



Dating seems like it is unavoidable in high school, but is it? Should we seek after a significant other? When do we know that we are ready to go out on a date or enter into a serious relationship? The world of dating as a teenager is really confusing, and sadly, it doesn't get any easier as you get older.

Dating is difficult. It's difficult because it involves two broken people entering into a relationship that more than likely will end up broken off. Broken people create broken relationships that result in breaking up.

The hope for this series is not just to warn students about the perils of dating, but to provide them with an understanding of what it means to date as a Christian. This is coming from an angle that it is probably not best for students to date in high school—BUT, they you do date, then there is a right way and a wrong way to navigate a relationship.

## OUTLINE

DATE	TOPIC	SCRIPTURE
	Before the First Date <i>When am I ready to date?</i>	Mark 12:30 Matthew 6:33
	The Intended Destination <i>What's the point of dating?</i>	Matthew 22:34–40 Philippians 2:3–4
	Chuck the Checklist <i>How do I know he/she is the "one?"</i>	Hebrews 12:1–3

## PRAYER

*Father, grant these students clarity of mind and heart as they seek to invest in the kingdom of God before everything else. May their hearts fall more in love with who you are and what you have done for them. Holy Spirit, reveal to each student that they are complete in Christ and in no one else. We love you and want you glorified and honored through the teaching of your Word. In the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.*



## **SERIES INTRODUCTION**

Have you ever heard the phrase, “You’re my better half”? Or how about the quote from the movie *Jerry Maguire*, “You complete me”?

Have you ever thought about what those phrases are really saying? Someone is saying that they are completely and totally incomplete without that other person. Wow! Well, what happens if you never find that better half? What about people who are single their whole life? Are they incomplete?

I would hope that we all answer those questions with a resounding “no,” yet we act like we are desperately searching for another person to complete us.

If you believe that you are incomplete without your “better half” to snuggle up close to, then dating and even marriage is going to be a rude awakening for you. It’s not that this whole idea of a “better half” is wrong, but you might be looking for the wrong other half. Let me explain.

You are right that you are incomplete. Each of us have at some point felt this, and we have attempted to satisfy it—maybe by buying something, dating someone, or even doing something. We feel incomplete, which causes us to have restless feelings and to seek to satisfy desires within us in the hopes that we will finally feel complete.

Everyone is incomplete. Knowing you are incomplete isn’t wrong, but you *are* wrong when you attempt to find wholeness in another person. St. Augustine wrote, “You have made us for yourself, O Lord, and our hearts are restless until they rest in you.” We were made to find wholeness in Christ, not in another person.

Colossians 2:10 says, “*You have been filled in him, who is the head of all rule and authority.*” You have been filled, meaning you were empty or incomplete. Another version translates Colossians 2:10 this way: “*In Christ you have been brought to fullness ...*” In Christ, you have been made full, you have been made complete.

Your better half is not a person, but Jesus Christ.

If your hope is in another person to complete you, then what happens when that person walks out your life? What happens when that person dies? What happens when that person isn't as great as you think they are? Your completion can only be found in a relationship with Jesus Christ, not in anyone else.

This is a dating series. So what does finding your completion in Christ have to do with dating? Before the first date, you need to find your completion in Christ. You have a lot of preparation to do before the first date.

## **BEFORE THE FIRST DATE**

We have a lot to do before we think about going on the first date. Whether you are a guy or a girl, you have your checklist. For example:

### GIRLS

Buy a new dress  
Do my makeup  
Get my hair done  
Shave my legs  
Try on outfits  
Ask my friends for help

### GUYS

Take a shower  
Don't forget to wear pants

It's funny, but that is scary-close to reality. We can think through some ways to prepare for your first date physically, but we are not just talking about any kind of dating. We are talking about Christian dating, and before the first date, you need to prepare spiritually. Here is what that outline looks like:

### When am I ready to date?

- When you love God most.
- When you seek Him first.
- When you have accountability in community.

## **WHEN AM I READY TO DATE?**

The main question that I want to answer for you all during this talk is the one that I hear the most: *when am I ready to date?* I hear this from many students. Even parents will come up to me and ask me, “When do you think it's smart for teenagers to start dating?” \*cough\* Never. \*cough\*

For some of you, your parents have told you that you can’t date until [fill in the blank], and if that is the case, then you need to trust in their wisdom and honor them. They have given you an answer for when you are ready, so don’t invent your own.

But if you have more freedom than that, you might be asking that question—*when am I ready to date?*—right now.

Well, we are always so quick to get dating advice from our friends, our parents, and even our mentors. But have you ever asked yourself, “What does *God* think about dating?” If God has created us and designed relationships for us, don’t you think He should have a small part in this conversation?

There is a way to do dating right and to not end up with a bunch of scars and broken hearts.

## **YOU ARE READY TO DATE WHEN YOU LOVE GOD MOST.**

The first question to ask about dating is the same question to ask about life: what do you love? You are only ready to date when you can say that you love God most.

### **Mark 12:30**

*And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.*

You will not truly love anyone else if you do not love God first and most. And no one will truly love you if they do not love God more than they love you. The first step toward your first date should always be the step of faith we make toward our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

The command to love the Lord your God is calling you to make a personal commitment to Him. It is wholehearted and comprehensive. We are called to love God with our:

- HEART – the control center of our body (emotions and feelings).
- SOUL – the essence of who you are.
- MIND – your thinking.

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