

# i kissed dating goodbye

## Introduction Week

1. Introduce self, name, interest, etc.
2. Who are your two closest friends and what makes those relationships special?
3. What is your families rules/view of dating? age? places? etc?
4. Name five reasons people wait longer to get married today.
5. What is the ideal age to get married?
6. Why did you select that age?
7. Should the man be older than the woman?
8. Should the man be taller than the woman?
9. How old were your parents when they got married?
10. What was your response when you first heard about *I Kissed Dating Goodbye*? (sound interesting? sound stupid? etc?)
11. Name five attributes you want in the guy/girl you marry.
12. What is your goal in dating?
13. Why is that your goal?
14. What should be the end result in dating?
15. What is love? (write their answers on the board)

## Chapter 1

### Opening comments

The suggestions on how to date in the book are not for the entire world, but for you who have put your faith in Jesus Christ. That is because God has Lordship over our lives, He is our master.

1. In the introduction (page 9) the author says that IKDG is not about how to make dating work for you, but how to make your life pleasing to God. Are you interested in exploring this idea?
2. Discuss the culture's idea of "romance" and share the ways you feel tempted to accept the culture's idea of romance instead of the Bible's. (Leader: You might share one way you are tempted to accept it to get things rolling)
3. How does the book describe "Christian Dating?" (16&17, don't have sex, only date Christians)
4. In what ways do you agree with the following statement from chapter one?  
"God's lordship in my life doesn't merely tinker with my approach to romance- it completely transforms it. God not only wants me to act differently; He wants me to

think different - to view love, purity, and singleness from His perspective, to have a new lifestyle and a new attitude.” (pg 18)

5. After breaking up with his girlfriend Josh, the author, asks, “What does it mean to genuinely care about the girls [or boys] I knew?” How would you answer that question?
6. Why does the author say he thinks short-term dating is harmful? Do you agree with him that there must be something better? why or why not?
7. Describe your reaction to Anna’s dream (pages 13-14). In what ways does thinking about your wedding day in that way help you to make changes in the way you relate to the opposite gender now at your age?
8. Read Philippians 1:9-10, “And it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment, so that you may approve what is excellent, and so be pure and blameless for the day of Christ” If you desire something better in relationships, how does this verse challenge your perspective on love?
9. Guys Only: If God’s best for our lives includes treating girls as sisters in Christ rather than as potential girlfriends, what does that mean practically?
10. Girls Only: When it comes to feeling-based love, girls are the experts. How can we avoid being led solely by our feelings or emotions in relationships?
11. What do we learn about love in 1 John 4:10-11, “In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.”? How does this look in our relationships?
12. Girls: Do you get the sense that the Christian guys in your life are concerned about protecting your heart, purity, reputation, etc?
13. Guys: Are you concerned about protecting the heart, purity, reputation, etc, of the girls in your lives?
14. What do you think of the following statement on page 19 of your book, “I have no business asking for a girl’s heart and exclusive affections if I’m not ready to consider marriage. Until I can do that, I’d only be using that girl to meet my short-term needs, not seeking to bless her for the long term.” What do you think he means by short term needs? Do agree with this or do you think it is too extreme? (make them say why they agree or disagree and their answer will give some insight into their current thinking).
15. How about this statement on page 20: what are your thoughts and can you think of specific ways this is true? “By avoiding romantic, one-on-one relationships before God tells me I’m ready, I can better serve girls[or boys] as a friend, and I can remain free to keep my focus on the Lord.” Read the next two paragraphs as well (begins with “So even though I’m not romantically attached...” ask what they think, see if you can get them talking.
16. This is not a book about rules to follow, but about getting you to think about what is the best way to live out the relationship we have with the people God has placed in your life. It is a pursuit of rethinking how we relate to the opposite sex in such a way that God will be glorified in our lives. The first step though is understanding why you think how you think? Have movies/Tv/music shaped your view on relationships? If you are honest,

have you bought into the idea that you need a boyfriend/girlfriend to be happy so often see in media? Maybe discuss a few movies that push the need of a relationship/hook up. or music (I love listening to Taylor Swift, but she holds to a worldly view of relationships, she is almost saying the pain the breaking up needs to be experienced to really live)

