

How To Marry A Loser Part Three

Dating A Loser

Introduction

Read: 2 Timothy 2:20-22

1. In reality, no one wants to marry a loser. However, many of us allow the media to create unrealistic expectations of the perfect date and shape our perception of true love.
2. When we begin to believe in these false ideals and conform to the worldly practices of casually dating and breaking up, we end up disappointed, broken and hurt.
3. On the other hand, God sees how valuable we are and desires for us to date the right person.
4. He has given us His perfect word, the Bible, to help us make good relationship decisions.
5. In today's lesson, we will examine several ways we should **not** approach relationships in order to avoid dating losers.

I. Mistake Lust For Love

A. The Bible encourages us to run away from any desire that controls our thoughts and emotions (v.22)!

Just because we feel attracted to a person doesn't mean we are ready to love them in a committed relationship.

B. We can keep ourselves from giving into lust by committing to specific emotional boundaries.

E.g. Avoid sharing deep emotional hurts with friends of the opposite gender, seek help from our leaders when someone of the opposite gender starts revealing too much of their private struggles to us, etc.

C. We can evaluate and identify friendships which have crossed these boundaries.

Consider these questions: Do we make special exceptions for any particular friendship? Is there a close friend of the opposite gender we turn to immediately when something crops up?

D. Be accountable to our leaders in our struggles with lust, and be open to their advice!

II. Pursue What Feels Good Now

A. Rather than pursuing a relationship that feels good right now, we should spend our energy running after the things God promises will last (v.22).

B. God has unique tasks prepared for us while we are single and we must look out for these opportunities to serve (v.21).

Discuss!

Connect Group Leader to facilitate sharing with the Connect Group members.

- *What are some things we can do for God as singles but not when we are dating?*
E.g. Going for missions as a single has less distraction/worries, being single means more time and finances to serve God, etc.

C. We make a conscious decision each day to focus on obeying Him rather than on our feelings (1 Corinthians 7:35)!

III. Ignore Godly Friendships

A. We should intentionally build friendships with a group of godly people whom we can confide in (v. 22).

E.g. Get to know people who serve in the same ministry, spend more time with our connect group members or fellow leaders, etc.

B. We should also work on our weaknesses in order to be that godly friend to others.

E.g. Instead of looking for friends who are patient enough to tolerate our bad temper, we should work on self-control so we can be a better friend to others.

C. Trust our leaders and act upon their advice.

E.g. Avoid getting into a relationship until they acknowledge we are ready, etc.

Conclusion

1. Confusing lust for love may cause us to start a relationship for our own selfish desires.
2. Rather than focusing on our feelings, we can focus on the tasks God has given us to do while we are single!
3. Other than taking advice from godly friends and leaders, preparation for a successful relationship starts when we commit to work on our weaknesses.

Prayer Points:

- a) Pray that we will commit to the emotional boundaries we have set and guard our hearts against anything that stimulates lust.
- b) Ask God to reveal the things He has specially called us to do while we are single.
- c) Pray against any distractions that causes us to lose focus from God.

**Give opportunities for visitors to receive Christ and members to re-dedicate their lives to Jesus.*