

## The Dating Game: Love, Sex, and Lasting Relationships Part 3 The Gentleman's Challenge

Scripture used: 1 Cor. 13:11 (NLT)

Book: The Triumph of Christianity, by Rodney Stark

### OVERVIEW

This week's message is Part 3 of a 5-part series titled, "The Dating Game: Love, Sex, and Lasting Relationships" and focuses on a challenge to become men whom Christ will be proud of. Jesus ushered into His Church a radical notion of the role of women and their status within the body of Christ. He deviated from 1st century society norms of regarding women as property of her father first and then of her husband. Jesus turned that notion on its head with His commands to love one another as equals and to regard one another with respect and honor (Gal. 3:28-28) as due a co-heir of Christ (1 Pet 3:7). Because Jesus restored what society stole from women by dehumanizing them, He commanded us to honor them today as well.

### KEY POINTS

Pastor Hurmon's illustration of tossing dolls from one man to another is one picture of today's society of intimate relationships between men and women. Often men are using women like toys, and Jesus commands us to stop that behavior (1 Cor 13:11) and demonstrate love to them as He loved them.

- Husbands must honor their wives. To honor a woman is to give her the highest expression of respect. Treat her as an inferior? No. She is a daughter of the Living God and your co-heir in Jesus.
- To be a great husband one must first be a great man. The Apostle Peter asks us to use our physical strength to protect a woman and not to harm her (1 Pet 3:7). Physical strength can be used in a negative way ("Might makes right!"). *Peter calls on men to elevate and protect women as co-equals*. Violence against women is never justified in any form - physical or emotional abuse. God refuses to hear an abusive man's prayers when he is dishonoring the King's daughter.
- A man is meant to be a woman's best choice as a husband and not her only choice.

So, how are we to do this? By the act of renewing our minds (Rom 12:1-2) and thinking differently about women.

*Be wary of what you feed your mind!*

- Stop listening to music which uses the "B" word or "H" word referring to women. Delete the songs from your playlist.
- Eliminate erotic images or pornography. Pornography spreads the lies: a) a real body is not good enough, b) one body is not good enough, and c) my wife's body is not good enough. These lies represent fantasy and a pathway Satan uses to destroy human relationships.
- Guard your tongue. Watch what comes out of your mouth. Use soft and kind words (James 3:10).
- Women, set a high standard as to how you are to be treated by men. Elevate your game!
- Submit your choices and body to God as an act of worship (Romans 12:1-2). Make a choice to let God transform you into a different person than before. You are a new beginning! Put away the ways of childhood.
- Commit to: Treat every woman with honor; Repent in an honest and heartfelt manner; Accept Jesus and submit to His leadership. But most of all: *Mean it and make it clear!*

### DISCUSSION

- 1) **HEAR** What was on your play list before this week? What is there now? Do you use "incognito windows" on your computer for any purpose? What do you choose to do tonight and each day going forward then?
- 2) **UNDERSTAND** To repent means to turn away from. How can you show it is not just empty words? What does a heartfelt repentance look like to you? How do empty words reveal themselves?
- 3) **DO** Think of something that is specific, just one thing, that you can work on this week and commit to treating the woman/women in your life everyday as the most important person in the world (Like Hillary/Condoleezza). Think of that one thing to do each day to honor them. and then share at your LG how that felt, both from the man giving it, and from the woman receiving it.

### PRAYER