## Chapter 2

1. Is two people going out for a good time with no interest in anything more a problem? Does commitment need to be the goal of a romantic relationship? Is this answer different for those who trust in Christ than for those who don't?
2. What was the phrase used over and over in chapter 2? "The Joy of intimacy is the reward of commitment." What does that mean in your own words? What does this look like in your relationships with boys/girls.
3. Even as Christians, we often approach dating with the goal of "figuring out what we'll one day want when we get around to actually committing to one person." How do you feel about this view? Why is this book saying that's still a selfish way to view even "Christian Dating?" (trading physical hookups for emotional ones, p 30-31)
4. Proverbs 3:3 links love and faithfulness (commitment). Have you thought about these two ideas as connected before? (p 31)
5. What does Josh say is the reason he stopped dating? (p 32, 3rd paragraph under "Applying the Principle." What do you think of this reason?
6. The very next paragraph explains his relationships now with girls. What is this philosophy? (p 32) The idea is not to shun or avoid the opposite sex at all. The purpose of not "dating" is to have great relationships that glorify God, not to stay away from girls/boys. As Christians we have a responsibility to our brothers and sisters in Christ to care for, encourage and build up each other. Is this what your relationships with the opposite sex looks like?
7. Then he takes it to another step and doesn't limit the idea of getting more involved with someone than you can commit to to just "dating" them. He says, "But you don't have to go on a date to become inappropriately intimate. You can do that over the phone, via email, or on group dates." (p 33) His idea is not to become legalistic and just not define what you are doing as "dating" but rather to guard your heart and the boy/girl's heart as well before you are ready to commit. Just because you aren't dating or boyfriend/girlfriend doesn't mean you can't cross the line of intimacy.
8. How have these two chapters changed (or have they?) the way you view dating/relationships? What are you hoping to learn more about in this study/book?

## Chapter 3

**Summary:** This chapter points out the reasons our common view of “Christian” dating is not the best way for young believers to handle relationships. Seven defects of our culture’s concept of dating are pointed out and discussed.

**Key Quote:** We don’t find the real beauty of singleness in pursuing romance with as many people as we want. We find the real beauty in using our freedom to serve God with abandon.” pg 44.

9. What was the point of the crummy shopping cart story at the beginning of chapter 3? (answer top of page 36 ”I’ve concluded that for Christians...”).
10. What is the cause of sinful and selfish relationships? (sinful and selfish people)
11. Do you agree that dating itself is at least part of the problem leading to sin in relationships?
12. On page 37 the author ask in regards to the problems with dating, “Is this the answer? Head out on the same course with the same assumptions and attitudes as those who have fallen and hope that in the critical moment you’ll be able to stay in control?” Why do you think dating would work for you? (what is different?) or Why do you think it would not?

**Defective Dating I: Dating tends to skip the friendship state of the relationship.**

13. Agree or disagree, why?
14. Page 39 reads, “He asked me out, but I’m just afraid that if we start actually dating it will change our friendship.” What expectations change when people go from friends to dating? (dating gives expectations of romance, exclusive interaction, etc)
15. Any thoughts on the following statement from page 39? “In dating, romantic attraction is often the cornerstone of the relationship. The premise of dating is “I’m attracted to you; therefore, let’s get to know each other.” The premise of friendship, on the other hand, is “We’re interested in the same things; let’s enjoy these common interests together.” If romantic attraction forms after developing a friendship, it’s a bonus. However relationships based on physical attraction and romantic feelings will only last as long as the feelings last.

**Defective Dating II: Dating often mistakes a physical relationship for love.**

16. How is it true that physical relationships (hand holding, cuddling, kissing, etc) cause people to falsely feel “love”?
17. Is dating a pursuit of commitment in Junior High? High School?
18. Do you agree with our book that the underlying attitude in dating is that a person’s primary value comes from the way he or she looks? defend

**Defective Dating III: Dating often isolates a couple from other vital relationships.**

19. Have you ever had a friend drop you for a boy or a girl? How did it feel? Ever neglected a friendship because of a boyfriend or girlfriend?
20. Do you think pairing off is healthy/safe for people your age? Defend you’re answer

21. The author states that “when we allow one relationship to crowd out others we lose perspective,” lose perspective of what? (top of page 42)

**Defective Dating IV: Dating can distract young adults from their primary responsibility of preparing for the future.**

22. On page 43 we read, “One of the saddest tendencies of dating is to distract young adults from developing their God-given abilities and skills. Instead of serving in their local church, instead of equipping themselves with the character, education, and experience necessary to succeed in life, many allow themselves to be consumed by the present needs that dating emphasizes.” How have you seen yourself or others in dating relationships pull away from church, youth group, friendships, school, sports or other activities?

