



## Love, Dates & Heartbreaks: Groundhog Date

Nobody wants to make choices that undermine their relational success. And success is usually the result of preparation— not the product of good intentions. This is why it's so important to get serious about becoming the kind of person the person we're looking for is looking for, rather than simply hoping that once we find "the right person," everything will work out. But to do so, we'll have to examine the fine print of what Jesus asks of his followers in relationships. Because if you don't want a relationship like the majority of relationships, you can't date like the majority of daters. You'll have to date in a different direction.

### Start Talking

1. In a groundhog date scenario where you (for some reason) find yourself stuck in a time loop, would you rather relieve the nervous tension of a first date over and over, or the more comfortable, but potentially less exciting date of an established relationship? Why?
2. What's the best venue and activity for a first date? Why?

### Looking Back

1. Last week, we talked about how fear of risk and rejection dominate much of our relational behavior, causing us to communicate without clarity or engage in relational power struggles to purvey the impression that we "care the least." What did you do this past week to avoid letting fear take the driver's seat? How did it work?
2. Which of your relational 'muscles,' need to get in shape? The courage muscle? Self-control? Honor? Planning and Prepping? What did you do to exercise it last week?
3. Andy asked us to identify any areas in which we might be mistreating someone, even if they were unaware of it. Were you able to identify any such situations in your own life? How did you make them right?



## What About You?

1. Have you been influenced by any of these lethal assumptions?
  - Once I find the right person, everything will be all right.
  - My situation is unique.
  - It may not be right, but it makes me happy, and God wants me to be happy.
  - Since I know better, I'll do better.
2. What's your initial reaction to the notion that "time is your friend" when it comes to relationships?
3. If you were able to watch a super cut of all your past relationships, what mistakes would you be able to identify yourself making over and over again?
4. What's your biggest reservation about taking a year off from dating?

## Look It Up

*Read the Following Passages: John 15:12, Romans 12: 1-2.*

1. Paul urges us to avoid conforming to the patterns of the world, but instead to treat our lives as sacrifices. When it comes to dating, how would you describe, "the pattern of this world?"
2. What do you think Paul means by, "the renewing of our minds?" What are the signs that our minds have been, "renewed?"
3. What all implications do you read into the fact that Paul urges believers to offer not just themselves, but their bodies as living sacrifices?
4. What things do you think tend to get in the way of a true "renewal of the mind?"
5. "Living sacrifice" is an ornate, poetic phrase. What does it mean to you?

## Putting It All Together

1. How would your relationship look different if you were to take Paul's statement about being a "living sacrifice" seriously? What would have to change?
2. What are three things you can do this week to move in that direction?
3. Where do you find yourself "conforming to the pattern of the world" in relationships? How can you break these habits?
4. What beliefs about dating and relationships of yours need to be renewed? How can you start that process?

