

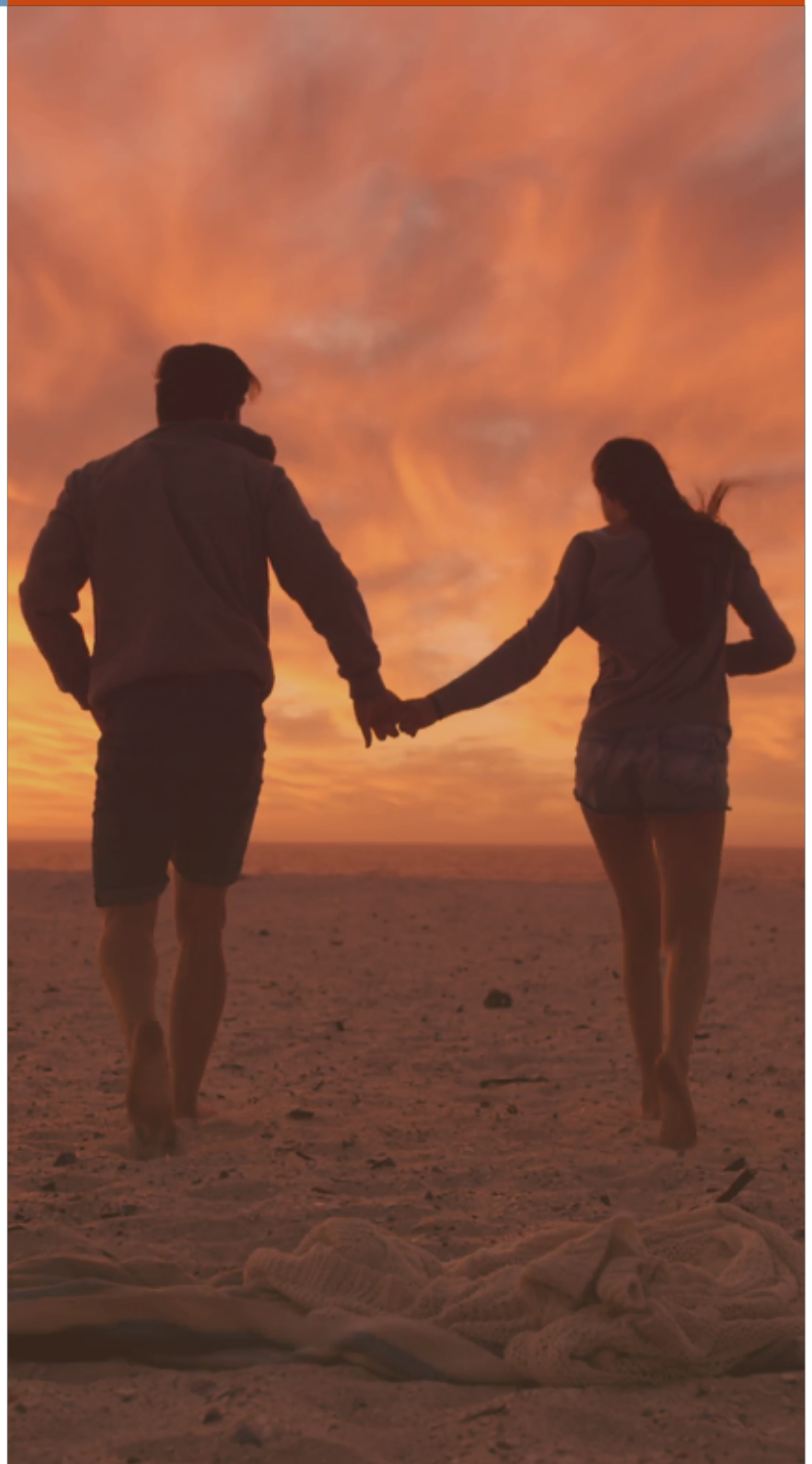
Kiss Dating Goodbye

By. Linda Morle, Fort Worth, TX

My desire is to speak to you about dating and marriage. It wasn't all that long ago when I was single and searching for a mate. In fact, I have only been married for 15 years. Those years of dating and/or not dating were just horrible. I was always in the "friendzone", always a bridesmaid and never a bride. Too short, too tall, too skinny, too fat, too spiritual, not spiritual enough, wrong hair color, wrong eye color, too smart, not smart enough are just a few of the things we hear when we are single and perhaps are some of the reasons guys/girls give each other when breaking up. Throughout the years, I have had these said to me time after time and it began to cause me great depression and very low self-worth.

