

SIX COMMITMENTS EVERY CHRISTIAN SINGLE MUST MAKE

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. Today we are going to talk about dating. We are going to talk about maximizing your single years as a Christian.
2. The single years are a very important season in your life. It is a season of huge decisions. What are you going to do after high school – college, trade school, or work? If you are going to continue your education, where? What are you going to major in? What line of work are you going to choose? Your single years are when you first start to earn a regular paycheck, so how are you going to manage your money? And then most important, dating. When are you going to start dating? What kind of person are you going to date? When should you get married? How do you know if you have found the right person?
3. Today I want to talk to you about the essential commitments you need to make as a Christian single.

II. VISION

1. At Church Acadiana our vision is to equip parents to disciple their kids in the home. We want to see parents sitting down with their kids several days a week teaching them to follow Christ. This only has to take a few minutes. If they are little, simply read a Bible story, discuss it, and then pray. As they get older, simply read a chapter of the Bible, discuss it, and then pray.
2. Why are we so passionate about equipping parents to disciple their kids?
 - i. Parents are called to it.
 1. **Ephesians 6:4** “Fathers, don’t stir up anger in your children, but bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.”
 2. Parents should not be dropping the kids off at church so the church can disciple their kids.
 3. The church can help; supplement; support; but the parents need to be discipling their kids.
 - ii. Parents are best at it.
 1. When parents are equipped and passionate about their calling, they are the best at discipling their kids. Why?
 2. They have more time with their kids. The church can spend a few minutes every week, but parents can spend hours every week.
 3. They are the best at communicating with their kids.
 4. Kids love and respect their parents more than anyone else. They are more likely to listen to and believe their parents than anyone else.
3. To help parents disciple their kids, we enable them to do church as a family. Why?
 - i. So you can model your faith. Christianity is more caught than taught. To disciple your kids, you need to set the example for them at church. You can’t do this if everyone in the family splits up at church. But if you stay together, you can model the faith for them. They can watch you sing and worship;

they can watch you listen and take notes during the sermon; they can watch you pray; they can watch you fellowship with other believers; they can watch you serve; they can watch you tithe.

- ii. So you can observe their faith. To effectively coach your kids in the faith, you must observe them. When the family splits up at church, you don't know what your kids are learning, who is teaching them, whether or not they are listening, comprehending, participating, or goofing off. But if you have them sitting right next to you in church, you can observe them. You know what they are learning, so you can ask them about it. You can see if they are listening and participating. You can see if they are singing and praying. You can see if they are taking notes. And then you can give them feedback and coaching.
4. Every few months I like to do a sermon to equip parents to disciple their kids. This morning I want to do a message on dating.
5. This message is for middle, high school, and college students, and then even singles in our church who are older. And it's also for parents who are guiding their kids through the single years.
6. If you are a Christian single (unmarried) and you want God's best for your single years, your dating relationships, and your future marriage, then you **MUST** make the following six commitments.

III. SIX COMMITMENTS FOR CHRISTIAN SINGLES

1. **First, only marry a Christian (1 Cor 7:39; 2 Cor 6:14-18).**

- i. The Bible is unambiguous about this.
- ii. **1 Corinthians 7:39** "A wife is bound as long as her husband is living. But if her husband dies, she is free to be married to anyone she wants—only in the Lord."
- iii. **2 Corinthians 6:14** "Do not be yoked together with those who do not believe. For what partnership is there between righteousness and lawlessness? Or what fellowship does light have with darkness?"
- iv. An unbelieving spouse will hinder you from being fully-devoted to Christ, and from raising kids to follow Jesus.
- v. **Proverbs 27:17** "As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another."
 1. God's plan is for you and your spouse to help each other grow in Christ.
 2. But it's essential that you and your spouse both be believers. It's essential that you both be made from the same material.
 3. When iron hits iron, they sharpen each other. They improve each other.
 4. What happens when iron hits wood? One gets dull, and the other gets damaged.
- vi. Let me be clear. It is a sin to marry a non-Christian.
- vii. But don't settle for the first professing Christian who comes along. You should only marry someone who is as serious about Jesus as you, and who holds the same theological convictions.

