

Relationships from the Christian Perspective

by Michael S. Slocum

- I. **Our Role and Responsibilities as Young Adults – to become the complete *person* God intended**
 - a. Spiritual Maturity
 - i. Our role as a Christian
 - ii. Our role as a son or daughter
 - b. Physical Maturity
 - i. Becoming a man or woman
 - c. Mental Maturity
 - i. Developing those skills necessary to function in your role as an adult
 1. husband - father – spiritual head of the household - provider
 2. wife – mother – helpmate - provider
 - d. Our time should be spent taking care of our development according to God’s plan – we are not in a position to offer anything to another until we take care of ourselves
 - e. Are you mature enough to withstand peer pressure? In the area of dating?
- II. **The Transition to Adulthood – when are you ready to be an adult and have a mate?**
 - a. When does it happen?
 - i. Maturity
 - ii. Responsibility
 - iii. Accountability

b. What does it mean?

- i. You are ready to fulfill all the roles in God's plan for you
- ii. You are ready to be responsible for your life
- iii. You are ready to be responsible for the lives of others (wife – husband – children)

III. Love

1 Cor 13: 1-13

13 Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal. 2 And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. 3 And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing. 4 Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; 5 does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; 6 does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; 7 bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. 8 Love never fails. But whether there are prophecies, they will fail; whether there are tongues, they will cease; whether there is knowledge, it will vanish away. 9 For we know in part and we prophesy in part. 10 But when that which is perfect has come, then that which is in part will be done away. 11 When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things. 12 For now we see in

a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known. 13 And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love.

a. The Heart is deceitful

i. Jer 17:9

9 "The heart is deceitful above all things, And desperately wicked; Who can know it?

ii. Your heart does not find love for you

iii. The passions of your youth do not represent God's will for you unless you have *sought* his will for you AND he has responded

b. Love has nothing to do with lust – you can lust for someone you do not love

c. You do NOT need to go find your mate – God will provide as He does all things

d. Trial and Error Experimentation is detrimental to you and your future mate

i. It is sin (spiritual damage)

ii. STDs

iii. Emotional and physical damage

iv. That boy or girl is more than likely someone ELSE'S intended

v. How many men do you want your future wife with before you meet her?

vi. How many woman do you want your future husband with before you meet him?

e. Love is a decision not a feeling

- i. Are you capable and responsible enough to keep any commitments you make?

IV. What To Do With the Opposite Sex

- a. Be friends and hold each other accountable
 - i. Establish relationships based on philial love
 - ii. Spend time in groups or with families
- b. Develop your Christian faith with your friends
- c. Develop your personality
- d. Understand your interests and passions
- e. Mature your ability to interact with others – different personalities, interests, temperaments, etc
- f. Pray for God’s will in this area
 - i. It is certainly possible that you become friends with a boy or girl that you may marry – but do it right

V. Purity

- a. Emotional
 - i. Keep yourself from forming connections that are erotic in nature – save that as a gift for your spouse
 - ii. Damaged emotional purity causes problems in the future if not sooner
 - iii. Protect the words that you use with each other – even words can cause loss of emotional purity
- b. Physical
 - i. Keep your purity intact as a gift for your future spouse
 - 1. Hand holding or other erotic touching
 - 2. Kissing
 - 3. Any sexual act – yes, any

- VI. Courting – a public affair usually involving family approval and participation – a period before engagement and marriage where the couple gets to know each other platonically with an intention towards marriage**
- a. This is not dating by another name
 - b. Involves the interaction of both families
 - c. Is a structured way for two who may be intended according to God’s will to get to know each other keeping emotional and spiritual purity intact
 - d. Is intended for those seeking God’s blessing for marriage
- VII. Dating – dating is the trial and error experimentation where a boy and girl explore each other for some satisfaction – could be emotional and/or sexual – is not meant for the exclusive use of those intended for marriage**
- a. Called trial and *ERROR* for a reason
 - b. Replaces God’s will with your own
 - c. Damages your emotional and physical purity – you will have to deal with this for years saving God’s deliverance
 - d. Causes harm to the OTHER person that they will get to deal with for years saving God’s deliverance
 - e. There is **NO** Christian dating
 - f. Dating is NOT Courting (see above) – there are differences in mind-set, method, and motive
 - g. Dating is the cause of many marital troubles today- the trial and error nature of dating bleeds over into marriage- marriages are entered into and then broken with little regard

h. Romans 12, especially vv. 9-13 ("Love must be sincere.... Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves."); Romans 13:8-14, especially vv. 9b and 10a ("Love your neighbor as yourself. Love does no harm to its neighbor."); 1 Cor. 13:4-7, especially v. 5 (love "is not self-seeking"). More specifically, 1 Tim 5:1-2 reiterates the "family" metaphor among believers and instructs us about how we are to treat our fellow members of the body of Christ: "Do not rebuke an older man harshly, but exhort him as if he were your *father*. Treat younger men as *brothers*, older women as *mothers*, and younger women as *sisters*, with *absolute purity*."

i. 1 Thess. 4:3-8 gets even more specific:

"It is God's will that you should be sanctified: that you should avoid sexual immorality; that each of you should learn to control his own body in a way that is holy and honorable, not in passionate lust like the heathen, who do not know God; *and that in this matter no one should wrong his brother or take advantage of him*. The Lord will punish men for all such sins, as we have already told you and warned you. For God did not call us to be impure, but to lead a holy life. Therefore, he who rejects this instruction does not reject man but God, who gives you his holy spirit."

VIII. Biblical Examples: Christ and the Church / Boaz and Ruth

Jesus is the groom and the church is the bride – Jesus died for the sins of the church – prepares a place in heaven for each

believer – loves the bride unconditionally – the relationship is pure

Eph 5:22-33

Wives, (be in subjection) unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. 23 For the husband is the head of the wife, and Christ also is the head of the church, (being) himself the saviour of the body. 24 But as the church is subject to Christ, so (let) the wives also (be) to their husbands in everything. 25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself up for it; 26 that he might sanctify it, having cleansed it by the washing of water with the word, 27 that he might present the church to himself a glorious (church), not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. 28 Even so ought husbands also to love their own wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his own wife loveth himself: 29 for no man ever hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as Christ also the church; 30 because we are members of his body. 31 For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and the two shall become one flesh. 32 This mystery is great: but I speak in regard of Christ and of the church. 33 nevertheless do ye also severally love each one his own wife even as himself; and (let) the wife (see) that she fear her husband.

Ruth 2-4

Ruth Meets Boaz – Ruth was obedient to the Lord and faithful to Naomi – this is why she was where she was and ended up

in Boaz's field – Ruth was not seeking a husband – she was doing what God commanded her to do – Boaz shows kindness to Ruth and she offers herself to him – Boaz redeems Ruth and they are married – Their lineage includes King David

We must differentiate between the world's standards and Gods. Only then will our path be clear. Dating is a worldly device based on erroneous science (Darwinian Evolution), and a selfish godless philosophy (Hedonism, Atheism, and Humanism). We are in this world but not of it.

Dating is deadly.