

A photograph of two teenagers holding hands, with text overlaid. The image is dimly lit and shows the lower bodies and hands of two people. The person on the left is wearing a brown hoodie and blue jeans with a colorful belt. The person on the right is wearing a grey jacket and blue jeans. They are holding hands in the center. The background is a blurred outdoor setting.

# Teenage Dating

How Close is too Close?

A photograph of a young man and woman holding hands, serving as the background for the text. The man is on the left, wearing a brown jacket and blue jeans with a colorful belt. The woman is on the right, wearing a grey jacket and blue jeans. They are both looking down at their hands.

# Teenage Dating

- Dating is a precursor to marriage and the family, and therefore it is important
- None of the problems that arise in marriage, save infidelity, can be solved by ending the marriage. You are bound for life.
- Most of the problems that arise in marriage are discernable in the dating process.
- “Don’t marry someone you can’t live without; marry someone you can live with.” (Roland Lewis, Home and Family professor at Florida College)



# Teenage Dating

- The Bible does not discuss dating
  - But it does teach principles that guide every Christian in moral conduct
- Choosing a mate in Bible times
  - The choice of a bride was usually made by the relatives or a friend appointed by the bridegroom.
  - Gen. 24:51, 34:11
- Courtship in 21<sup>st</sup> century America

A photograph of a couple holding hands, with the focus on their hands and forearms. The background is blurred, showing what appears to be an outdoor setting. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent dark grey box containing white text.

# Bible Principles That Guide Dating

- Modern dating has many problems
- One should be primarily focused on substantive, spiritual qualities
- Avoid activities that are a prelude to fornication
  - Gal. 5:19 - “Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness”
  - 1Cor. 6:18 - “Flee sexual immorality. Every sin that a man does is outside the body, but he who commits sexual immorality sins against his own body.”

A photograph of a young man and woman holding hands, serving as the background for the text. The man is on the left, wearing a brown jacket and blue jeans with a red belt. The woman is on the right, wearing a grey jacket and blue jeans. They are both looking down at their hands.

# Bible Principles That Guide Dating

- How close is too close?
  - Anything that increases temptation is too close.
  - Too often, youth and purity are robbed because our modern dating practices put young people in a position where they engage in behaviors that create regrets that last for the rest of their lives
  - Ecc. 11:9 - 12:1 - “Rejoice, O young man, in your youth, And let your heart cheer you in the days of your youth; Walk in the ways of your heart, And in the sight of your eyes; But know that for all these God will bring you into judgment. Therefore remove sorrow from your heart, And put away evil from your flesh, For childhood and youth are vanity. 12:1 Remember now your Creator in the days of your youth...”

A photograph of a couple holding hands, symbolizing partnership and commitment. The image is dark and serves as a background for the text.

## What Are Young Christians Supposed To Do?

- A difficult environment for Christians: Hyper-sexualized culture
- One should consider this the second most important decision in life
- It should be treated as the one chance we get for a lifelong partner



## What Are Young Christians Supposed To Do?

- Godly parents can be a wonderful source of help and safety
  - Parents, you are accountable for your involvement
  - Young people, be humble enough to trust that they have your best interest at heart and that you are limited in your own experience

A photograph of a couple holding hands, with the image dimmed to serve as a background for text. The couple is shown from the waist down, wearing casual clothing like jeans and jackets. The background is a soft-focus outdoor setting.

# Who Should I Date?

- Does he or she support your desire to remain a faithful Christian?
  - A good test of this is does he or she press you for more intimate activity
  - You deserve better than someone who is working to undermine your faithfulness to God.



A photograph of a couple holding hands, with the image dimmed to serve as a background for text. The couple is shown from the waist down, wearing jeans and jackets. The person on the left is wearing a brown jacket and a colorful belt, while the person on the right is wearing a grey jacket. They are holding hands in the center of the frame.

# Who Should I Date?

- How well do you communicate with each other?
  - One sided? Honest? How do they talk to you?
  - How much do you trust them with what you say?

A photograph of a man and a woman holding hands, overlaid with a semi-transparent dark grey box containing text. The man is on the left, wearing a brown jacket and blue jeans. The woman is on the right, wearing a grey jacket and blue jeans. The background is a blurred outdoor setting.

# Who Should I Date?

- Does this person have a prayerful, submissive attitude towards God?
  - Men: would your girlfriend qualify according to Proverbs 31:10-31?
  - Does she dress modestly - 1Peter 3:5?
  - Is her conduct consistent with 1Timothy 2:9-15 and Titus 2:4-5?

A photograph of a couple holding hands, with the text overlaid. The couple is wearing casual clothing, including jackets and jeans. The background is slightly blurred, suggesting an outdoor setting.

# Who Should I Date?

- Women: will your boyfriend love you as Christ loves the church - Ephesians 5:25?
  - Or as he loves his own flesh - Ephesians 5:28-29?
  - Will he live in an understanding way with you - 1Peter 3:7?

A photograph of a couple holding hands, with the image dimmed to serve as a background for text. The couple is shown from the waist down, wearing jackets and jeans. The background is a blurred cityscape.

# Who Should I Date?

- Do you both understand the permanence of marriage?  
— Matt. 19:4-9

A photograph of a couple holding hands, with the text overlaid on the image. The couple is wearing jackets and jeans, and the background is slightly blurred.

# How To Act During The Relationship

- Be aware of the ever-present danger of fornication
  - 1Cor. 7:9 - “But if they cannot exercise self-control, let them marry. For it is better to marry than to burn with passion.”
  - The stronger a relationship grows, the more difficult it is to maintain self-control.
  - Boundaries must be established in advance



# How To Act During The Relationship

- Where should the boundary be? None is explicitly given in Scripture
  - Matt. 5:27-30 - “You have heard that it was said to those of old, You shall not commit adultery. 28 But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart. 29 If your right eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and cast it from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell. 30 And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and cast it from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell.”

A photograph of a couple holding hands, with the text overlaid on the image. The couple is seen from the waist down, wearing jeans and jackets. The background is a soft, out-of-focus outdoor setting.

## Some Things That Should Be Considered:

- What experiences are special to me now and will be remembered as special later?
- What if we break up? What memories of our conduct would cause me embarrassment and shame?
- How would I feel if someone I was dating had done this thing previously with another? Would I think less of them?
- If the relationship does not work out, would what I have done do harm to a future relationship?
- Will I feel guilt and shame over this thing? How would I feel if word of this got to my family, friends, fellow Christians?
- How will my relationship with God be impacted if I do this thing?