

# God's wisdom for dating

## 1. Biblical lessons for finding a spouse?

*Proverbs 30:18–19* “There are three things that are too amazing for me, four that I do not understand: <sup>19</sup> the way of an eagle in the sky, the way of a snake on a rock, the way of a ship on the high seas, and the way of a man with a maiden.

## 2. Assumptions and observations

## 3. What are the biblical principles?

### i) We are made for marriage.

#### a) Creation

*Genesis 1:26–28 (ESV)* — <sup>26</sup> Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.” <sup>27</sup> So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. <sup>28</sup> And God blessed them. And God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.”

*Genesis 2:18–24 (ESV)* — <sup>18</sup> Then the LORD God said, “It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him.” ... But for Adam there was not found a helper fit for him. <sup>21</sup> So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. <sup>22</sup> And the rib that the LORD God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. <sup>23</sup> Then the man said, “This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.” <sup>24</sup> Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.

#### b) Christ

Matthew 22:30

*Ephesians 5:29–32 (ESV)* — <sup>29</sup> For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church, <sup>30</sup> because we are members of his body. <sup>31</sup> “Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.” <sup>32</sup> This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church.

#### c) Consummation

*Revelation 21:1–3 (ESV)* — <sup>1</sup> Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. <sup>2</sup> And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her

husband. <sup>3</sup> And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God.

**Matthew 19:10–12 (ESV)** — <sup>10</sup> The disciples said to him, “If such is the case of a man with his wife, it is better not to marry.” <sup>11</sup> But he said to them, “Not everyone can receive this saying, but only those to whom it is given. <sup>12</sup> For there are eunuchs who have been so from birth, and there are eunuchs who have been made eunuchs by men, and there are eunuchs who have made themselves eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of heaven. Let the one who is able to receive this receive it.”

**1 Corinthians 7:7 (ESV)** — <sup>7</sup> I wish that all were as I myself am. But each has his own gift from God, one of one kind and one of another.

## ii) Sex and marriage go together

**Genesis 2:22–25 (ESV)** — <sup>22</sup> And the rib that the LORD God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. <sup>23</sup> Then the man said, “This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.” <sup>24</sup> Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. <sup>25</sup> And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed.

**1 Corinthians 6:18 (ESV)** — <sup>18</sup> Flee from sexual immorality. Every other sin a person commits is outside the body, but the sexually immoral person sins against his own body.

**1 Corinthians 7:3–5 (ESV)** — <sup>3</sup> The husband should give to his wife her conjugal rights, and likewise the wife to her husband. <sup>4</sup> For the wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does. Likewise the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does. <sup>5</sup> Do not deprive one another, except perhaps by agreement for a limited time, that you may devote yourselves to prayer; but then come together again, so that Satan may not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.

cf.

**1 Corinthians 7:8–9 (ESV)** — <sup>8</sup> To the unmarried and the widows I say that it is good for them to remain single, as I am. <sup>9</sup> But if they cannot exercise self-control, they should marry. For it is better to marry than to burn with passion.

*“Will this relationship help me and the person that I’m dating to grow in our love for Jesus and in our godliness and holiness?”*

**1 Corinthians 7:39 (ESV)** — <sup>39</sup> A wife is bound to her husband as long as he lives. But if her husband dies, she is free to be married to whom she wishes, only in the Lord.

#### 4. The cultural context of dating

- i) Marriage is a social construct
- ii) Sex is an appetite
- iii) Sex and dating are synonymous
- iv) The mobile phone has changed the dating experience
- v) Porn affects dating whether you like or not
- vi) We cannot comprehend how rampantly individualistic we have been trained to be

