

Dating by the Book – as series for parents

Week 1

Why this topic is so important to me – Role of the pastor – Ephesians 4:11-13

Why this topic is so important to parents – Role of the parent – Deut 6:4-9

Why this topic can be so confusing for Christians?

- God did not choose to directly address it in the Word

We might disagree on stuff – and that is OK!

- As long as we are unified in our purposes of parents and pastor

How I am coming at this...

- 100% from a place of love – as a Pastor, a friend and your servant...
- As the father of a 2 1/2 year old – not of a teenager
- As an experienced “dater”
- As a student of the Word, youth and culture

What we will be discussing in this series...

Week 1: Dating: the basics, the Bible, and the Body of Christ

Week 2: Being and becoming ready to date by the Book

Week 3: Finding the right one in a wrong world

Week 4: The role of parents: preparation, protection and proposals

Observations on culture and youth

- Most dating is self-focused, rather than God-focused

- The two biggest reasons I see people dating – loneliness and sexual frustration
 - o How the world, flesh and Satan twist these things

- Most parents do not have a working policy on dating based on the Word of God, but on other things...

- Because of it – emotional, relational, spiritual and physical bonds that are reserved for marriage are created
 - o And our kid and their future marriages pay for it...

- Wikipedia – Dating is any social activity performed as a pair or even as a group with the aim of each assessing the other's suitability as their partner in an intimate relationship or as a spouse.

- My definition of typical American dating – The establishment and continuation of a relationship that requires intimacy on some level – physical, emotional, relational, spiritual – that goes beyond the conventional friendship.
 - o In other words, they are "more than friends"

- Different types of dating today...
 - o Casual dating
 - o Group dating
 - o Courting
 - o Youth group dating
 - o Which is right, which is wrong, for whom? And at what age?

Observations on the Word - "Dating" in the Bible

- Two categories given: Married and Single
 - o No real category for dating given... no need for it!

 - o How marriages were put together...
 - Adam and Eve – Genesis 1-3
 - Jacob, Rachel and Leah – Genesis 29
 - Solomon and his wives – Song of Solomon, 1 Kings 11:1
 - Esther and the King – Esther 2,
 - Mary and Joseph – Matthew 1
 - Betrothal period – v18

- Dating was not necessary – is it today?

A recovered working definition of dating...

- "Dating is a God-focused, mutually edifying relationship that has as its intentional goal the glorification of God through Biblical marriage."

- I believe this definition will allow us to pastor and parent the way God calls us too...

- "Dating..."
 - o This is the recovery of a concept...

 - o We will not conform to the patterns of this world – Romans 12:1

- "...is a God-focused..."
 - o Matthew 22:37 – great commandment I

 - o Exodus 20:3 – no other god before God

 - o 1 Corinthians 6:20 – we don't belong to us anyways

- “mutually edifying relationship”
 - Edify: build up towards godliness, holiness, Christ-likeness, purity, etc.
 - Does most dating today do that?
 - Romans 14:19 – “Let us therefore make every effort to do what leads to peace and to mutual edification.”
 - Matthew 22:39 – great commandment II

- “...that has as its intentional goal...”
 - What are some of the goals of “dating” today?
 - What happens when you don’t have a goal?
 - What is the difference between a goal and an intentional goal?
 - Why would God want us to be intentional (purposeful) in our relationships in general?
 - Specifically, in dating?

- “...the glorification of God...”
 - 1 Corinthians 10:31 – whatever you do...
 - We exist to glorify God – in everything...
 - Dating for Him first, then them, then us
 - Dating is spiritual function!

- “...through Biblical marriage.”
 - “Since marriage is God’s regular intention for mankind, we should date with an eye towards marriage.”
 - Adam and Eve – Genesis 2, husband and wife – Ephesians 5

In the context of this definition...

- How many dating relationships do we know of that define this as dating?
- What do the students think about this?
- My goal for the rest of the series will be to help you learn how to insert this definition into the lives of your kids!

Common reactions to this definition...

- It's too strict
- The way I dated was just fine, why should I do it different for my kids?
- My kids have already started dating and are just fine
- This definition is for religious nuts
- My kids will never go for it

Some helpful advice during this series...

- Be open to the scriptures and the Holy Spirit
- Keep an open mind in this if you came in with strong feelings about the topic
- Don't go home and slam the kids
- Take time to pray and fast if change will need to be made before any change is made