**Defective Dating V: Dating can cause discontentment with God’s gift of singleness.**

23. On page 44 the authors says, “We don’t find the real beauty of singleness in pursuing romance with as many people as we want. We find the real beauty in using our freedom to serve God with abandon.” What are ways you can use being single to serve God with abandon that you don’t or can’t when in a relationship? Consider Do Hard Things from last year.

24. How does dating make you focus on what you don’t have? Do you tend to dwell on when and who will be your next boyfriend?

**Defective Dating VI: Dating can create an artificial environment for evaluating another person’s character.**

25. How is dating an artificial way of interacting? Do you think people try to be what they think the other person wants them to be? Do you notice friends act different around their boyfriend than they do friends?

**Defective Dating VII: Dating often becomes an end in itself.**

**Remainder of Chapter**

26. Do you see any of these 7 habits in your thoughts or actions about relationships?

**Read from page 47**, last paragraph: “If you’ve dated, this probably sounds familiar to you. I think that for too long we’ve approached relationships using the world’s mindset and values, and if you’ve tried it, you might agree with me that it just doesn’t work. Let’s not waste any more time wrestling with the swerving cart of dating. It’s time for a new attitude.”

27. Would you be willing to try a new way, have a new attitude, a new philosophy about relationships with the opposite gender?

**Defective Dating Manifesto (making the 7 statements positive)**

I. I reject defective dating that tends to skip the friendship stage of a relationship, and I choose to build my future marriage on the solid foundation of friendship with my spouse.

- II. I reject defective dating that mistakes a physical relationship for love, and I choose purity and the clarity that comes in a relationship undistracted by premarital physical involvement.
- III. I reject defective dating that isolates me from other vital relationships, and I'm saying yes to the joy, wisdom, and godly perspective that comes from investing in family and other friends.
- IV. I reject defective dating that distracts me from my primary responsibility of preparation, and I choose to glorify God and serve my future spouse by using this time in my life to prepare for the future.
- V. I reject defective dating that causes discontentment with God's gift of singleness, and I embrace the contentment that comes with a heart of gratefulness and an attitude that seeks to make the most of today.
- VI. I reject defective dating that creates an artificial environment for evaluating another person's character, and I choose to get to know my future spouse in a setting that lets us both see who we really are and what our true character is.
- VII. I reject dating that becomes an end in itself, and I choose a healthy romantic relationship that bridges friendship and marriage and to either move purposefully towards commitment or just be friends with the other person.

**Final Statement on Chapter 3:** This book never suggest we stop dating because we're afraid of relationships but because we want something better - a better way to interact with our brothers or sisters in Christ.

## Chapter 4

**Summary:** This chapter begins to give us new ways of thinking about dating and relationships. That is breaking away from dating's negative habits by taking on a new attitude regarding love, purity and singleness.

The new attitudes are...

### **I. Every relationship is an opportunity to model Christ's love.**

- 1. How do you define a flirt? (page 50, "Much of her interaction with guys is fake, it focuses on attracting attention to herself and getting a reaction from whoever she currently likes.")
- 2. What is the 180 degree turn you can take from this flirtatiousness (Middle of page 50, "honest, sincere love that treats guys as brothers not potential boyfriends;" looking for ways to bless others)

### **II. My unmarried years are a gift from God.**

- 3. How has society taught us to feel complete without a boyfriend or girlfriend? (movies themes, music, tv shows, etc)

### **III. I don't need to pursue a romantic relationship before I'm ready for marriage.**

4. What is the youngest you can realistically see yourself getting married? Why then would you desire to date in high school?
5. Page 52 encourages us to , “seek close relationships with family and deep nonromantic relationships with brothers and sisters in the Lord.” How can you seek to grow these sort of relationships?

