

GEL DISCUSSION

Dating

The Point:

Dating should be completely different for a Christian if we trust God and his Word as we focus on God and his Kingdom first and trust him for everything else.

Atmosphere

On any given normal meeting night:

When people arrive, greet them, ask them questions and get them talking. (More importantly have students greeting and engaging other students) Have healthy social/hang out time with food, laughter, icebreakers, and/or games. After this, have chairs, sofas, ottomans, futons, etc. arranged roughly in a circle so everyone can participate.

Music, Games, Icebreakers:

Music should be playing before students ever come through the door. Songs students would hear on the radio is preferred. If at any time you need music to play before Gel Group starts, let James know and he can recommend and/or provide something. Music that is playing should be relevant to students. If you need any icebreaker ideas, let James know. If you need any help...let James know.

The Vision for this Discussion:

- 1) For Christians, our focus should be on God alone. Everything we do should come as a result of Jesus being at the center of our lives. Everything we do should bring glory and honor to God (1 Corinthians 10:31). Since "everything" means everything, that also applies to how we date and get close to people. For a Christian, we shouldn't date the way the world dates, but instead, we should date and interact with people according to the principles God lays out in his Word.
- 2) The Bible isn't a step-by-step how-to on dating or life, but in it, we find various principles for life. When it comes to dating and other close intimate relationships, we find the principle of being equally yoked in 2 Corinthians. This imagery plays on what farmers would do with oxen. Farmers would take a yoke (a wooden stick with a loop on each end) and put it around a pair of oxen's necks. This yoke would keep the animals together as the farmer drove them to plow a field. Paul draws on this imagery, telling us not to be unequally yoked with others. A literal example of animals being unequally yoked might be a donkey yoked with an ox; nothing good would come from it. He then goes into certain comparisons, comparing things that are completely opposite and showing they have nothing in common. In the same manner he draws the conclusion that believers and unbelievers don't share the most central thing of life in common, and if this is so then how can there be a close intimate relationship? As believers, we should hold Jesus dearer and closer than anything, yet this presents a problem when we become unequally yoked, getting involved in an intimate relationship with someone who doesn't hold Jesus to the same position. From this principle it seems that believers should date believers, because if not, they won't be able to agree on much.
- 3) When we look at the world's way of dating, the focus is on self and finding someone. However, as Christians, our focus should be on God, trusting that he will provide for our needs. Also, our focus should be on loving other people. Dating as the world dates doesn't enable us to love people very much because typically, when we date as the world does, we are in it for ourselves and in the aftermath of the relationship, when it's ended, there is a wrecked mess of broken hearts and hurt people.

The Discussion:

- 1) Would you rather go on a date with someone you really liked but you did something that was really boring, or go on a date with someone you didn't like very much but you did something really fun and exciting?
- 2) Describe your perfect husband or wife. What qualities would you want that person to have?
- 3) Read Matthew 6:25-34.
- 4) What does Jesus tell us to focus on? How do we become distracted and focus on other things? What are some other things you focus on instead of God and his Kingdom? Do you ever worry about having a boyfriend or girlfriend? Explain.
- 5) Why do you think most people go out with people in Middle School and even High School? (What do you think are the reasons?) If the reasons are superficial (to be cool, to kiss somebody, etc.) do you think those are reasons Christians should date someone? Do you think there are other ways to get those things (the things we just mentioned, if they are not superficial, ex. love, acceptance, belonging, etc.) without going out with someone? How?
- 6) What are the good things about having a boyfriend or girlfriend in Middle School and High School? What are the bad things about it?
- 7) Read 2 Corinthians 6:14-17.
- 8) What do you think this passage is talking about? (Look at the context of the passage. Paul is comparing certain things here. What is the relationship between these things Paul is comparing?) What do you take from this passage?
- 9) From this passage, who should a Christian date? Do you think this is a good thing or a bad thing? Explain.
- 10) Why do you think a Christian should date someone? What do you think the focus of the relationship should be? Explain.
- 11) What needs to change in the way you may look at dating?