

To date or Not to date. That is the question.

Song of Solomon 2:7 Daughters of Jerusalem, I charge you by the gazelles and by the does of the field: Do not arouse or awaken love until it so desires.

The “Song of Songs”, or “Song of Solomon” is eight chapters of highly sensuous and suggestive imagery thought to be an allegory of the love relationship between God and Israel, or between Christ and the church, or between Christ and us.

Chapter 2:7 is repeated fourteen times in these eight chapters. What point do you think the author is trying to make?

1 Thessalonians 4:2-7 For you know what instructions we gave you by the authority of the Lord Jesus. 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 live a holy life.

Why do people date?

How does it feel to be *in love*?

When two people become a “couple” what do they expect of each other?

How would you describe the *stages* of a dating relationship?

How does it feel to “break-up”?

Ready for sex but not the sacrifice

By the time you reach puberty hormones are flooding your body making you capable of reproduction and driving you towards a sexual relationship.

Read 1 Thessalonians 4:2-7. God asks us to: _____

Ephesians 5:25-27 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless

“If I ask a person for their heart and affections I need to be willing to backup my request with a lifelong commitment. Until I can do that I’d only be using them to meet my short term needs, not seeking to bless them for the long term.”*

Test your motivations

Test your feelings. Put an **S** next to a statement to describe a selfish motivation and an **L** to a describe loving motivation:

I need a date for the prom.

I will work so they can go to college.

A boyfriend brings flowers on Valentines Day.

Having sex is just having a good time.

I would like to be the one who makes them happy.

When I’m with them I feel great.

Philippians 1:9-10 (The Message) Learn to love appropriately. You need to use your head and test your feelings so that your love is sincere and intelligent, not sentimental gush.

Lesson Plan: To Date or Not To Date

The Goal of this lesson: The goal of this lesson is to get the kids thinking about their responsibility in a loving relationship, not just what a relationship can do for them.

Pre-Lesson Activity: We played “Honey I love you but I just can’t smile.” Arrange the kids in a circle. You can be “it” first. You say to a kid, “Honey if you love me will you please, please smile?” They must reply, “Honey I love you but I just can’t smile.” without cracking a smile. If they smile they are then “it”. The process is repeated until your cheeks ache from smiling.

Leading the Lesson: Spend some time in prayer the day before, going over the verses and questions in your mind.

Have a kid read the first set of verses and then go thru the questions for those verses. Give them time to answer. Listen to what they say and lead the discussion with additional questions of your own to lead them to the correct answers.

Note: When reading, kids will frequently stumble on words they do not know. Explain the meaning of the words so they can fully grasp the concept of the Bible verse. Sometimes you must restate the passage in your own words for them to get it.

Begin by reading a part of Solomon’s Song of Songs, like chapter one. The kids should be fairly scandalized by the sensuous imagery. You might be embarrassed by reading it. Read the first paragraph of the lesson. Explain the meaning of the words “sensuous” and “allegory”. Ask the questions I’ve listed. Most of their answers will be self-centered: We date because we want to be close to someone, it feels great to be in love. Read the Thessalonians passage and talk about how hard it is to control sexual impulses. Next, thoroughly discuss the responsibilities of being in a relationship like making a commitment to the other persons happiness, and sacrificing your desires to make sure they get theirs. This is real love. Read the last two passages and take the test.

Summary:

This was a very charged discussion. The kids were expecting me to give them the standard church diatribe and order them not to date. If I had they would have turned me off like a switch. Let the Bible verses and the Holy Spirit do the work it needs to do in their hearts. You just be a consultant if they have questions. You might ask them questions like: Would it be fair of you to get into a relationship in which certain aspects are implied that you have no ability as yet to deliver, i.e. life long commitment? Is it OK to have sex without the commitment? From verses like Song of Songs 2:7 How do you think God feels about it?

Take Prayer Requests

Always ask the kids for prayer requests for the next week. Check how things have turned out from the previous week’s concerns.