**IV. I cannot “own” someone outside of marriage and should not act as though I do.**

6. In what ways does having a boyfriend/girlfriend make unwarranted emotional, spiritual or even physical claims on someone?

**V. I will avoid situations that could compromise the purity of my body or mind.**

7. How can you avoid placing yourself in situations that will threaten your commitment to purity? What situations?

**Other**

8. What is the only way you can change your attitude towards dating? (God, Praying for change)
9. Important Paragraph:  
 “Choosing to quit the dating game doesn’t mean rejecting friendship with the opposite sex, companionship, romance, or marriage. We still can pursue these things; we just choose to pursue them on God’s terms and in His time. God ask us to put our romantic ambitions in the “all these things” pile that we must leave behind so we can “seek first his kingdom and his righteousness” (Matthew 6:33). Leaving dating behind is a by-product of God’s primary desire for us to consume ourselves with seeking him wholeheartedly. “
10. Any other thoughts on these radical ideas?

**Chapter 5**

1. In the story of Jeff and Gloria, what was Jeff’s reasoning for having sex for the first time with Gloria? How was the word love used there? (pg 59)
2. In the story of Eric and Leslie, what was Eric’s reasoning for not having any physical contact with Leslie? How was the word love used there? (pg 60-61)
3. What is your definition of love? (“Romance can thrill us to our core, but it’s only a small part of true love” p 62)
4. How does your definition of love compare to Scripture?

“If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. If I give away all I have, and if I deliver up my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing. Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not

rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends." 1 Corinthians 13:1-8

5. In what ways are we told what love is through ads? TV? Magazines? Movies?
6. How can you show the world the love of Christ through your relationships? (directing attention to the designer's creativity) p 65
7. Do you think people your age date for image (cool points)?
8. Consider the three worldly beliefs about love:
  - I. Love is primarily for the fulfillment and comfort of self (p 65). Do you agree that's how we are taught to think outside of Christ? What would the opposite/biblical statement of this read? (Love is for the glory of God and the good of others. p 67)
  - II. Love is primarily a feeling (p 66). Who becomes the center of these "feelings" when this is the case? Do feelings govern your actions in relationships?
  - III. Love is out of our control (p 66). How does that become an excuse?
9. Consider the questions in the middle of page 69.
10. Read the conversation about how guys get girls to like them; is this generally true about all guys? Girls, is this true about you as well? (p70)
11. Why does he say dating can be a training ground for divorce? (p 71)
12. The author makes the statement: "True love waits, but not just for sex. It waits for the right time to commit to God's brand of love-unwavering, unflagging, and totally committed." If this is true, how do you know what the right time to commit is? (p 72)

## Chapter 6

1. In the beginning of chapter 6 a fable is told about a boy who rushes through his life by pulling a magic string. Soon he came to the end of his life, having skipped the good with the bad. How can we apply this to dating?
2. What does impatience take away from us? Is there a sense of urgency that dictates our relationships? What's wrong with that thinking? (p 77)
3. Examining wrong attitudes about timing in relationships. His three points:
  - 1. The right thing at the wrong time is the wrong thing: (p 77)**
    - Have you ever viewed your life in "seasons" before?
    - How does knowing each season has its reason encourage you in being single now?
  - 2. You don't need to shop for what you can't afford: (p 78)**
    - Explain what he means by that?
    - People will argue that you "need" to date to know what you want in a spouse.
    - How is that thinking flawed? How can you get an even better idea of what you want in a spouse through friendships?
  - 3. Any season of singleness is a gift from God: (p 79)**
    - Discuss the bullet-point list on page 80.

4. The author states that he fears God will forget him (p 81); ever felt that way? Why is that thinking so flawed? How do we combat those thoughts?
5. Discuss the marshmallow story on page 82. What is he saying about dating? Why shouldn't we "snatch it up?" (answer is the 2nd paragraph on p 83)
6. Regardless of our circumstances, what is the key to contentment? (p84) Trust. Have you ever thought of discontentment in this way before: "Believe it or not, if we are discontented with singleness, we'll more than likely face discontentment when we're married. When we define our happiness by some point in the future, it will never arrive."
7. Read William Booth's quote at the bottom on page 84. What do you think of that?
8. If you are honest with yourself, how do you view your single years? How does this book challenge us to view them? (p 84-85) Don't wish them away!!!
9. Do you trust that "when God knows you are ready for the responsibility of commitment, He'll reveal the right person under the right circumstances? (p 86)" Why or why not?