- viii. **Randy Alcorn** (*The Purity Principle*) "If you're a Christian, date only Christians. If you're a committed disciple, date only committed disciples."

2. Second, only date a Christian.

- i. Why? Dates become mates.
- ii. Have you ever noticed that a lot of Christians marry non-Christians? They know it's wrong. They know it is unwise. But they still do it. Why? Because they allowed themselves to date non-Christians. They said, "I'm not planning on marrying this person. I just like being with them. We just have a lot of fun together." But then things escalated and they got married.
- iii. Dating leads to marriage. If you date a non-believer and things get hot and heavy, and you fall in love, then marriage will be a real temptation. It happens all the time.
- iv. In fact, this is why you should immediately break off any dating relationship as soon as it becomes clear that they are not marriage material.
- v. Dates become mates.
- vi. Let me give you a second reason you should only date Christians.
- vii. **1 Corinthians 15:33** "Do not be misled: Bad company corrupts good character."
- viii. Think about it. The Bible says you need to be very careful about who you choose for your close friends because they will rub off on you. They will influence your character, your behavior, your mindset. They will impact you. And it is much easier to pull someone down than to pull someone up. Your closest friends should be committed Christians.
- ix. If that is true, then isn't even more important that you only date committed Christians? When you date someone, they become your closest friend. You end up spending more time with them than anyone else. If they are not a committed Christian, then they will have a negative impact on your character.
 - 1. An unbeliever will not fully share and support your goals for sexual purity.
 - 2. They will not share and support your moral choices – the kind of music you listen to, the kinds of shows you watch, the kinds of places you like to go for fun.
 - 3. They will not share and support your commitment to church. They will not understand or support how much time you spend at church.
- x. Bottom line: If you only want to marry a committed Christian, then only date a committed Christian.

3. Third, save sex for marriage.

- i. **1 Thessalonians 4:3-7** "3 For this is God's will, your sanctification: that you keep away from sexual immorality, 4 that each of you knows how to control his own body in holiness and honor, 5 not with lustful passions, like the Gentiles, who don't know God. 6 This means one must not transgress against and take advantage of a brother or sister in this manner, because the Lord is

an avenger of all these offenses, as we also previously told and warned you. 7 For God has not called us to impurity but to live in holiness.”

- ii. The Biblical standard for sex is clear: Never before marriage, never outside of marriage, and never with the same sex.
- iii. Your body belongs to God, and He demands that you save it for your spouse (1 Cor 6:18-20). When you get married, your spouse is going to deeply appreciate that you have saved yourself for them.
- iv. How do you save sex for marriage? How do you stay sexually pure? When you date, it is not enough to avoid sex; you must avoid behaviors together that tempt you to have sex. You need to make a list of the behaviors that tempt you to have sex, and then you need to tell your date that you are going to avoid those behaviors. I'll give you two examples: Making out, and being alone together in private.
- v. When you get married, do you want to be sexually faithful to your spouse? Then you must learn sexual faithfulness before marriage. Sexual temptation does not go away when you get married. If you can't be sexually pure as a single person, then you will not be sexually pure as a married person.
- vi. This is one of the indicators that you are ready for marriage. Are you sexually pure? If you aren't pure as a single person, then you won't be pure as a married person.
- vii. This is also one of things to look for in a potential spouse. Are they sexually pure? If they aren't sexually faithful to God as a single person, then they won't be faithful to you when you get married.

4. Fourth, don't live together before marriage.

- i. This should be obvious, but if you want to save sex for marriage, then living with your boyfriend/girlfriend before marriage is off limits.
- ii. Besides, cohabitation (as it is called) leads to all sorts of problems. Those who live together before marriage are less satisfied sexually after marriage, are less satisfied with their marriage overall, and are more likely to divorce than couples who do not.
- iii. Let me say this especially to the single women. Don't move in with a man until he has stood before God, family, and church, put a wedding ring on your finger, and says, "I do."
- iv. By the way, if the person you are dating wants to move in together, then you shouldn't be dating them. They are obviously not committed Christian; they are not marriage material.

