



Why Your BFF Isn't the Whole World

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Dating is a tricky subject for Christians, there's really no way around it. We live in a world whose cultural norms aren't always in line with our beliefs, and this is especially true for young Christians. We are surrounded by people seeking new technology, sex, drug use, money, and other sources of pleasure that we honestly seek ourselves if we aren't careful. When we are young wide eyed idealistic individuals entering into relationships for the first time we have no idea what it's going to be like, and if we aren't careful we'll end up pursuing things in relationships that are very unhealthy for us.

I know what it's like; I've been cripplingly lonely before. I've thought to myself that a relationship or a person to love me might fix all my problems. It can be hard to rid ourselves of that notion, but I have experienced what happens when I get into relationships for the wrong reasons. I dated a girl not too long ago for two simple reasons: we found one another attractive and I thought a relationship would make me happy. So we went out, we had fun, and I thought I was happy. But I was missing something. I didn't even realize it at first but something terrible had happened: my fun new relationship had become more important to me than God. Pretty soon we were going too far physically, I stopped praying, and I continued thinking that the answer to my happiness could be found in a person rather than in God. I tell you this because regardless of whether or not you've started dating, desperately want to date, dated in an unserious way, or have no real interest in it; there is something we as Christians need to understand. Dating for physical reasons leads to sexual immorality and unhealthy pursuits, and dating in a way that puts your faith in a person rather than God, are both huge mistakes that are far too easy to make. You may not even be aware that you're making them unless you think carefully about your motives for relationships.

This is not to say that dating can't be fun and exciting. When two Christians develop a strong bond in the context of a caring and loving relationship, amazing things can happen. But we must understand the risks and boundaries if we are to avoid the mistakes of our culture. Date to get to know someone, have fun, but never forget that they are a son or daughter of God, as are you. We can't let dating, or the lack of it, consume us. We must stay focused first on the Lord and know that he will provide everything we need, regardless of what we want to happen for us.

- "But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well" – Matthew 6:33

It can be difficult, but when we are ready for it dating can be an amazing and enjoyable experience, maybe even the means to meeting the person you're destined to be with, but don't force it. Don't rush it, just let God guide you when you are lost and alone, that's the true key to inner peace.