

SERIES:	Keep Calm and Marry On
MESSAGE:	Friends with Benefits
SPEAKER:	Nate Heitzig
SCRIPTURE:	Matthew 22:37-40

No matter how you view dating, finding the right mate can be tricky. What should you be looking for in a potential spouse? How can you know that this is God's best for you? Though the Bible is silent about dating per se, it says a lot about how we are to treat one another and what our priorities ought to be. These principles play a major factor in the success of dating relationships—and marriages. Let's open our Bibles to Matthew 22:37-40 for guidance in playing the sometimes challenging dating game.

DETAILED NOTES

I. Introduction

A. Male/Female relationships

1. Relevant in all eras and walks of life
2. Dating, courting, going steady
3. "I don't understand the whole dating thing."—Britney Spears

B. Why so many people date the wrong way

1. Cues from media and Hollywood

- a. "I don't know of any of us who are in relationships that are totally honest—it just doesn't exist." —Richard Gere
- b. "I don't have a girlfriend. But I do know a woman who'd be mad at me for saying that." —Mitch Hedberg
- c. "I have a lot of boyfriends, I want you to write that. Every country I visit, I have a different boyfriend. And I kiss them all." —Anna Kournikova
- d. "There's only two people in your life you should lie to...the police and your girlfriend." —Jack Nicholson

2. Television examples

- a. Not exclusive; okay to date or hook up with as many people as you want; i.e., *The Bachelor*
- b. Game; not real
- c. If you are lucky, you marry rich and then you're set; i.e., *The Choice, Who Wants to Marry a Multi-Millionaire?*
- d. Perfect date includes: a private chef, hot tub, lots of wine, maybe getting lucky

3. Sounds crude and wrong because it is

4. Society looks at what can please instantly rather than ultimately

C. Statistics on dating in America

1. 54 million single people
2. 40 million have tried online dating
3. 53% have dated more than one person simultaneously
4. On average, couples wait 6-8 dates before entering an exclusive relationship

5. After 12-14 dates, couples trade house keys
- D. Worldly Views
1. Only benefit: sex
 2. Tiny marriages because of sexual intimacy
 3. High divorce rate: okay to give something meant only for marriage, when bored, or find someone better, get out
 4. How far is too far? (*Asked on Shock Therapy Live*)
 - a. Won't answer; walk up to edge, look over, and probably sin anyway
 - b. Rather ask: How holy is too holy?
 - c. How pure is too pure?
- E. Christian views
1. Seek the highest God has for us; not the lowest
 2. Look for the best person God has for us
 3. Benefits of a godly relationship outweigh the benefits of a worldly one
 4. Possible to be friends with benefits—not the kind of benefits the world offers
- F. Biblical culture
1. Not American lens
 2. Arranged marriages
 3. Bible doesn't directly tell us how to date
 4. Bible gives life principles to apply to dating
 5. Bible helps us view relationships the way they are supposed to be
- II. Be a God Digger, Not a Gold Digger
- A. Love the Lord God with all your heart, soul, and mind
1. Greatest commandment
 2. Applies to every area of life—including dating
- B. Foundation of relationship
1. Do you and do they adore God?
 - a. "Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers." (2 Corinthians 6:14)
 - b. Are they converted?
 - c. What do I want? What does God want? Are they the same?
- C. People tend to drop standards
1. Over time
 2. Gradual decisions
 3. We shouldn't be lowering standards
 4. We shouldn't be settling for the worst
 5. "We shouldn't be driving the Pinto when God has the Ferrari parked outside."
 - a. Ferrari on the inside, not the outside
 - b. Doesn't matter if the car looks great; does it run?
 - c. Society says sexual attraction and money are most important
 - i. Women who post photos on dating sites receive twice as many emails as those who don't
 - ii. Men who reported income above \$250,000 received 156% more email than those who reported income of \$50,000
 - iii. 4M Club (MultiMillionaire MatchMaking Club
 - a.) Seattle, Washington

