



Relationship under ignorance of Bible doctrine and arrogance toward God and man leads to the basement of shocking self-made miseries .

Christian Courtship

COSMIC CONTAMINATED & COMPROMISED LOVE LIFE

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THE FALSE GOD OF LOVE

The celebration of Valentine's day originated from a Roman fertility feast known as the Feast of Lupercalia is observed in ancient Rome as a day of offering gifts to the goddess of free sex and fertility, which Catholics substituted with some Christian's symbolism. There were three version of legends related to the origins of St. Valentine according to religious historians. Story tellers wrote the legends of Valentine and made history out of it.

The most famous was that of a Roman priest executed around A.D. 269. He was a man who renounced his priestly calling and vowed to celibacy in order to marry a girl. He was known as Valentinus who was condemned to death by Emperor Claudius II for converting the family of Asterius. On the eve of his execution that fell on February 13, 270, 270 A.D., he wrote a farewell love letter to his young girl and signed it "from your Valentine".

The second legend was that of the bishop of Terni who was executed for a crime of loving a young peasant girl. He was also called Valentinus, which is a good substitute for the Roman sex goddess Lupercalia.

The third legend refers also to a Catholic priest who was passionate lover of young girls. He was also executed for violating the priestly calling and violating the conduct of sexual purity. Despite the fact that Valentinus was just a legend and charge of misconduct, the Vatican made him a saint. The third legend is more detailed. As early as the fourth century B.C., the Romans engaged in an annual young man's rite to passage to the god Lupercus.

The names of the teenage women were placed in a box and drawn at random by adolescent men; thus, a man was assigned a woman companion for the duration of the year, after which another lottery was staged. After eight hundred years of this cruel practice, the early church fathers sought to end this practice. According to Catholic Church tradition St. Valentine was a priest near Rome in about the year 270 A.D. At that time the Roman Emperor Claudius II had issued an edict forbidding marriage. So, they made a saint out of legends.

This happened when the heyday of Roman Empire had almost come to an end. Lack of quality administrators led to frequent civil strife. Learning declined, taxation increased, and trade slumped to a low, precarious level. And the Gauls, Slavs, Huns, Turks and Mongolians from Northern Europe and Asian increased their pressure on the empire's boundaries.

The empire was grown too large to be shielded from external aggression and internal chaos with existing forces. Thus more capable men were required to be recruited as soldiers and officers. When Claudius became the emperor, he felt that married men were more emotionally attached to their families, and thus, will not make good soldiers. In order to assure quality soldiers, he banned marriage.

Valentine, a bishop, seeing the trauma of young lovers, met them in a secret place, and joined them in the sacrament of matrimony. Claudius learned of this "friend of lovers," and had him arrested. The emperor, impressed with the young priest's dignity and conviction, attempted to convert him to the roman gods, to save him from certain execution. Valentine refused to recognize Roman gods and even attempted to convert the emperor, knowing the consequences fully. On February 24, 270, Valentine was executed.

The Valentine's Day card spread with pseudo-Christianity and one of the earliest cards was sent to his wife in 1415 by Charles, duke of Orleans, while he was a prisoner in the Tower of London. The card is now preserved in the British Museum.

Points of Doctrine:

- The legends, myths and traditions related to Valentine's Day are all sanctioned by Satan for the deception and enslavement of the human race.
- Valentine's Day like the numerous harmless looking scheming of Satan can easily distract, distort and deceive even the ignorant and unsuspecting believers.
- The Church Age believers should live their freedom in Christ without compromising their convictions and beliefs.
- Observing Valentine's Day implies your acceptance, and recognition of demonic doctrines (Galatians 4:10-11).
- The institution of marriage is created and designed by God and not by any religion. The success of marriage lies in God and in His Word not through marriage specialists and "Christian counselors.
- Christian counseling is not a ministry ordained by God. Every believer is responsible to study the Word of God and find divine solutions to every human problem.
- Cupid is man-made angel curved in the imagination of futile minds that become sensationally famous legend.

The traditional Roman Catholic depiction of a cherub is based on him. On gems and other surviving pieces, he is usually shown amusing himself with childhood play, sometimes driving a hoop, throwing darts, catching a butterfly, or flirting with a nymph. He is often depicted with his mother (in graphic arts, this is nearly always Venus), playing a horn. He is also shown wearing a helmet and carrying a buckler, perhaps in reference to Virgil's *Omnia vincit amor* or as political satire on wars for love.

Cupid figures prominently in some poetry, lyrics and, of course, elegiac love and metamorphic poetry. In epic poetry, he is less often invoked, but he does appear in Virgil's *Aeneid* changed into the shape of Ascanius inspiring Dido's love. In later literature, Cupid is frequently invoked as fickle, playful, and perverse. He is often depicted as carrying two sets of arrows: one set gold-headed, which inspire love; and the other lead-headed, which inspire hatred.

