

"Courting and Dating"

by Adrienne Arms

Dating and courting: these two ideas are much alike but very different as well. Courting was a term used more in the past than today. Now people are dating and it's not always a long-term relationship. Courting is very serious; the two companions are looking seriously into marriage and contemplating their future together. Dating has become a term of the century; it's not very serious and the couple is not thinking about marriage. These relationships usually last a couple of weeks but in some cases they last longer, depending on the couple. Let's look further into the world of dating in today's society.

Dating

Dating today is based on physical appearance, the attraction one has to another by what they see. Because of this, teenagers might compromise themselves and end up regretting it. Dating is a game of chase - guys like the chase, girls like to tease. The whole point is to get what they set out for: a particular person. The media pushes dating onto the teens of today. Everyone is telling teens it's ok to have sex and always be touching and kissing. The problem with dating is there can be lots of regrets - girls don't say no, which can lead to pregnancy and responsibility that a young couple is not ready to handle. Dating is fine as long as it isn't taken to the stage of regret.

History of Dating

Before we look at courting, we're going to go into the history of dating, where it's been, and how it came to the present point. In colonial times being single was not a good sign. You needed to prove to people that you could take care of a wife and family. Marriage was usually arranged, and love wasn't found until the couple was married and had been together for a couple of years. A couple never went anywhere without a chaperone, or they courted at the girl's home with her family. The young couple had to be introduced by the girl's mother before the two could speak to each other. After the couple was engaged, they were allowed to spend more time together by themselves. This was how the upper class courted. The lower class didn't have such elegant homes, so they did their courting outside the home in groups. This meant less privacy and not as much time to get to know one another.

By 1920-1945, dating came into place. The couples started dating, which meant there was no real commitment involved. Dating brought something new into the world of courtship: the need for money. In this time period, the ways of power shifted. It was no longer in the house where the women ruled, but out in public shifting the power to the men. In the 1800s, dances became popular meaning physical closeness. In the 1920s, virginity wasn't required in the young woman. The depression and World War II had a large impact on the courtship system. The first-time marriage age was at a record low in 1950 at 22 for male and 20 for female. In 1960, women began to look into college and not just at motherhood after high school. College couples began living together. A study showed

that 40-50% lived with someone of the opposite sex before the age of 30. Sexually transmitted disease came into play and forced people to think about how important it was to only have one partner. The world of dating has changed a lot from staying at home to going out in groups.

Courtship

Courtship is based on being with someone to marry, being sexually pure for not only yourself, but for your partner and God. The girls need to want respect and guys need to learn to give it. Set boundaries for yourself and keep to them no matter what. If someone pressures you to start being sexually active, that person is not worth having around. Girls need to be true, and not lead a guy on for the fun of it. Start good Godly relationships where both of you have centered your lives around Jesus. In dating, remember it's not up to you to date a non-Christian to bring him to God. If the Lord isn't in control of everything in your life, including your relationship, then it most likely won't work. He has to be the center of it all.