



Discipleship Guide

Sermon: Dating with Purpose | Built Different

Speaker: Pastor JohnEric + Anais Zayas

Date: November 16, 2025

Key Scripture

2 Corinthians 6:14 – "Do not be yoked together with unbelievers, for what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness?"

Key Takeaway

1. Dating Should Be Intentional and Purpose-Driven

- Dating must be an intentional pursuit with the end goal being marriage
- Dating is not meant to fill a void or cure loneliness
- Our relationships should be built on the foundation of Jesus Christ

2. Know Your Values Before Dating

The six categories of values to discuss:

1. Family and Friends - Are you family-oriented? What about future children?
2. Work and School - Career aspirations, work ethic, education goals
3. Health - Physical, emotional, and mental health

4. Relationships - What does commitment look like?
5. Faith - Your relationship with Jesus and spiritual values
6. Leisure Time - Hobbies, passions, how you relax

3. Communication Must Be God-Honoring

- Be truthful, even when it's difficult
- Use the HALT principle before making major decisions:
 - Hungry
 - Angry
 - Lonely
 - Tired
- Honor God in how you treat others, including breakups

4. The Myth of "Fully Healed"

- Everyone has baggage; we're all works in progress
- Healing is ongoing; perfection isn't the standard
- We are "blessings wrapped in baggage"
- Jesus makes us new, even with our past

Discussion Questions

Opening Questions:

1. What stood out to you most from today's sermon? Why?
2. How has dating culture changed from previous generations to now? What challenges do you see?

Going Deeper:

3. On Intentionality:

- Why is it important to date with marriage as the goal rather than just "seeing where things go"?
- How can dating to fill loneliness lead to poor decisions?

4. On Values:

- Of the six value categories mentioned (family/friends, work/school, health, relationships, faith, leisure), which three are most important to you? Why?
- Why is it crucial to discuss values early in a relationship rather than after commitment?

5. On Communication:

- Discuss the statement: "A hard truth is better than a well-intended lie." Why is honesty so important in dating?
- Share a time when someone's honesty (or lack of it) significantly impacted a relationship.

6. On the HALT Principle:

- Have you ever made a decision while Hungry, Angry, Lonely, or Tired? What happened?
- How can pausing and praying before major decisions change outcomes?

7. On Being "Fully Healed":

- Why is expecting someone to be "fully healed" unrealistic?
- How does understanding that we're all "blessings wrapped in baggage" change how we view potential partners?
- What's the difference between having baggage and refusing to work on your healing?

8. On Faith Foundation:

- Why is being "equally yoked" (2 Corinthians 6:14) so important in dating?

- What does it practically look like to date someone who shares your faith values versus someone who doesn't?
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Personal Reflection Questions (10 minutes)

Spend some quiet time in reflection/journaling about these questions:

1. If you're single: What internal work do you need to do before entering a relationship? What values are non-negotiable for you?
 2. If you're dating: Are your values aligned with your partner's? Is your relationship honoring God in how you communicate and treat each other?
 3. If you're married: How can you continue to honor God in your marriage? What values need to be reinforced?
 4. For everyone: In what area of relationships (dating, friendships, family) do you need to be more truthful?
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Practical Applications

This Week's Challenge:

Choose one action to implement this week:

For Singles:

- ☐ Write out your top 3 values and what they mean to you
- ☐ Identify one area of healing you need to work on (consider counseling, mentorship, or accountability)
- ☐ If you're dating someone, have an honest conversation about intentions and values

For Those in Relationships:

- ☐ Schedule a "values check-in" conversation with your partner

- [] Identify if you're making any decisions from a HALT position and pause
- [] Practice God-honoring communication in one difficult conversation this week

For Everyone:

- [] Pray for those who were baptized today and their journey
 - [] Find an accountability partner to discuss relationship decisions with
 - [] Study what the Bible says about relationships (start with Ephesians 5:21-33)
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Group Prayer (10 minutes)

Prayer Points:

- Pray for those who were baptized today and their new journey with Christ
 - Pray for singles seeking godly relationships
 - Pray for those in dating relationships to honor God
 - Pray for healing from past relationship wounds
 - Pray for wisdom in all relationships (romantic, family, friendships)
 - Pray for the courage to have honest, God-honoring conversations
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Additional Resources

Recommended Reading:

