Should I Listen to My Parents' Dating Advice?

***EDITOR'S NOTE:***[***He Said-She Said***](http://www.crosswalk.com/family/singles/he-said-she-said/) *is a biweekly advice column for singles featuring a question from a Crosswalk.com reader with responses from a male and female point of view. If you've got a question about anything related to singleness or living the single life, please submit it to* ***hesaid-shesaid@crosswalk.com*** *(selected questions will be posted anonymously).*

**QUESTION:**I am a 25-year-old Christian male, dating a 30-year-old female. Our relationship has been going very well, with me planning to gradually advance to the next level. However, the main problem we are facing now is that my parents are against our relationship due to the age difference. They think the age gap would bring problems in the future and that it is just not acceptable for a man to date a woman who is 5 years older. I feel this relationship brings more good than bad in our life. What advice do you have?

**HE SAID:**

*"For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and will be joined to his wife, and the two will become one flesh*."  [**Ephesians 5:31**](http://www.biblestudytools.com/search/?t=niv&q=eph+5:31-31)

Most versions of the [**Bible**](http://www.biblestudytools.com/) use those exact same words, yet some go even further with “go away from” or “forsake” his father and mother.

As “children,” we should honor our fathers and mothers as many other passages command; however, there is a time in our life (men) when we need to step up and leave the confines of our home and security of our parents, start making our own decisions and take responsibility for the consequences of the choices we make, both good and bad.

Parents are innately protective of their children, and at some point they also need to let go and allow their children to grow into the person God created them to be - successes, failures or anything in between.

A five year disparity at this age may seem like a big difference (in their eyes), but a person’s “years” are not as important as their maturity, life experiences and compatibility. As you age, that difference will become negligible.

You mentioned, “…with me planning to gradually advance to the next level.” I would just caution you to not move faster than God is directing you to, especially in this situation. Oftentimes we want to quickly push forward when things are good; however, there is nothing wrong with going slow. You won’t find many happily married couples say they wished they had gotten married sooner.

You also said, “I feel this relationship brings more good than bad in our life.” How “bad” is the bad and what is it? I wouldn’t personally pursue a relationship which “I feel” is close to a “toss-up” on the positives and negatives, but it’s solely your decision as to how much importance you place on the “bad” parts.

In the end, this is your life and you need to live it for yourself with no regrets. With lots of [**prayer**](http://www.crosswalk.com/faith/prayer/), just allow God to lead you, and give Him the time He needs to reveal His direction for your life.

**SHE SAID:**

While I believe wholeheartedly that our parents' advice and support is important in all areas of our lives, there is a time when you have to listen first to the Holy Spirit and make your own decision. To me the age gap at your age range is of no real concern. If it was the other way around, no one would even bat an eye. I am thinking there is something more to their disapproval. Maybe they are thinking about your future kids. That if you don't start having children right away she will get too old. Or maybe she is really focused on her career and doesn't appear to want to be a traditional wife (in their definition). To me they are really sounding old-fashioned versus biblically correct. It's more of their opinion than truth.

It sounds like you are doing everything right. You are both taking things slow, praying, going to church, and hopefully also studying the Word. It could be that your parents are just wanting to hold on to you a little longer, despite the fact you have moved out and are living independently.

So, continue to pray about it all. Go to your pastor or other wise counsel who knows you both. Also, allow your parents to spend some real quality time with your girlfriend so they can see she is God's answer to your prayers. Allow them to fall in love with her too. And then bottom line, if they still don't like it solely based on the age difference, you have to follow the Holy Spirit instead. I will be praying for your next steps.

"*My steps have held to your paths; my feet have not stumbled.*"  -[**Psalm 17:5**](http://www.biblestudytools.com/search/?t=niv&q=ps+17:5-5)

***HE is …******Cliff Young****, a Crosswalk.com contributing writer and a veteran single of many decades. He has traveled the world in search of fresh experiences, serving opportunities, and the perfect woman (for him) and has found that his investments in God, career and youth ministry have paid off in priceless dividends.*

***SHE is ...******Kris Swiatocho****, the President and Director of* [***TheSinglesNetwork.org Ministries***](http://thesinglesnetwork.org/) *and* [***FromHisHands.com Ministries.***](http://fromhishands.com/) *Kris has served in ministry in various capacities for the last 25 years. An accomplished trainer and mentor, Kris has a heart to reach and grow leaders so they will in turn reach and grow others. She is also the author of* [***four books***](http://www.thesinglesnetwork.org/store.html)*.*

***DISCLAIMER****: We are not trained psychologists or licensed professionals. We're just average folk who understand what it's like to live the solo life in the twenty-first century. We believe that the Bible is our go-to guide for answers to all of life's questions, and it's where we'll go for guidance when responding to your questions. Also, it's important to note that we write our answers separately.*

***GOT A QUESTION?*** *If you've got a question about anything related to singleness or living the single life, please submit it to hesaid-shesaid@crosswalk.com (selected questions will be posted anonymously). While we are unable to answer every inquiry, we do hope that this column will be an encouragement to you. Click here to visit the He Said-She Said* [***archives***](http://www.crosswalk.com/family/singles/he-said-she-said/)*.*