

# CARE RESOURCES

## DATING

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### **BE IN A HEALTHY PLACE TO HAVE A HEALTHY RELATIONSHIP**

Even though there are no verses in the Bible that talks about dating – dating still is relationship – something that the Bible does talk about frequently. There are many principles we can apply simply by looking at how we should treat other people.

When you are considering whether or not to date someone, be honest with yourself about what your motives are. The Bible says to do “nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves” (Phil 2:3).

**There are ways to glorify God in a dating relationship, but if you are doing it to fulfill physical needs or because you’re insecure, chances are you are not in a healthy place to start a relationship.**

Marriage is a covenant based out of giving and selflessness, both of which we should exercise in our dating relationships now.

**It’s also important that we honour our boyfriend or girlfriend physically as well.** The Bible is pretty clear about its stance on sex before marriage: “(1 Cor 6:18-20)

As a Christian the goal of any relationship, including dating, should be to love God and love others. (Matt 22:36-40). When God is excluded from this it results in selfish, unhealthy relationships. But in Christ we know that God’s best is the only thing that truly satisfies.

### **DIFFERENCE BETWEEN GODLY WISDOM AND WORDLY DATING**

<b>Godly wisdom</b>	<b>Worldly dating</b>
It is for the purpose of cultivating a relationship for marriage. Gen 2:18-25	It is for the purpose of personal satisfaction. 1 Cor 10:23-24
It is a means to an end. It takes place only when ready for marriage.	It is an end in itself. It takes place (often years) before ready to marry, or as a substitute for marriage.
It involves parental input and accountability on both sides (if teenagers). 1 Pet 5:5	It generally discourages parental involvement. Prov 1:7
It limits the number of premarital relationships that can develop.	It provides extensive opportunities to develop multiple relationships.

It considers all physical contact a privilege of those who have bound themselves for life with marriage vows. Col 3:5	It promotes various levels of physical contact, from holding hands to fornication. 2 Pet 2:2
The relationship includes boundaries and accountability. Heb 13:17	It often provides extensive time to be alone and has little or no boundaries and accountability. Job 28:28

If a person is not ready or is unwilling to ask for another's hand in marriage, what right do they have to ask for the exclusive right to that person (a privilege that neither individual shares with other friends)?

### NEGATIVE ASPECTS OF DATING

- Distracts one from future goals, including God's plan or call on a person's life.
- Distracts from intimacy with God (not looking to Him to fulfil your needs). When relationships cross the line, prayer and devotions usually go next (James 4:4).
- Cause problems with other friends. Close friendships are broken over girlfriend/boyfriend.
- Promotes lust and moderate sexual activity, as well as opens the door to fornication.
- Develops a self-centred, feeling-oriented concept of love.
- Teaches people to break off difficult relationships, conditioning them for a "divorce mentality".
- It develops an appetite for variety and change, creating dissatisfaction in marriage.
- It is the cause of many teen pregnancies, teen abortions, the spread and cause of many STD's depression and suicide.

### INTELLIGENT STEPS AND CHOICES IN REGARDS WITH DATING

**Intelligent steps. Intelligent choices begin with oneself.** Intelligent love is more than sentiment, influenced by tender feelings. It is both knowledgeable and discerning of the depths and insight of God's ways, enabling us to love God and others more (Phil 1:9-10).

#### Being wise is

- Having a strong personal devotional life – abiding in His Word daily.
- Allowing yourself a period of observation to truly get to know the other person before getting involved (even emotionally), using God's Word as your standard.
- Keeping your relationship in the light of God's precepts – be accountable to others. Don't put yourself in compromising situations. Instead, flee from temptation and immoral behaviour.

### RESULTS OF DATING ACCORDING TO THE WORLD'S STANDARDS

If we practice dating according to the world's standards, allowing our emotions to dictate the course of our relationship, these three things will begin to develop:

- **Selfishness.** Concern for personal comfort and pleasure that can be gained physically and emotionally from the relationship.
- **Bad choices.** Choosing what feels good instead of what is right and pleasing to God, both emotionally and physically.
- **Spiritual deterioration.** Your intimacy with the Lord will be hindered resulting in a decline in your prayer life, devotional life, and participation in church functions.

