

# “(un)-Stuck: The Pursuit”

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**Introduction:** “un-Stuck”... Tonight’s message is intended to stir your thought process, to get you thinking. You may not leave here with all the answers. I hope that we are going to have fun together tonight!!! We’re going to be real tonight!

## TONIGHT: UN-STUCK: The PURSUIT

**Styles of Dating Pursuit in Driving terms (Approaches to Dating):** (some extremes)

- **LA Police Chase dating** – they’re in constant hot pursuit, going way too fast. This person hops from one relationship to the next too quickly. In this style, someone always get hurt, either themselves or bystanders (Speed-Dating).
- **Dukes of Hazard dating** – they’re spending way too much time ‘off road’ in their pursuit of a spouse, and often end up stuck in the mud (a muddy relationship)
- **Taxi Cab dating** – these people are somehow wearing a sign letting everyone know they’re available, but they don’t exercise enough discretion as to what kind of passengers they pick up, and it usually ends up costing someone something to leave the relationship
- **Search & Rescue dating** – this person is willing to pull anyone in, even if it requires CPR (evangelism/missionary dating) – more on this later
- **Rickshaw dating** – you’ve surrendered your dating life to another driver (God) but you’re not satisfied with the speed He is driving
- **Tour-Guide dating** – you’re not yet sure what you want in a spouse, but everybody else is telling you exactly whom you should marry!!
- **Parking Lot dating** – you’re just waiting around, trusting that the right car will come park in your space, hoping it’s the perfect fit (‘I Kissed Dating Goodbye’)

**Pursuit (as well as Preparation from last week) is the stage where you ought to be thinking about what type of person you want to marry!!** (don’t just wait until you meet someone to decide what you’re looking for!!)

**ILL>** Like shopping for a car. You don’t just visit a car lot w/o giving any thought to what you’re looking for!! It makes a whole lot more sense...

**1 Cor. 15:33** “Do not be deceived: Bad company corrupts good character.”

### What Character Qualities are you looking for?

- Which lot (eligible pool of singles) are they on? - Be equally yoked!!!
- Integrity
- Faithful
- Funny
- Responsible
- Family-Oriented

**It often comes down to ‘Non-Negotiables’ vs. ‘Negotiables’ – be intentional!!**

“Whenever I date a guy, I think, “Is this the man I want my children to spend their weekends with?”” Rita Rudner – now that’s being intentional and purposeful in date selection!!

**NOTE:** There are dozens of dating philosophies out there. What each of you needs to decide is which one works best and honors God most.

## Cultural Misconceptions about Love & Dating:

### 1. Hollywood: “Love is Sex”

Remember, Hollywood portrays a distorted view of reality. But we often laugh when we see scenes that are factually ridiculous. For example, one absurd scenario we often see in movies occurs when a group of skilled soldiers hidden behind trees and armed with machine guns open fire at the hero, who is in close range and fully exposed. Even so, the trained marksmen all miss, but with a single pistol in hand, the hero annihilates his enemies. We laugh, knowing that this is the fantasy land of Hollywood. However, we often buy into the scene of two people falling in love, getting sexually involved, and then leaving one another without any consequences. Just as the first situation was absurd, so is the second. Yet, too many people have been deceived into this type of thinking. They frequently think that if no pregnancy is involved, then there was no harm done. Yet the reality is that sexual involvement leads to such consequences as emotional pain, feelings of exploitation, guilt, sexually transmitted diseases, and harmful memories that are not forgotten. Do not buy into the definition that love is sex.

- Now I am hoping that not many of you are buying this lie! But this is the culture we live in!

Misconception #

### 2. “Love is a Feeling”

**Cathexis** is a word used to describe the powerful emotional experience commonly known as "falling in love". It is clinically described as the sudden collapse of the ego boundaries. Suddenly, everything is beautiful, and we are at one with the whole universe. Nothing has really changed except our perception.

