

Email Bible Lesson 13
Teen and Adults Bible Study-Love, Dating and Marriage - Lesson 1 of 12
(love-dating-marriage-01)

MAILBOX BIBLE COURSE

LESSON 1 – LOVE, DATING AND MARRIAGE BIBLE STUDY

Welcome to our Mailbox Bible Study Course. We trust you will enjoy these lessons as much as we did composing them. We are glad to be able to serve the Lord and you in this way. Many are being saved and helped through these simple Bible lessons. We suggest that you try to do one lesson each week; this will keep your interest in them active. This particular course contains twelve lessons on Love, Dating and Marriage Bible Studies. Please save this lesson onto your computer, read the lesson carefully, full in the answers in the blocks provided then attach this lesson into an email addresses to us biblelessons@uniserve.com and then push your send button. We will then evaluate and return any corrections to you with your next lesson. On completion of the full course, you will receive a beautifully presented certificate. Should you have difficulty opening or sending this file to us, please let us know by return email. We suggest that you print these lessons and put them in a binder for future studies.

May God richly bless you as you proceed?

Your Instructor

Harold Smith

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LOVE, DATING and MARRIAGE BIBLE LESSON CONTENTS

Twelve Lessons (for late teens, singles and problems of sex, dating and marriage).

1. What is Love?
2. The Three Kinds of Love
3. Ten Reasons Why You Should Wait Until Marriage
4. Understanding the Sex Drive
5. Dating
6. How to Say No
7. Love is More than a Beautiful Feeling
8. Ten Pitfalls and How to Avoid Them
9. How to Experience God's Love Part I
10. How to Experience God's Love Part 2
11. How Can I Tell if it is Real Love?
12. Choosing Wisely

LESSON 1:

WHAT IS LOVE?

A TRUE STORY BY SOMEONE WHO WAS SEEKING LOVE

During high school, I dated a lot of guys and I was hurt a lot. I was a very vulnerable girl because I wanted someone to love me. I wanted someone to truly-care about me. The problem was finding the right person to love and have them appreciate and enjoy my love. When I got into college, I had no intentions of getting married or falling in love. I felt like "I'm going to have a good time. I am going to

Email Bible Lesson 13

Teen and Adults Bible Study-Love, Dating and Marriage - Lesson 1 of 12 (love-dating-marriage-01)

experience a lot and I am not going to get myself tied down to any one person or any one thing. I am starting on a clean slate in other words. It's just going to be good wholesome relationships fun and finding out what being in college is all about." I was doing well until I met Joe. I do not believe that there is any such thing as love first sight but at that time I was a romantic teenager and when I saw him for the first time, I thought he was just super. He had a dynamite personality and a lot of charm. When he finally asked me out, I was beside myself. On our first date, we talked a lot and tried hard to impress each other. A month went by before he called and asked me for another date. I think he knew by then that I wanted to date him. He played on this and from that time on things were pretty heavy. I was very vulnerable because I wanted someone to love me. Our relationship really did not start off on the right foot because we were trying to impress one another. I did not want him to go out with anyone else but me. I do not think at that point I neglected any of my standards or morals but I did do things to impress him and to encourage a relationship with him. We dated and we had some pretty serious talks. We had some pretty bad fights too. He picked on me and teased me a lot. I tried to cover up hurt feelings when he would do this. I tried to laugh along with it, but I did get hurt. A lot of times at parties, he would just walk off and leave me. He did not give me any special attention and I felt hurt because of this. I realized at that point that it was mostly a one sided relationship since I started working real hard to make him feel the same way I felt. This is what got me in trouble. I worked too hard at it. I started to do things that I knew he wanted-anything that would please him. This included some heavy sexual things. I thought, "If I don't he's going to go somewhere else and I don't want to lose him." Time went on and we ended up going to bed together and doing things that I knew were not right, but I sacrificed my morals to keep him. This is the biggest mistake young girl can make. She thinks if she keeps doing what a guy wants to do, he is going to be crazy about her but it is not true. I know Joe lost respect for me. And I lost so much for myself that it was awful. Because of my Christian background, I died a hundred times in my own guilt. But I could not bring myself to say, "Forgive me Lord" because I knew in the back of my mind I was going to do it again. I was going to do anything I had to do to keep him. At this point, if I can say anything to young people, it is this - when you get into a dating game, find a fellow you know is a Christian - one who is not ashamed to say, "I'm a Christian and I do have morals myself." I know that it is kind of daring to date the guys you know are not Christians, the ones who are kind of wild. But stay away from these kinds of guys because you are going to lose something along the way. Joe and I were having problems in our dating relationship. We fought a lot. He picked at me a lot and I got hurt a lot. I tried to explain to him the guilt I felt about sleeping with him. I tried to stop it, but he just would not accept it. I had evaluated our relationship and to put it bluntly, it stunk! He did not treat me right at all. But I thought in the back of my mind, "If we get married, everything is going to be different. He is going to love me. He is going to take care of me, and he is going to care for me. This was a big mistake on my part. You do not change a person no matter how much you try and no matter how much you love them. You can take your dating relationship and magnify it about ten or twenty times and that is what your marriage is going to be like. Television, books, movies, songs--all these things that influence our lives these days make you think that you can pull another trick out of your sleeve to make everything hunky-dory. But it is not like that. Marriage is tough. Even when two people really love each other and both are working at it, it is still tough. You do not change a person...no matter how much you love them. If I had magnified our relationship ten times or even five times, I would have seen that in the future Joe was going to go out on me. He was going to slip around with other girls, he was going to lose his temper, he was going to hit me, he was not going to treat me like a wife and he was not going to take the responsibility of being a husband. But I did not do this. I moved quick. We ran off and got married I do not blame my getting married on anyone but myself, because I knew that I should not do this. But at that moment, I made a decision without a whole lot of thinking. I decided if I do not do this, I am going to lose him. What I should have decided was if he cannot wait for me and do it my way, then it is not worth it. But my emotions were in complete control and my thinking was not clear at all. I was very confused. I did not want to be hurt. But I jumped into this not knowing it would be the biggest

