

Southside Baptist Church
Do Parents Have a Choice?
Courtship vs Dating Study Session 3
VBS Parents Survival Kit – 7-19-22

1. Some background for this study:
 - a. This study was born out of our hearts desire that our children walk with the Lord even during a time when I was witnessing an unusual number of Christian teens turning away from their faith.
 - b. Relationship building with the opposite sex – season of parenting.
 - 1) What do you do when you don't know what to do?
 - 2) My first stop – what I knew by experience.
 - c. Lots of questions came up now as a parent.
 - 1) Dating, what is it? When did it start? What is its focus? Who sets the rules? Etc.
 - d. What are the major influences that shape dating?
 - 1) What do you see?
 - 2) A plan is much more important than the name.
2. Goal of this session – Discover and Alternative.
 - a. “Courtship” is not a biblical term.
 - 1) Courtship isn't but “Betrothal” is –
 - a) Both refer to a process of moving toward marriage that respects certain fundamental values, including parental authority and protection, moral purity, exclusivity of affection, and a God-centered understanding of marriage.
 - 2) What triggers this desire?
 - b. Adolescence:
 - 1) Because our bodies do change, it is possible for the urges of our bodies to get ahead of our minds. It is even possible for our urges to take command of our wills and to lead our wills.
 - 2) Is it possible to be prepared ahead of time?
 - 3) Important conversations here include - biblical view of sexuality, identity that speaks to men and women as well as their worth and value, relationships and how to build them, choices related to purity and relationships, etc.
3. Cultural tendencies that are concerning with dating: So often...
 - a. Dating tends to deny parental oversight and counsel. Founded on the autonomy of the child.
 - 1) The child takes authority to himself that really belongs to the parents.
 - 2) Dad, did you know? “headship” comes from the word, chaperone
 - 3) Genesis 2:23 –
 - a) This presupposes that the man, prior to his marriage, was with his father and mother.
 - 4) Genesi 2:24 –
 - a) “Therefore” indicates “not until”
 - 5) There is a principle involved here:
 - a) When they leave that they are ready.

- 6) If our children are to heed our counsel, then it makes sense that we be ready to give that counsel.
 - a) Proverbs 1:8-9 –
- b. Dating tends to promote and turns toward sexual impurity:
 - 1) Intimacy for the sake of intimacy?
 - 2) God created intimacy to be enjoyed only by a man and woman who have made a commitment, a vow, a covenant to give themselves to each other.
 - 3) Wisdom from Song of Solomon 2:7 –
- c. Dating tends to promote the wrong concept of commitment.
 - 1) Dating can be the practice of serial relationships.
 - 2) Would that have any impact on a marriage?
 - 3) Courtship helps to guard against this view of commitment.
- d. Dating tends to teach the practice of breaking up rather than staying together.
 - 1) They say that practice makes permanent.
 - 2) Is this a practice of short-term involvement and then break up?
- e. Some other concerns I have witnessed from dating is:
 - 1) Dating has a tendency to create isolation not participation –
 - 2) Dating often hinders spiritual growth –
- 4. Bring it together to move forward:
 - a. The question whether parents really have a choice?
 - 1) Every parent has to figure out a way to navigate the building of relationship of their kids with others, especially of the opposite sex.
 - 2) This decision is really based not on what you think today but about what you want to see ahead.
 - b. What do you value dad?
- 5. Where do you start?
 - a. What is your heart's desire for your kids?
 - 1) This question is what provoked me to take some time to think this through.
 - b. What is the goal?
 - 1) A process of moving toward marriage that respects certain fundamental values, including parental authority and protection, moral purity, exclusivity of affection, and a God-centered understanding of marriage.
- 6. Developing the Process:
 - a. Family is the key:
 - 1) Our desire was to craft a process that revolved around and included as much family centered time as possible thus limiting as much as possible the one-on-one time spent early on.
 - b. Timing is important:
 - 1) Need to answer the question of when!

- c. Why wait until 16?
 - d. Some blessing from this journey:
7. Take Away:
- a. There are some moving parts of this and some strategies that you will learn as you walk through creating a vision and mission for your family.
 - b. Recognize that this process, while it may have some similarities with others, this is your plan and strategy to help prepare your sons and daughters for marriage.
 - c. Remember as you think about this – how far can vision reach? How far can your wisdom and influence reach?