



The Truth About Dating | Doug Wekenman | 3.26.23

Weekly Study

SHARE

This week Doug continued our series “~~Real~~ Real Relationships” by talking about the truth of dating. God is relational at his core and exists in relationship. He’s created us out of a desire for relationship, and he’s also gifted us relationships with each other. In today’s world, if you desire to be married you have to navigate the often-unclear waters of dating. Doug gave us six truths that will help us walk in the truth when it comes to dating relationships and we feel confident that they will bring you even more freedom and peace. Clarity is kindness.

What does that mean to you?

Before you dive into the study check-in with each other by asking these questions:

- How has God shown up in the last week when it comes to having your relationships in order?
- What was your takeaway from Sunday’s sermon?

GROW

Read Genesis 2:18; Psalm 37:4

Relationships were God’s idea, but a necessary step in finding a romantic relationship that lasts is a season of dating. That being said, dating is not a concept that we find in scripture, so

how do we balance these two truths and walk in the wisdom of God as we date? First, we remember and praise God for the fact that relationships were his idea and that he wants us to thrive in all of our relationships. He has created men and women in powerful and unique ways that complement each other and bring the image of God to completion. You do not need a spouse to live a content, fulfilled life that puts the glory of God on display — and at the same time, you can be content with your life and have a desire to be in a relationship or be married! Who you marry is one of the most important decisions you will ever make after choosing to follow Jesus — He cares deeply about this decision. That being said, a factor that comes into play in order to make that decision is the man-made system of dating. Anything that is man-made is going to be imperfect, but we have taken something that is meant to be a means to the end of marriage and let it become morphed into something like a destination. While this is no one's fault, it has created complicated frustration and highlighted the fact that the relational patterns of our culture aren't working. When we submit our love lives to Jesus and seek his wisdom, we can trust that not only will he lead us through the uncertainty of dating but will also give us the desires of our hearts.

- **Gut check time: are you truly open to the chance that God knows more than you and has better plans for your love life than you do? If not, why?**
- **Is who, how and why you're dating glorifying God? If you are married: what do you and your spouse feel like you did well and what do you wish, if anything, you'd done differently while dating? What advice do you want to pass down to your (future) kids about relationships?**

MOVE

Read Matthew 6:33; Proverbs 18:22; John 8:32

Clarity is kindness! Doug provided a powerful outline of our God-given designs as a way for us to begin realigning ourselves and see ourselves rightly when it comes to dating. Modern studies are showing what we see broadly reflected across scripture: most women want to be pursued rather than do the pursuing. How do we act in light of that? Men: tell her it is a date! Do not apologize for your strength and masculinity. Do the work to get the girl. Women: see

yourself as favor from the Lord. Do not compare yourself but remember first and foremost that it's your identity found in Jesus and living out of that makes you valuable. Both men and women — do not lower your standards but loosen your grip on your list. The more you grow in your relationship with God, the more godliness becomes attractive. God knows who you need and will not disappoint you as you seek to honor him with your relationships — remember, a romantic relationship is good, but it is not ultimate. No relationship status will do for you what Jesus can do for you. Completion is found in Christ. Companionship is found in people.

- **Is there any place in your heart or mind that believes that you would be more complete with a partner? What do you hope a partner will do for you that you could first and foremost find in Jesus?**
- **Is there anything about this topic that is uncomfortable for you? (For example, the idea of most women wanting to be pursued over pursuing, or men walking boldly in their God-given masculinity) Talk about it with your group and gain some fresh perspective together.**
- **What are some of the things on your 'list' of what you are looking for that you sense the Holy Spirit may be asking you to let go of?**
- **Married couples, take some time to think about what qualities or character traits you wish your spouse had more or less of and surrender those things to God, asking Him to help you unconditionally love and accept them as they are today and trusting that He will carry them forward into His plans and purposes for their lives and your marriage.**

P R A Y

Pray together in smaller groups and ask the Holy Spirit to show you places in your heart that you need the truth about dating to sink in more deeply. Ask him to give you confidence in your God-given design, the courage and strength and wisdom needed to navigate relationships in an honoring way and that He would be your ultimate source of fulfillment.