Everything related to the celebration of Valentine's Day came from a pagan ritual of sex and fertility. The modern celebration originated from a priest who renounced marriage but caught having an affair with a young girl, or sexually abused young girls in the name of love. The fanatics painted the Valentine's Day color red to boost its emotional impact on love, marriage and sex. They also added a mysterious angel called Cupid to make an impression that Valentine's Day was the idea of God.

It is interesting to note that even the Catholic historians (story tellers) have difficulty of creating a reliable story. The feast of St. Valentine's Day and its sex oriented celebration has no spiritual and biblical relevance. Valentine's celebrations enslave people including Christians with burdensome, expensive, and oppressive activities, creating unrealistic expectation from human solution invented by religious leaders.

Valentine's Day is not for Christians to celebrate, honor or remember (Galatians 4:10). Christians are not commanded to celebrate Valentine's Day and churches must depart from such deviating practices since it is evil and unbiblical. It cannot edify the Church and it cannot glorify God. Christians must examine their local church's practices and beliefs and stand for the truth. The Bible is the absolute standards of all the Christian's practices and beliefs. Most churches are still in bondage in heresies, including the heresy of Valentine.

THE CONTRAST BETWEEN TRUE LOVE AND INFATUATION

- Real romantic love develops slowly and gradually. Infatuation develops at almost no time.
- True love always starts slowly. You have to know a person before you can truly love that person. Those who rush into marriage learn it by sad experience of self-made miseries.
- Infatuation is rushing into a bad decision. True love is attracted in the total personality of the one love.
- Infatuation is mainly interested in the physical features related to sensual gratification.
- Infatuation depends on few non-sense things. True love is attracted with most of the qualities of the one love.
- True love affects your whole personality. Willing to learn, adjust and change to bring out the better qualities. Infatuation is blind and daydreaming trying to believe that the only thing that matters is their love for each other.
- True love is not only interested in the whole person but that interest is growing warmer as the day goes by. In infatuation, the interest for each other grows between hot and cold, between burning and freezing.
- True love believes that the most important person in the whole world next to Christ is the one you love. Infatuation is a flattering fantasy yet always searching for someone new and never satisfied with anyone.
- Separation and distance makes true love fonder. Infatuation will not survive the test of separation and distance but will seek happiness in another person.
- True love always cultivates and never dominates. True love causes two different personalities grow intimately together that when separated even for short time a part of you seems to be missing. True love will live through quarrels and lots of disagreements and learning how to handle conflicts with poise.
- Infatuation may do a lot of kissing and making up but end up in separation or brokenness. True love can easily resolve quarrels and disagreements for healthier relationship.
- Infatuation can ignite little disagreement into a massive forest fire leading into permanent break-up.
- True love is concern about giving way to improve and build stronger relationship. Infatuation is concern only about getting and receiving from the relationship for personal gains and interest.
- True love is always unselfishly giving. Infatuation is always waiting to receive and getting.
- True love dwells in genuine humility and sacrifice for the one love. Infatuation dwells in human ego and castle of arrogance. Infatuation is blind, emotional, selfish, self-centered, arrogant, always demanding and threatening the other party.
- True love is always responsible and willing to pay the cost of endurance, hardship, and suffering. Infatuation is always ready to escape into the open sea of unreliability.
- True love is not love at first sight but the result of knowing and accepting the person just as he/she is. Some Christians are only infatuated with God, which they did not know about, as they are infatuated with a man or with a woman that they did not know.
- True is love for the capable and responsible and willing to be answerable for every thought and action. Infatuation is for immature, irresponsible and reckless people who are going to run away from their obligation and responsibility.
- True love is humble to submit to divine establishment authority and not rebel against it. Infatuation half-heartedly submits to authority while waiting for an alibi to rebel.
- True love is discerning and thinking. Infatuation is blind to the truth and reality of life.

