

## CHAPTER 13

### **HOW IMPORTANT IS YOUR SOCIAL LIFE TO GOD?**

#### I. CAN ONE BE TRULY HAPPY AND FULFILLED WITHOUT A BALANCED SOCIAL LIFE?

- A. Can one who pulls back into his shell and tries to avoid social contact with other human beings please God?
- B. What chances does one have of being in God's Kingdom if he or she decides to live the life of a hermit, being disregarding of the welfare of others?

#### II. MANIFOLD ARE THE SCRIPTURES SHOWING THAT GOD INTENDED WE LOVE EACH OTHER AND LEARN TO LIVE PEACEFULLY TOGETHER.

- A. Matt. 22:34-40 — "Love neighbor as thyself."
- B. Jn. 13:34 — "A new commandment I give you, that ye love one another."
- C. Jn. 15:12, 13 — "Greater love hath no man than he lay his life down."
- D. Ps. 133:1-3 — "How good it is when brethren dwell together in unity."
- E. Col. 3:12-14 — "Put on bowels of mercy ...."
- F. 1 Jn. 3:11, 16, 19 — "We ought to lay our lives down for our friends."
- G. Mal. 3:16 — "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another."
- H. Jn. 17:11-23 — "Christ prayed the disciples would be one."
- I. The keynote of God's coming kingdom is peace, unity, goodwill and brotherhood.

#### III. IT IS A KNOWN FACT THAT ONE CAN HARDLY RISE TO ANY DEGREE OF SUCCESS IN THE WORLD WITHOUT LEARNING HOW TO INTERACT WITH OTHERS.

- A. A quick analysis of the business world will bear this out.
- B. Consider the notables of the Bible — they were people-oriented.
- C. Andrew Carnegie once stated that he would pay more money to a man who knew how to motivate others than to one who possessed only technical skills.

#### IV. ACQUIRING THE ABILITY TO INTERACT WITH OTHERS OBVIOUSLY INVOLVES MEMBERS OF THE OPPOSITE SEX — FOR THE WORLD IS MADE UP OF BOTH MEN AND WOMEN.

- A. One of your main goals in life should be to understand, appreciate and respect the unique qualities God created in the opposite sex.
- B. Christ's own example demonstrates clearly His concern and respect for the women with whom He had contact.
  - 1. His one mother, Mary.
  - 2. The woman caught in adultery.
  - 3. The woman who had an issue of blood.
  - 4. The woman at the well.
- C. Christ married Israel.
  - 1. Much is recorded about His courtship with her.
  - 2. Many details given about His marriage and subsequent events which followed.
- D. Christ is going to marry the Church.
  - 1. Rev. 19:6-8 — "Christ's marriage to the Lamb"
  - 2. Eph. 5:22-27 — "That He might present it to Himself a Church."
- E. A large part of the Bible has to do with teaching the sexes how to relate and interact with each other.

V. THIS BRINGS US TO THE QUESTION FOR WHICH WE ARE HERE: "HOW DOES GOD VIEW THE PRACTICING OF DATING?"

- A. How would Christ conduct Himself on a date?
- B. What would have been His attitude toward the opposite sex?
- C. What would he have done — where would he have gone?
- D. He would have set the perfect example — for He had perfect knowledge and knew God's will perfectly.

VI. I CAN ASSURE YOU IT'S VASTLY DIFFERENT FROM THE WORLD'S VIEWPOINT.

- A. This world has not only forsaken but openly rejected God's true values.
- B. The selfish, sensual modern approach to dating is no exception.

VII. THE WORLD'S APPROACH.

- A. The American way of life is based on getting and not on giving.
- B. The hue and cry of the day is look out for yourself first, and stomp your neighbor if he gets in your way.
- C. Unless deeply converted, we are all motivated by SELFISHNESS, the all consuming passion that colors and taints every thought, motive, action, word — everything we have ever done.
- D. This attitude holds true in dating.

