

# Dating as a Disciple of Jesus

## 1 WORSHIP

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*You shall have no other gods before me. –Exodus 20:3*

*Do not worship any other god, for the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God. – Exodus 34:14*

*Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. <sup>2</sup> Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will. –Romans 12:1-2*

*They exchanged the truth about God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator—who is forever praised. Amen. –Romans 1:25*

*Then the word of the LORD came to me: "Son of man, these men have set up idols in their hearts and put wicked stumbling blocks before their faces....Therefore say to the people of Israel, 'This is what the Sovereign LORD says: Repent! Turn from your idols and renounce all your detestable practices! –Ezekiel 14:2, 6*

*"You are worthy, our Lord and God,  
to receive glory and honor and power,  
for you created all things,  
and by your will they were created  
and have their being." –Revelation 4:11*

**Summary Statement:** "Having a god" or idolatry, is nothing less than worshipping a created thing rather than the Creator of all things. Examples of other gods are money, sex, a boyfriend, the idea of a future spouse, beauty, sports, or ourselves. Worship is when we depend upon these things for identity, joy, hope, meaning and security. They become saviors in our lives that we believe will give us happiness. Instead of depending upon God, we depend upon them. Now, all of these things are not bad things; they are good things. The problem with idolatry is we take a good thing and make it a god thing then it becomes a bad thing. We make it supreme and rely on it. If that god we have put our hope in is coming through for us, we are happy. If that god is not, we are in a crisis. God wants us to trust Him. God wants us to put Him first. Putting Him first means that we find identity, joy, hope, meaning, and security in Him and His Word above everything else. **And we trust that His will for our life is better than anything or anyone this world can offer us.** This is how we show that we are truly putting God first.

## 2 TRUST

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*Trust in the LORD with all your heart,  
and do not lean on your own understanding.*

*<sup>6</sup>In all your ways acknowledge him,  
and he will make straight your paths. –Proverbs 3:5-6*

*And those who know your name put their trust in you,  
for you, O Lord, have not forsaken those who seek you. –Psalm 9:2*

*Vindicate me, O Lord, for I have walked in my integrity, and I have  
trusted in the Lord without wavering. –Psalm 26:1*

*I hate those who pay regard to worthless idols, but I trust in the Lord. –Psalm 31:6*

*Many are the sorrows of the wicked,  
but steadfast love surrounds the one who trusts in the LORD. –Psalm 32:10*

*Commit your way to the Lord; trust in him, and he will act. –Psalm 37:5*

*Trust in the Lord forever,  
for the Lord God is an everlasting rock. –Isaiah 26:4*

**Summary Statement:** Trusting in the LORD means you believe His will is better than your own. His desires are better. His Word is better. His love is better. Trusting in the LORD means you believe that He will provide for you. He will take care of you. Many are the sorrows of those who disobey God! But God's love will surround you when you trust in Him. When you pray to Him for your needs, He will take care of you!!! **This includes finding a godly spouse to marry!**

## 3 JESUS IS WORTHY

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*Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved  
by him from the wrath of God. –Romans 5:9*

*In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses,  
according to the riches of his grace -Ephesians 1:7*

*But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by  
the blood of Christ. –Ephesians 2:13*

*...knowing that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers,  
not with perishable things such as silver or gold,<sup>19</sup> but with the precious blood of Christ,  
like that of a lamb without blemish or spot. -1 Peter 1:18-19*

*Worthy are you to take the scroll and to open its seals, for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation -Rev. 5:9 (This passage from the Book of Revelation gives an inaugural vision of heaven. In that vision, Jesus is the Lamb of God who was slain to ransom people from all over the world for his glory.)*

*And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love,<sup>18</sup> may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ,<sup>19</sup> and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God. —Ephesians 3:17-19*

**Summary Statement:** Although Jesus Christ is God, He made Himself nothing and was crucified as a criminal for you! He willingly took your guilt and punishment upon Himself on the cross! All of your sin was transferred to Him. In Him you have reconciliation with God the Father! When you put your trust in Him, He gives you everything that belongs to Him. He gives you His holiness, glory, love, and the inheritance of everlasting life. **Since He did so much for you, are you willing to follow His will for your life?**

## 4 NEW LIFE IN JESUS

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*What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase?<sup>2</sup> By no means! We are those who have died to sin; how can we live in it any longer?<sup>3</sup> Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?<sup>4</sup> We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. —Romans 6:1-4*

*You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh.... So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh.<sup>17</sup> For the flesh desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the flesh. They are in conflict with each other, so that you are not to do whatever you want. —Galatians 5:13, 16-17*

*You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires;<sup>23</sup> to be made new in the attitude of your minds;<sup>24</sup> and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness. —Ephesians 4:22-24*

**Summary Statement:** When we receive Jesus as our Lord and Savior we receive His life. His Spirit lives in us. He gives us new desires. He gives us a new attitude. He gives us a new mind. This newness causes us to want to become like Him in righteousness and holiness.