## Chapter 7

**Summary:** This chapter challenges students to stop viewing purity as a line that should not be crossed and begin viewing it as a direction. A persistent, determined pursuit of righteousness that begins in the heart and is expressed in a lifestyle that flees from places where we may compromise our purity.

1. When you think of purity, what kinds of words or images come to mind?
2. This chapter began with a story from camp where students were asked to determine their "sexual score." If you added up your "sexual score" would that number you would be proud to show God? (don't answer out loud) think, just consider that (87-88).
3. On page 88 the author says, "We esteem purity too little and desire it too late." What do you think is meant by this statement?
4. How interested in purity are you really? What steps can you take to put good intentions into action (88)?
5. The author talks about his friends having a fixed point, and if that point was not crossed they still had their purity. Is there some line in your head that you've set as the point of purity? "As long as I don't do 'that' I've stayed pure?" What is the concern with that way of thinking? (90) Why is only being content to stay in the "grey area" not pursuing righteousness? (88)
6. In the context of the biblical story of David and Bathsheba, what was the first step that David made that led him down a bad road? How does this relate to purity? (90)
7. What does Christ say about sexual sin at the sermon on the mount? (Matthew 5:28 "I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart.") How is that different than how sexual sin is often thought of? (sin begins in the heart, 90)

8. Do you agree that the world has taught us that singleness is a license to fool around emotionally and physically? Has your view of this been changing after reading this book? (94)
9. The author says at the bottom of page 95, "I avoid one-on-one dating because it encourages physical intimacy and places me in an isolated setting with a girl." At this point in the study if a boy/girl wanted to go out on a one-on-one date with you, what would you say? Why?
10. The author talks about how standards that are set too low might lead to trouble; how high should you set your standards of purity? Or even just for whom you date? Are you truly willing to do this now, before you are in a situation that may compromise your purity? (95)
11. What does the author really mean when he says, "Physical interaction encourages us to start something we're not supposed to finish, awakening desires we're not allowed to consummate, turning on passions we have to turn off." (middle of pg 96)
12. What can you do to protect your brothers and sisters in the Lord from impurity? What are some things you could say to encourage them to keep their hearts set in the direction of righteousness? (97)
13. What do you think it means to "guard her heart"? **Guys:** What are some practical ways you can guard the hearts of the girls you know? Do you intentionally or unintentionally find yourself more in a position of hunter than protective warrior with girls God has placed in your life? (first sentence on pg 98 for more context) **Girls:** What are some practical ways you'd like to see guys guarding your hearts? (examples seen in "Matt" halfway down page 98)
14. How important to you is it that your future wife or husband is seeking purity in their relationships with the opposite gender? Do you honestly desire purity in your relationships? What are some practical steps to assure this?
15. What comes to mind when you hear the word "modest"? (Are your opinions on this word shaped by Scripture or our culture?) (98)
16. **Girls:** Are your clothes (what at the heart your reason for buying them) designed to attract physical attention or to protect your brothers in Christ (and others) from your being a stumbling block? Follow up question: Is there a difference between being "sexy" and being "beautiful"? Is there anything in your wardrobe that needs to go? (98)
17. **Girls:** The author was once asked to speak at a Christian music festival, there he noticed many of the girls in attendance were dressed immodestly and he was tempted to remove from his teaching time the part about modest dressing because it would offend people. In the end he decided it was more important to fear God than to fear the crowd and he did talk about it. Here is what he said, "You really have no clue how hard it is for a guy to look at you with purity in his heart when you're dressed immodestly. If you could get inside a guy's head for a day - or even ten minutes! - I believe it would significantly change your wardrobe. And if it didn't, what would that say about your heart? It's your heart that I want to encourage you to examine. I'm not here to start measuring skirt lengths. The question is, what is your heart's motive? Do you want to stir up lust in a guy?" Any thoughts on this?