VIII. THE WORLD'S APPROACH IS SUMMED UP IN I JOHN 2.

- A. I Jn. 2:15-16 — "Love not the world ... for all that is in the world is the 1) lust of the flesh; 2) lust of the eyes; 3) pride of life."
- B. Let's examine each of these points for a moment.
  - 1. The lust of the flesh.
    - a. The most powerful motivation for dating in the world is the sex urge.
    - b. "People Magazine" in 1962 arrived at the conclusion as a result of interviewing a great number of men.
    - c. God created the human body with a built-in sex urge for a pure and holy purpose. But the world has turned it into lust.
    - d. A fellow will go as far as the girl will allow him to.
    - e. Men will be very loving and gentle — but their hidden motive is to wear down her principles in order to experience her body.
    - f. If after the first, second or third attempt a guy is unsuccessful, he writes her off his list.
    - g. Many women realize this and go along so as not to be rejected and lose their so-called popularity.
    - h. Of course there are other advantages besides being popular: dances, trips, fun, frolic, etc.
    - i. Satan uses sex and gets young people so preoccupied with it that it saps their creative ability and destroys their character.
  - 2. The lust of the eyes.
    - a. It's a natural tendency to want to date others who are attractive and have the most sex appeal.
    - b. Fellows are attracted to girls who are cute and pretty and the girls want to date the fellows who are the most dashing and handsome.
    - c. But beauty is more than skin deep. Beauty and a sexy body will never make for the qualities of mind and character that are lacking.
  - 3. The pride of life.
    - a. Oftentimes fellows and girls, men and women, want to date the most beautiful and handsome so they can "show off" their catch to others and make them envious.
    - b. Some refuse to date but the cream of the crop out of plain vanity and selfishness. They do not want to lower their dating choices because their peers may cast disapproving eyes down on them.
    - c. Some date only certain types to build up their own status and prestige in the eyes of the community or close circle of friends.
    - d. The practice of going steady figures in. Once a fellow or girl has landed a good catch, they want to hold on to it for self-gratifying reasons.

IX. WHAT ABOUT YOU — US! HAVE WE CARRIED SOME OF THE WORLD'S ATTITUDES AND APPROACHES OVER INTO GOD'S CHURCH?

- A. Eph. 2:1-3 - "Shows we were a part of this world's ways before conversion."
- B. Col. 3:1-10 - "A description of the new man in Christ."
- C. Let's face it! Most of us came into God's Church devoid of His truth and values.
  1. Our parents may not have known God or His way — how could they teach us?
  2. What little we may know of the right approach to dating we have learned since coming in contact with God's Church.
  3. Like so many other things in life, Satan has deceived us in this vital area.

X. DOES DATING MEAN THE SAME TO US THAT IT MEANS TO GOD?

- A. When you hear the word date what concept comes to mind?
  1. Is it the Hollywood approach of lust, glamorized beauty, shape, sex, handsomeness?
  2. Is it an amorous feeling — a romantic aura?
  3. Do you get dreamy-eyed, emotional, experience strong feelings of sensual excitement and fantasy?
- B. I believe the word "date" has come to have the wrong connotation.
  1. Technically, a date is nothing more than a mark on the calendar to do a specific thing, at a specific place, with a specific person or persons.
  2. But it has come to embody a multitude of feelings and sensations:
    - a. A feeling of romance.
    - b. A sense of formality.
    - c. An uptight and nervous feeling because one or both parties fears he or she may not make a good impression or will not be liked.
    - d. An attitude that one must give super effort to make the event successful.
    - e. It often boils down to an exercise in vanity and selfishness.

XI. WHAT THEN SHOULD BE THE RIGHT APPROACH TO DATING?

- A. First, for the sake of these meetings, we are going to break down dating into TWO broad categories:
  1. Fun and friendship dates that are casual and relaxed.
  2. Serious dates or courtship that leads to marriage.
- B. For our purpose today, we are going to address the first — dates that are casual, relaxed, fun-loving, and friendly.

