

Sex, Dating, and Relationships: God's Design

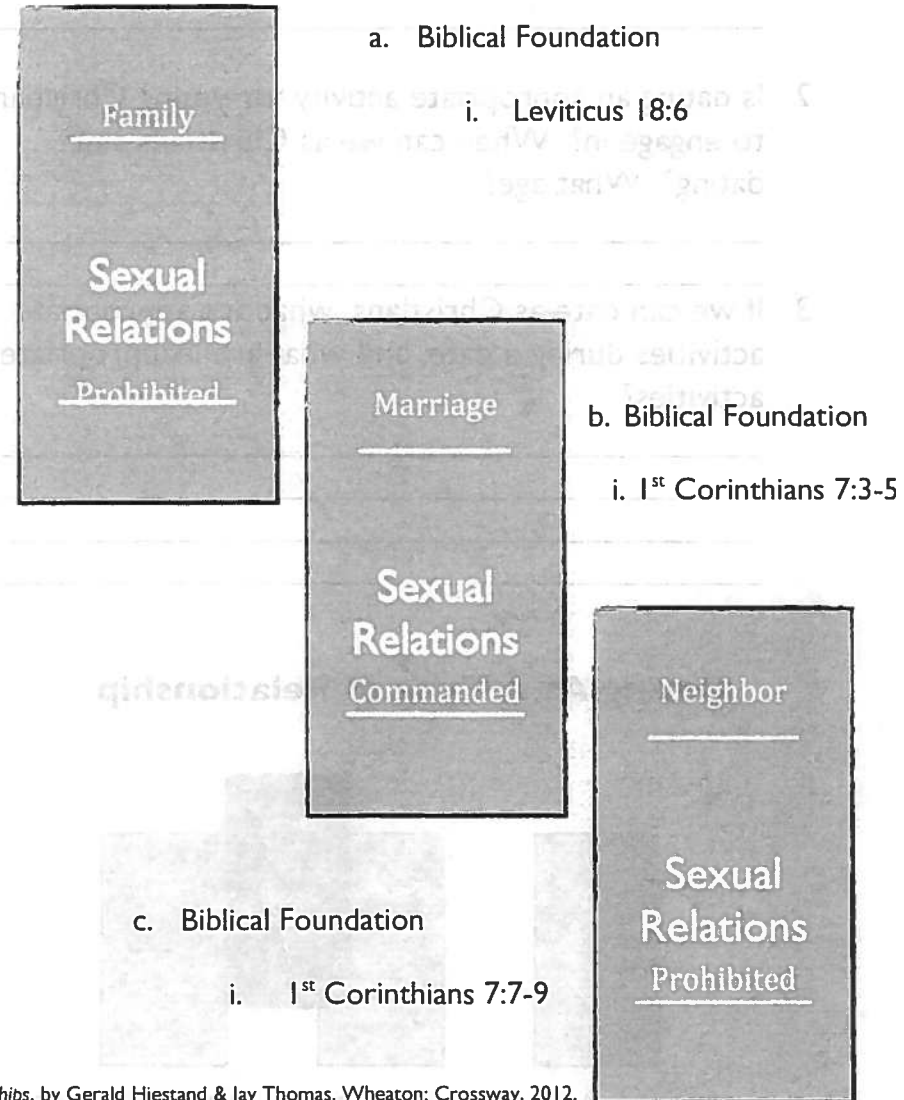
– Gerald Hiestand & Jay Thomas

Sex and Marriage

3 Different Male-Female Relationships

1. God created sex, and it is good!
 - a. Biblical Foundation
 - i. Genesis 1:28
 - ii. Genesis 2:18-24
2. As God's image bearers, our primary purpose is to be His ambassadors to the world; to spread His name and expand His kingdom.
 - a. Biblical Foundation
 - i. Genesis 1:26
3. God created marriage as a type, or visible image, which foreshadows, Christ and the Church
 - a. Biblical Foundation
 - i. Ephesians 5:24-32

“God created the physical oneness of sex [in marriage] to serve as a visible image, or type, of the spiritual union that exists between Christ and the church.”



