

The Essential Seven (Standards for Dating)

A Guide for Godly Relationships

By D. Matos

#1 – Child of God

If the Lord has in His plans for me to be married, I ask Him for a Christian spouse who is a believer, baptized, growing, and a sincere follower of Christ.

1 Corinthians 11:3

But I would have you know that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God.

Matthew 7:15–20

Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruits; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. “A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit; neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.”

2 Corinthians 6:14

Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness?

Romans 12:1

Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship.

#2 – Godly Verified

My future spouse should be Godly Verified by my Christian mentors and those closest to me. Oftentimes love is blind. We need an extra set of eyes to help us see things we may not see or not want to see.

Jeremiah 3:15

“Then I will give you shepherds after My own heart, who will feed you on knowledge and understanding.”

1 Peter 3:7

Likewise, husbands, live with your wives in an understanding way, showing honor to the woman as the weaker vessel, since they are heirs with you of the grace of life, so that your prayers may not be hindered.

#3 – Church Rooted

My future spouse should belong to a Bible-teaching church, be a church member, and should have a healthy church family where there are leaders and people around him or her that

genuinely care about their soul. He or she has godly mentors who they can speak with in times of struggle or for godly counsel and advice.

Ephesians 2:19

Now you are no longer strangers to God and foreigners to heaven, but you are members of God's very own family, citizens of God's country, and you belong in God's household with every other Christian.

Acts 2:42

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

#4 – Waiting Until Marriage for Intimacy

1 Corinthians 6:18

Flee from sexual immorality. Every other sin a person commits is outside the body, but the sexually immoral person sins against his own body.

VISIBILITY • ACCOUNTABILITY • CHASTITY

Allowed

1. Hand holding is allowed.
2. Arm around the shoulder area is allowed when walking side by side.
3. Hugging is allowed for brief moments when saying hello or goodbye.
4. Kissing allowed only on the top of the palm / cheeks / forehead.
5. Communicating to each other how we are feeling about one another and about our connection in a respectful and non-sexual manner.
6. Sitting closely side by side is allowed.
7. Placing head on shoulder when sitting side by side is allowed.
8. The man should pay for dates and feel free to take the lead on taking care of our tabs for all outings and fun. Women can sometimes pick up tabs but this should be rare.
9. Praying together is allowed but not to the point of discipling/mentoring each other. Prayers before meals, after dates or general prayer for blessing our relationship is allowed. No praying with each other as if we are already married or to the point of leading one another.
10. Meeting each other's family is required.
11. Attending one another's churches is required. Attending church together on an ongoing basis is required.
12. Establishing a healthy Bible-based counselor / small group or discipleship for couples together is required.

Not Allowed

1. No driving alone in each other's car after dark. Separate cars are taken if it is going to be a date that will be taking place after dark.
2. No smelling each other's hair or running fingers through hair or playing with hair.
3. No slow stroking of fingers or hands or of ANY kind while holding hands.
4. No touching of necks or caressing of neck of any kind.
5. No ear whispering or getting close to ears at all either to whisper or to touch of any kind.
6. Kisses are quick pecks. NO prolonged palm / forehead or cheek kissing of any kind.
7. Watching inappropriate movies together that contain intense sensual or sexual scenes are not allowed.
8. No "spooning" on a couch or being pressed up firm against each other.
9. No sensual phone conversations or texting sexual dialogue / references or innuendos.
10. No feeding each other food in a sensual manner. Just avoid that altogether.
11. No dressing inappropriately when seeing one another. *Females must dress modestly; no revealing clothing, short skirts, see-through or low tops allowed.

Genesis 2:18

Then the Lord God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him."

Matthew 19:6

So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore, what God has joined together, let no one separate.

Song of Solomon 2:7

Promise me, O women of Jerusalem, by the gazelles and wild deer, not to awaken love until the time is right.

Song of Solomon 8:3–4

Don't excite love, don't stir it up, until the time is ripe and you're ready.

#5 – No Idolizing of One Another

We do not idolize one another to the point where we lose focus of our relationship with Jesus and in growing in Him personally. There will be no codependency allowed. We both understand that we belong to our Heavenly Father and He is our First Love!

1 John 2:16

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.

Colossians 3:5

Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry.

1 John 5:21

Dear children, keep yourselves from idols.

Matthew 6:33

Seek first His kingdom.

1 Corinthians 10:31

So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.

#6 – Communicating

Communication to one another of our weaknesses / struggles and seeking godly counsel in efforts to overcome them. Understanding that mentoring or seeking Godly discipleship or counseling is a lifelong journey and part of how we keep our swords sharp!

We do not need to feel like we need to “get fixed” before marriage but we can identify where we know we could use some sharpening and that is an area we can be at work on and be transparent about with one another. However, remember that NOT every single thing needs to be revealed during the dating season.

Proverbs 15:22

Plans fail for lack of counsel, but with many advisers they succeed.

Romans 14:19

So then let us pursue what makes for peace and for mutual upbuilding.

#7 – Praying Together

When we pray together, we experience God’s presence. This is the best and most beautiful kind of Intimacy! However, we are to use caution when praying together when in the dating phase, as to not pray too intimately or begin seeking discipleship from one another.

Other Ways to Share in God’s Word / Prayer / Godly Dating & Godly Support

1. Sharing with each other what we learn from reading God’s Word on our own.
2. Having a spiritual accountability for one another in a loving, supportive, and gentle way.
3. Read a premarital Bible-based book together but on our own, then coming together to discuss the book or chapters together in a healthy and fun way. If you enter into engagement, a good book is “Tying the Knot” by Rob Green.
4. Meet each other’s mentors and church family. This will support mutual accountability.
5. Make sure to attend church services each week. At the right time, introduce them to your church (after you’ve introduced them to your family).
6. Meet other couples that are dating and in a courtship that is the same as yours or very close to. (Use caution here especially if you are going to go out on dates all together as some couples may NOT be as firm as you in your standards.) 1 Corinthians 15:33: “Do not be deceived: Bad company ruins good morals.”
7. Attend some fun Christian concerts or events.

8. Have good clean fun together; not everything needs to be serious!
9. Share your creative talents and interests with one another.
10. Share your goals and aspirations with one another, what God is leading you to do in your life, etc.

Matthew 18:20

For where two or three gather together as my followers, I am there among them.

Ephesians 2:22

And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.

1 Thessalonians 5:11

Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing.

Genesis 2:18

Then the Lord God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him."