XII. THERE ARE TWO GRAND REASONS OR PURPOSES FOR HAVING THIS TYPE OF DATES:

- A. To develop into a colorful and dynamic personality.
  1. God's great desire is for you to reach the stars, to be useful, productive and successful.
  2. He wants you to grow in all the graces, charms and abilities of a colorful and influential leader!
  3. He truly would like for you to hone every talent and capacity until it becomes razor sharp.
  4. Scriptures proving this:
    - a. Eph. 4:11-15 — "That we may grow up into Him in all things."
    - b. II Tim. 3:16-17 — "That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto good works."
    - c. Prov. 4:18 — "The path of the just shines more unto a perfect day."
    - d. Heb. 6:1 — "Let us go on into perfection."
    - e. Matt. 5:48 — "Become perfect."
    - f. I Cor. 15:39-42 — "Glorified bodies in the resurrection."  
(v. 58 — "Abound in God's work.")
  5. God is displeased if you withdraw into your shell and become anti-social.
    - a. Such people curl up in their rose buds.
    - b. They become desensitized to the needs and feelings of others.
    - c. They fail to develop those latent talents that would make them influential and useful to society.
    - d. Such people become preoccupied with themselves — become self-centered.

- e. They are oftentimes unaware that their personality becomes hard and repels others.
  - f. Their language and tone of voice become curt and businesslike.
6. Matt. 25:14-30 — "Parable of the talents."
- B. To be a source of inspiration and encouragement to others.
1. One of our greatest earthly responsibilities is to serve one another.
    - a. Gal. 5:13-15 — "By love serve one another."
    - b. Luke 22:32 — "When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren."
    - c. I Cor. 8:1 — "Love edifies."
    - d. Rom. 14:19 — "Let us follow those things which edify one another."
  2. A list of basic human needs.
    - a. Survival
      - (1) Food, clothing, shelter.
      - (2) Self-preservation is man's greatest need.
      - (3) Recognizing this fact should enable both sexes to better understand each other.
      - (4) Knowing this fact should also provide an array of topics to talk about.
    - b. Security
      - (1) Money.
      - (2) Job.
      - (3) More than just basic necessities for comfort.
        - (a) Car
        - (b) TV
        - (c) Clothing, material things, etc.
    - c. Companionship.
      - (1) The desire to be loved is one of man's most powerful motivations.
      - (2) We need someone with whom we can communicate and share our lives, our ups and downs, successes and triumphs.
      - (3) In helping to fill this need, we are fulfilling the law of love.
    - d. The need to achieve.
      - (1) Man is a miniature creator.
      - (2) He was endowed with an active mind and creative powers.
      - (3) He cannot be happy with life unless he is achieving.
      - (4) To block his creative outlets leaves him anxious and frustrated.
      - (5) Understanding this point should aid both sexes to interact with each other in a true spirit of concern and respect.
    - e. The need for recognition.
      - (1) Quote from "Success Magazine", page 106.
      - (2) When dating keep this point in mind and be aware of ways you can encourage each other.
    - f. The need for identity.
      - (1) This point has to do with building a positive self-image.
      - (2) It has to do with finding your niche in life that makes you unique and different.
      - (3) Famous people like movie stars, artists, clothing designers, etc., have found themselves and their true identity in the world.
      - (4) Basically it all boils down to what you do well through personal development of your talents.
      - (5) Knowing this fact should help in interacting with others.
    - g. The need for self-acceptance.
      - (1) Without self-acceptance there can be no satisfaction.
      - (2) The more you like yourself (this comes through building self-esteem through maintaining high standards), the happier you will be, for success is the satisfaction of basic needs which culminate in self-acceptance.
      - (3) How much you like yourself determines how successful you are.
      - (4) Learn to fill this need in human life and you will become popular.

