



Missionary Dating: On a Mission to Get Him Saved
by Kris Swiatocho

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There I was, standing at the entrance of my church for the zillionth time. Waiting for Bob, or maybe it was John or it could have been Dave. It didn't matter because there seemed to be a pattern - a pattern where I would meet this great guy, and he would tell me "Sure, I go to church," which, of course, was enough information for me to date him.

I would arrive at church early, eagerly waiting to have him join me, when much to my repeated surprise he wouldn't show. There would be other times when he would show, but be late, bored and distracted.

When was I going to figure it out? How many guys would I date in the hopes of either getting them "saved" or "walking right" with God? How long was it going to take for me to listen to God?

Hey, as a single adult myself, I know it's hard to find someone. It seems you have to kiss a lot of frogs, and then you still don't find the right one. I have heard all the stories, not to mention I have a few of my own. "He told me he was a believer." "He goes to church every Sunday." "At least he isn't bad person." "He grew up in church." "I know if I can just be the example, he will change." Are there any I am missing here?

I know of the desperation. Desperation that blinds us. Desperation that allows us to settle. Desperation that lies to us. Desperation that causes us to lose judgement. I know you get tired of waiting on God. Some of you haven't even begun to wait, while others may have given up.

... that he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh for the lusts of men, but for the will of God. 1 Peter 4:2

Five Levels of Missionary Dating

I have personally been through the all the levels listed below. I am sure there may be many more or less based on your own experience. I guess I have always known in my heart that any guy who didn't love God, didn't put Christ first and wasn't growing in his relationship with Christ by the evidence of his fruit is someone I shouldn't date. However, I did anyway.

As each relationship unfolded, there would be a pattern. These men weren't pushing me toward Christ, but instead pulling me away. It would take some time - even a few years - before I would get it. I would have to experience all the levels to truly understand. So what level have you experienced? Perhaps you are at one of these right now and are struggling with giving him up -- with giving the relationship to God.

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LEVEL 1

You have had one date. I mean, one date won't hurt anyone. I need a life, you know. It's nice to have a man take you out, spend money on you, and tell you you're pretty. However, the whole time you are talking with him at dinner, sharing about your life, your dreams, how many kids you want one day and your relationship with God, he is looking at the waitresses. You are at the point of unbelief. You have wasted yet another night of your life with the wrong guy, just hoping that your relationship with God would be enough for the both of you. It's not. You give him to God. God takes him out of your life.

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LEVEL 2

You have a few dates. He seems nice. You invite him to church on Sunday. You end up in a lengthy conversation about God. This intrigues you because he seems interested IN God. But after a few more dates you realize that he is interested in God because you are. You realize that he is interested in all kinds of gods. You know he needs to go. You give him to God even though he has the coolest convertible. God takes him out of your life.

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LEVEL 3

You've been dating for a month. You don't know each other that well yet. Yes, you have probably kissed him already. He seems to want to move faster in the romance department than you would like. You confront him about what God says, and he tells you that if you cared about him, you would show it. Oh my gosh, you're here again. It's sounding familiar. His walk doesn't match his talk. Thankfully you haven't dated him very long. However, you went farther physically than you should have. You were just so lonely, and he filled that part of your heart. At least you thought he had. You finally give him to God. God takes him out of your life.

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LEVEL 4

You've been dating for a couple of months, you're having fun and things aren't too serious. He told you he grew up in church but some of his behavior isn't Christ-like. You confront him about some of his choices. You don't like his answers. You know he needs to go, but you keep hoping. Finally you give him to God. God takes him out of your life.

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LEVEL 5

You've been dating three to four months; it's a time in your relationship where you know if it's love or not. At the start, he told you he was in church. However, you haven't seen any real commitment or growth in Christ. You keep thinking he will change, but he doesn't. Your heart is breaking because you thought he was "the one." You finally give him to God. God takes him out of your life.

So, I guess I was a missionary dater. I seemed to be on a mission to get guys "saved," "walking with God" and "growing in their faith." So what is wrong with that? I mean, we are supposed to witness and help lead others to Christ, right?

So everywhere we go, we tell everyone about Christ. We warn them and teach them with all the wisdom God has given us, for we want to present them to God, perfect in their relationship to Christ. Colossians 1:28

God calls each of us alone. We can not "save" anyone. We can only help lead them to Christ. Each person is responsible for his own life with Christ. Each person will go before the Father alone.

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God's one and only Son. John 3:6-18

God calls each of us into a relationship with Him. It is a relationship that is about our journey with Christ, our growth and our maturity.

So now we can rejoice in our wonderful new relationship with God -- all because of what our Lord Jesus Christ has



done for us in making us friends of God. Romans 5:11

Why Can't I Witness While Dating?

Here is the problem. God warns us when we join ourselves with those not walking with God, (those who don't believe, those who might even say they believe but their lives show otherwise), we take the risk that they may pull us away from God and the purpose he has for our lives. It's much easier to pull someone down from up high than it is for us to pull someone up from lower down. It is for our protection that God commands us to not be unequally yoked.

Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness? What harmony is there between Christ and Belial. What does a believer have in common with an unbeliever? What agreement is there between the temple of God and idols? For we are the temple of the living God. As God has said: "I will live with them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they will be my people." "Therefore come out from them and be separate, says the Lord. 2 Corinthians 6:14-17

The goal should always be to be equally yoked. By having Christ as the center of our relationships, He becomes the model for our lives. He gives us our direction and our purpose. He teaches us to love each other unconditionally. When things go wrong, we can go to Christ together to get help. If you are the only believer in your relationship, how can you both work toward Christ's purpose in your lives?

Does This Mean I Can't Have "Lost" Friends?

Of course not; it is through our relationships with the lost that we might help lead them to Christ. But when we start dating the lost, our emotions get all tied up, distracting us and we easily fall into temptation.

On hearing this, Jesus said, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. Matthew 9:12

And it doesn't mean that there aren't some people out there who got married when one was not a believer, then after several years the spouse became a Christian. And because this happened, that we shouldn't rejoice. But just think of the years they missed serving the Lord together by not being equally yoked.

It's is God's purpose for us to reach others for Christ. This means that every person you meet and get to know needs to be considered for His purpose and not yours - that every person of the opposite sex should be an opportunity for reaching out, nurturing and/or encouraging them in Christ. Some guys are going to church, reading their Bibles and even growing, however, they may still be very young in their walks with God. Come along side them and help them, pray for them, care for them, encourage friendships with other men and help lead them to Christ before you attempt to date. And even then, take the time necessary to watch for growth and see fruit. Allow God to tell you the next step.

But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. Matthew 6:33

I believe as we truly seek God's will in our lives, in our friendships and relationships - becoming the right person before we meet the right person - we will be given what we need. We just need to trust God that He knows what we need.

NOTE: Men, take extra caution. In general, males feel the need to rescue women. What is better than to meet a woman who needs you to lead her? However, God's Word is the same for us all: be equally yoked.

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