Email Bible Lesson 13

Teen and Adults Bible Study-Love, Dating and Marriage - Lesson 1 of 12 (love-dating-marriage-01)

hurt in my life. When we told our parents, they were hurt and disappointed. I quit college so I could put him through college. I took any job I could get. I was a waitress. I worked at a cocktail lounge at night, which was awful. I worked as a sales clerk. I did all kinds of jobs to keep us going. Our marriage was just nothing. He did not love me. It was me loving him and trying to make him love me, trying desperately to please him, sacrificing my own feelings. But it did not work. It could not work. You cannot make someone love you. They either love you or they do not. I lived in constant fear he was going to go out and find someone else and he did exactly that. I did not want to admit it because I wanted our marriage to work. Five months after we were married, I became pregnant and had a beautiful little girl. That changed things for a while. He was very excited about having the baby. But a month after the baby was born, things slipped back into what they were--him losing his temper, leaving me alone with the baby all the time and me carrying the load, trying to raise a child and support our family. We were married three years when things happened which made me realize that he did not love me, that he never would love me, that he was not a good father, and that he was not a responsible husband. I could not handle it any more, so we were divorced.

YOU CANNOT MAKE SOMEONE LOVE YOU.

As I look back, I see where I made many mistakes. My first and foremost mistake was that I did not accept and maintain a steady relationship with God. If I had done this, I would not have found myself in the position I was in. God's love is free and this love is like no other love you could ever experience in your life because it is whole. There is nothing lacking in the love that God can give you. Do not ever believe that you can live without love because you cannot. You cannot count on the people around you to give you that love either but you can count on God. He is always there and He never changes. Another mistake was starting off in such a hurry. This seems to be the popular thing to do these days. You think "Well I like him and he likes me. Maybe we are in love. Why don't we just go ahead and see if this sex business will work out for us if we really like it." You end up skipping over the part where you are really good friends. This was what was missing in my relationship with Joe. There was no respect and friendship. He really did not respect me and I did not really respect him. There was no friendship there. Another mistake was getting involved sexually when I had no business doing it. I was not married. I was not old enough or mature enough to face the consequences of a sexual relationship. Just because you have all the necessary parts to have, a sexual relationship with someone does not mean that you are ready to get into it. It is not just a physical act it involves your emotions. You can truly mess up your emotions by getting involved when you are not ready. It is something that should be held sacred for marriage. If you go back to the basics in what a relationship is all about you will see that you have friendship first, secondly you are both Christians, and out of that grows a love. And God helps maintain that love. From there you go to dating and being serious and then later getting married.

LEARNED TOO LATE

The writer of this true story was seeking love. It is only natural to want someone to love you and someone you can love is especially true of young people. If you are in high school or college, the chances are that you are in love with someone right now, or think you might be. But there are many wrong concepts about love. Many people confuse infatuation with real love. Others think that "love at first sight" is the real thing. Still others do not know the difference between lust and love. What is infatuation and how does it affect you? What is the difference between lust and love. What is sexual attraction? What real love? Let us consider these important questions.

WHAT IS AN INFATUATION?

