

Faith & Dating in 2025



3. We are called to love our neighbor as ourselves. Being boyfriend and girlfriend isn't synonymous with being a husband and wife. You have the responsibility to show love and not harm the other person's faith and purity.

This brings me to my fourth and final question: What should we look for in someone who we are dating? This is also kind of a subjective question, but the one thing you should look for is a fellow Christian. Throughout the Bible God warns his people regarding being close to those who follow other gods. Because whether you recognize it or not you are influenced by the people around you, and He doesn't want you to fall away from Him. Although it is possible to not lose your faith if you marry someone who isn't a believer, it is an extremely hard road and a continuous battle to keep the faith. In 2 Corinthians 6:14 God warns us not to be "unequally yoked" with unbelievers. Two cattle who are "yoked" together pull a wagon or something behind them.

What is dating?

February is often a month associated with love. On February 14th, couples often plan special dates, dinners, and other celebrations to celebrate their love for each other. So I thought it would be a good time to ponder how Christians should approach dating.

First things first, we should understand what the purpose of dating is. Dating should be used to find your spouse. However, many people, even Christians, don't date with this purpose in mind. The purpose they seem to aim at it is to have a good time. Whatever that means. This not only kind of wastes your time if you don't plan to marry the person you're dating, but also wastes the other person's time and energy.

Second, we should face the obvious question: Should we date? God created humans to need one another. He created male and female to be complimentary in strengths and abilities, He created us to need human interaction. The only thing that God recognized as needing improvement when He completed the work in the Garden of Eden was that Adam was alone, and God completed perfection by creating Eve for Adam. However, it is important to note that God doesn't promise us a husband or wife. Paul was single for his whole life, and talks about it in 1 Corinthians 7. He says singleness is also a gift from God, because you can focus

How should Christians date?

Marriage isn't a bad thing; it was instituted in the Garden of Eden and was called good, but it's not for everyone. Some people can remain single their whole lives, and that works for them and God blesses them in singleness. Other people want to get married, and that path is used for God's purposes in the kingdom. With this in mind, if marriage is a desirable thing for you, dating with the aforementioned purpose of finding a suitable spouse is a worthwhile thing to do.

Third, how should we act while dating? This is probably the most subjective question, but there are three points I came up with when I studied and researched this topic.

1. We are created to love, serve, and worship God. He should be our number one priority. Nothing in life, even dating, is bigger than God or more important than what He did for us. Therefore, how we act should reflect our love for God and keep Him as the first priority in our lives.
2. We should obey our parents. God has put parents in our lives to protect us and take care of us. We should obey our parents' rules regarding dating, even if we don't agree or enjoy their regulations. Obeying our parents is obeying the fourth commandment and reflects love for God in submission to Him.

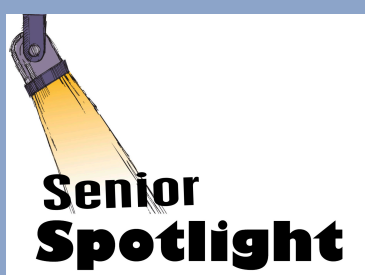


However if they are unequally yoked they work against each other, instead of with each other. This is a beautiful illustration of journeying through life as a partnership. When married you have a combined life- combined trials, goals, and joy. If you don't have the same core beliefs how are you going to 'plow the field' together effectively? So how can you tell if someone is truly a Christian? It's a difficult question because we cannot see each other's hearts. However, we can look at their words and actions. Do they go to church? Do they actively live out their faith? Do they have fruits of faith (kindness, goodness, gentleness, self-control, patience? Maybe look at 1 Corinthians 13:4-8 and substitute their name for love if you are still unsure.

If you take away anything from this article at all, I hope you take away this: Dating is well and good when used for the right reason.

However, no person, is going to fix the giant hole every human has in their heart that only God can fill.

By: Rebecca Heinze



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Senior Spotlight- Liem Makuach

Liem Makuach is our senior in the class of 2025 that we are putting the spotlight on this month! Liem came to Immanuel Lutheran as an eighth grader after making the big move from Seattle to Mankato with his family. I sat down with him this week and asked him a few questions to get some insight to share with our readers.

When pressed about his plans for post high school, Liem had a few funny quips. Liem’s biggest plan for after high school is to sleep. After he is caught up on sleep, he is considering going to college for nursing. However, he doesn't have any concrete plans at this point. After he graduates, Liem is looking forward to “being able to explore what’s out there,” and “seeing the world.”

