**Dating as a Single Parent**

Let me save you some time. If you search for dating in the Bible you won't find it. So, where are we supposed to find principles to establish a relationship that will last?

Heading into a relationship as a single parent for the first time (or anytime) can be overwhelming, confusing and complicated. Is it even possible to trust again? Is there hope that the next relationship will be different? We all have that hope. But what if you prepared yourself spiritually for a relationship before asking or saying yes to anyone? Is it even possible in the culture we live in today to have a godly relationship?

There are many but here are a few biblical principles to get started with:

1. **Identity matters (**1 Peter 2:9, Col 1:13)Knowing who you are (and whose your are) will help you to know where you want to go and who you would want to journey life with. Identity theft can happen in a relationship. We may have good intentions to positively affect the other person spiritually. But what most often happens is that they affect us! Knowing who and whose you are is critical. You are valuable.
2. **Being equally yoked**means being on the same page spiritually. (2 Cor 6:14) Spending life with a person that doesn't know Christ will always feel like you are dragging a dead weight around. We can't change a person's heart but the Holy Spirit can. It's best to wait to get confirmation of where that person is spiritually (without you) than try to make them a believer inside a relationship. Anyone can say they are a Christian but how is that person is living out their faith without you will give you your answer. Don't rush into a committed relationship without knowing truly where that person is spiritually in both what they say and what they do. Give yourself time to get to know the person outside of a relationship.
3. **Avoiding fornication** means not having sex before marriage. (1 Cor 6:13, 1 Cor 6:18 and 1 Cor 7:2) In the King James version it's called fornication...in the NIV and other versions it says, "sexual immorality". Sex is for marriage period. Outside of that is called fornication. Scripture is very clear about this. If someone you are in a relationship with is pushing you in this area, do what the Bible says...FLEE! It's clear that you shouldn't stop and try to work it out. It says "flee". Waiting for marriage will honor God and be a constant unfolding of blessings over your future marriage. You will find that a God honoring marriage gets better over time...and that's worth the wait.
4. **Being in the light**means not keeping the relationship a secret. (1 John 1:7) It means not being engaged in a relationship that no one knows about. Instead, allow your family and friends time to get to know this person before you fall in love. Give people permission to speak into the relationship.
5. **Readiness (**Psalms 37:4, Psalms 62:8) You and the children will most assuredly not be ready at the same time. It will go well for you and your children to wait and watch for the timing of the Lord and your children's readiness as well. How will you know? Stay in the Word and obediently listen to God daily. How will you know when your children are ready? Don't worry, they will tell you! Use this time to grow in your faith, heal emotionally and be restored physically,

If we have not met, I want you to know that I walked into this church 25 years ago with a 5 year old daughter and a 2 month old son in tow. This church embraced me but bigger than that the gospel and what God did in my life changed this ordinary girl forever! And I know He will do the same for you! He will! Enjoy church, the SPF ministry and this SPF newsletter. Allow yourself to get excited about what God has in store for you and your children.

**Holly Crain**
**Single Parent Family Ministry Associate**
Single Parent Family Ministry
Houston’s First Baptist Church — The Loop
Holly.Crain@HoustonsFirst.org
O: 713.957.7674
C: 832-247-4787
[HoustonsFirst.org](http://houstonsfirst.org/) ​