

# Purity—In Life and In Heart

By

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## **Purity-In Life and In Heart**

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# Purity—In Life and In Heart

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(a Devo Blast article)

I was going to talk about *standing for truth* this month, but since Kenneth is talking about purity and several other things in life have come up, this seemed the best time to address dating, courtship, and marriage this year. What **I am attempting is to cast vision, I am not trying to legislate rules**, and simply trying to encourage that we look for a method of pre-marriage “getting to know each other” that *allows us to build boundaries of protection for ourselves and to maintain a godly testimony before Unbelievers*. What I now will go into is part of my own journey, testimony, and what I have taught and discussed with classes I have taught and young men that I have mentored over the last 5 years.

There is no **life** found in dating. It is an endless process of giving your heart away and searching for a loving feeling. I only said I was “dating” a girl for one day—and then my mom found out and it was over (I was like 9 or 10). As my mother will tell you, I have always “liked” girls. That is not a bad thing necessarily, but it has brought heartache. I proposed 5 times by the time I was 12. I always have wanted to be married; I even thought as a young boy that I would turn 16, get a car, and get a wife (again, my mother will verify this). My quest for “love” turned sour and at about 12 or 13 I slid into a shell—

still “liking” girls, but being less forward. I began to grow in my relationship with the Lord, but “relationships” were still foreign to me. I was almost never without a “crush” and those would only end in heartbreak until another good-feeling crush came along.

Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth; and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and **walk in the ways of thine heart**, and in the sight of thine eyes: but know thou, that **for all these things God will bring thee into judgment.**

Eccl 11:9 (KJV)

At some point, I realized this pattern was futile. And I cried out to the Lord in despair and at my utter end something like this: “*Lord, what does Your Word say about pre-marriage ‘relationships?’ Is it dating, or courtship, or is something else Your way?*” That question began an approximate 3 month journey where it seemed that every time I opened the Word of God that the Lord showed me how His Word was filled with answers to my question: it is seen in how the Church is the Bride of Christ, the harlot vs. virtuous woman in proverbs, Israel the prostituted daughter, and the many scriptures that teach clearly and bluntly about where lustful and selfish motives (often part of dating) take us. What will follow in this article is many of the principles I have learned as the Lord has led me on a walk of coming to the conviction that dating is unbiblical and that courtship is historically based on Biblical principles. One day I would like to write a book on Courtship, and have attempted to several times and have always been set back, please pray for me that the Lord will make a way to write that book.

Around the 1920s courtship shifted to a new concept in our nation: dating. The saying is that “[pre-marriage relationships] moved from the front porch to the back seat [of a car].” It was right during the time of WWI and WWII that dating became common. Prior to that time courtship was around. Now courtship can be defined many ways, but I will define it as *the time period is a pre-marriage relationship that is not centered on pleasure alone, but seriously looking toward marriage. It is a testing time to make sure that it God’s will is for the two to marry and for them to grow closer as friends.* Dating I would define as *a young man or young woman asking*

*somebody out because they like the way they look/want to have a good time. It is based on emotion, affection (which is not necessarily wrong), and often lust (which is wrong). It is an unwise time period where a boy and girl isolate themselves from authority and protection and step into a flirtation ground where kissing and more may be permitted. There is hardly ever any real getting to know someone because you are observing them in a false environment; where their true character—their strengths and weaknesses—will not be very clearly seen.*

I still recall doing a Royal Rangers high school devotion on 1 Corinthians 7:27 which discourages divorce and chanceful searching for a spouse and Proverbs 18:22 “*Whoso findeth a wife findeth a good thing, and obtaineth favour of the LORD* (KJV).” The balance of these two verses in light of the Whole counsel of God, is seek the Lord first and then He will put your other priorities in order and guide your steps: Matthew 6:33. It is the principle that Focusing on the Mark Ministries is built on; yet it is one that I have struggled with and I’m sure that you have too. It can be difficult to seek the Lord first when there is a significant other on your mind. But our first priority in life must remain the Lord even after we are married.

I have found the balance of 7:27 and 18:22 best described by this analogy: suppose you lost your keys. You look frantically for them and search in places that you normally don’t go. Along the search, you will probably find some things that you didn’t know were where they are and perhaps didn’t even know you had. It is the same with God. If we will seek Him first—if He is our all-consuming focus like the keys—then He will guide us to the right woman (or man if you’re a woman) at the right time. The Key is not to go around trying to find a spouse, but to seek the Lord first in our lives and trust the Lord to guide you. God brought Eve to Adam and supernaturally orchestrated Isaac and Rebecca’s marriage (Gen. 24—great chapter!). I am not saying that God will miraculously orchestrate every marriage, but He certainly is God and we should obey what He has said in His Word.

In Scripture, there are two types of women. Rebecca is one that displays virtue in Genesis 24, but there is another type: the harlot.

The two types of women who will cross your path:

## **Virtuous**

Characteristics:

- Quiet and gentle spirit
- Hard working
- Has a heart for God
- Makes her home her priority (not a career)
- Compassionate to the poor
- Diligent
- Has inner beauty of the heart that is of great worth in God's sight

## **Harlot**

Characteristics:

- Loud
- Boastful
- Her feet won't stay at home (she's always out and about)
- Flirtatious
- Sensual—kisses
- Pursues sinful pleasures
- A “pretty” viper

**As I tell young men—the women you hang around, will make or break you.**

## The Two Types of Men

### **Man of Passiveness**

- Selfish
- Lazy and Slothful
- Foolish
- Greedy
- Oppressor of the Poor
- Has a bad name

### **Man of godly Character**

- Wise
- Generous
- Provider
- Warrior
- Uncompromisingly standing for truth
- God Fearing
- Has a Good name/reputation

Summary of points to study further on your own:

- Prov. 5, 6, 7, 31 women
- Character
- Crying out to the Lord

- Young men focused on the Lord 1<sup>st</sup> then the other priorities fall in place
- Balance—a godly man avoids all extremes (Ecc. 7:18)
- Not legalistic rules, but true, sincere heart for having a relationship with the Lord first
- Vanity (true beauty is on the inside, not outside)
- 1 Peter 3, Eph 5, Prov. 31, Gen. 24, Is. 48:17, 30:21
- Dating prepares people for divorce because they are trained to selfishly look for someone who can fulfill their own desires and when they are done with one person, they just move onto the next. In short, there is not commitment and responsibility to their “love.”
- Busy at home (Titus 2:5) vs. never being at home (like a harlot, Proverbs 7:11) and a feminist, career woman (I’m not saying women cannot work, Proverbs 31 clearly teaches that they can; but today, many women’s first priority is not their home, but a career—this is sadly very evident in our culture)
- **Gentle and quiet spirit** (this is one of the greatest qualities to look for in a woman)
- She’s a dedicated Christian (with similar worldview and calling)
- Virtuous—Prov 31
- The Focus of a young man should be a deepening relationship with Lord first, then discovering his calling and providing and preparing for future marriage.
- Parents—are you preparing your kids for living a Christian life dedicated to the Lord and marriage (if it be the Lord’s will for them)? Marriage is much more important than college....yet do we try to train them for it?
- Avoiding even a hint of sexual immorality requires seriousness (Ephesians 5:3). Joseph wouldn’t even be around Potiphar’s wife and fled when she tempted him—he didn’t try to “missionary date” her as a false teaching today tells young people to do.
- A good illustration that I learned from Joshua Harris: We talk about Falling into love, but what happens when we hit the bottom?

Either the things I have mentioned really are important, or they are just some crazy rules and principles that a few people follow. You have to decide for yourself. How important is your belief, your view of dating and courtship and who will it impact?