## INTELLIGENT LOVE DOES NOT

- **Tempt the other person to compromise.** Kissing passionately, being alone together, inappropriate touching, and sleeping together.
- **Play with your emotions.** Manipulating them for selfish reasons, being concerned only with what you want out of the relationships.
- **Control the person to conform to your will.** Who they talk to, who their friends are, how they spend their time, what they do, how they do things, how they dress.
- **Interfere with their spiritual life.** Lying, sneaking around parent's backs, going to church to meet each other, not God. Not being concerned for their spiritual growth.
- **Ask for their heart and affection without the ability to properly cherish it and/or the capacity to remain committed.** No personal responsibility or self-control. No Godly character. A weak or no personal foundation on which to build upon.

## INTELLIGENT LOVE

- Is always concerned with pleasing God first.
- Looks beyond personal desires and the gratification of the moment.
- Is centred on others; not self-centred. By serving others and glorifying God (doing His will), our emotional needs will be met.
- Will never ask for the heart of another until having the ability to treasure and care for it the way God has ordained in marriage.

## A SMART WAY TO OBSERVE A FUTURE MATE AND ALSO TO EVALUATE YOUR OWN CONDUCT

### Spiritual maturity. (Matt 7:13-27; John 15:12)

- Is he/she a professing Christian?
- Does his/her life, behaviours, and mouth reflect walking the narrow way?
- Does he/she have a daily devotion?
- Does he/she read the Word regularly?
- Does he/she faithfully attend a church?
- Does he/she tithe regularly?
- Does the person serve in the church and serve others?
- Is it evident how he/she loves and cares for others?
- Is this person willing to forgive others or does he/she hold onto bitterness and justify anger towards others?

### Mature character (Luke 16:10)

To be faithful means: one who is worthy of belief; to trust to be confident in.

- Does this person keep his/her word and commitments to others?
- Is this person one who always takes the path of least resistance or one who is willing to work hard and do the right thing even when it is inconvenient?
- Is this person able to face difficult situations without becoming angry; lashing out and hurting others with mean words or physical violence?
- Is he/she easily swayed by others to participate in things that are wrong or is this person able to resist negative peer pressure?
- Does the person have good goals for him/herself in education, a career, and becoming independent from parents?

- Is this person faithful to his/her employer and a good employee or do you hear frequent complaints about insufficient income, hard work and nasty comments about his/her employer or colleagues?

### **Appreciative (Luke 6:45)**

A selfish person is inconsiderate of others and has a mentality of entitlement. To appreciate someone means to value them.

- Does he/she show appreciation when you or others do something for him/her?
- Is appreciation shown towards parents; employer; friends; a waiter in a restaurant?
- Do you hear and see expressions of gratitude like tipping the waiter and saying, "Thank you"?

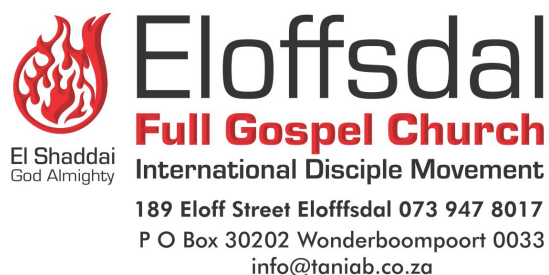
### **Responsibility (Titus 3:14; Prov 13:4)**

To be responsible means one needs to keep commitments. Does this person show up on time or is he/she chronically late?

- Is he/she a procrastinator who is always looking for a reason why not to do something that should get done?
- Is this person a faithful employee who works hard and is always on time?
- Are his /her bills paid on time?
- Does this person live above his/her means? Credit card debt?

### **Thoughtful of others (Phil 2:2-4)**

- Is he/she thoughtful of other peoples' needs or trials?
- Is there evidence in this person's life that reveals genuine concern for others?
- Does he/she pray for people who are going through trials?
- Does the person open doors for strangers; offer to help a friend move; offer to help their parents with projects around their home?
- Is this a person who always has to win or have the best of everything?
- Is this a person who believes that he/she deserves better than others do?
- Does he/she praise other peoples' accomplishments or do you detect some jealousy there?
- Is he/she happy when someone is blessed financially or materially, or does he/she become resentful?



If you would like to speak to someone about your situation, we would love to help you and pray with you. Please contact the El Shaddai FGC Offices or you can email us at [info@taniab.co.za](mailto:info@taniab.co.za)