

**Anoka, Minnesota
Young People's Meetings
December 28 –31, 2002**

The #1 Priority

ONLY GOD CAN MEET A PERSON'S TOTAL NEEDS – IN MARRIAGE OR OUT OF IT!

This means that you ought to be continually growing in your relationship with the Lord.

Question: Are you maturing as a Christian in the following areas?

Answer: Yes or No.

- A. _____ Putting priority on daily time alone with God. Psalm 5:3.
- B. _____ Talking freely to others about Christ. Mark 5:19.
- C. _____ Being sensitive to sin in your life and dealing with it. Psalm 66:18; 1 John 1:9.
- D. _____ Increasing in obedience to the Word of God. 1 Samuel 15:22; John 14:21-23.

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DATING

In our society dating is generally the beginning of the process that leads up to mate selection and marriage. Thus it is wise to think through motives and standards for dating and arrive at principles that will guide you as a Christian.

Why Date?

Select from the list below what you think to be good purposes for dating. Check the ones you choose.

- A. ____ Getting to know people of varied types, gifts and backgrounds.
- B. ____ Gaining sex experience through experimentation.
- C. ____ Developing quality relationships with the opposite sex.
- D. ____ Discovering what your needs are for a mate.
- E. ____ Acquiring as many ego-building romantic relationships as possible.
- F. ____ Influencing the other person (and vice versa) in such a way that both of you will mature in Christ.

Whom to date.

It has been said that one ought not to seriously date a person he or she would not marry.

1. Read 2 Corinthians 6:14-18. What is the strong command given in verse 14?
2. When a person becomes a Christian, he or she receives a new nature, one that wants to please God. His or her old nature is to be denied while the new nature should be fed and thus grow in Christ. See 2 Peter 1:4; 1 Corinthians 2:12-14; Romans 6:11-16.

A non-Christian has only one nature – the unredeemed nature that cannot please God.

The marriage of a Christian to a non-Christian joins two people together who can relate only on the basis of the one nature they share in common – the old one!

What problems for the partners and their children can you foresee in such a marriage?

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How to date.

The best goal to have in all your actions in life is found in 1 Corinthians 10:31, "Do all to the glory of God."

1. State briefly how this principle can affect a dating relationship.
2. What exhortation was given to Timothy in 1 Timothy 5:2 for his relationship with the opposite sex? See also 1 Timothy 4:12; 5:22.
3. Read Genesis 26:6-11 and note the action that betrayed Isaac's attempt to pass off Rebecca as his sister.
 - What was this action? _____
 - If someone were to observe your normal dating behavior what conclusions would they draw?
 - _____ That you are brother and sister
 - _____ That you have more than a casual interest in one another
 - _____ That you are married
 - _____ That you belong to Christ
4. Dating as Christians involves being an example to each other in Christ-likeness.
 - A. What principle from the life of Jesus is given in Mark 10:45?
 - B. State how you think this principle can be applied to your dating responsibilities.
 - C. How would 1 Corinthians 6:18; 7:1 and 1 Thessalonians 5:22 apply to your dating responsibilities?

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Preparing For Marriage

1. Is marriage for everyone? Read 1 Corinthians 7.

The scriptures contain clear teaching about marriage and family life. There are no pat answers, no simple formulas; but when one follows the instructions and principles given by God (who ordained marriage in the first place), then it is possible to prepare for the kind of relationships which give personal fulfillment and provide a solid, happy and well-functioning family unit.

See what insight you can gain from the following passages concerning the institution of marriage.

2. Read Genesis 2:18-25. Give particular thought to verses 18, 23 and 24 and then answer the following questions.

A. Who said that it was not good that man should not be alone?

B. Loneliness is the first thing that God said was “not good”. What did God do about it?

C. What do you understand the word, “help meet” to mean?

D. The following statements relate to verse 24. Check those you agree with.

- _____ Under God, a man is to assume independent responsibility for his wife.
- _____ God designed marriage to be a permanent union.
- _____ Each partner in the marriage is complete in herself/himself.

3. The book of Proverbs contains a collection of inspired wise sayings about the whole of life.

A. What does Proverbs 18:22 say about the choice of a wife?

B. What further insight can be gained from Proverbs 19:14?

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EVALUATION

On a scale of 1 for good, 2 for fair, and 3 for poor, evaluate the following to use in considering marriage.

- A. _____ Counsel of those who know you best, especially your parents.
- B. _____ Prayer.
- C. _____ My life purpose.
- D. _____ Family pressure or desires.
- E. _____ Timing
 - 1. _____ Age
 - 2. _____ Schooling
 - 3. _____ Finances
 - 4. _____ My maturity
 - 5. _____ Maturity of potential mate.
 - 6. _____ Desire to live for Christ.
 - 7. _____ Home situation and responsibilities.
- F. _____ Honest recognition of my desires.

APPLICATION.

According to God marriage is for life! That's serious because more than just two people are involved. Your life touches many people. No wonder then that the Bible stresses the importance of making right decisions.

- **Decide to do God's will regarding marriage.**
- **Decide if you should marry.** More important than the right to get married is the right to follow God's will. He has your best in mind.
- **Decide whom you should marry – the right one in God's plan.** While Adam slept in the will of God , He brought him a partner. Pray for your prospective partner now.
- **Decide when you should marry.** Be sure you know God's will on timing. There should not be a sense of hurry or rush. If it is real, it will keep. Trust God for this.

1. If you anticipate marrying some day, what area of your life do you think you need to work on to be prepared for marriage?
2. How do you plan to do this?
3. Have someone help you on this. Whom do you plan to ask?