



Scripture: Genesis 2:15-25, John 6:35

Hey everyone! I'm so excited to dive into this conversation with you today. We're going to talk about something that is on most of your minds at some point: dating. Dating is a huge part of our culture, whether it's through social media, school, or just hearing about it in movies and songs. But here's the big question: *What is the purpose of dating?*

Maybe you've never really thought about it, or maybe you assume dating is just something people do because it's fun, exciting, or because everyone else is doing it. But today, I want to challenge you to think deeper. What if dating isn't just about having a boyfriend or girlfriend? What if there is a greater purpose behind dating? That's what we're going to explore together.

Before we go any further, let's take a moment to pray and ask God to guide our conversation today.

[\[Pray here.\]](#)

Here's something that might surprise you: the concept of dating doesn't exist in the Bible. The way we think about dating today (going out, talking to different people, swiping left or right on an app) wasn't how things worked in biblical times.

When we look at biblical marriages, we see that families had a massive role in choosing a spouse for their child. Now let me ask you something, how many of you would trust your mom to pick out your future wife/husband? You are probably terrified at that thought. It's possible your mom has already tried to set you up with someone you have no interest in.

But in biblical culture, the focus was not on attraction or surface-level qualities. Instead, parents and families were deeply concerned with the potential spouse's character, faith, and their ability to provide a stable future. These qualities were seen as the foundation of a strong and lasting marriage. They asked questions like: Does this person fear the Lord? Are they faithful? Are they trustworthy? Will they lead and love their spouse well?

Now, once they had found a match and it was agreed upon, the couple would get engaged. This engagement was sealed with a ring and a formal contract. It did not look like the proposal videos many of us have seen through social media, but it was certainly significant. After this, the groom would often leave and go and prepare a home for his bride. This is so crazy because this usually took a year but could actually take longer. It was an act of love and service that he was preparing a place for their future family.

Now, keep in mind they didn't have cellphones or easy ways of communicating. So, the bride-to-be would blindly wait not knowing what day he could return. She was simply waited. And when the time came when the groom returned for his bride, there would be a joyous procession leading to the wedding ceremony. After this, they would officially begin life together.

Now, let's compare that to how relationships often begin today. What do most people prioritize when they consider dating someone? Think about the conversations you've had or even your own experiences. I've had students excitedly tell me that they've started dating someone, and when I ask what they like about the person, the responses are almost always the same: "They're really nice, super sweet, funny, and fun to be around." If they are honest with me, they may even tell me that they think the person is "cute" or "hot."

There's nothing wrong with those qualities, but do you notice something missing? How about faith, character, and a relationship with Jesus? These things rarely make the first cut when students describe what they look for in a boyfriend or girlfriend. Sometimes I even raise this with students, and I ask about the other person's faith. Often there is a long pause or a sheepish grin. Then they say, "Well... they're not against going to church or Christianity."

Does any of this sound familiar to you or to conversations you have had?

Think about how relationships often start today. Typically, it's quick and based on a first impression or attraction. Maybe it's a glance across the room, a DM, a Snapchat, or just scrolling through someone's profile thinking, *They're cute, so I want to get to know them.* Before we know it, we're drawn in by the person's looks or how they make us feel.

Now let me be clear about something, I am not saying that it is bad to have butterflies or be physically attracted to the person you are interested in having a relationship with. In fact, I think those are great things. But that does not mean it should be the main thing.

Let's take a deeper look at the way the Bible approaches relationships and how our culture approaches dating. Open our Bibles to **Genesis 2:15-25 (NIV)**

The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it. And the Lord God commanded the man, "You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat from it you will certainly die."

The Lord God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him."

Now the Lord God had formed out of the ground all the wild animals and all the birds in the sky. He brought them to the man to see what he would name them; and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name. So the man gave names to all the livestock, the birds in the sky and all the wild animals. But for Adam no suitable helper was found.

So the Lord God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man's ribs and then closed up the place with flesh. Then the Lord God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man.

The man said, "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called 'woman,' for she was taken out of man."

That is why a man leaves his father and mother and is united to his wife, and they become one flesh. Adam and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame.

This passage is significant because it gives us God's original design for relationships and marriage. Notice a few key things here: God created Adam with purpose before bringing Eve into his life. Adam was already walking with God, working, and fulfilling his calling before God provided a wife for him. Now God saw that Adam needed a partner and so He intentionally created Eve. Adam and Eve were uniquely suited for each

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