- "Boundaries in Dating" by Dr. Henry Cloud and Dr. John Townsend
- "The Meaning of Marriage" by Timothy Keller
- "Single, Dating, Engaged, Married" by Ben Stuart

Scripture for Further Study:

- 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 (Love is patient...)
- Proverbs 4:23 (Guard your heart)
- Ephesians 5:21-33 (Marriage and Christ)
- James 1:2-5 (Testing produces perseverance)

5-Day Devotionals

Day 1: Dancing on Your Past

Reading: James 1:2-5; 2 Corinthians 5:17

Devotional:

"The grave that you're dancing on is the past that you've left." What a powerful image of resurrection life! When you accepted Christ, you became a new creation—the old has gone, the new has come. But trials will test whether you'll return to that grave or keep dancing in freedom. James reminds us that testing produces perseverance, which completes God's work in you. Today, recognize that you're not who you were. The enemy wants you to revisit your past, but you have the power through Christ to keep moving forward. When temptation whispers, "return to what's familiar," remember: He that is in you is greater. Your identity is no longer rooted in past mistakes but in who Jesus says you are. Dance on that grave—you're free!

Day 2: The Foundation of Relationship

Reading: 2 Corinthians 6:14-18; Matthew 7:24-27

Devotional:

"Do not be yoked together with unbelievers." This isn't about judgment—it's about foundation. Every relationship in your life, especially romantic ones, must be built on the solid rock of Jesus Christ. When you share core values rooted in faith, you build something that can withstand life's storms. But when attraction, loneliness, or convenience become your foundation, the relationship crumbles under pressure. Before pursuing anyone, ask yourself: Are we both pursuing Jesus? Do our values align? Is this person helping me grow closer to God or pulling me away? Dating should be an intentional pursuit toward marriage with someone who shares your commitment to Christ. Don't settle for companionship that compromises your calling. Build on the Rock, and your relationship will stand.

Day 3: H.A.L.T. Before You Fall

Reading: Proverbs 3:5-6; Psalm 46:10

Devotional:

Never make life-changing decisions when you're Hungry, Angry, Lonely, or Tired. Our flesh wants immediate relief from discomfort, but God calls us to pause and seek His wisdom. When you're exhausted from being single, you might settle for someone who isn't God's best. When you're lonely, you might stay in a relationship that dishonors God. When you're angry about past hurt, you might wound others. The Proverbs remind us to trust God with all our heart and not lean on our own understanding. Before you say "yes" to that relationship, that move, that major decision—HALT. Go before the Lord. Ask: "Father, will You be pleased with this choice?" Let Him lead your decision-making, not your desperation. God's timing is perfect, and His plans are always better than our impulsive reactions.

Day 4: The Myth of Fully Healed

Reading: Philippians 1:6; Romans 8:1

Devotional:

We're all "blessings wrapped in baggage." No one comes to a relationship fully healed—healing is ongoing. The myth that someone must be perfect before they're worthy of love contradicts the gospel itself. God didn't wait until you were fully healed to love you; He loved you while you were still a sinner. The truth is, we all carry past wounds, triggers, and patterns. What matters is whether you're actively pursuing healing through Christ. Are you in community? Do you have accountability? Are you honest about your struggles? When dating, don't demand perfection—look for someone committed to growth. Philippians 1:6 promises that "He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion." You're a work in progress, and so is your potential spouse. Extend grace. Choose someone who's on the healing journey with Jesus.

Day 5: Every Decision, God-Honoring

Reading: Colossians 3:17; 1 Corinthians 10:31

Devotional:

"Whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus." This includes how you date, how you break up, and how you treat your ex. Every interaction should reflect your relationship with God. You can't claim to love Jesus while tearing down someone made in His image. When a relationship isn't working, honor God by telling the truth with compassion. Don't string someone along because you fear loneliness. Don't cheat because you're afraid to have the hard conversation. A hard truth spoken in love is better than a well-intended lie. Even in ending relationships, you represent Christ. Ask yourself: Will God be pleased with how I'm treating this person? Your witness isn't just in church—it's in how you love, how you leave, and how you live. Be "built different". Honor God in everything.

Reflection Questions for the Week:

- What "graves" from your past are you still tempted to revisit?
- Are your current relationships built on the foundation of Christ?
- What values are non-negotiable for you in a future spouse?
- Have you been making decisions from a place of H.A.L.T.?
- How can you honor God better in your relationships today?