

“I met this great guy in Math class last semester and we became fast friends. He is kind, forgiving, honest, principled, and the list goes on. He has asked me to start dating him. The problem is this: though he has all the ‘fruits of the Spirit’, he is not Christian. Does it really matter? How can we be ‘unequally yoked’ if we’re so much alike?”

— signed **“Love Sorry”**

# How can we be ‘unequally yoked’ if we’re so much alike?

Dear “Love Sorry”,  
Friendship is one of the major keys to meaningful and lasting relationships. Relationships are beautiful gifts from God which must be developed and nurtured through time and shared experiences. Since God created men and women to be relational beings, we can understand your attraction to this man who exhibits all of the “fruits of the Spirit.”

However, as we enter into relationships, we must first seek God and be strong in our relationship with Him. God has the ability to lead us in the way that we should go (Proverbs 3:5-6). God responds to our prayers (Matthew 6:6-8; 7:7) and gives us wisdom when we are faced with difficult decisions (James 1:5). God is love (1 John 4:16) and He longs to befriend each of us personally and to guide us in our friendship and dating relationships.

Since you acknowledge that you have a personal relationship with God, consider what you must do to guard yourself during the process of dating, courtship and marriage. Your future goals, emotional health and salvation may be impacted by the decisions you make today.

When considering anyone as a potential partner, we suggest the following guidelines:

- 1) Present the person to God. Complete honesty about your motives is of utmost importance. Tell God how you feel, and how the person makes you feel. Tell God everything.
- 2) Get to know the person as a friend in group settings. Invite the person to spiritual group functions to see if an interest is developed in spiritual things.
- 3) Share your own faith, and how important it is to you.

- 4) Seek counsel from your parents and other spiritual leaders.
- 5) Try to discern whether the person lives a life that is in harmony with your beliefs.
- 6) Prayerfully consider the future goals for the relationship (dating, courtship or marriage).

Your key question revolved around pursuing a dating relationship with a young man who has not accepted Christ as his personal savior. Please consider the following questions when approaching this important decision:

- 1) How important is it to you that your dating relationship be with a Christian?
- 2) What compromises are you willing to make in your spiritual beliefs if the relationship progresses to courtship?
- 3) Will it be more difficult to have a marital relationship with someone who is not Christian?
- 4) How will your future be af-

ected if he chooses not to accept Jesus as his savior?

At our core, we are all longing for true friendship. We are all seeking meaningful, lasting relationships. The beauty and safety of this search rests in seeking counsel from our heavenly Father. He understands our hearts and knows our needs. King Solomon states, “Except the Lord builds the house, the builders labor in vain” (Psalms 127). God can build our relationships if we place them in His hands. He is the divine architect. “Wait on the Lord: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the Lord” (Psalms 27:14). **e**

*Answer provided by Dr. David Sedlacek’s “Marriage, Family and Interpersonal Relationships Skills” class in the Andrews University Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary.*