

"Get Prequalified—Finding a Mate"

Genesis 24; 29

I. Introduction

- A. Dating is a relatively new practice—less than 100 years old
- B. Added to the complications of the dating process is the phenomenon of online dating
 - 1. 40 percent of singles have dated someone they met online
 - 2. 25 percent of singles have dated someone their friends introduced them to
- C. There are no dating texts in the Bible
- D. Some Christians disagree strongly with the dating process and are proponents of courtship
- E. There are, however, biblical examples of people engaged in the process of finding a mate
- F. A smart home comes from smart dating

II. Separation (Genesis 24:5-7)

- A. Abraham sent a matchmaker to find a wife for his son from Abraham's own family (see v. 3)
 - 1. The Canaanite belief system was not part of the covenant God made with Abraham
 - 2. Paul mentioned this principle in 2 Corinthians 6:14: "Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers"
 - a. The farmer would find two animals that could work together to pull a plow
 - b. A mismatch leads to two people headed in two different directions
 - c. Believers and unbelievers have opposing masters, worldviews, sources of wisdom, aims in life, and eternal destinies
 - d. If a child of God marries a child of the Devil, they're going to have problems with their in-laws
- B. Courtship and marriage are not a private matter
 - 1. When people date, they first need to take a step toward God and then a step toward others
 - a. Step toward God first
 - i. Psalm 127:1
 - ii. Luke 10:27
 - iii. You won't be able to love another person well if you don't love the Lord more
 - b. Step toward other people

- i. Lean hard on people who know you best, who love you most, and who will be honest enough to tell you when you're wrong
 - ii. Invite others into the relationship—couples need honest, courageous people who won't be afraid to speak up
 - 2. Dating, by its very nature, is isolating
 - 3. As a couple grows closer to each other, they grow further away from people who were, at one point, very significant in their lives
- III. Supplication (Genesis 24:12-21)
- A. The whole process should be covered in prayer
 - 1. The chapter begins in prayer when Abraham placed his servant under oath before God not to find a wife for his son from the Canaanites (see vv. 2-4)
 - 2. The chapter continues with the servant's specific prayer (see vv. 12-14)
 - 3. The chapter closes in prayer as Isaac meditated in the field (see v. 63); *meditate* is best translated *to seek the Lord in solitude*
 - B. A lifelong commitment involves lifelong ramifications; praying and inviting God into that relationship should be the priority
 - 1. Pray together; praying immediately raises the dating relationship to the spiritual level—the best level
 - 2. When you pray with someone, you receive immediate insight into their relationship with God
 - 3. What role does God play in your relationship?
- IV. Selectivity (Genesis 29:9-12, 15-17)
- A. There is no perfect person, but there is a perfect person for you
 - B. What attracts us to each other?
 - 1. Love mapping: the genetic answer to why we are attracted to certain physical or nonphysical characteristics
 - 2. According to Helen Fisher, the issue with love at first sight brings up the speculation of biological origin to this phenomenon; another issue is that the infatuation phase of a relationship lasts four years or less
 - 3. Proverbs 31:30
 - C. Choose well—be discriminating and careful
 - 1. The advice of others should be taken into consideration, but that shouldn't be the deciding factor
 - 2. Make the right choice for you, not for others
- V. Sacrifice (Genesis 29:18-19)
- A. Jacob was willing to wait for his bride (see v. 20)
 - 1. The seven years gave Jacob the chance to get to know her and her family
 - 2. It ensured that the relationship was not based solely on pheromones and hormones

- B. Every relationship requires sacrifice: you sacrifice your independence, self-will, personal activities, solo plans, spending money on certain things, and spending time on certain things
 - C. Be willing to sacrifice the back door: divorce
 - D. If you go from dating to mating, you seal the back door
- VI. Stamina (Genesis 29:21-28)
- A. "Love suffers long" (1 Corinthians 13:4)
 - B. Deciding too quickly or rebounding too quickly is dangerous
 - C. It's much easier to get into a relationship than it is to have to live through a relationship
 - D. The risk of marital failure is reduced notably by longer dating periods
 - E. A Kansas State University study concluded that "a strong correlation between the length of time spent dating their current spouses and marital satisfaction can be seen"
- VII. Conclusion
- A. Christians are referred to as the bride of Christ (see Ephesians 5:22-33)
 - B. Relational language, not religious language, is used
 - C. God wants to be the central part of your life

Figures referenced: Helen Fisher

Cross references: Psalm 127:1; Proverbs 31:30; Luke 10:27; 1 Corinthians 13:4; 2 Corinthians 6:14; Ephesians 5:22-33

Topic: dating

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