I was 26 years old and couldn't take it anymore. I vividly recall laying on my bed screaming out to God. "What's wrong with me!! Why can't I just have anyone ask me out to dinner? Is that too hard for you God?" God is so good and immediately I feel asleep and had a dream. The Lord spoke to me in an audible voice and told me "I can give you someone but he will pull you away from the church, if that is what you want, OR you can be PATIENT and WAIT. I have someone for you. HE'S NOT READY YET". I woke up repenting and thanking the Lord for answering my prayers. After all, from as far back as I can remember, I always prayed that God would provide someone for me to serve Him with.

Why didn't I just trust Him? He simply wasn't ready yet! At that very moment, I kissed dating goodbye and began to date the Lord and rely on Him for companionship, friendship and dinner conversation and then began to pray for my spouse, whoever and wherever he was. My prayers were no longer centered around me but for my future spouse. Remember, the Lord didn't tell me who he was just that he wasn't ready yet. I prayed daily and



ask God to bless every aspect of my future husband's life.

Are you wondering what it means to kiss dating goodbye?

It's very simple: turn your thoughts and desires from finding a spouse to fully serving and loving the Lord. Fill the space between dating and marriage with service for the Lord. My space consisted of becoming a more active member of my home branch, area MBA/Region, GMBA and even missionary work. Nights were filled with visits/dinners with the Saints, insuring the senior members of my branch were taken care of and phone calls to friends throughout the church (even though I was in the friend zone with some of those guys).

The summer, I turned 27, a few of us made a trip to Tijuana for the Conference of the Americas. While there a sister from Durango, Mexico whom I never met walked up to me and in Spanish, asked me if I was married. When I said no she began to cry and said the Lord had just spoken to her to tell me that my spouse is now ready. God had given her the exact words He had given to me a year earlier.

One very important character trait of God that I learned was that HE IS NOT IN THE SAME TIME ZONE as us. He is in the GTZ (God Time Zone), which is the only one that really matters.

Another year has now passed and I was at the November GMBA Conference, when out of the blue Bro. Jerry asked me if I would meet him at Eat-n-Park after the meeting. We sat there until two in the morning talking, and my heart raced the entire night. We went our separate ways and on Sunday, I was crushed when he didn't sit with me. I was distracted the entire service and kept replaying the conversation over in my head. How did I mess this up? I felt he was the one. Lord, what kind of joke is this?

