

# “What’s the Big Deal About Dating?”

## Lesson 4

Dating – what a great opportunity our culture allows. Many countries today still arrange marriages as they did in Bible times. Christian dating allows a single adult to prayerfully select a future partner for lifetime. It allows that single person to learn social skills. It also allows two individuals to sharpen each other spiritually.

What qualities should a Christian young adult look for in a future partner? One author has said, “It takes more than two Christian people to make a happy marriage.” 1 Corinthians 7:7 is a key passage on marriage in the early church. Paul was not spelling out a complete theology of marriage but was answering definite questions. One question was “is marriage or singleness better?” Wiersbe said, “Singleness is not subspiritual nor super spiritual.”

Who are you looking for? Mr. or Miss Right? Am I attracted to those most like me or different than me? Neil Warren suggests in his book, *Finding the Love of Your Life*, to find a person to love should be a lot like you.

*A team of researchers administered a psychological test to three groups, each consisting of 35 couples. One group included couples who were happily married, the second group consisted of couples having trouble but planning to stay together; and the final group contained couples on the verge of separation.*

1. *The happy couples were significantly similar in general activity, friendliness and personal relations.*
2. *Unhappy couples tended to be dissimilar.*

*“Clinical studies available indicate that similarity is associated with marital success.... Evidence suggests that dissimilarity per se is associated with instability and divorce. Every similarity is an asset. For couples, similarities are like money in the bank, and differences are like debts they owe. Every difference you have requires negotiation and adaptation.*

*What similarities are absolutely essential? 1) Intelligence, 2) Values, 3) Interests.*

*What differences spell trouble? 1) Energy level, 2) Personal habits, 3) Use of money, 4) Verbal skills and interests.*

*Let’s look at this area of dating and determine from a description of a single Bible character, Rebekah. What qualities did she have that would be desirable in any future mate?*

Six characteristics to look for in a mate:

1. Comely (v.16a) (Physical attraction) – Proverbs 31:30; Ezekiel 16:15; Proverbs 6:25; Psalm 90:17.
  - a. Definition:
    1. David was “comely” (1 Samuel 16:18); Joseph was “goodly, and well favored.” (Genesis 39:6)
    2. “Outward beauty is not always related to inward happiness.” (Galatians 6:17; Isaiah 53:3-4)
  - b. Dynamics:
    1. Are they attractive to you? – not your neighbor!

“Beauty is in the eye of the beholder.”

2. Are you improving on your fairness?

- *“Not a bold billboard but masterful portrait in the gallery! Both are paintings – one more tastefully, masterfully done than the other.... Their purposes are different -one is to grab your attention, the other is to reveal the artist’s touch and his heart!”*

c. Description of the Body is:

- Temple – (1 Cor. 6:19) “Your body is the temple.”
- Tool – (Rom. 6:13) “Members are instruments.”
- Treasure House – (2 Cor. 4:7) “We have this treasure ... earthen vessels...”
- Tabernacle/ Tent – (2 Cor. 5:1) “For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.”

**All are temporal but visible.**

2. Chastity (v. 16b) (Purity) – 2 Corinthians 11:2; 1 Peter 3:2; Titus 2:5; 1 Thessalonians 4:4.

- a. A gift to present to others.
- b. Virtue – “Your present influence on others.”

“You cannot change your past, but you can change the meaning.”

3. Character (v.16c) – 1 Kings 9:4; Psalm 7:8; Titus 2:7.

- a. Dependable
  1. Fulfilled daily routines.
  2. Faithful – she was doing her job not running around looking.
- b. Obedient: She was doing what she was told to do.

4. Concern for others (v. 17-20) – Luke 6:35-38; Mark 17:42-45.

“How they treat their parents is how they will treat you.”

- a. Kind
- b. Thoughtful
- c. Courteous

5. Closeness to family (v. 23-28) – Colossians 3:18-20; Ephesians 6:1-2.

- a. Culturally responsible.
- b. Family members were carnal but still interested in her life.

6. Committed to Lord’s will (v. 58) – Psalm 143:10; Ephesians 5:17; Matthew 26:39.

Last, but not least!

Conclusion: *Dating is a privilege afforded to few. How do you know if you have similarities with others? How do you know if they have these six qualities? Spend time with them and make careful observations.*