An infatuation is the state of being completely carried away by an attraction to someone. The dictionary calls it "being blindly in love." In other words, you are so carried away by this that you do not know what you are doing. The one involved in a romantic infatuation usually cannot think of

Email Bible Lesson 13

Teen and Adults Bible Study-Love, Dating and Marriage - Lesson 1 of 12 (love-dating-marriage-01)

anything or anyone else other than the person he or she is "in love with." An infatuation is an exciting experience--an emotional high--but it never lasts long because it is NOT true love. One of the signs of an infatuation is that you tend to idolize the person you think you are in love with. Everything they say or do seems just perfect to you. You do not see any flaws. Other people can see plenty of "danger signals," but you cannot see them because you are "blindly in love." Our romantic feelings have taken over and you are not using ordinary good sense. When you are involved in a romantic infatuation, you tend to be disorganized. You are not yourself. You are irresponsible and you tend to neglect your duties. Sometimes young people will daydream and "laze" around, not doing their duties. Someone will ask, "What is the matter with you, Caroline? You are not yourself." Caroline will smile sweetly and say, "Oh, I'm in love." No, she is not! She is infatuated. If she were in love and her love was the real thing, she would be concerned about her duties, preparing and planning for her future. Most infatuations do not last long. What does last is the bitter fruit of wrongdoing committed during the infatuation. Remember, when you are infatuated, you do not use common sense. Your romantic feelings are in control. When this happens, you can do some things that you will regret the rest of your life.

WHAT IS LUST?

Lust is an intense desire to satisfy one's sexual appetite. Lust often goes under the name of "love," but lust and love are two entirely different things.

LUST is SELFISH - the emphasis is on getting something. Lust demands immediate satisfaction. Lust says, "I want it for my own pleasure, I want it regardless of the consequences, and I want it now."

LOVE IS UNSELFISH - the emphasis is on giving. Love wants what is best for the other person. Love is willing to wait. Real love will wait for the right time and the right circumstances.

The Bible gives examples of both lust and love. Amnon, one of David's sons, thought that he was madly in love with Tamar, his half-sister. He desired her so much that he was literally sick. One of his evil friends suggested a plan whereby he could get Tamar alone. Amnon carried out this plan and forced Tamar to have sex with him. What happened next? He no longer cared for her. In fact, he hated her. Amnon's love was not love at all. It was just lust. On the other hand, the Bible tells of the love Jacob had for Rachel. Jacob had to work for Rachel's father seven long years in order to obtain Rachel as his wife. Jacob was willing to work and wait for Rachel because his love was the real thing. The Bible says that seven years "seemed to him but a few days" because of the love he had for her.

WHAT IS SEXUAL ATTRACTION?

Sexual attraction is physical attraction between a fellow and a girl. We are built with a sex drive, which causes us to be interested in the opposite sex. There is nothing wrong or sinful about this. God made us this way. Sin comes when we attempt to satisfy our sexual drive in a wrong way. To be sexually attracted to someone does NOT mean that you are in love with that person. A fellow sees a girl with a beautiful figure and he says, "Wow!" A girl sees a handsome football player and her heart skips a beat or two. Is that love? No, it is simply physical attraction between a fellow and a girl. Movies, television, magazines, and books constantly bombard us with this idea: "Find someone who turns you on...if you have a good sex life, that's all that matters." The campus beauty queen marries the former captain of the football team and everybody sighs and says, "What a handsome couple!" But in a short while, their marriage is broken. Why? Because there was no real love between them. They were just sexually attracted to each other and had little in common besides this. They soon became bored with each other. Remember, sexual attraction not love. There is a vital place in marriage for sexual attraction, but a marriage cannot be built on sexual attraction alone. There are couples by the

Email Bible Lesson 13

Teen and Adults Bible Study-Love, Dating and Marriage - Lesson 1 of 12 (love-dating-marriage-01)

thousands who could not or did not resist sexual involvement before they were married, but now they cannot stand to touch each other.

WHAT IS REAL LOVE?

Real love has many qualities. It does contain the magical element of physical attraction. But it is a lot more than this. Love has roots in friendship. In true love, you love the total person. You enjoy being with that person sharing things with them. Real love is unselfish. It sacrifices for the one it loves. And it carries with it the vital quality of commitment it does not give up or quit when problems come along. Real love will bring out the best in you. You want the one you love to be proud of you. If you are just infatuated with someone, you may "laze" around and daydream, but if your love is real, you apply yourself to your work, you make plans, and you prepare for the future. Real love is not just a wonderful feeling that strikes you suddenly. It takes time to grow and develop. Some of the most popular songs in the world of music give the wrong impression that falling in love with someone at first sight is real love. You do not "fall" into real love---you grow into it. You have to know a person before you can love that person with real love. It is impossible to truly know someone at first sight, and it is likewise impossible to have real love for someone at first sight. You may be attracted to someone at first sight you may even be "turned on" by someone at first sight But you cannot genuinely love a person whom you do not really know.