THE CONTRAST BETWEEN TRUE LOVE AND LUST

- True romantic love distinguishes between a body and a person. Choosing a girl because of her beauty and bodily form is perilous. The vital statistic 36-24-36 can easily become 45-45-45 in few months. Selecting a guy for his physique and good-looking face is like selecting an always smiling great white shark over the friendly, ugly and fat humpback whale. In God's plan of marriage, physical appearance and other factors (look, age, color, height, race and status) are under personal preference of each individual.
- True love generates respect. Erotic lover who whispers sweet nothing in private but tear you down in public is like a clown. He is using another person to produce laughter by giving his lover bad remarks. Such person will do well in circus but not in the family.
- True love is self-giving; it is not what you can get from another person but what you can give without expecting anything in return. The passionate desire for her/his body is not love but lust.
- True love can thrive without physical expression until full commitment for marriage. Lust is seeking for someone to play, caress and gratify his or her sexual desire. Lust is not willing to enter commitment and responsibility.
- True love seeks to build a life and permanent relationship of marriage. Lust is just looking for short term outlet for emotional unbalance and object of pleasure. The objective and goal of any relationship is marriage. Marriage is a triangular relationship between God, a man and a woman, not a triangle between three persons. The basic principle is not to be involved with anybody you are not willing to marry. Get involved only after you are physically, emotionally and spiritually prepared.
- True love embraces serious and difficult responsibility. Marital responsibility is far more than money. It is commitment to love the other person whatever happens.
- True love can postpone gratification of sexual passion. True love can wait until marriage.
- True love is basically a commitment. Feeling, emotion, selfish and childish expressions would change and fall-out of love. Fallen expectations and broken promises are basic elements that you cannot avoid. You have to endure them.
- True love will not hurt the other person after getting what he/she likes. Personality differences, unpleasant and bad communication, misunderstanding and numerous marital problems are subjects for rebuilding the relationship not criteria for separation. Immature couple cannot handle such problems.
- True love will always resolve to solve problems. Infatuation basically cannot handle multiple problems. Marriage is a garage where both the husband and wife work to repair the errors and damages of their blissful relationship. It is not a recreation center for childish people to pass away their boredom.
- True love is willing to pay the full cost of responsibility. Marriage is not the solution to many problems of the adolescent and teen-age life but a chain of problems for adults to solve and enjoy.
- True love is founded on the Word of God and ignites by the virtue love for God and for man. Lust is looking for anyone who is willing to share the passions of sexual desires.
- True love recognizes the importance of submission to God's perfect timing particular in the area of sex. Majority can delay their wedding day but advance sexual relationship to gratify the lust. Majority engaged in premarital sex are most likely not to end up in marriage.

SEX SHOULD WAIT UNTIL MARRIAGE

God designed sex exclusively inside marriage, not for those who are hot for sex. Our liberated society under the influence of the new morality is destroying the divine plan regarding this issue. Satan is destroying everything that God has established and instituted including the family, marriage and the government.

Today, love is defined as sex. Many young lovers are interested only with their passions and desire and not with the relationship or commitment. Sex is designed for pleasure of married couples and not for those seeking pleasures or sexual experiences. God designed sex for pleasure, procreation and physical intimacy of husband and wife not for those seeking sexual adventure.

Sex before marriage or sex outside the marriage may end-up to broken relationships, broken family, broken hearts, separation, painful memories and illegitimate children. Any sexual exploration or adventure outside or before marriage may result to unwanted child, responsibility and headache. Teen-age marriage always results to self-made miseries especially for the mother.

The giving in to sex before marriage is not proof of your love but a sign of passion or lust. There is proper time for everything under the sun and it pays to wait for God's time. Sex with the wrong person at the wrong time is unhelpful and disregarding the other party.

Christians are not to adopt the trend of the world in rejecting the will of God that results to self-made miseries. Sex is for mature people with genuine commitment to love each other, whatever happens. Believers who follow the trend of the world regarding free sex or sexual perversion are living under the satanic will. In most cases the believers failed to identify the divine discipline that may lasts for a lifetime.

The ability to have sex is not a sign of masculinity for a man and is never a sign of femininity for a woman. Sex proves nothing. Dogs just do it for no reason at all, except for their biological instinct. Sexual pleasure is temporal. Those who are seeking frantic happiness from sex will always be disappointed because sex cannot fill up the vacuum in your soul. Sex cannot fill-up the loneliness, the boredom and emptiness of your soul. Only God can answer that emptiness.

Sex is not everything but God is. The beasts have their own sexual pleasure of sex but they cannot possess happiness from sex. Man in the same manner cannot find any happiness from sex. God alone is the source of true happiness. Sex is not love. Real love can wait but lust is always hungry for sex. Sexual purity is not replaceable. The real issue here is the soul for the person.

Sexual perversion is the deviation from the normal function and therefore, it is not only social, political emotional sin but as well as spiritual in nature. Christian must aim to become spiritual and advancing believer- the best for his/her lover. A person whose mind is always filled with sex is a maniac. A person who is not satisfied with one wife or husband will always look for another.

UNDERSTANDING THE SEX DRIVE

Sex drive is a normal part of the mentality of every normal man and woman. To be ashamed of it is to doubt God's perfect righteousness and faithfulness to us. To misuse it (the human sex drive) is to thwart God's plan and purpose. The sex drive energizes or destroys relationship, depending on its uses and control. The male sex drive develops in adolescent, producing sperm and stores them in the seminal vesicles. When they are filled, the sex drives climb-up or increases and demands a release of the seminal fluids. God designed the male's body to handle this in a natural way by means of night emissions or nocturnal releases.

The male sex drive is biological, emotional, psychological becoming greater when aroused by sight or thinking responding readily to any visual or touches stimuli. Male sperm releases by masturbation develop almost automatically because of the combine sex drive and the external nature of the male sex organs. Therefore, if it is to be avoided, it must be a choice, a decision of the soul. From biological standpoint, masturbation is not necessary.

The female sex drive system does not automatically build up sex drive, which demands a release. A man naturally turns to masturbation for release, but female must be taught or learn it first. A woman is stimulated sexually more by touch than by sight. It is more difficult for them to develop a strong habit of masturbation but when developed, it is more difficult to break it.

