

DATING - Some Things to Consider

What is genuine "love" like? - 1 Corinthians 13

a. What is genuine love like? (This passage applies to love in *any* relationship, but in this study, our focus is on its application to the marriage relationship.) _____

b. What are some of the ways that 1 Corinthians 13 would apply in dating and marriage?

Genuine love ("commitment love"), contrasted with...

a. LUST

- Based on your understanding of love (1 Corinthians 13), how are *love* and *lust* different?

- Which results in joy and companionship? Which results in loneliness and loss? Why?

- Which builds-up the other person? Which tears him/her down? Why?

b. EMOTIONAL LOVE and INFATUATION

- What is the difference between commitment love and emotional love?

What type of woman should a man desire for a wife?

The world stresses physical appearance, and often encourages men to evaluate women based on the appearance of their bodies. The world also encourages women to *use* their bodies to attract and influence men. The Bible gives a totally different perspective.

- a. What kind of woman is described in Proverbs 31:10-31? _____

- b. Other passages in the book of Proverbs describe a totally different kind of woman - one who is sexually immoral. Two of the passages are Proverbs 2:16-19 (which shows how wisdom can protect a man from such a woman) and Proverbs 6:20-35. How does the Bible contrast such a woman's lifestyle with the woman of Proverbs 31? _____

- c. Some men make physical appearance their primary concern, when looking for a wife. What does the Bible say should be an *even greater* concern? (Reflect on what Proverbs 31:10-31 tells us, as well as what we read in 1 Peter 3:2-3, and any other related passages you may have found.) _____

- d. What should a woman's greatest priority be - enhancing her physical appearance, or what? _____

What does the Bible say about DATING?

Look up the word "dating" in the Bible. Can you find it?

Though the Bible might not speak directly about the modern concept of dating, there are many related issues that the Bible *does* speak directly about.

Describe what the Bible says about...

- Purity
- Lust

- The seriousness of marriage
- The proper attitude about sex and sexuality
- "Flirting" with sin
- The contrast between "love" and "lust"
- The contrast between "the quest for self-gratification," and "building-up the other person"

Dating is not the only option! In fact, the concept of "dating" that many people practice (filled with lust and self-gratification) isn't *ever* a legitimate option for *anybody*!

- So what else can you do to get to know someone who could someday be a potential spouse? (Think of some ideas!)

If you do date...

- Think about the values which are reflected by the choices of what you do on your date. Most modern dating accomplishes the *opposite* of what it is "supposed" to do. Even when there is no sinful conduct, it is often so different from "real life," that it *doesn't* provide an opportunity for a person to really learn what the other person is like. (Example: "Real life" isn't defined by entertainment, by constantly doing things that cost a lot of money, or by many of the other types of activities that characterize a typical date. Life is not all "fun and games.")
- What role does God have in your dating? (For a follower of Jesus, there is *no* aspect of life in which God can be ignored. God will impact *all* that you do.)

What should a husband be like? What should a wife be like?

(Things to consider when looking for a spouse.)

Characteristics that husbands and wives should have

The following verses show us not only what we should look for in *someone else*, but they teach us what *our own* attitudes and actions should be. *Both* husband and wife need to follow God's standards, if they want a marriage that has the maximum satisfaction and fulfillment. If the relationship is "one-sided" - if only one of the spouses follows God's ways - there will be much less harmony in the marriage.

- List some of the character traits and attitudes described in the following verses, which show the responsibilities of husband and wife to each other.

Husbands	Wives
Colossians 3:19	Colossians 3:18
Ephesians 5:25-33	Ephesians 5:22-24, 33
1 Peter 3:7	1 Peter 3:1-6 (especially if the husband is not a follower of Jesus)

Note that, in the above instructions, the requirements for the husband and the wife are *different*. Other passages mention character qualities and obligations that apply equally to *both* husband and wife, as they interact with God, with other people (including themselves), with the world, etc. (Example: *Both* must have a loyalty to Christ that is greater than any loyalty they have to each other - Luke 14:26; Matthew 19:29.)

- What are some of the character qualities mentioned in the Bible, that apply *equally* to husband and wife? (Since this would include most of the commands and statements that instruct us in how to live, focus on passages that have a strong impact on the way the husband and wife would interact with each other, with their immediate family, and with God.)

A look at Genesis 3:16

Genesis 3:16 gives us the foundational description of the relationship that will be present between husband and wife, because of the *nature* of male and female. This passage is not given as a *command*, but simply as a *description* of reality. When each spouse does his part (obeying the instructions examined in the previous section), this relationship will be harmonious and beneficial for both. If they *don't* follow the instructions found in the above verses, there will be ongoing hostility, manipulation, abuse and pain.

- How does God describe the nature of this relationship, in Genesis 3:16?

- Examine the following two scenarios. In one, the instructions given in the previous section are obeyed; in the other, they aren't. Contrast the effects that these two attitudes will have on the way that husband and wife interact with each other. (For each scenario, write down some of the consequences that will occur.)

Situation 1 - Each partner focuses on himself and his own interests, wants and needs. (The needs of the other are neglected, ignored, or even "sacrificed" - in an attempt to get one's own needs and desired met.)

