



FORGE
HIGH SCHOOL

Student Resources

Dating FAQ

Q: What does a healthy high school dating relationship look like? What does the Bible say about it and how it should look? What is the “line” for physical/emotional connection in dating?

Although the Bible does not address dating directly, it does have a tremendous amount to say about marriage. We know that marriage is the covenant relationship within which God allows us to experience intimacy and oneness, and based on that truth we know that dating should be distinct from that since it is prior to any covenant commitment. We believe that the goal of dating should be to (1) make an informed and wise decision about marriage, and (2) to treat each other with complete holiness through that process.

One of the biggest challenges of dating is being wise with the time frame between beginning a relationship and how long it takes to progress to marriage. If it is not a possibility to get married in the next few years, then beginning a dating relationship would be more foolish than wise.

Once you confirm a realistic time frame, the Scriptures are clear that our relationships should have these characteristics:

- Primarily brother/sister relationship – 1 Timothy 5:1-2
- Glorify God – 1 Corinthians 10:31
- Purity – 1 Corinthians 6:15-18
- Self-control with holiness and honor – 1 Thessalonians 4:4
- Obedient to Jesus – John 14:15

We should not allow dating to look like marriage or engagement. This means that we must keep a healthy distance from one another in order to make sure we are only learning about each other and not taking steps towards life together (which would happen in engagement). Students should maintain their own life where they are following Jesus personally and living an Adventure for Him (2 Corinthians 5:19-20).

The line for physical intimacy is clear. We are called to flee from sexual immorality and to not allow even a hint of it in our lives, so there should be no physical intimacy before marriage. The line for emotional intimacy is harder to discern, but just as important. A dating couple needs to make sure you are not taking God’s place in each other’s life, primarily through finding comfort, encouragement, and guidance. You should be fully satisfied in Christ personally, or else your relationship will become the unhealthy center of your life.

If you feel like you have a realistic time frame to build towards marriage and you are strong enough in Christ to date, then we would recommend these principles as you choose to date:

1. Make sure you are satisfied in Christ and growing in Him apart from that relationship.
2. Have a purpose for what the relationship is moving towards.
3. Don't let your life revolve around that person, and guard how much you communicate.
4. Involve your parents and community.
5. Talk about how you are going to break up at the beginning of the relationship.
6. Be prepared to get married early.
7. You would have to sacrifice some dreams and freedoms to get married early, but we would rather you get married while in college and maintain your sexual integrity than for you to act like you are married and be living in sin.

Q: How do we as Christian females relate to guys as friends in Christ? If two people like each other but don't want to date, how do they keep sin out of the relationship?

The brother/sister relationship as described in 1 Timothy 5:1-2 should give direction to our relationships, whether it is as friends or in dating. To think of a sibling relationship can be awkward, but it is the realistic expectation of what God has designed and we should be obedient that standard or purity. It is possible to relate to one another in this familial relationship and create memories that you will not look back on with regret.

In order to do this, we must not make your lives revolve around each other. By having a healthy distance, we can maintain those relationships without putting the pressures of dating on a friendship. We should also focus on the adventure God has called us to live out as we are "agents of reconciliation" (2 Cor. 5) in His story. No matter what stage of life or relationship status we find ourselves in, we are always called to give our lives away for the sake of others so they can know Christ and be reconciled with Him. Focus on living in that adventure now, so that God can be the foundational element of your friendships.

Q: Why won't a guy just ask a girl out?

I'm scared that this question shows an impatience in our girls. To be honest, there are very few high school guys that are strong enough or mature enough to have anything to invite a girl into, but too many girls are settling for weak boys because they want to be affirmed so badly. Let's be patient and wait in faith, knowing that God is growing and transforming us into a person who will be ready for a relationship in the right time. Then in the right time when both the guy and girl are strong enough, a guy can move courageously towards a girl and take the risk of asking her out. I promise you will enjoy it more when you are prepared for where it can actually go.

Q: How do you pursue a girl without lust? Where do we draw the line between lust and an appreciation for sexuality in the early stages of a relationship?

Lust, by definition, is insatiable. It is a discontentment with what you have and a strong desire for something that you do not have. So, in order to pursue a girl without lust, you must first be satisfied in Christ. When we find our satisfaction in Christ and are content in our relationship with Him, then our hearts will not be overflowing with lust. But make no mistake about it, if you are struggling with lust when you are pursuing a girl, it will overflow from your heart and you will corrupt her. That's why it is really important to be strong in Christ before you move towards a relationship.

Let's be honest – girls are beautiful. God has designed girls with a unique ability to show beauty and to captivate others. As Christian guys, we must be able to appreciate beauty without desiring to take from it. There is nothing wrong with acknowledging a girl's beauty, but the second that you desire to take something from her it becomes lust. We must be strong men that are satisfied in Christ so that we can protect our Christian sisters rather than defrauding them.