Two categories of sexual sins are prominent all over the Scripture. Fornication (pornea) refers to an illicit sexual relationship and adultery while moichos refers to a sexual relationship outside marriage. Fornication is illicit sexual relationship between unmarried persons while adultery is illicit sexual relationship between married people other than their spouses.

The biblical standard that stands throughout the ages is one husband - one wife. God is not asking for human opinion regarding whatever He established as standard but simply obedience. If you are a believer and you have violated God's standard, then apply the grace provision for adjustment to the justice of God through the doctrine of rebound by naming your sins to God (1 John 1:9).

Sexual sins never begin by accident but through a series of pre-sexual experiences, which involves the mind and the soul. These are the things that excite, train, develop, and move the sexual drives. Most of the pre-sexual experiences that are not related to preparation for marriage contribute only to illicit sexual activities.

THE BIBLICAL CONCEPT OF COURTSHIP

If the first period of adolescent life has been happily passed in a growing understanding and fellowship with the members of the opposite sex, there will be no difficulty in passing on to the next step in the serious game of choosing your partner. Among your friends will be someone who attracts you more than the others, and in later teen years he or she is likely to become your special friend. So quite naturally, friendship should lead to courtship. The natural basis of this kind of friendship is sex attraction. It is that which impels you to select one friend from among all the others.

It fills the friendship with that beautiful and exhilarating emotion called 'being in love'. You feel that your heart has already chosen your destined mate. This is natural and right because God designed it that way. Compatibility is not meant to acquire the paramount worth of being in love. There is no such thing as compatibility since no two persons are alike. Compatibility is myth and a deception of the devil. That wonderful experience of opposing personality is the primary element of blissful marriage life. Among young people courtship is thought of and talked about as 'great fun'. There is no human experience more exhilarating to mind and body than falling in love.

Even the prospect of such an experience makes life a thrilling adventure for most young people. But what needs to be pointed out is that it is much more than 'great fun'. It is one of the most serious issues of your life. During these critical months and years you are choosing your life-partner, and therefore, you are choosing your destiny. You yourself are choosing your own happiness or misery. You are choosing whether the rest of your life is to be lived in the perpetual 'keeping in love' or, may be, in the hell of disharmony and perpetual friction.

Other people are not choosing for you. You would be indignant if they attempted to. You have to insist that this is your choice, and so it is. This is your right of privacy and the exercise of your volition. It is important that you think and act carefully yourself and that you get careful and prayerful advice from your parents (if they are believers) or from friendly spiritually mature believers. For this is the great factor to notice about courtship: it is a time and an experience in which you choose. If you make bad decision, they will not share your suffering. If you make good decision, they cannot share your happiness.

You cannot choose without knowing fairly intimately the one upon whom your preference has fallen. That is why courtship is good and necessary. There must be a special relationship between you which makes possible for private talks, and sharing together of interests and activities and going places together. In all these experiences you can observe each other in different circumstances and notice each other's reactions. It is a good thing for this experience of Christian courtship to take a long time so that by the time your choice is made you are quite sure that you have chosen the best (if not the best). As a rule, if possible, let the courtship be long and the engagement short.

Here are four general principles to help you to choose:

Choose a Christian. The warning of the Apostle Paul not to be unequally yoked is not only an authoritative Word to the Christian believer; but a wise counsel that it is fatal to ignore. An unequal yoke is bound to chafe. Do not think that being 'in love' is enough and that after marriage you can win your partner to Christ. It may not be so. You must both start from the same place. The two must be one in Christ. Both must possess salvation, living a Spirit-filled life and advancing in the knowledge and grace of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Choose an advancing Christian. It is not enough that your friend is a Christian. He or she must have a personality that harmonizes with your own. This essential element in life partnership is affinity which is defined as relationship by spiritual attraction. Negatively, it means that the one must be free from anything that would offend the other's tastes. Positively it means that the mind, intellect, speech, habits, and tastes of the one are pleasing to the other. It calls for someone who is positive toward Bible doctrine.

Look for Character. Take warning then, and look for character. The trouble is that love is blind and we always think she is an angel or he an angel during the courtship period. You don't have to marry an elect angel, but you have to make sure that you are not marrying a demon either. It is not unwise to make quite sure before marriage, and while it is foolish to expect perfection, it is very wise to put high value on character. The only way to see the real character is through the individual's principles in life. Pray for God to reveal your lover's principles.

The real person is within the mentality of the soul. It is something that nobody can fake and whitewash. Either that character is formed by Bible doctrine or by human viewpoint. The character formed by human viewpoint could be cultured, temperate and personable in the surface but demonic deep underneath. The real person is in the mentality of the soul camouflaged by pleasing personality, legalistic self-righteousness and religious morality. The believer's integrity is formed by metabolized doctrine in the soul not by his culture, family tradition or environment. The Mind of the perfect humanity of the Lord Jesus Christ in the Hypostatic Union is the only pattern and model of our character. Anyone in the Church Age can have the Mind of Christ through the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit and metabolized Bible doctrine.

