

Glad Tidings

“And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers...” (Acts 13:32)

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Dating for Marriage

(Jerry Fite)

If marriage is of import in your life, you will probably want to inculcate its weightiness in the hearts of your children. Dating should therefore occupy a considerable place in your thinking. How many couples do you know never had one date or personal interaction with one another before marrying? Dating leads to engagement, as the relationship grows in marrying probabilities. Successful engagement leads to marriage!

The question of dating will come to the forefront in family discussions when the teenage years arrive. Will you allow high school dating? Got an age in mind? Will your teenagers be allowed to date for fun? Or, will they date knowing that such interaction has marriage in view. Dating leads to marriage does it not?

Knowing dating has marriage in the future does not rule out common sense. A godly family may decide that all the dangers of sexual intimacy in these maturing teenage years is so great today that they will not allow high school dating. Knowing dating is for marriage, they will allow the dating – engagement -marriage experience to take place later

when the children have been allowed more years to mature in their thinking.

Perceptive parents may allow high school dating knowing that their children want to date “*just because they like a boy or a girl.*” At an early age these parents have established the unpromising doctrine in the heart of their children that sexual intimacy is reserved for marriage (*Matthew 19:5, I Corinthians 7:1-2, Hebrews 13:4*). The receptive children hold to God’s effective wisdom in dealing with sexual lust by being always ready to “*flee*” fornication and youthful lusts (*I Corinthians 6:18, 2 Timothy 2:22*). These perceptive parents are allowing the beginning of dating because they see their teenager currently manifesting a genuine spiritual relationship with the Lord. He or she is reading, meditating upon, and applying the Word, while coupling God’s Word with persistent prayer (*I Timothy 4:13, Psalm 119:15-16, Matthew 7:24-27, Luke 18:1-8, I Thessalonians 5:17*).

Whenever your children interact with the opposite sex, today’s culture and technology will affect dating. Instant and incessant communication through cyberspace with cell-phones allow

opportunities for the godly teenager to apply the dating for marriage wisdom. For example, you may have a friend of the opposite sex who “likes” all your postings, and sends flirtatious texts, making you feel that you are the one they have been looking for. Beware, you may be being “*Mosted*” – creating a false sense of intimacy through flattery (*Proverbs 7:5,13,15*).

While dating, you may notice that your boyfriend spends much of his time on the internet. He may seem to be always playing games, or especially excited about the newest game on the market. You may also learn that he frequently views pornography. Red flags should go up in your mind. Pornography is sinful for it promotes lust outside of marriage (*Matthew 5:28*). Gaming, while not inherently sinful, can be sinfully addictive (*I Corinthians 6:12*). Both internet gaming and pornography can destroy a marriage. Pornography’s unhealthy satisfying of sexual desires without intimacy and gaming’s adrenaline surges from stressful experiences without dangers are addictive. Being addicted to fake love or fake war can destroy the real intimacy God provides in a real marriage. Pay attention in dating as you look to marriage!