

DATING – 4, 2 pgs

Making out is so powerful for turning people on because of the length of time spent in highly seductive intimate physical contact, pressing our bodies together, sexually stimulating one another. Most anyone can be seduced by a sexual predator through having their sensual desires worked up like this. **Feeding lust only makes it stronger**. Naivety and lack of experience render Christian girls as a class particularly vulnerable. Girls who haven't been pursued by many suitors because of their looks or other physical features are more vulnerable still to the attentions of **sexual predators**. They steal the hearts of these girls by convincing them of their sincerity through the intimacy of their words, kisses, and embraces. These girls interpret their attentions as **promises** - caring, love, and **commitment**, and willingly give themselves to those who seek only their own sexual gratification. Does this mean you shouldn't develop a close relationship with the opposite sex? NO! Your commitment to God and your mission through adherence to the standards you develop from Scripture reinforced by your community of Christian friends is your lifeline to using common sense and maintaining purity with self-control.

What about those of us who have already begun dating – what should we do? Pause your dating activities until you both meet the prerequisites. Work through Scripture separately to determine your standards building your relationship on your mutual commitment to God. Discuss them together and with your parents or spiritual advisors. This is a perfect subject for serious Christians to engage in. Same advice for those who have already been engaged in such activities. Treat it like any fleshly desire. Will there be consequences? Of course. Be honest with yourself and before God [**confess and thank God for the finished work of Christ**] & do what is right from now on.

Although sexual predators can be either sex, they probably don't think of themselves this way. When I was in college and afterward, I made out with my dates but not with any intent to corrupt them. And there was no difference between the non-Christian girls I dated before I came to Christ and the Christian girls I dated afterward. All of us wanted the same things, that wondrous sexual thrill of intimate contact, of enticing and being enticed [**set afire**]. I knew there was something wrong, but that was all I knew to do. Because of the law of diminishing returns and my refusal to go too far, these relationships were short-lived and always ended with a broken heart. I ended them because there was nowhere else to go and the thrill level was continuing to decline. We had reached the point where all I wanted was to get my hands under their clothes and my conscience was screaming at me.

It's not only the young people growing up in our church that need this instruction. They are bringing in singles from other places to attend Grace Fellowship and meet their parents, which is a good thing because it shows that their relationship has already progressed to a certain point for them to take this step. **They're here for the parents' approval**, and as parents your first concern is whether or not their new friends are Christians. So you do your best to find out, but don't make the mistake of thinking the matter is settled once your questions are answered satisfactorily. Keep that issue open and regard the subsequent period of behavior as probationary. The sincerity of their conversion testimony ought not be assumed, especially where it is complicated by an interest in your son or daughter. This brings us to the real reason for the introduction, their "romantic" interest in

each other. Given our discussion on dating, you will certainly want to know what standards the friend has committed to before the Lord. You may want to discuss this material with them as well.

Eph.4:17-24

*¹⁷ ... no longer walk as the rest of the Gentiles walk, in the futility of their mind, ¹⁸ being darkened in their understanding, **alienated from the life of God**, because of the ignorance that is in them, through the hardening of their hearts; ¹⁹ who having become callous [insensitive to their consciences] gave themselves up to lust, to work all uncleanness with greediness. ²⁰ But you did not learn Christ that way; ²¹ if indeed you heard him, and were taught in him, even as truth is in Jesus: ²² that you put away, as concerning your former way of life, the old man, that grows corrupt after the lusts of deceit ; ²³ and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind, ²⁴ and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.*

Notice the type of things & associations that are wrong to engage in.

Gal.5:16-24

¹⁶ But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify [fulfill] the desires [lusts] of the flesh . ¹⁷ For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh , for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do. ¹⁸ But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. ¹⁹ Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality [fornication – premarital sexual relations] , impurity [uncleanness], sensuality, ²⁰ idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, ²¹ envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these . I WARN YOU ... that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. ²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, ²³ gentleness, self-control ... ²⁴ And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its (sinful) passions and desires [lusts] .

What have you learned about the benefits and the dangers of dating?

My set of dating standards that I have developed from Scripture and am committed to before the Lord _____

LAST WORD

Ladies, in light of what Beyond Abraham teaches us, and the warnings of Beyond David suggest that **the principle criteria for seriously considering any suitor** is his commitment to working with all family members in pursuing a spiritual life and a supernatural mindset together - someone who demonstrates leadership intensions, personal commitment to this pursuit of God, and competence in Biblical understanding and wisdom. You don't want to lose yourself or your children to the world.