Look for Accomplishments. I do not mean those abilities that need an academic training, but the sort of things that any wise mother will teach her daughter. The young man is preparing for his responsibilities mainly by his diligence in his trade or profession. A young woman should prepare by learning all the practical tasks which make for efficient wifhood and motherhood and home-making. Even if marriage is not her destiny the girl who trains herself in this practical way has not wasted her time. Let every girl remember that the best type of boy will be attracted by a pretty face during courtship and by the food she serves on the table during the marriage life. The girl who did not learn to do house work will find herself trap between the laundry basket and dirty plates.

The guidance of God is the underlying principle for the Christian youth or maiden, in choosing a partner. God will guide those who seek His leading. But even so, He will do it through your own wisdom (not emotion) and also by the wise advice of spiritual mature believers. If you are in Christian fellowship and prayerfully follow the four guiding principles you will not make a mistake, not unless you are hunting outside the fence. Do not be fooled by the grass that seems greener outside the fence.

CHRISTIAN ENGAGEMENT

When an attracted couple, after an adequate time of courtship, is quite sure that they love each other deeply; that in every way they were made for each other, and God's seal is upon their union, then the natural result is to prepare for marriage. This definite contract to marry is called betrothal or engagement, because each party has engaged to marry the other. Let us keep in mind this simple meaning: it is a promise to marry. The engagement ring is a sign that such a promise has been given. The ring and the marriage contract are both symbol that cannot prevent a marriage from tearing apart.

A good marriage is build by God through the power of the Holy Spirit and metabolized Bible doctrine in the soul (MBD) of the couple. Please note that the issue here is Christian marriage not a Christian wedding ceremony. Anyone can have a Christian wedding but only the grace and doctrinal oriented couples can have a Christian marriage. Beware of the religious but doctrinally ignorant believers in the local churches who are always busy doing things for God. They have nothing to offer except "a Christian wedding" and perpetual unchristian way of life. Ask God for Christian with MBD.

It is much more than the privilege to display an expensive ring, and it can be manifested even without any ring. It is a spiritual invisible contract. Christian young people should be taught to regard it as a sacred bond. There are no `ifs' and `buts' about it. If you are engaged you have promised to marry. You belong to your lover as he belongs to you.

No honorable man encroaches upon that sacred engagement. Not by the slightest look, word, or action would he distract her heart from her pledged loyalty. On the other hand a betrothed person having pledged his or her heart to another, never allows that heart to be tempted from its loyalty. If there must be long separation before the arranged marriage can take place, the heart should be guarded carefully. The Christian is loyal above everything. Keep your love and guard your heart.

It will be clear now that there should not be any engagement to marry until both parties have fully made up their minds that they intend to be married, and it is not good to make promises to each other until you are old enough to make up your minds. It takes time to know another person and so, take your time. And, if you seek Divine guidance, give God time. Engagement should be of short duration.

The Christian idea of betrothal comes from the Hebrew custom, according to which the wedding ceremonies had begun with betrothal (Matthew 1:19).

Some Common Misconceptions About Christian Engagement:

Engagement is thought as preparation for the grand wedding ceremony. Christian couples should be very practical and settle for simple, inexpensive and burdenless ceremony. Engagement is thought as time for making a lot of money for the wedding expenses. The idea of luxurious wedding is not Christian and it has nothing to do with your future happiness and well-being. It is nothing but a showroom of arrogance and status symbol. No Christian lady deserved a grand and fabulous wedding.

Engagement is thought as a time for sending gifts to the family members of both parties. If there is a requirement for expensive wedding, gifts to family members, wealth or money in order for the wedding to proceed - this is something the engaged Christian couple must think twice. Money must never be a reason for marriage or reason for break-up of marriage.

Of course, the modern institution of engagement is not as binding as that. The Early Church abandoned the Jewish betrothal and highlighted it into the wedding ceremony, but it is significant that the modern custom of engagement is now defined in the same way as betrothal. While it is true that a broken engagement is better than a miserable marriage; yet engagement is a promise to marry which should not be made until mutual love and loyalty can be promised with certainty.

It cannot be emphasized too much that Christian marriage is a sacred life-long contract. We all know what sickness and health means. But do we all realize what "for better or worse" means"?

Do we know what "until death us do part" means"? Although certain laws provided policies for the marriage contract in certain circumstances to be legally terminated but under the Christian principles, divorce is not sanctioned. In certain unavoidable circumstances that the marriage contract has to be terminated, both parties cannot re-marry as long as the other party is alive.

Once marriage has been contracted by Christian man and woman the great task of 'getting married' begins. The courtship should take a long time, so getting really married takes a long time. To marry two human beings takes few seconds but marriage is a lifetime learning, adjustment and growing together. Some couples start to break out their marriage as soon as they finished honeymoon.

