The Signs of Red Flags in Dating Relationships

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Dating for Christian Single Adults can be complex. First, we are constantly inundated with secular influences of romantic relationships. Secondly, it seems that everyone has their own definition and purpose for dating. While I agree that the Bible does not specifically address dating, it does instruct us how to conduct ourselves in all life situations.

What kind of person should a Christian date? The Bible exhorts us to “run from anything that gives you evil thoughts that young men often have but stay close to anything that makes you want to do right. Have faith, love, and enjoy the companionship of those who love the Lord and have pure hearts.” – 2 Timothy 2:22. It is easy for someone to argue with your advice, but it’s more difficult to argue with the Word of God. If we apply this principle to dating, it means that we simply should not date individuals who give us evil thoughts about abandoning the church, cohabitating, fornicating, etc. However, we should readily welcome those of the opposite sex that encourage us in our Christian walk.

In 2nd Corinthians, we are told that is unwise to date someone who does not love God. The Scripture says, “do not be teamed with those who do not love the Lord, for what do people of God have in common with people of sin? How can light live with darkness? And what harmony can there be between Christ and the devil? How can a Christian be a partner with one who does not believe?” – 2 Corinthians 6:14-15. A recipe for disaster occurs when a Christian attempts to date someone who is not a Christian, because the two individuals in the relationship are walking in different directions. The book of Amos puts it best in asking, “can two walk together, unless they agree?” – Amos 3:3.

Sometimes non-Christians will pose a Christians to win over the hearts of those they are seeking to date. It is shameful of those who infiltrate the church and ministry functions to prey upon someone of the opposite sex. Again, the Bible gives us an indicator of such red flags in saying, “what I meant was that you are not to keep company with anyone who claims to be a Christian but indulges in sexual sins, or is greedy, or is a swindler, or worships idols, or is a drunkard, or is abusive. Do not even eat lunch with such a person.” – 1 Corinthians 5:11

When you hear the term domestic violence, it probably conjures up the picture of abuse within a marriage. Domestic violence can be defined as behavioral abuse used by one person in a relationship to control the other one in the following ways: name-calling or put downs, isolating a partner from family or friends, withholding money, prohibiting a partner from getting or keeping a job, actual or threatened physical harm, sexual assault, and stalking – ([www.domesticviolence.org](http://www.domesticviolence.org) – accessed January 3, 2010.) The Bible exhorts us not to have intimate dealings with anyone with a bad temper in saying, “keep away from angry, short tempered individuals, lest you learn to be like them and endanger your soul.” – Proverbs 22:24

Another red flag are signs of slothfulness in your significant other. If he/she spends their days in idleness watching television, talking on the phone, obsessed with social media and does not have a livelihood; you had better heed that warning. Other signs are lack of grooming and poor housekeeping. The Bible is clear that we should not date lazy people. It says, “now here is a command given in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ by His authority: Stay away from any Christian who spends his/her days in laziness and does not follow the ideal of hard work we set up for you.” - II Thessalonians 3:6

While I agree that one must be physically attracted to his/her significant other, physical beauty alone is unable to sustain a true relationship. There is a famous quote that says, “all that glitters is not gold.” That statement is so true. Many individuals may look attractive outwardly; however, they may possess an ugly character or disposition. God does not want Single Adults to be swept off our feet by good looks while ignoring serious character flaws in someone of the opposite sex. The Bible says, “be beautiful inside, in your hearts, with the lasting charm of a gentle and quiet spirit that is so precious to God.” – 1 Peter 3:4. Inner beauty truly counts the most!

Most people dislike someone with a bad attitude. Individuals with a bad attitude are unattractive and are not desirous companions romantically or socially. However, we as Single Adults tend to be blind to character flaws in someone we are dating. Our dating partner may generally have a pleasant attitude toward us: however, he/she may have an unpleasant disposition towards others. If that is the case, their true demeanor will eventually reveal itself in the relationship. That’s why it’s important to have those closest to us as accountability partners who will speak the truth to us. The Bible says, “may God who gives patience, steadiness, and encouragement help you to live in the complete harmony with each other – each with an attitude of Christ the other.” – Romans 15:5-6

We all need encouragement and support in life. The Word of God asks these questions, “Is there any such thing as a Christian cheering each other up? Do you love me enough to want to help me? Does it mean anything to you that we are kindred in the Lord, sharing the same Spirit? Are your hearts tender and sympathetic to all?” – (Philippians 2:1-2) If someone we are dating answers all of these in the affirmative, then we can be assured that we are in an encouraging and supportive relationship. One last note is that these questions are not answered with one’s lips but with one’s actions.