#### 5. Getting practical: Who, when, and how?

##### i) Who should you date?

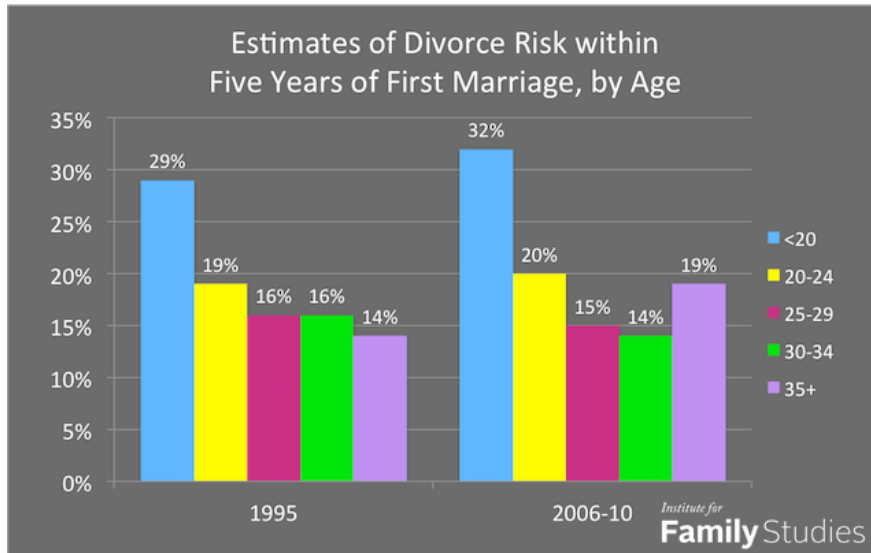
***Galatians 5:22–23 (ESV)*** — <sup>22</sup> *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,* <sup>23</sup> *gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.*

“Will dating them be good for them and for me in loving and following Jesus?”

##### ii) When should you date?

- a) Be careful if you're young!

From: <https://ifstudies.org/blog/want-to-avoid-divorce-wait-to-get-married-but-not-too-long>



b) Beware of dating when you're vulnerable

c) Have the DTR conversation!

### iii) How should you date?

*Date as a follower of Jesus. Marriage is the goal, but it probably won't happen!*

#### a) Marriage is the goal:

Marshall Segal (*Not Yet Married*) – His goals for marriage:

1. May we enjoy God more than anyone or anything else, including each other (Ps. 16:11).
2. May we pray and pray and pray (Matt. 6:9-13).
3. May we have and raise joyful, godly children, if God wills (Ps. 127:3-4).
4. May we be bold ambassadors for the gospel wherever we go and always be winning worshipers for him (2 Cor. 5:20).
5. May we meet God together regularly in his Word (Ps. 19:7-10).
6. May we make our home a safe, inviting, and life-giving place for others (Rom. 12:13).
7. May we be a blessing to the families God has given to us (Eph. 6:1-3).
8. May we find ways to learn from marriages more mature than ours and to invest in marriages younger than ours (Eph. 5:18-25).
9. May we live worthy of the gospel, cultivating shorter cycles of correction, confession, repentance, forgiveness, and reconciliation (Heb. 3:12-13).
10. May we develop, enjoy, guard, and model a healthy and pure sex life (Phil. 2:3-5).
11. May we maintain a healthy rhythm of rest, knowing that God loves us and runs the world (Ps. 127:1-2).
12. May we always love and invest in the local church (Heb. 10:24-25).
13. May we disciple younger men and women and raise up leaders for God's church (2 Tim. 2:1-2).
14. May we support God's global cause through world missions (Ps. 67:3-4).

15. May we hold what we have loosely and overflow freely in generosity (2 Cor. 9:7–8).
16. May we sing (Ps. 5:11).
17. May we never stop pursuing each other, striving to know and serve each other faithfully and creatively (Rom. 12:10).

How does aiming for a Christian marriage shape the way you date?

BUT remember:

- 1) An invitation to coffee is not a marriage proposal.
- 2) Analysis and trust don't go together

**b) It probably won't happen:**

- Treat each other with absolute purity

*1 Timothy 5:1–2 (ESV) — <sup>1</sup> Do not rebuke an older man but encourage him as you would a father, younger men as brothers, <sup>2</sup> older women as mothers, younger women as sisters, in all purity.*

- Flee sexual immorality (1Cor 6:18)
- Dealing with a history of porn
- Choose to create some space (handle your phone differently)

**c) How should you end it?**

**6. CONCLUSION**

Date as followers of Jesus. Date as if marriage is the goal and date as if it probably won't happen.