



Here are your Idols Dating

Series Summary: Idolatry is a sin that the nation of Israel dealt with time and time again as they worshiped false gods such as Baal. It is easy for us today to assume that because we do not worship false gods in temples that idolatry is a thing of the past. Nothing could be further from the truth. Instead, idolatry is alive today because just like Israel we worship things other than God. The question is what are they?

Big Idea/Question: If we view singleness as a curse, dating is our idol.

GET THEM TALKING

Do you ever feel pressured to date? Why is that?

Can dating someone become an idol in your life?

Leader Note: 100% yes. We are called to have a relationship with Christ. When we take part in idolatry, we are replacing Christ with something else. What else would be easier to replace our relationship with Christ than with another relationship (dating)?

GROUP DISCUSSION (Why dating becomes an idol)

How do you know if dating is an idol? What are the signs in your life that you idolize?

your dating relationship or simply dating itself?

Leader Note (answer): There are a couple of good answers to the question above. But one that sticks out to me is dating is an idol if you view singleness as a curse. In the passage below Paul makes it clear that being single (as he was) is not a curse.

1 corinthians 7:32-34 I would like you to be free from concern. An unmarried man is concerned about the Lord's affairs—how he can please the Lord. **33** But a married man is concerned about the affairs of this world—how he can please his wife— **34** and his interests are divided. An unmarried woman or virgin is concerned about the Lord's affairs: Her aim is to be devoted to the Lord in both body and spirit. But a married woman is concerned about the affairs of this world—how she can please her husband. **35** I am saying this for your own good, not to restrict you, but that you may live in a right way in undivided devotion to the Lord.

What advantage does Paul list that a single (not married) individual has?

Leader Note (answer): A single person does not have to worry about sustaining and maintaining a marriage. While dating and marriage are not the same thing, the logic does apply to both. When you are single you are freed to pursue after Jesus with 100% undivided attention. Does this mean dating, being engaged, or being married is a bad thing? No. But this does mean that being single is not a curse. It is not something to dread because being single can be a blessing from God as it was for Paul.

Can you be single and idolize dating?

Leader Note: YES!

- If you view singleness as a curse dating is already your idol.
- If you believe someone else will one day complete you and as a single person you are incomplete dating is your idol.
- If you can not find hope and happiness apart from a dating relationship dating is your idol.

What are some warning signs that you are making an idol of dating?

Answer / Leader Note: a couple of thoughts

1. **Dating who you should not** - Scripture tells us that we are not to pursue marriage (or dating relationship) with an unbeliever (2 Cor 6:14).
2. **Physical boundaries being crossed** - If the dating relationship you are in includes sexual sin it has already become a stumbling block in your faith.
3. **When Christ comes second** - If you are investing more time, effort, and energy than you invest in your relationship with Christ.

If you feel convicted that you have made dating an idol what is the next step?

VIDEO TEACHING (the solution)

The solution to our unhealthy obsession with dating and fear of singleness trust in God's provision and goodness.

Matt 6:25-30

Once we truly trust God's goodness we are free to seek out God and his kingdom

Matt 6:32-33

What does this look like? It means we put Christ first in all things. We are pursuing him above all else.

Transition - How do you know you are putting Christ first? And if you aren't what do you need to do to change that?

GROUP DISCUSSION (Seek out Christ)

How do you know you are putting Christ first?

Passage Set up: The Apostle John speaking to the Church of Ephesus, in the Book of Revelation, gives some sound advice to any believer who has wandered from Christ due to idolatry or any other sin.

Revelation 2:4-5 Yet I hold this against you: You have forsaken the love you had at first. **5** Consider how far you have fallen! Repent and do the things you did at first. If you do not repent, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place.

What did John tell the Church of Ephesus to do once they realized they had wandered in their faith?

What does it mean to confess and repent?

Leader Note (further Study): Confession is the act of acknowledging our sins before God in prayer. When we confess our sins we own our wrongs and we do not make excuses for them. When we repent we turn away from our sinful habits and pursue after thoughts and thoughts that glorify God. We turn from our sins to pursue Jesus. Some useful passages on confession and repentance are 1 John 1:9, Psalm 32:5, Acts 17:30, and Romans 10:9-10.

Leader Note: It is important that students realize a couple of things about confession and repentance. We believe in Jesus Christ for eternal life once. But that does not mean that we should not also regularly confess and repent of sinful actions and habits as believers. Confession and repentance should be a part of our prayer life.