The truly sad part is that, at this point, we are sometimes not really in love with a person; instead we are in love with being in love. We may not actually care about this person, but care a great deal about what they do for us, what they "provide" us. As you can see, cathexis is wholly emotional, independent of rational thought. It is here that the danger is greatest. In order to secure a steady supply of this emotional drug, we go to great lengths to nail down this relationship. We may make all sorts of cosmetic changes in our behavior pattern, or our manner of dress, in an effort to appeal to this person's interest. I can't tell you how many times I've seen this sad ritual repeated.

- Love is more than just a feeling: Commitment, sacrifice, selflessness, compromise

Misconception #

### 3. “Love is Conditional”

Meaning, I love you if you continue to meet all of the following conditions. But if you ever stop meeting my needs, then I will withdraw my love from you..

- This is shallow & self-centered.

**The Truth: *TRUE* Love is both a Feeling and a Choice!!!**

**Col. 3:1-10** <sup>1</sup>Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. <sup>2</sup>Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. <sup>3</sup>For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. <sup>4</sup>When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory. <sup>5</sup>Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry. <sup>6</sup>Because of these, the wrath of God is coming. <sup>7</sup>You used to walk in these ways, in the life you once lived. <sup>8</sup>But now you must rid yourselves of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips. <sup>9</sup>Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices <sup>10</sup>and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator.

As people who are to be clothed with the image of our Creator, something should be different about how we approach dating relationships.

## Four God-Honoring Thoughts about “*The Pursuit*”

### 1. Who should be the Pursuer and Who should be the Pursuant?

Q. First, where do I do my Pursuing?

- Clubs?
- Bars?
- Dating websites: e-harmony & Christian Singles
- Waiting?
- Church dating – having your own ‘Visitation’ Ministry!!

1. **Men are generally the Pursuer**, Women the Pursuant

a. BUT, this is neither a Biblical Mandate nor a universal B&W rule

*ILL*> biblical example might be Jacob (last week) who worked 14yrs for a wife!

2. **Women may Pursue men**, but this is generally more dangerous for them, as they are typically much more emotionally susceptible to hurt and will usually be more deeply wounded by rejection than would a man

a. Perhaps Women should have this approach: Indirect Pursuit by showing themselves interested and available

*ILL*> Ruth & Boaz

**BUT, How do I let someone know that I am interested w/o being too obvious, and while at the same time honoring God?**

### 2. Which Vibe-Sending Techniques Honor God? (sending signals)

**A Few “How-Not-To’s” in sending out the Vibe:** (if you have used these, I’m sorry!)

- “You’re feet sure must be tired b/c you’ve been running through my mind all day!”
- “Was there a loud crash when you fell from heaven?”
- “Can I have your number? I lost mine.”
- “Do you believe in love at first sight, or should I walk by again?”
- “If I received a nickel for every time I saw someone as beautiful as you, I’d have five cents!”
- “I have had a really bad day, and it always makes me feel better to see a pretty girl smile. So, would you smile for me?”

Warning: some of these are super-cheesy!!

- “Is there an airport nearby or is that just my heart taking off?”
- “If I could rearrange the alphabet I’d put U and I together.”
- “I need to get some air because you took my breath away”

**Sending out the Vibe is all about trying to figure out if someone is *interested* in you or letting them know that you are *interested* in them.**

**Some Questions to consider in Vibe-sending** (to stir our thinking):

- How do I send the Vibe?
- How do I know if someone is sending me the Vibe?

- How do I recognize the “Not Interested” Vibe – aka “NO”?
  - Am I getting the “Not interested” signal but ignoring it?
  - NOTE: it probably doesn’t mean “some time in the future” either!
- How do I clearly send out the “Not interested” Vibe?
- Am I sending misleading signals without knowing it?
  - How do I protect other from being interested when I am not?
- How do in know if I’m missing a Signal – positive or negative?
- Am I thinking enough about any signals I might be sending that might be misinterpreted?

## 1. Direct

### a. Verbal

- “I like you, can we go out?”
- “I’m attracted to you and I would like to go out with you.”
- “Will you go out with me?”
- “How ‘bout we go to dinner next week?”

