

# The Dating Game

2/12/05 - Outline and Notes (accompaniment to the audio teaching)

Being single can be difficult. Being unhappily married is more difficult.

Having a Godly, loving spouse is the greatest blessing we can have in this life, after Christ. Godly marriage should therefore be the goal of dating.

*Gen 29: 20 – “Jacob served seven years to get Rachel, but they seemed like only a few days to him because of his love for her.”*

## What is dating?

Spending time alone with someone, based on a mutual attraction.

## Reasons for dating...

### ⌚ Bad:

- Need company
- Want to be with someone you're attracted to
- Want to do/have nice things
- Want to have a good time
- Want a physical relationship without commitment

### ⌚ Good:

- Spend time with someone to find out if they are your lifetime mate.
- See if there's a spiritual connection (a “spark”)

## Marriage is the goal

Marriage is a lifelong commitment between a man and a woman based on love, and is the foundation of a happy, strong, stable, secure family, which in turn is the basis of a stable society, which is God's design for successful human living. This is God's intention.

## Bad reasons for getting married

Money

Looks

Social position

Co-dependencies

Worst reason: because we've been going together for so long

## Soul Ties

- ⌚ Emotional connections that are based on needs, fears or insecurities.
- ⌚ We can get emotionally connected to a person that we don't really love, because they meet some compelling, usually unhealthy need in our life (eg: fear of being alone; no one else would love me).

## Good reason for getting married

- ⌚ True love; true love is a spiritual connection; true love has a “spark”

### **What is true love?**

- ⌚ It's what all the songs, movies, TV shows, etc. are all about.
- ⌚ It's the deepest need of every human being
- ⌚ "You know when you know..."
- ⌚ It's something deep down that connects you to someone in a way that transcends looks, money, interests, and everything on the outside that people consider when judging whether or not a couple is "right."
- ⌚ A commitment you want to make based on a desire to be responsible for another person's long term well being.
- ⌚ It's an "unction" from God – a lifelong ministry to the other person that God puts in your heart.

### **Becoming One**

If the purpose of dating is marriage, the purpose of marriage is "oneness."

*Gen 2: 24 – Therefore a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh.*

A marriage is only strong when the couple is committed to becoming one. This is an ongoing, lifelong process. The key to becoming one is being completely open – and being completely open requires vulnerability, and this is dangerous. Therefore, trust is essential.

### **What does this have to do with dating?**

In dating we are touching the deepest, most important dreams, needs and desires of the other party, and putting our own on the line, too. Therefore in dating we must have the utmost sensitivity to the other person's (and our own) vulnerability, and conduct ourselves accordingly.

### **The Dating Game (TV version)**

#### **Typical Dating**

- ⌚ People get together for a while, then they breakup and someone gets hurt. This produces "baggage."
- ⌚ Baggage: bringing resentment, anger, remorse, disappointment, damaged esteem, guilt, or growing callousness into the future.
- ⌚ The more baggage we create, the less likely we are to have successful relationships in the future.
- ⌚ This is why dating is sometimes discouraged: because of these negative affects.

#### **Successful Dating**

It's about being responsible...

- ⌚ Start with the right goal: "I want to be married, not just have a good time."
- ⌚ Humility: "not thinking less of yourself, but thinking of yourself less." Have the other person's best interests at heart. Be aware of their needs, more so than your own.

- ⌚ Honesty: “be a first rate version of yourself, and not a second rate imitation of someone else.” Be especially honest about how you feel about the relationship as you continue dating. If you don’t see the relationship heading to marriage, it’s time to end it.
- ⌚ Holiness: Never be suggestive, or manipulative (vain compliments). Conduct each date as if before God (because it is).
- ⌚ Look for the right things: communication, caring, and “the spark.” Remember that a spark is not a physical attraction or emotional reaction, but a desire for the other person’s best -- even if it means giving them up.
- ⌚ Remember the risks: you are opening up your heart, and expecting the other party to open theirs (the human “holy of holies”).
- ⌚ Know the risks: be prepared up front to be disappointed if it doesn’t work out. If you accept this up front you won’t be resentful (or guilty) later.

### **The Dating Guide**

- ⌚ Assume responsibility for the other person’s well being.
- ⌚ Remember the three H’s: humility (be yourself), honesty (be open about your feelings), holiness (conduct yourself before God).
- ⌚ Remember what you’re looking for: communication, caring, and a pathway to marriage.
- ⌚ Don’t stay in a dating relationship just to avoid being alone. Don’t let unhealthy soul ties arise. Meet new people in group-settings. Let God help us with our “baggage” and other needs. Don’t stop growing.
- ⌚ Remember the risks: vulnerability is risky – someone may get disappointed. This is the price we pay, so be prepared.
- ⌚ Commit the relationship, as well as your deepest hopes and dreams to God. Seek God’s will, not a mate, and you’ll get God’s best.

*Gen 29: 35 – “this time I will praise the Lord.”*