

"Finding 'the One,' and Keeping Them"

Song of Solomon 1:9; 2:4; Matthew 22:37-40

I. Introduction

- A. The idea of finding *the one* is present in most societies
 1. Our society is obsessed with it
 2. Finding the one is easier said than done; at times, it can feel like the quest for the Holy Grail
- B. How should we as Christians do the dating thing right?
 1. We tend to date the wrong way because we have bad examples
 - a. Hollywood
 - b. Celebrities
 - c. Reality TV
 2. This is not how God intended it
- C. Society seeks what will please instantly rather than what will please ultimately
 1. We live in a culture of instant gratification—a culture focused on the short term
 2. Scripture focuses on what pleases ultimately—the long term
 3. Romans 6:23
- D. Couples in our society tend to view the dating relationship as a mini marriage, but the result of the mini marriage is the mini divorce
 1. The divorce rate is high because we're teaching ourselves to give the other person something that is meant for marriage, then we leave when we get bored or when things become too difficult
 2. This is human nature; we want to have all the benefits of a relationship without the righteousness that God requires from a relationship
 3. Rather than asking how far we can go before we're sinning, why don't we start asking ourselves how holy is too holy?
 - a. You can never be too holy
 - b. You can never be too pure
- E. As children of God, we should be seeking the highest, not settling for the lowest
 1. We need to seek the abundance of God's grace, mercy, love, and plans for our lives, not taking the scraps that fall from the table
 2. We shouldn't be settling; we should be seeking God's highest, the greatest of His desires and plans for us (see Jeremiah 29:11)
- F. What does the Bible say about finding the one? And once you've found them, how do you keep them?
 1. There's no Bible passage describing the perfect Christian date
 2. However, we can find important life principles throughout Scripture that can be applied to a dating relationship

II. Be a God Digger, Not a Gold Digger

- A. If Jesus is first and foremost in our hearts, and we love Him with all of our heart, soul, and mind (see Matthew 22:37), then everything will happen the way God wants it to happen
 - 1. It has to start with adoring God
 - 2. The first question you should ask before you even think about entering a relationship with someone:
 - a. Do they love God?
 - b. This should be the foundation of your relationship
 - c. 2 Corinthians 6:14
- B. The Christian life is about making sure your desires match God's desires for your life
 - 1. What do I want in a relationship?
 - 2. What does God want in my relationships?
 - 3. And are those two answers the same?
- C. People tend to drop their standards, but it doesn't all happen right away
 - 1. It happens one deliberate decision at a time, until you're scraping the bottom of the barrel and wondering how you got there
 - 2. No one wakes up and decides to get trapped in sin
 - 3. We shouldn't be settling for the worst; we should be seeking God's will for our lives
 - a. Do you both love Jesus?
 - b. Do they love Jesus more than they love you?
- D. What do they believe about Jesus?
 - 1. It's more than what they say they believe; it's easy for someone to tell you what they know you want to hear
 - 2. It's about heart change, not about what they say
 - a. Is their faith real?
 - b. Does their love for Jesus cause them to respect you and your boundaries?
 - c. Do they love the light instead of the things of darkness?
 - d. Do they desire to grow in their relationship with Jesus?
- E. It's okay to be attracted to someone, but it's wrong to base your decisions on that infatuation
 - 1. What distinguishes infatuation from love?
 - a. True love withstands the test of time
 - b. True love withstands the test of patience; get to know them, their family, and their devotion to God (see 1 Corinthians 13:4)
 - 2. Love is a constant devotion, not a passing emotion
- F. Dating leads to marriage, so if you've already dropped your standards in order to date an unbeliever, then what's next?
 - 1. You shouldn't date someone unless they are marriage material
 - 2. You shouldn't date at all until marriage is something that's in sight for you
 - 3. To date without the possibility of marriage is setting yourself up to fall into sin
 - a. If it doesn't mean anything, and it's not going anywhere, what's to stop you from dropping your standards and doing some things that aren't going to matter because you're not going to marry that person anyway?

- b. If it's not the person you see yourself marrying, or you're not ready to get married, what's the point of dating at all?
 - 4. Whoever you're dating should be a converted believer with visible evidence of God's work in their life
- III. Act Like Royalty, Not Rap Stars
 - A. If God is foremost in your life, and the person you're interested in dating is in that same place, the question becomes how can I love others appropriately?
 - 1. The primary reason many relationships end is selfishness
 - 2. As humans, we are incredibly selfish
 - a. We lie to save our own pride
 - b. We seek to meet our own needs over the needs of others
 - 3. The more selfless you are, the more successful your relationships will be
 - B. Is the person you're dating respectful?
 - 1. Does your significant other treat you the way they treat their most valued possession?
 - 2. One of the best ways to show respect is by asking your parents and their parents what they think about your relationship
 - C. What do the people you respect think about the person who should be respecting you?
 - 1. If you start your relationship in sin, do you really think it will get better?
 - 2. Sometimes, we can become blinded by emotion
 - a. God puts people in our lives to help us see things we cannot see
 - b. Ephesians 6:2
 - 3. Ask the people you respect and love for their insight before you start the relationship and the waves of emotion take over
 - D. Whoever you're dating, you're also dating their family
 - 1. When you marry someone, you're marrying into that family
 - 2. Be respectful to their family, even before the relationship begins
 - E. Parents, be the kind of person your kids feel comfortable with
 - 1. Be the person your kids can introduce their significant others to
 - 2. If you aren't, you won't have the chance to be a godly influence in their lives
- IV. You've Got Game—Use It!
 - A. If you've found the one, this is how you keep them
 - 1. One of the primary reasons marriages fall apart is some people don't know what to do with love when they find it
 - 2. Why stop using your game once you've won?
 - a. Use it while you're dating, while you're engaged, and when you're married
 - b. Song of Solomon 1:12, 16-17; 2:4
 - 3. For a relationship to blossom and continue to grow, there must be time spent with each other—intentional, private time spent getting to know each other
 - B. Strive to have tunnel vision
 - 1. Song of Solomon 1:15
 - 2. Focus on being committed to your spouse

3. Solomon and his wife had a growing commitment to each other because of their adoration for God, their respect and love for each other, and time spent together
 - a. Commitment defines Christian relationships more than any other quality
 - b. Proverbs 5:15
- C. Build your partner up
 1. Song of Solomon 1:16
 2. In the dating or marriage relationship, there has to be constant affirmation for each other
- V. Conclusion
 - A. Are you friendly and kind toward the people in your life?
 1. Song of Solomon 1:16
 2. In order to cultivate relationship, you must first cultivate friendship
 - a. This is what finding the one and keeping them is all about
 - b. It's hard to love someone if you can't stand being around them
 - B. Invest in each other through quality time
 1. It doesn't have to be an expensive meal or event
 2. It doesn't matter what you're doing; it matters who you're doing it with
 - C. Build your relationship
 1. Not just emotionally, but also spiritually
 2. Build up your relationship with Christ and your love for God before your love for each other

Figures referenced: Richard Gere, Mitch Hedberg, Jack Nicholson, Amy Schumer, Britney Spears

Cross references: Proverbs 5:15; Song of Solomon 1:12, 15-17; Jeremiah 29:11; Romans 6:23; 1 Corinthians 13:4; 2 Corinthians 6:14; Ephesians 6:2

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