


Two WILL BECOME *One*

What is the difference between dating and courting?

Wikipedia says that **dating** is: "a stage of the human mating process whereby two people meet socially, possibly as friends or possibly with the aim of each assessing the other's suitability as a partner in an intimate relationship or marriage. It can be a form of courtship consisting of social activities done by the couple."

Google Online Dictionary defines **courting** as: "behavior designed to persuade someone to marry or develop a romantic relationship with one."




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What is the difference between dating and courting?

Some have said that **dating** is:
"a socially acceptable form of prostitution."

"a form of prostitution in which sex is paid for in installments rather than all at once."

"The modern day battlefield of romance where hearts are won and broken, the not-quite so version of chivalry and wooing, an interview for a lover; the lay down some time-and money and see if you get some candy routine; the progressed game of cat-and-mouse; the human courtship ritual; playing baseball for a home run."




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How should Christians approach courtship?


1. No courtship should begin without prayer.
2. No courtship should begin until you are emotionally mature enough to handle a relationship and make decisions based on principles instead of feelings.
3. Find someone in your life that can be a spiritual mentor to you. This should be someone who loves you enough to tell you the truth and not merely a cheerleader.



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Stages of Courtship

1. **Pre-courtship:**
 - a. Go on group dates to get to know the other person or work with them in some meaningful innocuous way.
 - b. This allows the development of deeper friendships.
 - c. We need this development to help discern the will of God before committing to each other more formally.
 - d. If attraction is sensed, both of you should back off to:
 - i. Pray
 - ii. Receive counsel from your spiritual mentors
 - iii. And wait to hear from God before moving forward



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Stages of Courtship

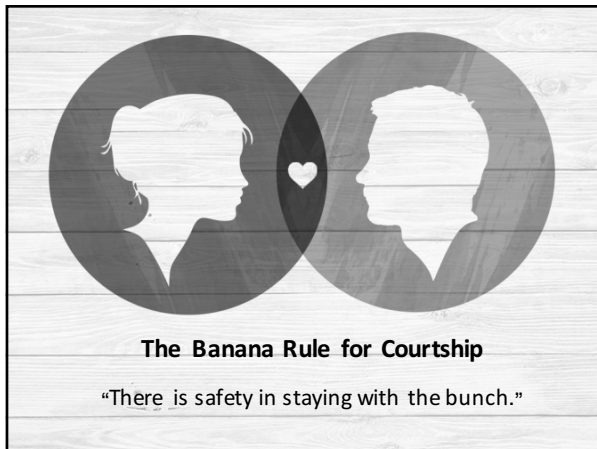
1. **Pre-courtship:**
 - a. Attraction should never be based just on physical attributes.
 - b. However, to marry someone we are not attracted to because they are spiritually strong is a mistake.
 - c. Likewise, it is a mistake to marry someone because of physical attributes and personality but who has no spiritual life.
 - d. We should find attraction in 4 major areas:
 - i. Physically
 - ii. Emotionally
 - iii. Intellectually
 - iv. Spiritually



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2. **Courtship:**
 - a. Once a **man** and **woman** have confirmed God's will for them to be together they can officially begin spending more time together in an intentional way.
 - b. Both should understand that officially courting someone should never happen if there is no desire to eventually marry that person.
 - c. Strict guidelines be established for **not** having physical contact.
 - d. These guidelines should include not being alone where they can fall into sin.
 - e. The "banana rule" will save a lot of heartache and regret.



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3. **Engagement:**
 - a. As the relationship develops the **man** should take the step to seek permission from his lady's father, parent, or guardian before he asks her to marry him.
 - b. Once the blessing of marriage is secured the proposal should be made in a meaningful and creative way.
 - c. After the engagement is official arrangements should be made to get both families together so they can get to know each other better. Two families are coming together not just two people.
 - d. Take a "Pre-marital Inventory" or "Marriage Compatibility" assessment. Take them separately from one another.



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3. **Engagement:**
 - a. The inventory or compatibility test should be taken before a wedding date is set. Nearly 20% of couples who do these tests realize they should not get married.
 - b. Once the marriage inventory or compatibility test is done and both of you feel certain you are compatible, arrangements should be made to receive pre-marital counseling.
 - c. Pre-marital counseling should be done with someone who has a successful marriage and who has and led others in doing so.
 - d. There should be no resistance to counseling from your fiancé, but agree on who you want to counsel you.