## 5 SEXUAL IMMORALITY

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*Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality, nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God. -1 Corinthians 6:9-11*

*The body is not meant for sexual immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. -1 Corinthians 6:13 (The word translated "Sexual immorality" is porneia. It was where we get our word "pornography." It describes all sex outside of marriage including pre-marital sex and adultery.)*

*I fear that when I come again my God may humble me before you, and I may have to mourn over many of those who sinned earlier and have not repented of the impurity, sexual immorality, and sensuality that they have practiced. -2 Corinthians 12:21*

*Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality... I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. -Galatians 5:19, 21*

*But sexual immorality and all impurity or covetousness must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints. -Ephesians 5:3*

Summary Statement: It is Jesus' will that we commit to someone in marriage first, then give of ourselves sexually to that person. Every time we have sex, we give some of ourselves to the other person. It is not very hard to understand why our Lord and Savior Jesus wants us to commit to biblical marriage. Look around: how is sex outside of biblical, lifelong marriage working out for us? At the end of the day, we must put His will above our own.

## 6 THE LORD'S SUPPER

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*So then, whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord. <sup>28</sup> Everyone ought to examine themselves before they eat of the bread and drink from the cup. <sup>29</sup> For those who eat and drink without discerning the body of Christ eat and drink judgment on themselves. -1 Corinthians 11:27-29*

Summary Statement: If we come to the table of the Lord but willfully reject His Word for our lifestyle and sexuality, Paul says we are eating and drinking judgement upon ourselves.

## 7 THE HEART OF MARRIAGE

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*Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands as you do to the Lord.<sup>23</sup> For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior.<sup>24</sup> Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything.*

*<sup>25</sup> Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her<sup>26</sup> to make her holy, cleansing<sup>(u)</sup> her by the washing with water through the word,<sup>27</sup> and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless.<sup>28</sup> In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself.<sup>29</sup> After all, no one ever hated their own body, but they feed and care for their body, just as Christ does the church—<sup>30</sup> for we are members of his body.<sup>31</sup> “For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.”<sup>(u)</sup><sup>32</sup> This is a profound mystery—but I am talking about Christ and the church.<sup>33</sup> However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband. — Ephesians 5:22-33*

**Summary Statement:** When two people cohabitate without a covenant commitment, they open themselves up to being used by each other for pleasure or companionship without the security of a Christ-centered covenant commitment under the authority of Christ and the Elders. The heart of marriage is to be one as Christ and the Church are one. When two people live together without marriage, they are living as one, but they have not committed to each other before God and the Church as one. Jesus desires that our marriages be a picture of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The husband is to love his wife as Christ loved the church. The wife is to submit to her husband as she submits to Christ. This unity, depth, and holiness is only possible when we marry in Christ.

## 8 THE NEED TO MARRY A CHRISTIAN

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*Do not intermarry with them. Do not give your daughters to their sons or take their daughters for your sons —Deuteronomy 7:3*

*Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness?...Or what does a believer have in common with an unbeliever? -2 Corinthians 6:14-15*

*How do you know, wife, whether you will save your husband? Or, how do you know, husband, whether you will save your wife? -1 Corinthians 7:16*

*A woman is bound to her husband as long as he lives. But if her husband dies, she is free to marry anyone she wishes, but he must belong to the Lord. -1 Corinthians 7:39*

*Do not be misled: "Bad company corrupts good character." -1 Corinthians 15:33*

*Therefore, do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is. -Ephesians 5:17*

Summary Statement: God wants us to marry believers because marriage is a picture of the Gospel and meant for unity. How can two people be united who disagree on God, the meaning of life, the purpose of life, values, worship, parenting, finances, etc.? The biggest decision you will make in your life second to Jesus is who you will marry. After counseling people for years, I have observed a lot of severe pain, excessive frustration, and brutal hardship on people who make a foolish choice and do not consider the realities of living with someone that will drag them down. Marriage takes more than love. It takes your sacrifice, commitment, heart, soul, and the core of who you are. Why not trust in the Lord, pray for a godly spouse, and wait patiently? (This is not to say that God can't save the unbelieving spouse in a marriage. However, there is no guarantee the unbelieving spouse will get saved.)

## 9 BIBLICAL FRAMEWORK FOR DATING

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Discovery: *This is the period of time you are getting to know the other person. What are their beliefs, values, attitudes, etc? What is their personality like? What are their goals in life? What do they like to do for fun? What is it like when you are spending time together? Do you enjoy spending time with them? Can you see yourself committing to this person until death do you part?*

Commitment: *The commitment phase encompasses the engagement.*

Covenant: *Marriage is a public covenant made before God and witnesses. In that covenant you bind yourself to be faithful to the other person regardless of their shortcomings and weaknesses. You are publically and legally committing to them until death parts you. You are committed to see your marriage be a picture of the Gospel of Jesus Christ where love, respect, forgiveness, and holiness will flourish. If there are wounds that you cannot heal, you have Jesus, your pastor, and your church to go to so that healing and forgiveness will reign.*

## 10 BIBLICAL WISDOM FOR DATING

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- If the person you are attracted to is not a Christian, then direct him or her to Christian people of their same gender who can present to them the claims of Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is a huge part of your life and there is no hope for a biblical marriage unless the other person commits to Christ. God has not called you to missionary dating combined with romance. Missionary dating with intimacy is a train wreck. If the other person is willing to consider Jesus; great. If not, then they need to go. Wait on God to provide you with who you need.

- When you date, date with community. Come to worship. Come to growth group. Let the other person meet your friends in Christ. Let them meet your pastor. Seek the advice and prayers of godly people and your pastor.
- When you date, seek out your family's advice as well. If your family is not mature spiritually, then you will have to consider their advice against biblical wisdom and other godly people. If your family is godly, then you should definitely consider any red flags they see.
- It is better to be single and free to do ministry than be with the wrong person that is taking you away from doing what God has called you to.