**Intentional Relationships: Pocketing?**

**QUESTION:**

*I have been dating a wonderful lady for several months. We have told each other "I love you" and even talked about marriage. However, there are times I feel very distant from her. For example, I still have not met some of her friends. She talks about them, but for whatever reason, it never seems to be the right time for me to meet all of them. Also, she has met my parents on several occasions, but when I suggest we take a weekend to see her parents, they seem to always be out of town. Lastly, while she takes many pictures of us together, I have never seen them posted on her social media accounts. She keeps telling me that our photos are private and doesn't want the world to know everything about our lives. However, she posted other pictures of her friends and past dating relationships. So, what does this mean?*

There is a new term out there called "Pocketing," which means someone keeps you/your relationship in their "pocket." While that might seem nice, who doesn’t want to be in a warm and soft place? It is not. Pocketing means that someone keeps you from fully seeing or experiencing them for whatever reasons.

**It could be they:**

• Are embarrassed to date you and don't want their friends to know

• Do not feel you are good enough to take home to momma

• Like getting their needs met only; it's about them

• Know dating you is wrong. For example, you aren't a Christian, and they know God would be against dating someone who isn’t a believer and a follower of Christ.

*2 Corinthians 6:14 Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers. For what partnership has righteousness with lawlessness? Or what fellowship has light with darkness?*

• They know their parents or friends wouldn't approve because of your nationality or skin color. While it’s not a sin to date someone of a different race or ethnicity, you know it would cause issues, so don’t let your friends or family know.

• Have something to hide such as being in prison, already in another relationship or married, and living a double life.

*Luke 16:10 “One who is faithful in a very little is also faithful in much, and one who is dishonest in a very little is also dishonest in much.*

On a more positive note, there could be a logical answer, such as their family is toxic. Maybe they do want to keep your relationship more private. Perhaps in the past, they put too much on social media, and it causes problems in the relationship. But bottom line, all this is screaming the need for a DTR: Determine the Relationship\*. You need time to sit down and address these concerns. Be sure you agree on where you are and where you are going. If they aren’t willing to take you to meet their parents, it could be because they are not ready to date. Remember, there is no dating in the Bible, only courtship for marriage. So the more you know where you are and your expectations, the healthier your relationship and possible future marriage will be.

\*DTR and more on dating are found in Chapter 11 of our new study. Order your copy of Intentional Relationships for Single's 12-week Bible study to learn more. This study covers topics on why our relationships fail, identity, gender differences, boundaries, conflict, blind spots, friendship (in all our relationships—family, work, church, neighbors, friends) but also intentional friendship, including red, yellow, and green flags, intentional dating, and engagement.

To learn more about dating, DTR’s, red, yellow and green flags, order your copy of Intentional Relationships for Singles 12-week Bible study. This study covers topics on why our relationships fail, identity, gender differences, boundaries, conflict, blind spots, friendship (in all our relationships—family, work, church, neighbors, friends) but also intentional friendship, including red, yellow, and green flags, intentional dating, and engagement.