

Relationships Week Two: Dating Relationships



Name _____

Part One: So Many Options

We are free to make wise and Godly choices about who we date.

2 Corinthians 6:11-16 (NIV) We have spoken freely to you, Corinthians; our heart is wide open. You are not restricted by us, but you are restricted in your own affections. In return (I speak as to children) widen your hearts also.

Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers. For what partnership has righteousness with lawlessness? Or what fellowship has light with darkness? What accord has Christ with Belial? Or what portion does a believer share with an unbeliever? What agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God;

2 Corinthians 6:11-13 (Message) Dear, dear Corinthians, I can't tell you how much I long for you to enter this wide-open, spacious life. We didn't fence you in. The smallness you feel comes from within you. Your lives aren't small, but you're living them in a small way. I'm speaking as plainly as I can and with great affection. Open up your lives. Live openly and expansively!

There is no real biblical grounds for any certain type of dating style to be accepted as the "right way" or orthodoxy.

According to several post covid studies, 16 to 29 year olds are experiencing reoccurring bouts of loneliness and higher than average debilitating anxiety.

According to *Pew Research*, 12% of married couples in America found their spouse through online dating. While this percentage is not large, online dating has grown in recent years. People can now easily browse and find compatible relationship matches with only a few clicks or swipes.

Online dating apps flood us with more potential options than ever before in history leaving us with the need for a stronger and more intentional process for vetting potential candidates.

Questions:

1. Take a few minutes and talk at your tables about the current landscape of dating in our culture. Do not give advice to each other or try and correct anyone's experience. Just listen to each other.
2. Who do you have in your life currently that has been given the right to speak into this area of your life and what emotions come up in you when you think about giving someone this kind of access into your personal life?

Part Two: The Purpose of Dating

We need to understand the why behind the vehicle of dating.

The median age for someone's first marriage rose in America to 29.5 for men and 27.5 for women.

Chaos, confusion, and calamity arises when we try and use an object or instrument outside of its created purpose. Examples: The shuttle between airline terminals or Driving long distance on a spare tire.

The purpose of dating is to try and transition two friends toward the destination of marriage.

We need a process to follow to keep things in the right order in our lives.

1. Friendship – Build the relationship
2. Faith – Get on the same page
3. Flesh – Learn how to properly express affection, not engage in sex. (Oxytocin and Dopamine)
4. Family – Two people becoming one and starting a new family.

Part Three: The Nature of Dating

We are called by God to be a distinct and set apart people.

2 Corinthians 6:14-18 (NIV) ¹⁴ Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness? ¹⁵ What harmony is there between Christ and Belial? Or what does a believer have in common with an unbeliever? ¹⁶ What agreement is there between the temple of God and idols? For we are the temple of the living God.

As God has said:

“I will live with them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they will be my people.”¹⁷ Therefore, “Come out from them and be separate, says the Lord. Touch no unclean thing, and I will receive you.”

¹⁸ And, “I will be a Father to you, and you will be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty.”

Deuteronomy 22:10 (NIV), “Thou shalt not plow with an ox and a donkey together.”

2 Corinthians 5:17 (NIV) Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.

We must match first love to first love in our pursuit to find someone to share our lives. Is Jesus a Yay or a Yawn with that person?

Why do we have so many troubles in dating?

For most of us, it boils down to a lack of trust that God will provide someone suitable for us.

Genesis 24:2-8 (NIV) One day Abraham said to his oldest servant, the man in charge of his household, "Take an oath by putting your hand under my thigh. Swear by the Lord, the God of heaven and earth, that you **will not allow** my son to marry one of these local Canaanite women. Go instead to my homeland, to my relatives, and find a wife there for my son Isaac." The servant asked, "But **what if I can't find a young woman who is willing** to travel so far from home? Should I then take Isaac there to live among your relatives in the land you came from?" "No!" Abraham responded. "Be careful **never to take my son there**. For the Lord, the God of heaven, who took me from my father's house and my native land, **solemnly promised** to give this land to my descendants. He will send his angel **ahead of you**, and he will see to it that you find a wife there for my son. If she is unwilling to come back with you, then you are free from this oath of mine. **But under no circumstances** are you to take my son there."

How can we trust God?

Jesus never married while he walked on earth so that He could prepare a place for us to be his bride. This places us securely in His marriage so we can now risk dating and marriage with others.

Part Four: Questions and Answers