5. Fifth, honor your parents.

- i. **Ephesians 6:1-3** "1 Children, obey your parents in the Lord, because this is right. 2 Honor your father and mother, which is the first commandment with a promise, 3 so that it may go well with you and that you may have a long life in the land."
- ii. When do you have to stop obeying your parents? The Bible doesn't say, but it is generally understood that when you move out of the house and are

supporting yourself, then you no longer have to obey them. But if you're under their roof, then you're under their rules.

- iii. But even if you no longer have to obey your parents, you will never outgrow your responsibility to honor them.
- iv. The Hebrew word for "honor" is *kabed* (kaw-bad').
- v. In his book on the Ten Commandments, **Mark Rooker** writes that *kabed* means "heavy, weighty, severe, or important.... Honoring someone or something carries the nuance of weighing down with honor or respect. It means to treat someone with the respect and deference that his position deserves."
- vi. **Philip Ryken** wrote, "To honor one's parents is to give due weight to their position. It is to give them the recognition they deserve for their God-given authority. To honor is to respect, esteem, value, and prize fathers and mothers as gifts from God."
- vii. Why does God command you to honor your parents? God works through your parents to guide and protect you. Your parents have wisdom, knowledge, and experience that you don't have. They have been there and done that. When you honor your parents, God is able to guide you and protect you to the best pathway for your life. That's God's method of taking care of you. When you rebel against your parents, you are rebelling against God, and you are abandoning His best. You're going to get hurt.
- viii. Let me teach you a revolutionary way to honor your parents. When you are ready to date, involve your parents in your choice of a date and a mate. (If you are living with your grandparent, and they are basically raising you, then involve your grandparents in your choice of a date and a mate.) I would go so far as to say this: As a general rule, don't date or marry someone without your parent's blessing. Why?
 1. Remember, your spouse will become their family member; the parent of their grandchildren. If things don't work out, guess who you're going to run to for help? Them! They should get a say.
 2. If your parents don't like your choice of a date or a mate, then that's a HUGE RED FLAG! Your parents want you to be happy. They want you to get married. And they have a lot of wisdom. If they don't approve of you dating or marrying a particular person, you would be a fool to ignore them.

6. Sixth, prioritize your relationship with God.

- i. **Matthew 6:33** "But seek first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these things will be provided for you."
- ii. What does this verse mean? God promises to meet your needs if you will put Him first.
- iii. What do most singles want? They want to fall in love and have a wonderful marriage and family.
- iv. God promises that if you seek Him first, He will provide for you. He will bring along the right person at the right time.

- v. But if you neglect your walk with Christ, then you will run into several huge problems:
 - 1. You will become discontent and try to fill the void with a relationship and/or sin rather than God. God gives us an inner peace, and joy, and satisfaction that you can't get from anything or anyone else. If you are not letting God satisfy your soul, then you will try to fill that void with a relationship that's not good for you, or with sin.
 - 2. You will have a diminished sensitivity to God's voice as He tries to guide you to the right person and away from the wrong person.
 - 3. You will have decreased strength against sexual temptation.
- vi. The most important thing to focus on when you are single is your relationship with God. Get as close to God as possible.
- vii. Let me give you four keys to prioritizing your relationship with God:
 - 1. Give Him the first part of your will (put His will first).
 - 2. Give Him the first hour of your day.
 - 3. Give Him the first day of your week.
 - 4. Give Him the first ten percent of your finances.
- viii. Remember, just because you are single doesn't mean you should be dating right now. Before you ask, "Whom should I pursue?" ask the Lord, "What should I be doing with my single years?" God may not want you to date right now because He wants you to focus on something else -- like spiritual growth, or ministry, or career training/education. God wants to lead you not only in whom to date, but when to date, and what to focus on in this season of your life.

IV. CONCLUSION

- 1. Six commitments every Christian single must make:
 - i. Only marry a Christian.
 - ii. Only date a Christian.
 - iii. Save sex for marriage.
 - iv. Don't live together before marriage.
 - v. Honor your parents (or guardians).
 - vi. Prioritize your relationship with God.
- 2. Making these six commitments will protect you from many pitfalls and set you up for success with dating, sexual purity, relationship with God, and your future marriage.
- 3. But only you can make them. Friends and family can help you keep these commitments, but nobody else can make these commitments for you.