It is essentially the task of two individuals finding perfect harmony on the three levels of personality:

- Physical Harmony: Both bride and bridegroom need the will and knowledge to find this level of harmony.
- Mental Harmony: This probably has already been largely achieved during courtship. You will already have discovered your identity of interests and have found much intellectual pleasure in pursuing those interests together. But now in the closer fellowship of marriage you will find there are still higher levels of harmony to reach.
- Spiritual Harmony: It takes three to make a good marriage. In the Christian marriage service the whole meaning of the ceremony is that God is joining two individuals together in Himself. It is God joining the male and female believers together in Him. The pastors have no authority to join the couple with God. There is no command for pastors to officiate marriage. But this wonderful spiritual harmony does not come by a magical act of God. It must be achieved by each partner receiving doctrine into their souls.

It means an utterly unselfish surrender of each individual's life to God which develops into harmony of mind, soul body and human spirit. Then it means that these two fervent God-devoted souls study the Word, much together until at last they see the blueprint of God's will for them. God is able to make His revelations and pursue His personal purposes through both as if they were one. God gives this blessing to those who mean to have it. It may take time, but if you give God time He can do the impossible.

DATING PRINCIPLES FOR BELIEVERS

The Seven Habits of Highly Defective Dating:

- Dating leads to intimacy but not necessarily commitment.
- Dating tends to skip the "friendship" stage of a relationship.
- Dating often mistakes a physical relationship for love.
- Dating often isolates a couple from other vital relationships.
- Dating, in many cases, distracts young people from their primary responsibility of preparing them for the future.
- Dating can cause discontentment with God's blessing.
- Dating creates an artificial environment for evaluating another person's character.

There are three deceptions in the world's pattern for love for us to learn the true definition of love:

- The deceptions that love is primarily for the fulfillment of self. True love is defined by serving others and living for the glory of God. Jesus demonstrated this kind of love by dying on the cross.
- The deception that loves is based on feeling. True love is based on obedience to God and service to others - John 14:15.
- The deception that love is unpredictable and beyond our control. True love is a choice we must make, just as Jesus chose to love us.

The Seven Habits of Highly Effective Dating:

- Embrace the beauty of total intimacy and total commitment in marriage.
- Choose to build your future marriage on the solid foundation of friendship.
- Choose purity and the clarity that comes in relationship undistracted by premarital physical involvements.
- Say yes to the joy, wisdom, and Godly perspective that come from investing in family and other friends.
- Choose to glorify God and serve your future spouse by using this time in your life to prepare for the future.
- Embrace the contentment that comes with a heart of gratefulness and an attitude that seeks to make the most of today.
- Choose to get to know your future spouse in a setting that lets you both see who you really are and what your true character is.

Five Principles to Help You Avoid Defective Dating:

- Every relationship is an opportunity to model Christ's love.
- Your unmarried years are a gift from God.
- Intimacy is the reward of commitment not of dating adventure.
- You cannot "own" someone outside of marriage.
- You have to avoid situations that could compromise the purity of your body or mind.

Four Important Steps for Getting on Track with God's Plan

- Start with a clean slate.
- Make your parents your teammates.
- Establish protective boundaries.
- Check who's whispering in your ear and who's feeding your mind.

Three principles to get rid of wrong attitudes toward the timing of relationships:

- The right thing at the wrong time is the wrong thing.
- We don't need to shop for something we can't afford.
- Any season of singleness is a gift from God.

Three principles to help you maintain the direction of purity:

- Respect the deep significance of physical intimacy. Refuse to steal these privileges before marriage.
- Set your standards too high. Cut off the opportunity for sin at its root; always flee from even the slightest possibility of compromise.
- Make the purity of others a priority. For gentlemen, this means we must start being "warriors" standing guard over girls' hearts. For ladies, this means doing all we can to guard our brothers' eyes being careful that we don't act, glance, or dress in ways designed to attract attention or show off.

Four Keys For Staying Out of the "Romantic Zone":

- You need to understand the difference between friendship and intimacy.
- When spending time with members of the opposite sex, be inclusive, not exclusive.
- Define your objective not to use and abuse your date.
- Seek opportunities to serve, not to be entertained.

In Christian's perspective, courtship, dating, and engagement are great responsibility and commitment. The real issue in the Christian life is not courtship, dating or marriage but your relationship with God and to His Word. Courtship, dating or marriage cannot solve your problems but instead create more problems. For believers without metabolized Bible doctrine in the souls; courtship, dating and marriage will only create unrealistic expectations.

Three "pollutants" that we must guard against when it comes to relationships:

- Infatuation which makes another human being, instead of God, the object of our longing. We must understand that no human relationship can ever completely fulfill us.
- Lust which craves something sexually that God has forbidden. To fight lust, we have to detest it with the same intensity that God does.
- Self-pity which uses feelings as an excuse to turn away from God and exalt our own needs. To combat self-pity, we must refrain from comparing, redirect our feelings into comparison and service to others, and use feelings of loneliness to draw closer to God.

What to Do When People Ask Why You Don't Play the Dating Game.

Five principles to help us communicate our decision:

- We should communicate our convictions about the dating game and its danger with humility.
- We do not try to prove that someone is wrong by insisting on what you know as right. They have the rights to believe what they want to believe.
- We should communicate our doctrinal principles and conviction regarding the dating trends to encourage spiritual growth among believers.
- Never argue or be critical of their personal viewpoint or belief. Respect their opinion without compromising yours.
- We do not have to win the debate for the sake of argument.

