

Relating to the Opposite Sex

United Faith Chapel, Kampala, Uganda:

www.unitedfaithchapel.org

Two Major Challenges:

- **"signals"** – we often mis-interpret the "signals" that other people send to us, and we are often unaware of the signals that we are sending
- **"boundaries"** – We do not have clear and safe boundaries in our lives and in our behaviors

Some Common Mistakes

1. We misinterpret the attention of the opposite sex
2. We put up with too much in a relationship and "hang on" too long
3. We are not very good at reading the "danger signals" in a relationship
 - Significant age difference
 - Different family upbringing
 - Different priorities of spiritual life
4. We get physically involved much too soon and go much too far
5. Our standards can be too low ... "just so he/she is born again ..."
6. We carry a checklist of "requirements" and judge others too quickly and too selfishly
7. We think that anyone is better than being alone

Some Contrasts between the World's View and the Biblical View

The World's View on Relationships

There should be several intimate relationships before marriage

You will spend a lot of time together alone

There will be a high level of emotional involvement and some sexual intimacy before marriage

What I do as an adult is totally up to me and is no one else's business

It is about "finding" the right person

Intimacy comes before commitment

The way to tell if I want to marry someone is to **act** like we are married

The Biblical View on Relationships

You should be emotionally and physically intimate with only one member of the opposite sex: your spouse

You will spend a lot of time together in group activities

There will be a lot (but somewhat limited) emotional involvement and no sexual intimacy before marriage

I am accountable to the community in all areas of my life

It is about "being" the right person

Commitment comes before intimacy

The way to find a mate is to act in a way that **does not** imply a marriage level commitment

Some Helpful Scriptures

I Corinthians 6:9-7:19	command to be pure, seriousness of sexual sin and instructions regarding marriage
1 Thessalonians 4:1-8	do not wrong or defraud one another in relationships — by implying a relationship or commitment by your words or conduct that does not actually exist
Song of Solomon 2:7	"do not awaken love before it pleases" — i.e. before the proper time, meaning marriage
Proverbs 6:20-7:27	warning to avoid sexual sin and foolish relationships
James 1:13-15	temptation is to be taken very seriously
Romans 13:8-14	love others, work for their soul's good; don't look to please self
Romans 14:1-15:7	favor others, not self ... value what's good to their souls
1 Timothy 5:1-2	treat single women as sisters in Christ, with absolute purity
Titus 2:1-8	young men and women should focus on self-control/godliness
John 14:15	if you love Christ, you will obey His commands — read: above your own desires — and live biblically