18. What do you think of the idea that we should make the purity of others our responsibility? What is hard about taking on this responsibility? Why is it loving to take on this responsibility? “And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works” - Hebrews 10:24 (97-98)
19. **Guys:** Even though you really do not have control over the clothing choices of girls, are you encouraging the women in your life to dress in a way that is inappropriate? Furthermore, what ways have you found to combat the temptation to lust when girls around you are dressing in a way that is immodest.

## Chapter 8

**Summary:** This chapter brings the focus of the book back to the grace of God in Christ for those who believe. There is a dream shared that has the author feeling guilty for his sin only to come to terms with the joy of being forgiven in Christ.

1. When you read the story of “The Room”, how did it make you feel? (103-105)
2. If there was truly a room like this, how do you think you’d react to it?
3. If you could see all the sins from your life, physically written on cards, would that make a difference in how you lived? Why?
4. How does it feel that in Christ the worst thing you ever done is forgiven? How does this help you deal with shame from past sins?
5. Be encouraged, that if you are a Christian, God has forgiven all your sins. Embrace His love and forgiveness without replaying and living in your sins.

## Chapter 9

**Summary:** This chapter gives us five important steps for getting on track with God.

1. Start with a clean slate.
  2. Make your parents your teammates.
  3. Establish clear guidelines.
  4. Check to see who’s whispering in your ear.
  5. Season your conviction with humility.
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1. What was the author’s point regarding the “nail puller” gift? (middle of 112)
  2. Does the idea of tearing down something to make it better seem logical? (112)
  3. Here are the 5 steps to getting on track with God:
    1. **Start with a clean slate:**
      - What is the difference between worldly sorrow (leads to shame, but not change) and Godly sorrow (leads to repentance). **Read** them 2 Corinthians 7:10, “For godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation without regret, whereas worldly grief produces death.”(pg 113)

- Why is repentance the first step in seeking to build a godly lifestyle? (112-113)
- One of the first steps the author lists for getting a clean slate involves the possibility of breaking up, does this seem too radical, do you believe you could be bold enough to do this even if you still “liked” they guy/girl? (bottom of 114)

## **2. Make your parents your teammates:**

- The author says “you’ll need two things as you live out a new attitude toward relationships: wisdom and accountability.” (new section on page 115) Where does he see as the ideal place to get both of these? (Parents) Why are they a good choice for this?
- Would you say you are more likely to not let your parents know when you like someone or more likely to tell them who it is? Why do you think you react this way? (115)
- Does the idea of involving your parents in your relationships make you nervous?
- Would you be willing to commit now to telling your parents about the next person you are attracted to and to seek their opinion? Example at bottom of page 115, “I’ve been thinking about so and so. What do you guys think of him/her?” (115)
- Would you change your relationships if your parents asked or told you to?
- What are some of the biggest influences in your life concerning purity, dating, and the opposite sex (besides parents if that is first answer)? (116)

## **3. Establish clear guidelines:**

- Will you meet with your parents or mentor to lay down some guidelines as suggested on the bottom of page 116? “What constitutes a romantic setting? What is going out with someone appropriate?”
- What should you do when someone feels attracted to you, or vice versa? How much time should you spend on the phone/texting/etc with the opposite sex? How much time should you spend together, even in group settings?
- Remind them of this: “Rules by themselves won’t change our hearts, but once we’ve taken on a new attitude, protective guidelines can help keep us on course.” (117) How can we pursue this as an issue of the heart rather than simply rules.

## **4. Check to see who’s whispering in your ear:**

- Are their TV shows, music or friends who tend to make you feel discontent without a boyfriend/girlfriend? Can you listen to these things more critically or would it be best for you to avoid them altogether? (117)

## **5. Season your commitment with humility:**

- If you embrace not dating until you are ready to marry how will you humbly explain your convictions to others? That is without sounding self-righteous? (118) Hint: Do not try to win an argument.

4. How can we apply A.W. Tozer’s statement on page 120? (read first paragraph after title, “Let’s Live It”)

## Chapter 10

**Summary:** This chapter explores how to keep relationships with the opposite sex during this season in life in the “Just Friends” category. While friendships with the opposite are important and valuable there are boundaries to stay within. The author gives four steps to help maintain healthy friendships with the opposite sex.