Relationship based on compatibility will not endure:

- Have the same preference, like and fondness
- Have the same taste, experience, background
- Have the same types, modes, types and wants
- Commended, approved and voted by friends

Five Areas Where Every Young Person Needs to Prepare While Single:

- Practice intimacy. In your homes and in your friendships, you should learn the art of sharing your lives with others by being open and honest.
- Practice seeking God with others. To prepare for a dynamic spiritual life in marriage, you should learn to talk about and share your faith with other believers.
- Practice financial responsibility. Now is the time to learn to manage money wisely. This includes saving, giving, and keeping a budget.
- Practice parenthood. You should be observing how skilled parents raise their children and seeking opportunities to learn from them.
- Practice practical life skills. It will be a blessing for your future husband or wife if you learn how to manage and care for a home before getting married.

CHARACTER & ATTITUDES THAT MATTER MOST

Character is defined by the choices and decisions that a person has made and makes each day based on his norms and standard. We can evaluate a person's character by observing how a person relates to God and whether or not the individual has a dynamic, growing, personal relationship with Him.

We can also look at the way he or she treats others, such as authorities, parents, and members of the opposite sex. We can take note of the way this person disciplines his or her personal life regarding the use of time, money, and care of his or her body. Attitude is how a person looks at and reacts to life. A godly attitude is expressed through a willing obedience to God, humility, industriousness, self-discipline as well as contentment and hopefulness.

Principles that Can Guide You from Friendship to Matrimony:

- Remember your relational responsibilities. When you feel attracted to someone, remember you are not the "center of the universe," but your actions affect your relationship with the person you're interested in as well as all the other relationships you have. Only God can change a self-centered person but you can save a lot of tears and headaches if the changing process occurs before marriage.
- Seek a deeper friendship first. Focus on developing a closer friendship with a potential partner before introducing romance. Don't change your routine; instead look for opportunities to bring that person into your real life. Wait to verbally express your feelings. Wait and pray (maintain your spiritual momentum).
- If you feel inclined to deepen a relationship with a guy or a girl, it's always wise to take extra time to get to know the person better as a friend and to seek God's guidance. Seek the counsel of a few, older, trusted Christians (ideally, this should include your parents). Ask them to pray for you, and allow you to become accountable about your relationship.
- Define the relationship's purpose: pursuing marriage. It's the guy's responsibility to clearly state the intentions and provide leadership and direction for the relationship.
- Honor her parents. The man should show respect by asking the girl's parents for permission to pursue marriage with their daughter and inviting their perspective.
- Test and build the relationship in real-life settings. This is the time for the young man to win the girl's heart and for the two of them to test the wisdom of their potential marriage. This period need lasts only as long as it takes for both to feel confident about getting married.
- Reserve passion for marriage. Protect each other by refusing to physically express your love until the proper time.

Teen-agers wrong motives for dating:

- Status symbol: this other person becomes a trophy, the most lovable guy or the hottest babe.
- Security blanket: looking for some type of emotional stimulation that they don't receive at home.
- Long to be important: you got someone desired by every boy or girl.
- Peer pressure" everyone else is doing it, following the trends.
- Something to show off - someone to parade in the campus.
- Arrogance boaster - I got what they have.
- Insecurity complex - unwilling to be left out.
- Premature adulthood - trying to be able and capable of what belongs to adults.
- Pseudo-independence - as a showroom of false liberty.

Why Dating for Teen-agers does more harm than good?

- No teenager is prepared or equipped to have authority over another teenager. A man has no authority over a woman until they agreed to get married.
- Most teen-agers are attracted by selfish motivation.
- They use the other person until they are tired or bored, and then call it quits.
- This steady romantic relationship forces young people together more than they are ready for.
- Teenagers should never be alone for too long; all that sweetness can turn bitter, real fast.
- The teenage years are part of the preparation process, a boot camp in humility to orient us to the absolute authority of God's will which is a spiritual life of service and impact for the Lord Jesus Christ.

Never date anyone that you would not marry. Young men, until you have your spiritual priorities in order, until you have some honor and integrity, you don't need and are not ready for God's grace provision of a woman. This implies evaluation from divine viewpoint before the dating process begins. That rules out all unbelievers! You cannot and will not change another person; therefore, dating them for Christ is not a legitimate function of the Royal Ambassadorship.

Only God can change a person through daily intake of Bible doctrine. Therefore, without the metabolized Bible doctrine in the soul, there is no way a person can be changed not even by a miracle. If your boy or girlfriend is not Christ-centered and grace oriented; if the Word of God is not priority number one in their life, then what you have is the spirituality vs. carnality or spirituality vs. religion syndrome, in either way, you are headed for big trouble.

The Lord Jesus provides us with the perfect example to follow. He is the epitome of what a real man should be. As a young man, your goal in life should be to grow up spiritually and become exactly like Jesus Christ. As a young lady, the same applies to you. The boys you date and the man you eventually marry ought to be focused on Jesus Christ and His Word as priority number one in life. If he is not, then he is a loser, and you better start leaving him behind.

