



Discussion Guide

HOW SHOULD A CHRISTIAN DATE?

Chapter 1: Is Marriage Better than Singleness?

1. Have you ever thought that being married was superior to singleness?
2. Have you ever made marriage an idol?
3. What are some unique trials about being single and being married?
4. What are some unique blessings about being single and being married?
5. What are things you're looking forward to in marriage?
6. What do you think you'll miss about your single life if/when you get married?
7. Would you be content if you remained unmarried for the rest of your life?
8. Who in your life is an excellent example of a married couple?
What makes their relationship one that you'd want to replicate?

Chapter 2: Why Is Christian Dating So Weird?

1. What's the difference between awkwardness and weirdness in dating?
2. Why is using clear language an essential part of dating well?
3. Why doesn't clear communication in romance happen easily?
4. Have you ever used unnecessary Christian lingo in your dating life? If so, what did you say?
Has anyone used it on you? How did that make you feel?
5. Have you ever experienced a special revelation from God about someone you were interested in?
Do you know anyone who had a special revelation about a specific person they were to marry?
If so, how did the relationship go?
6. Do you believe that the "regular ways" singles meet (at church, through friends, etc.) and get married are as holy and spiritual as the supernatural ones?
7. Do you believe God acts as a heavenly matchmaker today?
8. Do you think there is one person God has for you to marry or many people?

Chapter 3: “Scalpel, Please.” Dissecting the Word Date

1. Do you agree with the author’s definition of a date? “Spending time with someone because you’re curious about the possibility of marrying them at some point.”
2. Do you agree that there is no one right way to date, just many wrong ones?
3. Besides finding a spouse, in what other ways does dating help us grow and mature?
4. Have you ever felt ambivalent about asking someone out or going on a date with a particular person? What did you do?
5. Why are “friendships” so confusing? Have you ever been in one? How did it turn out?
6. Share a time when you had a D.T.R (Define the Relationship), and it went smoothly. Also, share a time when it was awkward but necessary.
7. Do you tend to use (or welcome) hard start dates more than soft start dates? Why do soft starts come with an extensive warning label?
8. What is your opinion of nonexclusive dating?
9. Is it OK for women to make the first move? Women, have you ever initiated with a man or asked out a guy? Men, have you had a woman ask you out? How did it go?
10. What “kind” of dating works for you?

Chapter 4: Busting Twelve Christian Dating Myths

1. Which myth resounded with you the most?
2. Even though God doesn’t promise us a spouse when we do all the “right things”, what are some things you can do to attract a husband or wife now?
3. Do you agree with Dr. John Gottman that we need to have high expectations in searching for a spouse? If so, what does that mean to you? And what are your highest expectations?
4. If you struggle with loneliness (most singles do at some point), in what ways can you reach out and connect to your community now.
5. Have you ever been unsure about going on a date but went anyway? Did going on the date bring clarity to your feelings?
6. Why will the best dating relationships and marriages require work to be successful?
7. Do you have a lot of dating choices or only a few? Research states that more options don’t equal increased satisfaction. Does this give you hope for your love life?
8. What are some other myths you see in Christian dating that need to be squashed?

Chapter 5: A 4,000-Pound Paper Weight: A Sturdy Frame Supports Dating

1. How are you preparing now to be married someday?
2. Consider the Fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5:22. Which ones are well established in your life, and which ones need improvement?

3. In what other areas in your life is God calling you to be more like him? What is your plan to get there?
4. Is there any trauma in your past that needs to be healed before you can be emotionally, physically, and spiritually intimate with your future husband or wife?
5. Which spiritual disciplines have helped you develop your relationship with Christ the most? Which new ones would you like to experiment with?
6. Why is keeping God first so crucial in romance?
7. Who in your life can you confide in but also challenges you? How has this person helped you grow?
8. Have you mentored someone? How did they help you become more like Christ?
9. How will strong character and spiritual life prepare you for the trials of marriage?

Chapter 6: Follow the Stages for a Great Relationship

1. Why is friendship a key to a solid romantic relationship?
2. What's the farthest stage you've made it to in dating? If you broke up, why didn't the relationship make it to marriage?
3. Define some "key events" in your romantic journey (kissing, sitting by them at church, going on vacation with their family, etc.). In what stage of dating would you place each of those?
4. Have you ever been on multiple dates with people in the same week? How did that go? What was going on in your heart?
5. Why is it important for your relationship to spend the longest time in the exclusive dating stage?
6. Summarize the theory of love (by Robert J. Sternberg) that includes passion, intimacy, and commitment. Think of it as a triangle of love. Is one side more important to you than another? Where does God fit into that?
7. Have you ever skipped stages in dating? If so, which ones? For example, you weren't friends first and jumped into exclusive dating? How did that go?
8. How will you communicate to your boyfriend or girlfriend your expectations for each stage of the relationship? How will you handle differing expectations?
9. Although you cannot remove all the risks in dating, how can the stages help you guard your heart as you progress towards a possible marriage?