XIII. Where do we begin?

- A. To make your dates more casual, relaxed, friendly and enjoyable, I'd like to suggest you begin with group dates or group activities.
- B. There are a number of reasons why I think these are terrific for breaking the ice and building friendships.
  1. They give people a chance to ease out of their nests and try out their new wings socially.
  2. They give people an opportunity to mix and mingle freely within a crowd without feeling encumbered or responsible to any one individual.
  3. They give you an opportunity to sharpen your skills by drawing out strangers, visitors or those who are shy, withdrawing or ill at ease.
  4. Group dates provide an opportunity for you to meet new people and make new friendships.
  5. Such activities will make it easier for you to meet people you may want to ask on a single date later.
  6. Group dates will provide an opportunity for one to overcome his inhibitions and hangups, as well as to try out new social skills.
  7. Group dates are more economical since others can share expenses.
  8. Group dates can provide an opportunity for fellows and girls to develop expertise and skill as a host or hostess.
- C. A suggested list of activities.
  1. Go to Sabbath Services in a group and have a picnic afterwards.
  2. Potluck dinner at someone's home — good conversation.
  3. Roller skating party — include whole church congregation.
  4. Bowling.
  5. Miniature golf.
  6. Horseback riding.
  7. Campouts or rent lodge at Lake Arrowhead for weekend, etc.
  8. Small group go to Handle Bars for drink and conversation.
  9. Card parties or game parties (Charades, Pit, Bunco, etc.).
  10. Buy block of tickets for baseball game; pizza afterwards.
  11. During summer months when Sabbaths are long, go to someone's house for wine, cheese, conversation; maybe go out to dinner after sunset.
  12. Service projects:
    - (a) Need to get involved with community around us.
    - (b) Go to old peoples' home — provide entertainment.
    - (c) Activity to raise money for church — rummage sale, etc.
    - (d) Help those in need (committee to help when there is sickness, someone is moving, etc.).
  13. Involvement with other Church areas:
    - (a) Volleyball teams — compete with other churches in tournament.
    - (b) Visit other churches — have picnic and/or dance.
  14. Deep sea fishing trip.
  15. Visit Magic Mountain, Busch Gardens, Knotts Berry Farm, Movieland Wax Museum, Universal Studio Tours, Disneyland, Marineland, etc.
  16. Excursion to Catalina Island, dance at Aragon Ballroom.
  17. L.A. Civic Center Tour: Olvera Street, China Town, Union Train Station, County Court House, Police Admin. Building, etc.
  18. Concerts at Hollywood Bowl or Music Center; plays at Greek Theatre.
  19. Backpacking trip.
  20. Bicycle trip or motorcycle trip w/ picnic.
  21. Those who have a particular talent could give lessons: guitar, scuba diving, cooking, sewing, macrame, art, etc.
  22. Square dancing lessons.
  23. Hay ride, sing-along.
  24. Beach parties, cookout.
  25. Palm Springs' Aerial Tramway to Mt Jacinto.

26. Griffith Park Observatory and Planetarium.
27. McCurdy Nature Study Center and Nature Trail.
28. Huntington Gardens and Arboretum.

XIV. In venturing out from group dates into single dates, what goals should you set and what values should you be seeking?

A. To have fun and enjoyment.

1. This is time in life for greater emphasis on fun and enjoyment.
2. The right kind of dating produces the right kind of fun.
  - a. It should be something you can look back on and savour and relish with no regret later and no harmful side effects.
3. A good date is profitable.
  - a. There should be a sense of accomplishment of time.
  - b. A good date should be spiritually, culturally and mentally stimulating.

B. To develop a well-rounded personality.

1. Be responsive and expressive.
  - a. Participate in conversation with enthusiasm.
  - b. The more practice you have, the easier this becomes.
2. Show a genuine interest in your date — don't center the conversation around yourself.
3. Maintain a positive outlook on life.
  - a. A positive outlook makes a person magnetic.
  - b. You will be a lousy date if you are a griper, complainer, moaner, or if you are negative and pessimistic.
  - c. Girls tend to have a problem with moodiness.
    - (1) This happens when the mind is on self.
    - (2) Moodiness is caused by negative attitudes towards yourself — namely self-pity.
4. Be patient and gentle.
  - a. This comes through genuine love for other people.
  - b. Be tolerant of idiosyncracies of others.
    - (1) God made us all different.
    - (2) We must learn to appreciate these differences in each other — don't expect others to fit in our mold.
5. Have a good sense of humor.
  - a. God laughs, and He made us able to laugh.
  - b. Humor should be spontaneous, uncanned, spur-of-the-moment type.
  - c. Avoid off-color humor.
6. Maintain good personal grooming and hygiene.
  - a. Cleanliness and neatness.
    - (1) Dirty fingernails, dirty hair and dandruff are unsightly and repulsive.
    - (2) Unpressed clothes and unpolished shoes do not demonstrate social awareness.
    - (3) Dirty teeth and bad breath are very offensive.
7. Relax and be yourself.
  - a. Don't put on sophisticated airs.
  - b. Don't exaggerate, put on acts or be gushy.
  - c. The more you are around people, the less nervous you will become.