* This lesson series is based upon the interpretation and theological framework laid out in the book: *Sex, Dating, and Relationships*, by Gerald Hiestand & Jay Thomas. Wheaton: Crossway, 2012.

Sex, Dating, and Relationships: Dating?

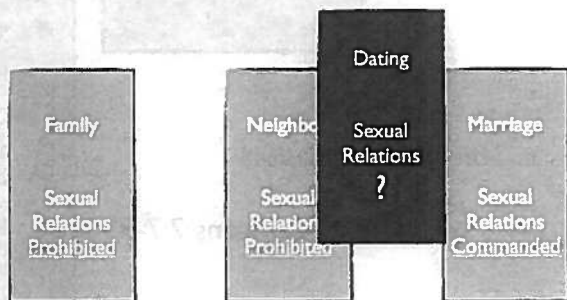
Dating Discussion

1. How do you define "dating"?

2. Is dating an appropriate activity for young Christians to engage in? When can we as Christians start dating? What age?

3. If we can date as Christians, what are appropriate activities during a date, and what are inappropriate activities?

Dating As A Type of Relationship



Historical Background

1. Dating was originally defined as an activity that two people engaged in rather than a category of relationship. For example, two people might "go on a date".
2. The modern concept of dating refers to a guy and a girl as something they *are*. It is used to distinguish romantic relationships from non-romantic relationships.

Houston, We Have A Problem

"The problem with this shift is that we have created *apart from scripture*, a fourth type of male-female relationship...and there is potential for great confusion, because when we invent our own category of male-female relationship, we are forced to invent our own invite our own purity guidelines for that category."

- Gerald Hiestand and Jay Thomas

So Is Dating Biblical?

1. Strictly speaking, dating as an activity, or dating as a type of relationship, is never discussed in the Bible.
2. Dating can be engaged in Biblically, as long as we view it as a sub-category of the neighbor relationship, and not as a stand-alone *type of relationship*.
3. If we view dating this way, then dating would have the same restrictions as the neighbor relationship!!!

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Sex, Dating, and Relationships: Biblical Dating

The Dating Illusion

1. The so called commitment people make to each other in a dating relationship can end *at any time*, and *for any reason*.
2. “Unlike the dating relationship, the commitment and exclusivity of marriage is involuntary. Marriage entails certain obligations and responsibilities that are irrevocable.”

- Gerald Hiestand and Jay Thomas
3. The dating relationship has the *appearance of security* and stability, but it lacks any true means of achieving it. There is no *real commitment* until engagement and marriage.
4. Young Women – GUARD YOUR HEARTS. If he doesn't put your interests ahead of his own, and isn't a Godly man, then *do not open your heart to him*. Remember that the security you feel when you're on a date with a young man is ultimately *just an illusion*. Until he's asked you to marry him, and fully intends on marrying you, he isn't really committed to you.
5. Young Men - Remember that she's your neighbor, not your wife. These are the daughters of God, made in His image, and deserve a husband who will love them as Christ loves the Church. Until you're married to her, *she isn't yours*, and you aren't hers.

Dating Friendships – Exploring the Possibility of Marriage

- I. Maintain the boundaries of the neighbor relationship:
 - a. No sexual contact. Period. This includes heavy physical contact or open mouthed kissing, because activities like these *are sexual*, and push us towards sexual intercourse.
 - b. Get accountability.
 - c. Avoid alone time.
 - d. Be outward facing (group dating).
 - e. Begin at the right time. Don't start a dating friendship until marriage is a realistic possibility for you, either immediately or in the near (within the next couple years) future. This means you shouldn't start the activity of dating until your junior year.
 - f. Keep it short, and make a beeline to the altar.
2. Clear Communication - If you have no intentions of marrying this person, then you shouldn't start a dating friendship with them. Period.

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THE DEFINITION OF A DATING FRIENDSHIP

- Dating Friendship - “Two friends getting to know each other with a view towards marriage.” - Gerald Hiestand and Jay Thomas
- A dating friendship is just like a regular friendship, in every respect, except you will be going on *dates* in order to explore this person’s personality and determine whether they are an appropriate candidate for marriage.
- As we’ve stated before, dating should be viewed as an activity, rather than a type of relationship.