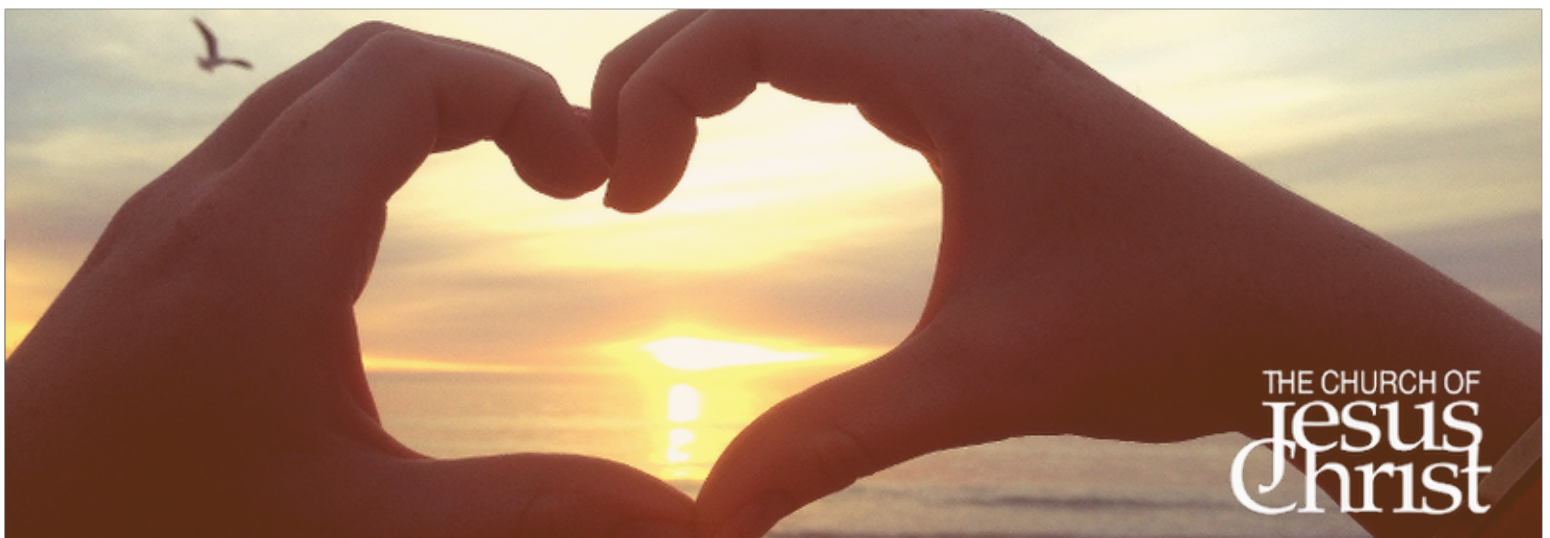
A few weeks passed and Bro. Jerry called me, and it was then he explained that he liked me and didn't want to sit with me and have people talk about us until we were certain. He didn't want us featured on CBS (Church Broadcasting Service). One night when we were on the phone, I gathered up the courage and asked him why he had picked me. His exact words were, "You have always been in the picture, I just wasn't ready for you yet." We dated and were engaged in

three months and married in nine months. The Lord has truly blessed our lives.

Disclaimer: Let me be clear, I do not recommend this quick path for everyone. Even when God is directing two people to be together, they should take the time to build a good foundation for their relationship. Even though God directed us to be together, it hasn't always been smooth sailing. Just like every other married couple, we have had our challenges to overcome and continue to overcome.

Many of you reading this article are searching for a spouse. It is imperative to be prayerful about it. The best advice I was given during the dating years was during a Singles' Retreat. The ladies were reminded of the story of Ruth and Boaz and advised to compare everyone we dated with Boaz. If the guy was a "Boaz" he was worth pursuing. If he was a "Bozo", drop him fast. Ladies, strive to be Ruth and guys, be a Boaz.

It is beneficial to seek and accept godly counsel. Proverbs 11:14 says, "Where no counsel is, the people fall: but in the multitude of counsellors there is safety." Your ordained officers are there to help and support you. Don't be ashamed



to talk to them and discuss this topic with them. It is important to have others praying with and for you. Seek to have experiences about your mate and ask God to provide someone else with the experience. Our own experiences have helped us get through some difficult situations.

Ideally, you should keep yourself pure. The scripture I Thessalonians 4:3-5, "For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication: That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honor. Not in the lust of concupiscence, even as the Gentiles which know not God". Whether or not you are baptized, we all were born with a portion of the Spirit of God in us. Our bodies are His temple. He lives inside of us, and whatever you do to your body you are doing it to the Lord. If you are reading this and are not "pure", reach out to God and ask for forgiveness. The goal is to stop making the same mistakes that lead to your impurity Furthermore, keep in mind that although God will forgive, there still may be consequences for our sin.

For example, when you date someone in the church and don't keep the relationship pure, it can be very uncomfortable seeing or being around that person if the relationship doesn't work out.

Guys, one day you may be serving that gal communion – if that's not the definition of awkward, I don't know what is.

Be prayerful, seek counsel and be pure in all your relationships and give God a chance to work this out for His honor and glory. While you are waiting, kiss dating goodbye and serve the Lord with all your heart. I love the chorus to "While you Wait" by Joe Pace: "While you're waiting for your promises/ To be fulfilled in

your life/Remember God is not late/ So just praise Him while you wait, wait."

There is a little more to our story. If you would be interested in hearing more of that testimony, please contact me through Facebook or email me at morle.linda@gmail.com.

I pray God blesses you abundantly with all the good desires of your heart and the ability to kiss dating goodbye.