C. To expand socially and culturally.

1. Develop social skill and expertise.
  - a. Study proper etiquette so you won't be embarrassed.
    - (1) True etiquette is the law of love — treat others as you would like to be treated.
  - b. Practice makes perfect.
    - (1) The more you put yourself in social situations, the more comfortable you will become.
2. Learn to appreciate art and good music.
  - a. Auditorium concerts are a good opportunity.
    - (1) Prices have now been reduced so more can afford to go occasionally.

3. God is a cultured individual.
  - a. He has the highest standards of excellence.
  - b. He is surrounded by richness and beauty.
- D. To broaden your education.
  1. Dating encourages you to get out of your rut and expand your interests.
  2. You can learn by listening to experiences and sharing ideas with your dates.
  3. The more variety you have in dating, the broader the educational values.
    - a. Talk to people from different countries or those who have traveled.
      - (1) Encourage them to talk about their native land and experiences.
      - (2) We're not talking about inter-racial dating — but international dating.
    - b. Date people from different economic backgrounds, or different states within the U.S.A., urban and rural.
      - (1) Ask them to share information about their backgrounds.
- E. To develop the art of conversation.
  1. Human nature wants the "no sweat" way — no effort.
    - a. Modern dating in America inhibits social development and development of personality.
    - b. Not much talking takes place, especially when loud, throbbing music is being played.
    - c. Movies are frequent dates — no talking is done in the theatre.
    - d. Dates are watching, listening and petting — no talking.
  2. Communication takes effort
    - a. Share clean and wholesome ideas.
    - b. Ask questions about each other's backgrounds.
  3. On a date, the man should normally take the lead.
    - a. His responsibility to initiate conversation and guide it.
    - b. Don't monopolize the conversation, be a braggart or a know-it-all.
    - c. Don't preach to her or evaluate her weaknesses.
    - d. Plan ahead — have some good topics in mind.
  4. Be a good listener and don't butt in.
    - a. Give speaker your undivided attention.
    - b. Respond and add something for the other to reply to.
  5. Don't gossip, tell off-color jokes, or talk about your sex problems.
- F. To overcome self-centeredness.
  1. Have attitude of giving a date — not getting a date.
    - a. The American way of life and dating is based on getting. We all are motivated by selfishness, the all-consuming motive of human nature.
  2. Don't just date those who are the most attractive to you. This is lust of the flesh.
  3. Dating helps develop sensitivity to the needs of others.
    - a. Learn to listen and try to understand.
    - b. Be an encouragement.
    - c. If the problem is serious, suggest counseling.
  4. Some people just need a little recognition and attention.
    - a. Example of the rose bud.
  5. Opportunity to learn service.
- G. To experience a wide range of personalities.
  1. "Birds of a feather flock together."
    - a. Don't get stuck in this cliquish pattern.
  2. Becoming acquainted with a variety of personalities can expand your own qualities.
    - a. It helps you to become more balanced.
    - b. We must learn to accept the differences and idiosyncrasies in people.
      - (1) This is part of the individuality and uniqueness that God has created in each of us.
    - c. Sometimes opposites do attract — you never know unless you try it.
  3. By experiencing a variety of personalities, we can come to understand each and every individual.

#### H. To build confidence

1. Dating helps build a solid, confident self-image.
  - a. The more good dating experiences you have, the more confidence you will build.
  - b. Dating encourages you to try new things, go to different places.
    - (1) Be original — try to come up with something different, but worthwhile.
2. Self-respect is often measured by our accomplishments or failures.
  - a. Every successful date is an accomplishment.

#### I. To prepare for courtship and marriage.

1. Experience a variety of samples of the opposite sex to find out what are your likes and dislikes.
  - a. You must date widely in order to be sure that you find the right mate.
2. You must learn how different people with a variety of standards and personalities affect you.
3. In casual dating you overcome nervousness and learn to relax and respond to the opposite sex.
  - a. Then when you are ready to begin courting, you can evaluate situations realistically.
4. You become aware of the psychological differences in men and women.
  - a. If these aren't learned prior to marriage, it can produce a tragic situation.

**-END-**