

## Principles and Practices of Dating 101

### Some Observations:

1. Dating is a practice process.
2. Dating is a selection process.
3. Dating is a modern convention not a Biblical example.
4. The majority of our dates won't end up our mates.
5. Dating is risky business: heartbreak, rejection, impurity, immorality, broken relationships.
6. Dating is one of the top reasons young singles fall away or leave ministries or churches.
7. The Dating Game causes more problems than any other issue in college/singles ministries.
8. The worldly way of dating stinks.
9. Pride keeps many from taking advice and causes many to make stupid mistakes.
10. The majority of Christians are worldly when it comes to dating.

### Some Principles:

1. Must date or not date according to spiritual principles—it is huge in one's spiritual walk.
2. Must date according to what you think Christ would have you do.
3. It is more blessed to give than to receive.
4. Do nothing out of selfish ambition.
5. Do everything to build up the body of Christ.
6. Do nothing to cause another to stumble.
7. Do not use freedom to justify the flesh.
8. Do not conform to the pattern of the world.
9. Must glorify God with our body.
10. Must realize that our dating IS others business.
11. Must realize that the person we date is NOT our sole charge, but the body's.
12. Must begin dating to prepare to both marry AND to break if off.
13. It is NOT okay to cause division in the body through our dating.
14. It is NOT okay to go against all advice in our dating.
15. It is NOT okay to select whom we date and marry based solely on looks or popularity.
16. It is NOT okay to be selfish with our time and talents while we date.
17. It is NOT okay to select a weak worldly Christian to date and then justify it as "helping" them.
18. We must obey the one another passages both in and around our dating relationship.
19. In order for others to date, I must be willing to date.
20. Not dating may seem noble, but it's usually the coward's way of just waiting for the "right" person.
21. To have an effective dating culture, everyone has to cooperate and get involved.
22. One must never confuse infatuation with love.
23. One must never confuse infatuation with maturity.
24. One must never confuse infatuation with rationality.
25. One must consider oneself temporarily insane when infatuated.
26. To be a good leader in the campus ministries, one MUST be a leader in good dating, otherwise your leadership is damaging and counterproductive.

### Some Strong Suggestions:

1. Don't date regularly (go steady or exclusive) until you are within a year of being ready to marry.
2. Check for compatibility BEFORE dating regularly.
3. Get the go-ahead from spiritual leaders within the ministry before dating regularly (don't run outside for this!).
4. Date lots of different people, mixing in people you have interest in with those you don't think you do.
5. Fellowship date.
6. Double date.
7. Date; don't just hang out.
8. Dating more keeps dating from being such a big deal.

9. Plan your dating just like your outreach, etc.
10. Look for spiritual opportunities to grow in dating—go out with people who might challenge you spiritually.
11. Go out with people who might not be considered the most attractive in the world.
12. Be careful about dating people with bad attitudes.
13. Bust people who try to be impure or improper.
14. Expect respect.
15. Girls, when you hang out with guys much they won't ask you out.
16. Guys, when you hang out with the girls they won't hang out with each other.
17. Guys and girls, when you don't go out others will be more tempted to go out with worldly people.
18. Don't imitate those who see themselves as the exceptions.
19. Don't imitate OR take advice from those who have little or no experience and aren't good examples for everybody.

**Questions:**

1. Explain how girls/guys work and think.
2. What boundaries should there be between genders in friendships and group situations? Give suggestions on how to treat one another.
3. What boundaries should we set in Dating relationships?
4. Explain compatibility vs. chemistry in choosing a mate.
5. Explain negotiables and non-negotiables in choosing a mate. Any suggestions?
6. Follow on to Brandon's idea of love "creating community". How can dating do that?
7. How should accountability in dating work?
8. What does a healthy balance look like between friends and a boyfriend/girlfriend?
9. Talk about being okay with being single (and being okay with others being single)
10. "How to get a girl in 10 days" - half joking.
11. Talk about priorities. What does it mean to give your life, dating, etc. over to God. How to organize around Him.
12. How can we avoid mini-divorces?
13. Explain an ideal timeline (and an ideal timeline) for friends, dating, engaged, married mixed with school, work, etc.
14. Identify warning signs of unhealthy relationships.
15. Talk about the role of the Bible in dating relationships. (Should we study together, etc.?)
16. We talk about dating but a lot of girls in FOCUS don't want to date until after college, and they take your asking them out too seriously, as if you're asking them to go out with you forever. How do you broach the subject when the girls take this stance?
17. I want to be married in 15 years—what should I be doing right now?