



Christian Parenting for Teenagers

The Dreaded "D" Word

DATING



Teen Dating's Negative Tendencies

1. Dating leads to intimacy but not necessarily to commitment.

- “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.” (1 Thess. 4: 4,5)
- Intimacy without commitment, like icing without a cake, can be sweet, but it ends up making us sick.



Teen Dating's Negative Tendencies

2. Dating tends to skip the friendship stage of a relationship.

- The premise of dating: "I am attracted to you, therefore, let's get to know each other."
- The premise of friendship: we are interested in the same things, let's enjoy these common interests together.
- Intimacy without friendship is superficial. A relationship based on physical attraction and romantic feelings will last only as long as the feelings last.



Teen Dating's Negative Tendencies

3. Dating often mistakes a physical relationship for love

- In a dating relationship, the couple doesn't look at each other as possible life partners or weigh the responsibilities of marriage. Instead, they focus on the demands of the present. And with that mindset, the couple's physical relationship can easily become the focus, and probably they would discover that all they have in common is lust.



Teen Dating's Negative Tendencies

4. Dating often isolates a couple from other vital relationships

- Dating is about two people focusing on each other. Unfortunately, in most cases, the rest of the world fades into the background.
- When a boy and a girl started dating in high school, they forgot about their youth group meetings, their soccer game practices, their Bible study meetings, etc...
- Dating isolates the couple from family members, friends, and even service in the church.



Teen Dating's Negative Tendencies

5. Dating distracts young adults from their primary responsibility of preparing for the future.

- During dating relationships, the couple has no time to acquire new skills and focus on their studies.



Teen Dating's Negative Tendencies

6. Dating can cause discontentment with God's gift of singleness

- The period of singleness is a period for boundless opportunities for growth, learning and service.
- "There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under heaven." (Ecc. 3:1)



Teen Dating's Negative Tendencies

7. Dating creates an artificial environment for evaluating another person's character. Being fun on a date does not say anything about a person's character or ability to be a good husband or wife.
- Each one portrays himself or herself at his best.
 - Dating creates an artificial environment.



Five attitude changes to avoid defective dating

1. Every relationship is an opportunity to model Christ's love.
 - Real love is not selfish, looks for the good of others.
 - Emphasize that your teen should have a one to one personal relationship with Christ.



Five attitude changes to avoid defective dating

2. My unmarried years are a gift from God

- This is the best time for teens to explore, study and tackle the world.
- This period in the teen age life is valuable and important one for development of the personality, spirituality, and views in life.



Five attitude changes to avoid defective dating

3. Intimacy is reward of commitment
 - I do not need to pursue a romantic relationship before I am ready for marriage.
 - Are you ready financially to support a family?



Five attitude changes to avoid defective dating

4. I cannot “own” someone outside of marriage
 - The new attitude views claims on another person’s time, affection, and future before marriage as unwarranted.



Five attitude changes to avoid defective dating

5. Avoid placing yourself in settings that encourage temptation.

- The Lord Jesus said, “You have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not commit adultery. But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart.” (Matt. 5: 27. 28)



Conclusion

- **Relationships between girls and boys should be in groups, never one on one.**
- When one is financially responsible and emotionally stable to start a family, then one should consider courting, to know the other person's personality.



Biblical advice on sex

1Thess. 4: 1-8

- “Finally then, brethren, we urge and exhort in the Lord Jesus that you should abound more and more, just as you received from us how you ought to walk and to please God.”
- Living a pure life pleases God.



- “For this is the will of God, your sanctification; that you should abstain from sexual immorality.” (v.3)
- God’s will is that we avoid sexual immorality.



- “That each of you should know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor.” (v.4)
- God wants us to know how to control our bodies.
- Our methods of controlling our desires must be holy and honorable.



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- “Not in passion of lust like the Gentiles who do not know God.” (v. 5)
 - How we control our bodies will differ from the method of unbelievers.



- “That no one should take advantage of and defraud his brother in this matter, because the Lord is the avenger of all such, as we also forewarned you and testified.” (v.6)
- Gratifying our sexual desires outside of marriage offends and detracts from the other person.
- We should not take advantage of another person in order to satisfy our sexual desires.



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- “For God did not call us to uncleanness but in holiness. Therefore, he who rejects this does not reject man, but God who has also given us His Holy Spirit.” (7, 8)
 - These instructions come from God and not from man.
 - If we disobey these instructions, we reject God.



How to guide your teens in sexual matters?

1. Instill the sense of purity in your teens by modeling it, concerning the images in T.V., internet, movies, magazines, etc... Our society is saturated with sexual images and conversation. Express your thoughts about what is right and what's wrong, and let your teen give his perspective.
2. Use teachable moments to discuss all aspects of sex and what is expected from us as Christians before marriage and after marriage.
3. Have a running dialogue with your teen about sex, not a one time talk.