1. We need to understand the difference between friendship and intimacy.
  2. When spending time with members of the opposite sex, we need to be inclusive, not exclusive.
  3. We need to make a priority of same-sex relationships.
  4. Seek opportunities to serve, not to be entertained.
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1. Where is the line for you between romance and friendship?
  2. Can you give an example of when you realized a friendship has crossed that line into more than friendship? Ever feel jealous or possessive after that or notice the other person respond that way? (125)
  3. So far do you agree with the author’s view of the problems with dating itself? Why or why not?
  4. What were some of the mistakes the author claims to have made in his camp relationship with “Chelsea”?(125-127) (Romantic Situation, Constant Writing, Premature intimacy)
  5. The book asks the question, “Is it even possible to be just friends with a girl/boy?” What do you think? Furthermore is it possible to remain just friends with a boy/girl you feel attracted to? (128)
  6. What characterizes a brother/sister relationship in Christ; what should this relationship look like?
  7. The author states that Biblical fellowship is characterized by discussing and sharing what God is teaching us and doing in our lives (middle of 129). Do you have any relationships that look like that? How can you further develop relationships with both sexes to look that way?
  8. What does it mean in Romans 12:10 to, “Love each other with genuine affection, and take delight in honoring one another”? (130)
  9. What is the difference between intimacy and friendship? (132) How does C.S. Lewis’ quote illustrate this? (middle of page 132, “ We picture lovers face to face, but friends side by side; their eyes look ahead.”)
    - Also note the author says, “The key to friendship is a common goal or object on which both companions focus. It can be an athletic pursuit, a hobby, a faith or music, but it’s *something outside of them*. As soon as the two people involved focus on the *relationship*, it has moved beyond friendship.”
  10. What does it mean to be inclusive not exclusive? How can you actively pursue inclusive attitudes in relationships?
  11. Ever been the token third wheel spoken on bottom of page 133? That is including others just so it won’t be an official one on one date.

12. Why should you pursue same-sex friendships? (134-135) If you are honest with yourself, are you more “real” when you are with same sex friends? How is not pursuing these relationships short-sighted? (think married!)
13. Why does the author suggest we serve side by side with someone, instead of sit next to them in a movie?

## Chapter 11

1. The chapter opens with a story about a girl who made outward rules for herself regarding dating. Why did that not stop her from controlling her feelings? (139)
2. What is meant by the phrase, “the human heart doesn’t like taking orders from the mind.” (140). How have you experienced this?
3. The bible says a lot about our heart. Discuss these verses:
  - **“Above all else, guard your heart”** (Proverbs 4:23)  
What are practical ways to do this? (141)
  - **“The heart is deceitful above all things...Who can understand it.”** (Jeremiah 17:9)  
How does this contradict the world’s idea of “following your heart”? (141)
4. Could you relate with the story on pg 142 about the spring?
5. Read 1 John 2:15-16: **“15 Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16 For all that is in the world—the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride in possessions—is not from the Father but is from the world.”** (143)
  - What are the three things in this verse that we are warned pollute our hearts?
    - Infatuation (144): How would you define “infatuation?” The author compares it to idolatry. How would you define “idolatry?” Agree with his assessment?
      - \*Plus, is infatuation usually based in reality?
      - \*How does he suggest we break the pattern of infatuation? (144: reject notion that any human relationship will ever completely fulfill us)
      - \*Is attraction to another person wrong? How can it continue on to become sin if left unchecked? (145)
    - Lust (146): What is lust? To fight it the author says we should detest it with the same intensity that God does. Do you?
      - \*What do you think of the quote: “What we are afraid to do before men, we should be afraid to think before God” (147)
      - \*Verses to help:
        - ◆“Create in me a clean heart, O God” Ps 51:10
        - ◆I have made a covenant with my eyes not to look lustfully at others (Job 31:1)
        - ◆May the “meditation of my heart be pleasing in your sight, O LORD” (Ps 19:14)
        - ◆“I will not set before my eyes anything that is worthless. (Ps 101:3)
      - \*What are ways we can practically guard ourselves from lust?
    - Self-Pity (147 & 148): What is self-pity? Do you ever focus on your own sorry state and not rely on God to do His best for you?

\*How will asking this question help with self-pity: “Am I really lacking something in my life, or am I just coveting what someone else has?”

