - on a separate thread of how the LORD found a wife for our SIL. It is a testimony of the goodness of God. I trust others will be blessed like we were.

God bless you, young man. He is interested in you and will not leave you dangling. Trust Him.

ginnyrose

Re: - posted by lyndon, on: 2005/9/18 14:33

I've just been reading through the thread and thought I'd add a little to it.

I'm surprised how many people don't 'see' anything wrong with kissing someone who isn't or won't be your wife. In another thread an older brother posted the question "who's wife were you just holding hands with?" and that's a very valid question. I think that the excuse 'we all have emotions and feelings' is a little shaky ground to stand on when it's another's feelings and purity that we are to consider.

Parsley quoted a verse from Timothy at the beginning of the thread on treating younger women as sisters, if we were to truly apply this verse to courtships I wonder how differently we would do things?

To be honest, my views on this have changed over the past few years, I used to see nothing wrong with a hug or a kiss here and there, but as you come to see how little things creep in and hinder your walk with the Lord.....

King Jimmy I'm glad that you and your girlfriend are walking in the Lord in your relationship, keep putting him first in all things.

One thing that kept crossing my mind when reading the thread was a quote by Winkie Pratney "Once a fuse is lit its only a matter of time".

Lyndon

Re: - posted by PaulWiglaf, on: 2005/9/18 16:28

Just a question: Why would a God whose character is one of fidelity and stability support such fickle and transitory pleasures like dating? It is in this mode of thought that causes me to question Christian backing of something that supports just enlightenment of the senses with little commitment.

Ex: Johny likes Jane, Johny dates Jane, Johny kisses Jane, Johny meets Susanne, Johny dumps Jane.

This cycle sounds like a step down from "preferring one another in honor" (Rom. 12:10) to satisfying, not mortifying, the "inordinate affections" (excessive lusts) mentioned in Colossians 3:5. What would be excessive about them? The mere fact that feelings are placed in higher estate to companionship and commitment.

Also, it sounds more like pleasure without responsibility. Yet, I know that they say they make sure they won't have sex or anything like that, but isn't that like saying, "I won't enter an inferno, so I'll just play with matches"?

Ultimately, though, we should be displayers of the divine nature, as well as partakers thereof. It strikes me that it is culture, not scripture, that obsesses over that exhilarating first kiss, and constantly uses two people consuming each others to ensue to symbolize love. Yet, like in grammar, they misplace this modifier. As sensual ecstasy is not the summation of any relationship (or ought not be), it should be placed secondary to fellowship (spending time with that person/ building up an understanding and enjoyment of their character and personality), as it fades and is only there as an added, temporary blessing.

Also, would we condone men making out with their mothers or sisters? If one would, I'd question their comprehension of Paul's exhortation to Timothy and the soundness of their conscience. Likewise, I think it best that we hold a high standard in order to sustain "all purity" (1 Tim. 5:2) and respect not only with our fellow sisters, but with those that are without. For, if the church is as "an open door" (Song of Sol. 8:9), who will be there to stand against the flood of sensuality?

Re: - posted by PaulWiglaf, on: 2005/9/18 16:30

Just a question: Why would a God whose character is one of fidelity and stability support such fickle and transitory pleasures like dating? It is in this mode of thought that causes me to question Christian backing of something that supports just enlightenment of the senses with little commitment.

Ex: Johny likes Jane, Johny dates Jane, Johny kisses Jane, Johny meets Susanne, Johny dumps Jane.

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Re: - posted by PreachParsly (), on: 2005/9/19 8:57

I'm just curious about everyone who has posted in this thread. How old are you? Are you single? Courting/Dating anyone? I'm 21. Single and no. I'm just wondering from what background the your line of thought is coming from.

Re: - posted by lyndon, on: 2005/9/19 10:36

Hi Josh

I'm 21. Single, and currently involved in a courtship.

Lyndon

Re: - posted by PreachParsly (), on: 2005/9/19 15:10

I ran across this article and thought it was awesome. (<http://www.gospeljohn.com/dating.htm>) A Christian Testimony of Dating and Marriage

Re: - posted by PaulWiglaf, on: 2005/9/19 23:43

Well, I'm 16 and single. If anything, I'd be quick to admit that my father's infidelity to my mother (and subsequently us) taught me to cherish the precious treasure of relationships, esp. between husband and wife (Well, that it is something fragile and needed to be protected with the utmost of prayer and care). So, experience and the Word have been twin engines in my hard stance toward dating, as well as watching the torture of other friends in their pursuit of pleasure through temporal romance on the school scene.

Re: - posted by lyndon, on: 2005/9/20 0:07

Quote:

-----I ran across this article and thought it was awesome. A Christian Testimony of Dating and Marriage

I second that opinion, a few minor points that I didn't quite agree with, but overall an awesome testimony of trusting God to bring to people together.

Re: Dating - posted by Gery, on: 2005/9/21 18:44

Dear Brethren,

Can you trust God with your soul's salvation, but not with showing you your husband/wife? Do any of you believe that God can lead you to the right person? Why must you test and try and evaluate? Is not God able? Or have you not yet allowed Him so far into your life?

In Him,
Gery

Re:, on: 2005/9/23 7:55

Quote:

-----Can you trust God with your soul's salvation, but not with showing you your husband/wife? Do any of you believe that God can lead you to the right person? Why must you test and try and evaluate? Is not God able? Or have you not yet allowed Him so far into your life?

I personally believe that God leads you to the person that He knows would be most suitable for you. That is not to say that there is only one person for each of us. I think God gives us a choice providing that you choose someone who you know loves God and is definitely grounded and going in the right direction. I believe that dating is OK unless you know for sure that you are not going to marry the person and I think you have to be pretty serious about someone before you start dating them but I don't know how you find out if someone is right for you unless you get to know them properly by dating. I also think that if you stuff things up with someone who might have been a very good match for you then you haven't

t missed your chance and that God can find you someone else who might be equally suitable. I think Ron said something in another post some time ago about a clay pot going wrong in the making and God chucks it away and starts again with a totally new thing and that if things in your life mess up then God starts again and makes something new and He can do that with relationships in your life. I just think that God lets you choose as long as you respect His boundaries. Anyway I am going off on a tangent now. I might be totally off the wall theologically or whatever and sorry Ron if I quoted you wrong as I don't remember. I don't really know for definite but that is how I think about the whole dating/marrying/is there one perfect partner thing. So yes, in short, I believe that God does lead you to your partner when you trust Him and put yourself in His hands but I am not sure that there is only ever one possibility of partner for each of us and that you need to perhaps date to find out if they are the one that God wants you to marry.

Liz :-)

Re: - posted by followinghim, on: 2006/2/22 7:10

how are single yet in a courtship?