Both young man and the young lady must have a pre-determined honor code, before dating. Where do you get this? This comes from doctrine in the soul divine viewpoint. When you leave it to the woman to determine your character, guys, you are weak and irresponsible. No real man would dare take a woman, emotionally or physically, where she does not need to go. She will be physically and emotionally used, and exploited. You are dating another man's future wife. Keep in mind, somebody else is dating yours!

Teenagers, you don't have the right to turn each other on. You don't have the capacity or self control to handle that type of situation. The Bible reserves that right and privilege for the marital relationship (1 Cor. 7:3-4). Gentlemen, if you wouldn't marry her, don't date her! The same is true for you, young ladies. The world's style of dating through the internet or mail to order bride is not for the Christians.

Dating is the exploration of a friendship, not an excuse for sexual immorality. There are many passages in the Word of God that deal with premarital sex and sex between two unmarried individuals. The Biblical term is fornication, and it is listed as a personal sin and a violation of God's plan for the sexual relationship of marriage (1 Cor. 6:9, Heb. 13:4).

Closing Principles:

- Victory over sexual temptation will be gained only through the utilization of divine power of the Holy Spirit and divine provision of the Word of God.
- If you are dating to "turn him or her on," you are turning off the plan of God. You are opening a door for compromise with evil policy.
- You are a sure winner when you execute things according to the divine protocol.

Erroneous Reasons for Relationship or Marriage:

- To fulfill or gratify sexual desires
- Social pressure
- Unexpected pregnancy
- To solve domestic problems
- To acquire status symbol
- To improve economic situations in life
- Pity or sympathy upon the person
- For trial - with intention to get away from it

Whom Not to Get Into Relationship With or Marry:

- Unbeliever (2 Cor. 6:14-18)
- Habitual gambling
- Jealous person
- Neurotic or mentally sick
- A mama's boy or daddy's girl
- Egotist, arrogant and conceited
- Separated or divorced person
- Suicidal and menacing person
- Violent or pervert or sex maniac
- Physically or spiritually Immature believer
- Addicted to substance, alcohol or tobacco
- Member of cult or under demon influence

Wrong Places to Find Your Right-Man or Right-Woman:

- Bars, pub houses, and clubs, drinking or sex parties
- Beaches and resorts
- Concert Hall or movie houses
- Entertainment place
- Mall and shopping centers
- Internet social networks

Basic principles Related to Dating:

- Finding a date is easy but not the right one
- Do not trust anyone too quick too soon
- Dating an unprincipled person is a waste of time
- Acquaintance guarantees nothing but danger
- A man is always in a hurry to undress a woman
- Be ethical by reinventing the ancient courtship
- Be a lady of discretion but not courting a man
- Essentiality not urgency is the call
- The priority is learning Bible Doctrine

Question of Volitional Choice:

- The world's preference and your favorite too
- The Lord's choice for you under directive will
- Anything important demands a lot of thinking, planning and preparation
- Believers are not to conform to the standards, norms, fads, trends and changes of the world

Basic Principles Related to Relationship:

- As a single believer, it is better to remain in that status for longer period of time to grow in the knowledge and grace of the Lord Jesus Christ.
- It is better to be a single without a relationship than to be involved with a wrong person.
- Before you get into the relationship, make sure you have learned and understood the doctrine of the right man and woman.
- Problematic relationship is preventable.

Changing worldly trends and standards:

- Woman courting man is not biblical standard but the man is responsible to find the right woman.
- Sex for pleasure is not acceptable to God
- Teenage parents is not part of God's will
- Single mother is outside God's plan
- Man abandoning responsibility is abomination
- Sex before and outside marriage is sin
- Dating for the sake of sexual experience is sin
- Getting into a relationship for sexual pleasure is abomination.
- Seduction is a deceitful and dangerous way to get into a relationship and not the right way to get into marriage.

The Biblical Concept of Doctrinal Husband:

- He is the head of the wife (Eph. 5:23)
- He holds the position of responsibility
- He is subject to the Lord (1 Cor. 11:3)
- He loves his wife (Col. 3:19)
- He loves his wife as himself (Eph. 5:28, 33)
- He must love his wife as he loves his own body (Eph. 5:28-)
- The basis of his love for his wife is Christ's love for the Church (Eph. 5:25)
- He honors his wife as a weaker vessel and being fellow heir with Christ (1 Peter 3:7)
- He regards her as his glory (1 Cor. 11:7)
- He renders upon her compassion (1 Cor. 7:3)
- He provides for his household (1 Tim. 5:8)
- He serves her to lighten the heavy burden of life (Gen. 29:20).
- He gives to his children (Luke 11:11-13)
- He gives them the inheritance and birthright of Bible doctrine (Proverbs 13:22, 20:7)
- He increases in wisdom of God's Word as years passes by (Job 12:12, Titus 2:1-2)
- He waits upon God to fulfill His promises for his life (psalm 128: 3-4, 6).