\*How does he suggest we redirect our self-pity feelings? (148: meet others’ needs)

•How does this verse comfort you in light of this chapter: “For God is greater than our hearts and knows everything” (1 John 3:20)

## Chapter 12

1. What are real ways you can “hustle while you wait?”
2. How does the story in Gen 24 of Rebekah comfort you with God’s sovereignty?
3. “We cannot ignore our current responsibilities (as sons, daughters, brothers, sisters and friends:) and expect to magically gain the strength of character and virtue that will make us good husbands and wives” (157). Have you ever thought of it this way? What are your responsibilities at this stage in your life?
4. How can you “practice intimacy” now? (158: family)
5. How can you “practice seeking God with others” now? (159: again, family; sharing what God is teaching you with Christian non-romantic friends, praying with them, asking for accountability, sharing weakness)
6. How can you “practice financial responsibility” now? (160)
7. How can you “practice parenthood” now? (160)
8. How can you “practice practical life skills” now? (161)
9. Remember that you aren’t doing any of this to make God love you more or solely for a husband or wife, but to honor God in your life at this stage, no matter what His plans are for your life.

## Discussion Questions: Chapter 13

1. Do you find yourself concentrating on one aspect of marriage to the exclusion of all others? Why is this dangerous? (p. 167)
2. How do you view marriage? Have you sought to understand it biblically or just from what you have observed, heard, or imagined? (see answer to “What is marriage?” on p. 168)
3. What are characteristics of strong marriages you have observed?
4. How is the Bible’s definition of marriage different than the world’s? (p. 168)
5. How can we encourage ourselves and others to have a higher and more Godly view of marriage? (p. 170)
6. Read and discuss the paragraph at the top of page 171.

## Chapter 14

1. What qualities do you think you will look for in a wife/husband at this point?
2. Have you even thought about the game the author talked about playing (“what will she/he look like when she/he’s 50?”)? How does that change your attitude about what matters in a person? (p. 175)
3. How would you define “character?” (p. 176)
4. Discuss: “Your reputation is learned in an hour; your character does not come to light for a year.” Do you agree? Do you ever mistake reputation for character? (p. 176-177)
5. Three ways to know more about a person’s character:

### **How a person relates to God** (p 177):

1. Why is it most important to chose a spouse who loves God more than *anything* else?
2. Why is this?: “If you love and want your spouse more than anything, you will end up selfish, fearful, bitter or disillusioned.” (p. 177)
3. Why is this?: “If you love Jesus more than anything else, you will really love and enjoy your spouse.” (p. 177)
4. Why does this relationship with God need to be growing? Why is “are you saved?” not enough?

### **How a person relates with others** (p. 178):

1. Why is how a person relates to others something you need to watch in a potential spouse?
2. If we asked your parents today, how would they describe the way you relate to them? Are you proud of that? What can you change in that relationship that will prepare you to be a better spouse someday? (p. 178)
3. Do you agree that most of the time we are attracted to people like ourselves? If that’s true, what do your friends say about you? (p. 179)

### **Personal Discipline** (p. 179):

1. What is one area in your life that you most need to grow in personal discipline?
6. How would you define “attitude?” (p. 181)
  7. Four Godly attitudes to look for:
    1. An Attitude of Willing Obedience to God:
      - What does this attitude look like in daily life?
    2. An Attitude of Humility:
      - How can you practically consider others as more important than yourself? (quick to confess sin, put others first, seek forgiveness)
    3. An Attitude of Industriousness:
      - Why is this important in a marriage?
    4. An Attitude of Contentment and Hopefulness:
      - Why is this important in a marriage?

## Final Discussion Questions

1. How have your opinions or views on dating changed since the beginning of this study?
2. If you summed up the entire book in one sentence, what would it be?
3. What about this book stood out to you most?
4. What did you agree with? Anything you disagreed with?
5. How has your goal in relationships changed after reading this book?
6. Why are purity, modesty, and accountability so essential to romantic relationships?
7. What does it mean to serve your brothers/sisters in Christ?
8. What is so important about character and attitude? Why should you be concerned about your partner's character or attitude (or lack thereof)?
9. Do you think that you romanticize marriage in your own mind?
10. What does a scripturally based marriage look like?
11. Did you enjoy this study this summer (regardless of how you feel about the book)?