- b.) Women pay \$250 to be listed as potential partners for single millionaires
 - D. Don't let money or looks be most important: Let it be their relationship with God
 - 1. Do they have a deep sincere love for Jesus Christ?
 - 2. Are you both believers? What do you believe?
 - a. 76.5% of Americans call themselves Christians
 - b. We are called to be born again, changed
 - 3. Are they real?
 - a. Do they adore God?
 - b. Do they respect you?
 - c. Do they honor boundaries?
 - d. Do they respect convictions?
 - e. Adore God with their lips and their lives?
 - f. Don't love things of darkness, but love the light
 - g. Not perfect, but growing and changing
 - h. Evidence of belief in Jesus
 - E. Nothing wrong with physical attraction; cannot base choice on infatuation
 - F. Average person has five "real loves" between 9th grade and second year of college
 - G. What separates feeling from true love?
 - 1. True love stands the test of time
 - 2. True love stands the test of patience
 - 3. Love is a constant devotion, not a passing emotion
 - H. Guidelines
 - 1. Shouldn't date unless they are marriage material
 - 2. To date without the possibility of marriage is set up for falling into sin
 - 3. Shouldn't date unless marriage is in sight
 - 4. Whoever you date should be a believer who has evidence of God's work in their life and who adores God
 - I. Love others
 - 1. Main reason relationships fail: selfishness, pride
 - 2. The more selfless you are the more successful your relationship will be
- III. Act Like Royalty, Not Rap Stars
 - A. Respect
 - 1. "I have compared you, my love, to my filly among Pharaoh's chariots." (Song of Solomon 1:9)
 - a. Do they respect you?
 - b. Do they respect the Bible's and your boundaries?
 - c. Filly: horse
 - i. More important than his most prized possession
 - ii. Fastest horse in the stable
 - 2. Worth protecting
 - 3. Worth pursuing
 - B. Men
 - 1. Leaders
 - 2. Called to be the initiator
 - 3. Don't lead girls on

4. Don't toy with their emotions
 5. Make sure she knows how much you value and respect her
 6. Make her feel cherished
- C. Ladies
1. Don't be a player-dater
 2. Don't date sleazebags
- D. Does my boyfriend/girlfriend feel as loved and valued as my hobby, possession, etc.
- E. Show respect by asking what parents think about the relationship
1. If parents don't know, you are a jerk
 2. If they won't like you, change
 3. Girls deserve a gentleman—they are made in the image of God
 4. Don't begin a relationship being sneaky and disrespectful
 - a. If you are, you don't deserve a relationship
 - b. If it starts in sin, it won't get better
 5. "Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. 'Honor your father and mother,'" (Ephesians 6:1-2)
 6. Parents help us see things we don't always see
 - a. May see something dangerous
 - b. Give us insight and advice
 - c. Keep you accountable
 7. Whoever you date or marry you also date/marry the family
 8. If your age makes this weird, ask pastors
 9. Prayer and counseling before the relationship starts
 10. Instruction to parents
 - a. Be the kind of people your kids are comfortable bringing their dates around
 - b. Don't view dating as a forbidden word
- IV. You've Got Game...Use It!
- A. Pursue one another
1. "He brought me to the banqueting house, And his banner over me was love." (Song of Solomon 2:4)
 2. What to do once you've caught the fish
 - a. Applies to dating, marriage, engagement
 - b. When pursuing send flowers, write poems, etc.—don't let that stop
 3. Guys and girls want to be pursued, even after they've been won over
- B. Takes time for a relationship to grow: Spend time together
- C. "Behold, you are fair, my love! Behold, you are fair! You have dove's eyes." (Song of Solomon 1:15)
1. Doves have tunnel vision
 2. See nothing but what is in front of them
- D. Commitment
1. Adoration for God
 2. Respect for one another
 3. Time spent together
 4. Must be cultivated
- E. "You are handsome, my beloved! Yes, pleasant!" (Song of Solomon 1:16)
1. Quality time with each other and with God

2. Guys want their woman to think they are cool
 - a. Don't care what others think
 - b. Affirm husbands/boyfriends
3. Girls want to know they are beautiful
 - a. Nothing else compares
 - b. Nothing comes between you
4. Constant affirmation
- F. Are you friendly? Are you kind?
- G. Close friends with Godly benefits
 1. Not sexual intimacy, but spiritual intimacy
 2. Not monetary value, but moral value
- H. Don't be transparent
- I. Don't be dependant
- J. Seek love in Christ; He desires a relationship with you

Publications referenced: *The Choice*; *Who Wants to Marry a Multi-Millionaire?*; *Shock Therapy Live*

Figures referenced: Britney Spears; Richard Gere; Mitch Hedberg; Anna Kournikova; Jack Nicholson

Cross references: Song of Solomon 1:9; Song of Solomon 1:15; Song of Solomon 1:16; Song of Solomon 2:4; 2 Corinthians 6:14; Ephesians 6:1-2

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