

"All sin is rooted in the suspicion that God is not good."
Oswald Chambers

Missionary Dating – It's Problems and Perils

I. Definitions

A. *Dating* - a social engagement between two people of the opposite sex

B. *Missionary dating* - the popular theory that a believer can date a non-believer and turn them to Christ without jeopardizing their own walk with the Lord. (1 Cor. 7:16)

***The idea seems harmless; why would God care if a believer has a mere "social engagement" with a non-believer?**

1. First, why would a believer want to date a non-believer (or vice versa)? "*Or what fellowship can light have with darkness?*" (2 Cor. 6:14-15)

2. Second, we don't know on which "harmless social engagement" we might become emotionally attached.

II. What does God's Word say?

A. 1 Cor. 5:9-13 & Col. 4:5&6 (Have *right* relations with non-believers)

B. 1 Cor. 7:39 & 2 Cor. 6:14 (Marry within the ranks)

C. Psalms 37:4 & Matt. 6:33 (Put Christ first and trust)

III. How trouble begins - we fail to trust God and then rationalize our subsequent disobedient behavior by telling a variety of subtle lies to ourselves *and* our parents. Sample lies:

A. "But, we're *just* friends."

(Could you end up married to this friend?) [*see questions for Mr. Right*]

B. "He is a Christian."

(Has he "fired a shot" for Jesus in the recent past?) [*see Marks of Disciple*]

C. "All the cool Christian guys are taken. Only the nerds are left."

(Do you trust God to perfectly meet *every* need in your life?)

IV. What possible outcomes exist if you choose to disobey God and date a non-believer?

A. The *J* word causes such a problem that you eventually break up.

The results - you've wasted time and probably sustained a broken heart.

B. You become so attached to the non-believer that you marry.

The results - you will suffer the consequences of deliberate sin, will stunt your spiritual growth, and will likely have a difficult marriage

C. The non-believer gets saved and you *either* marry *or* break up.

The result - you have disobeyed the Lord and *appear* to have gotten away with it – not the best witness.

"For rebellion is like the sin of divination, and arrogance like the evil of idolatry." 1 Sam 15:23

"Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. The one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction; the one who sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life."
Gal. 6:7&8

V. Okay, okay. I am convinced! I'll date in a manner that honors my Lord. Any tips? [*see Courting Tips*]

**IMPORTANT QUESTIONS FOR MY GIRLS TO ASK THEMSELVES REGARDING
MR. RIGHT**

1. Does he love Jesus at least as much as I do?
2. Does he want to serve Jesus at least as much as I do?
3. Does he love me at least as much as Dad does? Does he pursue me?
4. Does he treat me as well as Dad does?
5. Do we agree on money? 1. Earning? 2. Giving?
3. Saving? 4. Spending?
6. Do we have similar career aspirations? Or do they conflict?
7. Do we agree on where we would want to live?
8. Do we have similar interests? hobbies?
9. Do we have similar interests in sex? (This is determined by discussion & not by practice!)
10. Do we have similar interests in children?
11. Do I like and enjoy his family? Does he like and enjoy mine?
12. Do I respect him? Could I cheerfully submit to his leadership?
13. Can and will he occasionally say "I was wrong, will you forgive me"?
14. Is he enslaved to anything: ie
 - a. alcohol?
 - b. drugs?
 - c. pornography?
 - d. work?
 - e. recreation?
 - f. pride?
 - g. money?
 - h. the Internet?
 - i. etc.?

*Read - Deut. 30:11-20

The Key Question: Are you convinced beyond a shadow of a doubt, that when the "chips are down" Mr. Rite will make his decisions based on God's Word rather than on his "feelings?"

"Bible teachers should stress that a personal, self-denying, costly, and persistent following of Christ is necessary if a person is to be acknowledged by Jesus at the final day. In the absence of this teaching millions drift on, assuming that because they have made verbal acknowledgment of Christ ten, twenty, or even thirty years ago and have done nothing terribly bad since, they are Christians, when actually they may be far from Christ, devoid of grace, and in danger of perishing forever." from Christ's Call to Discipleship by James Boice

Marks of a Disciple (a learner on the way)

Symptomatic of his new nature, a disciple of Jesus Christ joyfully strives to:

1. surrender his identity to Christ and conform to His likeness (Phil 3:4-8; Rom 8:29)
2. know and obey God's Word, the Bible [*loves God; hates sin*] (Jn 14:21; 1 Jn 2:3-4)
3. embrace a life of prayer and meditation (Mk 11:22-25; James 5:16)
4. love fellow believers and voluntarily submit to them (Jn 13:34-35; Eph 5:21)
5. die to himself [*bears his cross and doesn't become offended*] (Matt 10:32-39; Gal 2:20)
6. live by faith [*doesn't become worried*] (Eph 2:8; Heb 11:1-6)
7. share the Gospel with the lost (1 Cor 9:19-23; Col 1:28-29)
8. bear the burdens of others [*the heart of a bondsman*] (Mk 10:35-45; Gal 6:2)
9. own nothing (Matt 8:20; Luke 12:15-21)
10. remember that apart from Christ he can do nothing [*humility*] (Jn 15:5; Eph 2:8-9)

"I will be most useful and most content when I grasp the truth that my life is not about me but about God."

**SOME PRACTICAL TIPS FOR BUILDING A "COURTING"
RELATIONSHIP THAT GOD WILL DIRECT AND BLESS**

Let all that you do be done in love. 1 Cor 16:14 NAS
(Love = willing the best for another person)

Pray for each other daily. Pray with each other often.

Understand that another human being cannot make you happy.

Treat each other as siblings in Christ. Help each other grow.

Just go slow!!! *Facts* are the killer virus of *infatuation*.

Eliminate any compulsion to *own* the other person.

Stay out of the sack! Flee all forms of sexual impropriety.

Understand that *obedience* is the key to God's blessings.

Study God's Word as if your lives depended on it. They do!

Find a place to serve God together.

Involve yourselves in a Bible believing church.

Reach for God's best in every area of your life.

Submit your relationship to the guidance of a spiritual leader

Take time to ask each other intelligent, pointed questions.

Do not be bound together with unbelievers; for what partnership have righteousness and lawlessness, or what fellowship has light with darkness? 2 Cor 6:14-15 NAS

