When Their Past Effects Your Present *by Kris Swiatocho*

QUESTION: I am in a relationship with a Christian girl who wants to put God first and seek His will in our relationship. However, she has a very promiscuous and abusive past, leaving her with a permanent STD. I feel like I should end the relationship, but if she is genuinely repentant, I believe I should be able to get past this and love her for the person she has become. Her past grieves me. It has become such a burden to me. Should I enjoy my time with her and let God do His work in our lives, or reluctantly part ways and search for someone else?

ANSWER: What courage it takes to write and ask for help on this very sensitive subject. I appreciate your heart and your desire for counsel. You are right: because of the blood of Jesus Christ, she has been forgiven (just like you) of her past mistakes. Unfortunately, our sin produces consequences that can affect our lives today.

In every relationship, you will have things that come up that could be a deal breaker. We call these red and yellow flags. For example, will she be OK if you do not want kids? Will he join your church, your denomination? Does she get along with your family? Is he in debt up to their eyeballs? *For more about flags, read Chapter 10 from our study “Intentional Relationships for Singles.”* What you hope is that some of this is sorted out during the Intentional Friendship period prior to dating—reducing the emotional damage it could cause. However, even in the dating period, you should still be asking those hard questions, allowing you a prayerful option to exit the relationship.

Because none of us is guaranteed a perfect relationship or marriage, anything great today may not be great tomorrow. Because you have written that her past grieves you, I wonder, is it indeed about the STD and her former promiscuity? Ask yourself some questions: Are you grieving her past because she is grieving, and you don’t want her to hurt? Are you grieving her past because you are fearful of it? Afraid of what other STDs she could have that she might not know about or the possible emotional effects that could come down the road? Are you grieving her past because you are unsure how it will affect your future together? A future of having kids? A future of contacting the STD yourself?

Remember, you have every right to say this is more than you can handle. You do not have to risk getting this STD and living with its effects. But if you are falling in love with her, if she is who God has given you, then you have to love her like Christ loves you, imperfections and all. Do the research that you can on the disease. Learn of the precautions that are available to prevent further infection. Let her know what you are feeling and your fears. Be honest. Trust the Lord for His protection and the next steps.

***Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight (Proverbs 3:5-6).***

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• [www.TheSinglesNetwork.org](http://www.TheSinglesNetwork.org)

• [www.KrisSwiatochoMinistries.org](http://www.KrisSwiatochoMinistries.org)

• [www.LaborDaySingles.org](http://www.LaborDaySingles.org)

• www.IntentionalRelationshipSolutions.org