### b. Non-Verbal

- Old Faithful* – “Pass them a note in gym”
- Keep staring and/or winking at the person until they realize you are sending the “go out with me” vibe!!

## 2. Indirect

### a. Verbal

- “Investigative Reporting” – Asking a lot of questions about a person
- Engaging them in genuine conversation, beyond “what’s your favorite color”
- Flirting – Is flirting OK?
  - Flirt**: to court triflingly or act amorously without serious intentions; to play at love;
    - to trifle or toy with, as with an idea:
 General Opinion:
    - OK if you are genuinely interested
    - NOT OK if you are just playing, as it is misleading and may deceive and hurt someone
      - It will send the wrong ‘vibe’

Question: Does flirting honor God?

### b. Non-Verbal

- Placing yourself in places where you know they’ll be
- Watching them in an activity...
  - Touching –
  - The more I think about this, though, the more it seems wrong. What if she wasn’t interested? Then I was invading her personal space!!

## What “Vibe-Sending” dishonors God?

The previous discussion was mostly regarding behavior in “Group Interactions.” Next, let’s talk about One-on-One Interactions. For those who are already in an ‘exclusive’ dating relationship, how do I ‘Define’ it?

## 3. How do I Define the Relationship? (DTR)

- Relationships that lack definition often end in misleading and hurt, because expectations are not shared
  - **Types of Dating Relationships**
    - Casual Date – dinner & movie, with no specific promise of future dates
    - Exclusive Dating – spending time only with each other
    - Courting – committed to *pursuing* marriage
    - Engaged – *planning* for marriage (still not married though!)
  - One of the main reasons why YAs get hurt in relationships is b/c they have different expectations – one person is more emotionally engaged, invested, and committed than the other, and this leads to inevitable disappointment!!
    - Thus it is important to try to have open & honest dialogue...
  - Remember the Rule: All dating relationships end one of two ways!!

#### 4. How do I Honor my 'brother' or 'sister' in Christ?

- This is usually something we don't really think much about in dating... probably b/c we see 'Prospects' as objects instead of as brothers/sisters in Christ.
- In Dating/Searching, always learn to treat others with dignity, honor, and respect as a fellow Child of God.
  - Always remember that you are dating God's Child!!!

#### **Tips for Honoring God (and others) in your dating life:**

1. Establish Standards & Guidelines, and stand by them – don't compromise!
2. No Missionary Dating – any impact that may happen will most likely be superficial, as they will be made in order to curry your affections
3. Look for someone with a Visible Faith
4. Focus on Being, not on Finding – this is huge!!!
5. Establish a Truth-Teller in your life about your date selections – more on this in coming weeks
6. Don't let guilt motivate you to either start or stay in a relationship
  - Ended relationships are far better than painful, drawn-out ones
7. Look for someone who doesn't 'need' you
  - This may sound odd, but if you start dating someone who needs you, then they will begin to place you in wrong priority. **“Desperate longing is a short step from obsession. If they need something we have, then they will feel compelled to do things in order to control that supply.”** This is when/how people become controlling, manipulative and passive aggressive in a relationship!!

#### **Conclusion:** (worship team)

#### **A Few Questions to Ask Yourself about your Dating Approach:** (current or future rel.)

1. Does/Will the relationship drive me closer to God or further away from Him?
2. Does/Will the relationship cause me to compromise on any of my values?

3. Does/Will the relationship cause me to compromise my integrity?
4. Do/Will I need to hide the relationship from anyone? Why?
5. Does/Will the relationship strengthen or weaken my character?
6. Does this person serve Jesus?
7. Does this person encourage *me* to serve Jesus?
8. Does this relationship take a higher priority than God does in my life?
9. Have/Will I stopped serving God b/c of this relationship?
10. Are/Will the other important relationships in my life being strengthened or weakened as a result of my dating relationship?
  - a. In a healthy and God-honoring relationship, these relationships are strengthened. In unhealthy dating relationships, the couple often isolate themselves from others.