Similar to his plans for after high school, Liem enjoys relaxing and TV and playing soccer in his free time. If anyone knows Liem personally that would come at no surprise. His talent on the soccer field is evident! Liem’s goals for the rest of the year are to “*stay consistent, be myself, and don’t let anybody’s option determine what I’m capable of.*” Liem’s biggest accomplishment in high school has been making it to senior year. Throughout the time that Liem has been in high school, his favorite classes have been all of Mr. Schrader’s classes. Liem likes Schrader's classes because, “*Mr. Schrader wants you to be on a straight path and learn perfectly. He’s a very good teacher.*”

After being in school for a long time, Liem has plenty of advice for younger students. He says, “*Don’t let anyone put you down to where you feel like you have to prove yourself to them. It’s their perspective, not yours. Just be a good kid. Just be awesome--or crazy. Just be you. Explore and see beyond what you’re seeing. High school isn’t the end: it’s just the beginning.*”

On behalf of the Immanuel students, we hope that Liem achieves his goals of exploring the world, getting enough rest, and achieving all his other ambitions. God bless you in your future, Liem!
By: Rebekah Busch



Video Games Effect Christians

Video games are a very common pastime and form of entertainment among all ages today, especially teens. I myself play a good amount of video games. In my experiences from participating in countless voice chats and lobbies, I've come to the realization that people I



know who claim to be Christians don’t act very Christ-like once they get on these games. Filthy and crude language, inappropriate jokes and distasteful content, along with sinful attitudes seem to go unchecked in these spaces. Why is this, and how can we play these games without all morals going out the window once we get in a game chat?

I'd like to start on why I think these Christian video game players talk as they do while gaming. In my opinion, it comes down to wanting to seem cool and on par with the rest of the community they connect with while gaming. For those of you who might not know, when you log into these game chats you are either in a random chat or ones with your friends. It's much easier to swear, slander others, and joke about inappropriate things when you're behind a screen than to cling to and practice civility and decency. To that point I've noticed in game chats with my friends who are Christian, any comment about Christian topics and/or bringing up acting Christ-like on a video game is shunned. They either avoid the topic entirely or say something rude back.

I don't think video games in and of themselves cause this behavior, but I’d argue that they probably play a part in developing such habits. From my experience, when you play these games it encourages you to act more aggressively towards others. Most of these games are intense and fast paced and require quite a bit of attention and even skill, so when something doesn't go right it's really easy to get frustrated and often get upset with your teammates.

I don't have a solution for how to fix this, but I think it is something we can all try and self-reflect on as Christians, so that next time we get on these games, we consider if what we are doing and saying is benefiting ourselves and others, and reflecting our faith. Don't let the pressure of what everyone else is engaging change how your faith shines through.
By: Leah Dick

Devotional

1 Timothy 4:12 - Don’t let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, and in purity. NIV

I don’t know about you, but I don’t often think what I do as a teenager amounts to much. I’m not going to do anything revolutionary, such as discover a cure for cancer or change the world. So, what impact do my actions even have?

In addition to that, I often feel that my actions are monotonous. I get up, go to school, do my homework, play sports, go home, sleep, and repeat. That’s been my life for the past twelve years. It’s not groundbreaking or special; it’s exactly what millions of other kids do every single year, every single day.

In the above verse, Paul encourages the young pastor Timothy that, although he is young, he can still set an example for other believers to follow. We can, too: Even when doing the most average things, we can still give glory to God. 1 Corinthians 10:31 - *Whatever you eat or drink or whatever you do all to the glory of God.* Just by doing as Colossians 3:23 says “*Whatever you do, work at it heartily, as to the Lord and not for men...*”. The day to day things we do in our lives here on this side of heaven can all be done to the glory of our Creator God.

You can be an example by doing your best in all you do, even if it’s not perfect. Attempting to obey God’s commands, showing love to others even when you don’t feel like it like, helping a classmate who is struggling with an assignment. Waking up on time and helping your parents around the house before school. Paying attention in class to the best of your ability to show respect for your teachers. Doing these things for God's glory is important; especially because you often don’t realize who is watching you and what they see.
By: Rebecca Heinze



Whitewater 2025

Whitewater XXV took place on January 24-26. It was a fun weekend for all who went. For those who don't know, Whitewater is a State Park near St. Charles, MN. Campers from both Immanuel Lutheran High School in Mankato and our sister high school Immanuel Lutheran High School in Eau Claire, can attend this camp. This year, there were about 30 campers from each school! The campers stay in the cabins at the park for two nights.

Each year on the journey to the state park, there is a traditional stop and activity planned for the campers to enjoy. The activity this year was the Historic Owatonna Orphanage. This is a museum, so the campers got to learn all about the lives of the children who had lived there. The group watched some videos explaining the daily lives of the orphans, did a scavenger hunt, and got to see where the orphans lived. It was an interesting and immersive experience for the group, and it gave everyone a unique perspective into the lives of people who went before us. It also served as a reminder to be thankful for what the Lord has blessed us with.

At Whitewater State Park, the campers had the opportunity to hike, play games, meet new people, and sit by the fire. There wasn't any snow, but the cold air still gave the weekend its signature 'wintery' feel. The theme of this year's devotions was *"The Power of Prayer."* The campers got to learn how to be closer to God and strengthen their faith through prayer.

Some of the meals that the campers got to enjoy were tacos, pasta, brunch, and caramel rolls. Another highlight of the weekend was game night on Saturday night where campers played “*Minute to Win It*”--a game where the campers had to complete a challenge in one minute to get points for their team.

Another focus of the weekend was the acknowledgment of the last Whitewater for Mr. & Mrs. Matthew Busch and Mr. Michael Wheaton. The Busch's have been involved in all of the **twenty-five** Whitewater camps that have taken place for Immanuel students. Mr. Wheaton has also helped plan and attend many of those. A big thank you was given to them for all their hard work in allowing Whitewater to happen for students for many years.

By: Rebekah Busch