PRECIOUS LOVE

Satan does not want you to know and experience true love. That is why he promotes all kinds of false love. He wants you to get involved in sex outside of marriage. He wants to generally mess up your life so that you think life is not worth living. God, on the other hand, loves you supremely and desires only what is best for you. He wants you to have precious love--not cheap sex. If it is His will for you to be married, He has just the right person for you. He wants you to have a mate who loves you unselfishly and is committed to you for life. And He likewise wants you to be committed to that person for life. He wants your home to be a little bit of Heaven on earth. In May of 1973, in the little town of West Point, Mississippi, a beautiful marriage of twenty-five ended in a most dramatic way. The devoted wife of a local newspaper editor walked out of the evening church service. She smiled happily and spoke to her friends, and then fell dead on the church lawn. Emergency efforts to revive her were of no avail. To her friends and husband, it seemed as though she walked out of church straight into heaven. The little city was stunned. Letters and telegrams poured in to the bereaved husband, for she was warmly loved and admired. One day, after the funeral, her husband, Henry Harris, wrote a long, heartfelt tribute to his wife. Here is what Mr. Harris wrote of his lovely wife: She walked right out of church, right into Heaven. As one friend expressed it, she came to West Point to go to the church, and she left from the church. He was remembering the spring of 1946, when she graduated from the Mississippi State College for Women and came to West Point to be assistant to the pastor of First Baptist Church...Actually she looked upon work in West Point as temporary. was convinced that the Lord was calling her to become a foreign missionary, But the Lord was giving me a different message. I knew she was the girl. And later that same year, on night of December 10, 1946, I nervously asked her to become Mrs. Henry Harris. Her answer was not really a "No." Rather, it was silence. And the silence went on for days and weeks. She loved me. She timidly told me so. But she felt very strongly that the Lord wanted her on some mission field. And I used every power of persuasion to convince her that Henry Harris was her lifetime mission field. It took months of wooing. Much more than that. You see, it was a strange and wonderful and marvellous courtship, which involved much more than the whispering of "sweet nothings." While I wanted her to be my wife more than anything in the world, I, too, wanted God's will to be done. And for weeks and months, our dates were lengthy sessions of prayer. One year to the day after that proposal, we became man and wife. There is absolutely no doubt that God's will was done. There was never a happier marriage. Some more "modern" couples will find this hard to believe but for twenty-five years five months and ten

Email Bible Lesson 13

**Teen and Adults Bible Study-Love, Dating and Marriage - Lesson 1 of 12
(love-dating-marriage-01)**

days, we never had an argument. Surely, there must have been some disagreements; but now, in looking back across those wonderful years. I cannot recall a single one of consequence. I know that the coming weeks and months will be extremely hard. There will be times when I will have to find a quiet place and let the tears flow. Nothing wrong with that. But Heaven is dearer, because Wanda is there waiting. And I still have her in four wonderful children. Every year I added another long-stemmed red rose to those sent her on December 10. There were twenty-five in the last bouquet. Then, on Tuesday, I told the florist to just cover the coffin with red roses and put a big urn at each end, filled with red roses. You see, they will have to last a long time...until we are together again. I do not believe a day has passed in twenty-five years that I did not tell her I loved her. And yet, I don't believe she ever knew how much she meant to me., and how much I truly loved her...and while I kept telling her my love every day, I can keep thanking God for letting her share this portion of my life. As I have said before...in trying feebly to pay tribute to a departed friend... but never with more meaning than now... "Thank God for memories." That is precious love. What young people would not want such a marriage as this? Such a marriage can be yours if you seek God's will, find it, and follow it.

TEST - LESSON 1 – LOVE, DATING AND MARRIAGE

True or False?

- 1) The "I don't want to lose him" attitude can lead to very big trouble - True OR False:
- 2) It is a tragic mistake for a girl to sacrifice her morals to keep a boyfriend - True OR False:
- 3) It is all right for a Christian to date non-Christians - True OR False:
- 4) It is a good idea to try out sex before marriage - True OR False:
- 5) A good Christian friendship should develop first; then real LOVE can grow in this relationship - True OR False:
- 6) Briefly describe a person who is infatuated:
- 7) Give two characteristics of lust:

Fill in the following blanks:

- 8) To be sexually attracted to someone - that you are with that person.
 - 9) Real love has its roots in
 - 10) You don't "fall" into real love--you
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Email Bible Lesson 13
Teen and Adults Bible Study-Love, Dating and Marriage - Lesson 1 of 12
(love-dating-marriage-01)

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