

JACK'S CORNER

QUESTION: I know I'm not supposed to have sex before marriage, but what about making out on a date? How far can I go? (7th grade boy)

ANSWER: Thank you for such a clear, honest question so relevant to young people. I know it might be embarrassing, but **please ask your parents to talk about this subject with you!** I will set up an outline for you:

First, let's define some terms you probably already know. "Making out" usually means hard and repeated kissing above the neck. Sometimes making out includes kissing with the tongue ("Frenching"). "Necking" usually means heavy and repeated kissing and touching in the neck area. "Petting" refers to touching, rubbing, kissing in the more sexually excited areas of the body like the breasts, inner thighs, penis and vaginal area. Believe me, your parents know about this stuff!

The Bible doesn't say anything directly about dating and making out. Dating didn't exist in Biblical times; parents arranged marriages, and young people were strictly chaperoned. **HOWEVER, the Bible does have MUCH to say about how we treat each other, and about our motives.** We are told to "love our neighbors as we love ourselves" MT. 19:19. Romans 13:10 says: "Love does no harm to its neighbor." 1 Corinthians 13 explains that "love is patient and kind...it is not self-seeking...it always protects..." The Bible is filled with many more verses about true love. You and your parents can find many more. You can also find what the Bible says about "sexually immoral" and "lascivious" behavior.

Keeping these Biblical principles in mind, discuss with your parents how you should answer the following questions:

1. Is what I am doing, or would like to do, HELPFUL to the other person; or am I just interested in meeting my needs...doing what I want to do? Instead of asking: "What is wrong with it?" ask: "What is right about it?" You don't need to be overly physical to show that you care.
2. Will this activity create more frustration than appreciation? When we touch each other in certain ways and in certain places, our bodies are designed by God to prepare for sexual intercourse. Activities like necking, petting, even "making out" are called "foreplay" when they are done in the marriage relationship. Foreplay is the exciting touching that is done before sexual intercourse to make it more pleasurable and intense. Our bodies were not designed to stop "half way" on the road to intercourse. Once we get sexually excited and "on the road", it is very frustrating to stop. Once the dating relationship moves into physical touching, we tend to want to go farther and farther. Your parents understand this!

3. Would there be any kind of deep care and commitment to your relationship if the physical touching were removed? If making out and necking are the main activities in the relationship, something is wrong. You are probably using each other. You are probably more “in love” with the way you feel, than in love with the other person. Your parents know that it takes far more than physical touching to make a great relationship.
4. What is the main activity that should happen on a date? The purpose of dating is to get to know someone in order to help you decide whom you would like to marry some day. The main activity should be talking.

Private parts should remain private until there is a commitment before God and others. God designed marriage for this commitment. Activities that frustrate and tempt should be avoided. **So many people ask the wrong question when it comes to many aspects of morality.** It's not: “What is wrong with it, or how far can I go? It's: “What is Biblically right about it, or will it draw me closer to God?”

Your parents should be able to help you establish some Biblical standards for the physical aspect of the dating relationship. Be a young man of courage! Rise up and don't let Hollywood, or what everyone else does, determine what you will do. You can find godly young women out there who will respect your values and standards.

Jack Lipski, M.A.
SOTHCS Counselor
(Permission to copy granted for personal use only.)