Chapter 7: Make a List but Avoid Creating Frankenstein

1. Is there a specific "type" of person you're looking to date and marry? Describe him or her.
2. What are the top give traits on your nonnegotiable list for a spouse?
3. What are three items on your negotiable list?
4. Do you have any items on your nonnegotiable list that are unique to you and probably not found on someone else's? What makes it so important to you?
5. What are the limitations of lists? Why do they say more about us than someone else?
6. Would you go out with someone if she or he scored low on your "attraction-o-meter?" Why or why not? What number (1-10) would you need to go on a date?

7. Have you ever dated or been tempted to date someone outside the Christian faith? What happened?
8. What are your thoughts on the “Dangerous Prayer” at the end of the chapter?

Chapter 8: Unfriend-Zoning People and Other Ways to Meet Dates

1. Have you heard any stories of people who have met in incredible ways and got married?
2. In the section titled, Five Practical Ways to Meet People, Eric describes different ways to meet others and potentially find a date. Is there a new one that you might try? What are some other practical ways to meet people?
3. Have you tried online dating? How did it go? (Or how is it going?). What do you like and dislike about it?
4. What are some benefits and caveats to online dating?
5. When communicating with a man or woman you’ve never met, why is it important to “meet fast and date slow?”
6. Have you been set up on a date or set anyone up? How did it go?
7. What does an excellent first date mean to you? Describe your ideal first date.
8. How would you like your church to help its unmarried Christians meet, interact, and get to know each other? List your creative ideas.

Chapter 9: Sex, True Purity, and Almost Jumping Out of a Moving Car

1. Did your parents give you a sex talk? How did it go? What did they say? Was it helpful?
2. How does inner purity—a “wholeheartedness towards God” affect the whole person?
3. Have you been affected by the heresy of the sexual purity gospel? (a.k.a, if you wait for sex, God will bring you a spouse, and you’ll have a fantastic sex life.)
4. What type of physical affection would you be OK with at each stage of the relationship?
5. With physical intimacy, do you agree with the statement “indulgence brings fog” (C.S. Lewis)? Why or why not? Can you share an example from your own life?
6. If you’ve struggled with your sexual activity, what measures can you take with your spiritual life now to hit the “reset button?”
7. If you’ve felt any guilt for past sexual experiences, how will you forgive yourself and the other person? (See Isa. 1:18, Eph. 1:7, 1 John 1:9).
8. God is the Redeemer. What can you teach others about how you’ve waited for sex or what you’ve learned from your mistakes? (See Psalm 19:14 and Romans 8:28.)

Chapter 10: Getting the Best from a Breakup

1. What does the idea of getting the best from a breakup mean to you?
2. What did you learn about God through your former boyfriends or girlfriends? What did they teach you about yourself? And how did they make you a better person?
3. Has anyone ever broken up with you in an honoring way? What about a way that felt disrespectful?
4. If a dating relationship ends, can you still be friends with the person? What are the caveats?

5. Why is forgiveness such an integral part of the healing process?
6. How do you handle grief? Do you tend to punch the pillow in anger, turn within, or quickly busy yourself with new activities? All of the above?
7. Do you agree or disagree with the adage, “time heals all wounds?”
8. How do you know when you’re “over” someone?
9. How much time should you take off from dating after a breakup?
10. What will you do differently next time?

Chapter 11: Fall in Love with Your Cheesecake

1. What are two healthy patterns you’d like to create with your next boyfriend or girlfriend?
2. Have you seen opposites date and develop a healthy marriage?
3. Have you unwittingly searched for a “clone” instead of someone who complements you?
4. Do you agree with the prayer, “Lord, give me the person I need, not the person I want?”
5. Why is how you argue so important to the health of the relationship? What does it mean to “keep short accounts with one another?”
6. Do you know your primary and secondary love language? They include words of affirmation, acts of service, quality time, physical (nonsexual) touch, and gifts.
7. What is the most challenging love language for you to practice?
8. What healthy patterns did you see in your parents (or other guardians) that you’d like to take to your own marriage? What unhealthy ones do you want to leave behind?
9. Describe the kind of tasty “cheesecake” you’d like to form with your next boyfriend or girlfriend.

Chapter 12: You Found “The One” When You Can Love Like a Prince

1. What does it mean that person you invest in will be the one you love?
2. Why is love only ‘true love’ when the intoxicating feelings subside?
3. Do you agree that love is a choice? And how is it much more than that?
4. How is committing to marriage like doing a backflip?
5. What does it mean that marriage is a covenant? What Bible verses support this?
6. Are there unique questions that you need to answer before marrying someone? If so, what are they?
7. How will you know that you and your boyfriend or girlfriend are ready for marriage? What will that type of relationship look like?
8. Do you agree that a couple should date for a year before getting engaged?