



**34 Free or Low Cost Dating Ideas**  
**20 Essential Questions “Before You Say I Do”**  
**The 4 Main Purposes of Marriage**

**34 Free or Low Cost Dating Ideas**

- 1. Read a book together you both agree you’d probably enjoy.**
  - Man can read first page
  - Woman can read second page
  - Read the 3<sup>rd</sup> page in silence
  - Discuss book or ideas in book at any point
  - Continuing reading aloud or in silence or combination of both
  - Note: you need to be cuddling for both people to read 1 book..
- 2. Volunteer or Acts of Kindness Date**
  - Acts of Kindness are random acts of service to help others in need that won’t cost money.
  - Paint a fence or wall, do dishes, walk dog of elderly or the disabled. Ask what person needs.
  - Wash the car of a neighbor or an elderly person or someone God brings to your attention
  - Make a meal together for a family in your neighborhood
  - There are websites with Acts of Kindness idea so do a search of *random acts of kindness ideas*
  - Volunteer your time together for something worthwhile
  - Buy coffee or something similar for a stranger at a restaurant
  - Buy some of the groceries of a person you don’t know in front of or behind you at the supermarket line.
- 3. Thank You Date**
  - Get together to write thank you notes to people who have blessed you over the years
  - Write a thank you card or note to your parents and others for the good they did in your life.
  - You can also call people to thank them, but a special note hand written (not typed) is special.
- 4. Visit Local Zoo, Museums, Art Galleries or Historical Sites: Go on free days or when prices are lower for locals.**

## 5. **Star Gazing**

- In advance of date, locate a good place to gaze at stars
- Bring a blanket and some cheese and crackers and something to drink
- Lie on blanket looking at stars and talk about the wonders of the stars, how they were made
- Look for falling stars, planets, constellations like the Big / Little Dipper, Orion and the 3 Sisters.
- Talk about a book or person you read where stars played a big part in their life
- Best to star gaze when moon is not out or hidden. But, you can look at moon too.

## 6. **Go on a Sunset Picnic**

- Plan the picnic together and both help prepare what you are bringing so it makes it easier
- Decide in advance a good spot to have both a picnic and watch the sunset.
- Can be at a nearby park, nearby hilltop, mountain area or at the beach.

## 7. **Go on a “Memory Lane Date”**

- Select a place outside your home, like a park, hotel lobby, restaurant, museum - somewhere comfortable
- Bring photos, children old school art, memento's, items you bought or made for each other, cards
- Remember the good times you had with family, friends, vacations, weddings, your first job, first time you kissed, first time you were intimate in marriage, holidays, birthday's anniversaries, salvation of family members
- This takes time and planning together to refresh your memory so you'll have lots to talk about

## 8. **Go Hiking Date:**

- The park, rain forest, beach, or just around some nearby location that is safe.
- Bring the dogs if you like (or not)
- Bring some water and fruit to share
- Make sure you stop several times to rest and talk

## 9. **Prayer Date:** Have you wanted to be able to pray more with your spouse to be or spouse? Great, plan a prayer date

- Make a list of the things you want to pray about for you, the couple, the family and go for a walk hand in hand slowly strolling and praying softly together.
- Stop along the way to pray other things the Lord brings to your remembrance.
- Plan some type of an intimate time together when you get back to your home.

## 10. **Fly 1 Kite Together or Bring 2 Kites Date:**

- An interesting twist is to make the kites together yourselves.
- Customize the tail of the kite with a cloth tail that reads: Elena loves Gary or I love Gary because....

11. If near beach go search “Tide Pools” or go to Aquarium on free or discounted days.

12. **Picture Date:** Bring a camera or cell phone with a camera and take photos. Enlarge some of the best pictures and make a frame to hang up or put on your desk.

Variations to the picture date:

- At different times focus Picture Date on a particular “Theme” like photos of trees, birds, mountains, children, neat building architecture, families, pets, wild animals, sunsets, sports activities etc.

## 13. **Board Games and Card Games Date**

- Skibo, hearts, puzzles, spoon, monopoly, scrabble and many other game to choose from

## 14. **Bird Watching Date**

- Many good places to go. Binoculars can be purchased for \$20

## 15. **Take a Class Together Date:**

- Art, pottery, singing, dance class, language class, ceramic class, making jewelry, learning a musical instrument together

16. **Work-out Date:** Do a work out together at local gym or design a workout routine at a local park.
- To do a workout routine at a local park that would be free, then do this: Decide on how many exercises in the training routine and what specific location to do a specific exercise. For example at the first park bench do 2 minutes of stretches. At the tree that is a 3 minute walk from first exercise do 3 minutes of deep knee bends. After that go to the next point in the park and do another exercise routine. Design work out routine so there are a total of 8 – 12 exercises that are a 2-3 minute walk apart.
  - An extra twist on this is to get your children involved and do the work out as a family or with friends.
17. **Sports Date:** The sports date is done together, is fun and safe for the couples physical condition.
- Note this about doing the activity together not *watching* someone else do it
  - Tennis, basketball, ice skating, roller skating, roller blades, bowling, racquet ball, Frisbee golf
  - Biking, dirt bikes, ATV, 4 wheeling, canoeing, kayaking, row boat, body surfing, fishing
18. **Swim Date By a Stream, Lake, the Beach or a local Swimming Pool**
- Many great places to swim at local streams with rope swings and lakes or the beach.
  - Many places to go for community swimming pools that are free or very low cost
19. **Go Garage Sale Hopping Date**
- You can find really good buys on many things at garage sales.
  - Books, CD's, DVD,s, children stories, appliances, furniture, children items
  - Pray for something you really need that is really good price with good quality
20. **Mini-Golf Date**  
Miniature golfing is great fun, pretty good prices and combines sports with lots of humor fun and talking.
21. **Couples Only Bible Study Date Night**
- Spend an hour or so doing a couples only bible study **then go on a inexpensive date together**
22. **Outdoor Candlelight Dinner -- Men To Prepare Everything For Their Spouse (1 Couple or Multiple Couples)**
- Select a suitable outdoor location at a park, mountain area, beach, lake or stream.
  - Prepare a simple meal that can be eaten cold – chicken, salads, fruit and desert and thermos for drinks.
  - Bring a folding table / 2 chairs (borrow if needed), nice dishes and silverware, white table cloth, candles
  - We have done this several times and purchased a Bunsen warmer to keep food hot and Tiki torches.
  - A good twist is on week-end night to make arrangements in advance for the children to be taken care of and surprise her spur of the moment. But, do the surprise at breakfast that morning so it won't be too big of a surprise.
23. **International Theme Dinner Date**
- Everyone has to eat so with so with careful planning you can do a theme date for nothing extra
  - Choose a theme like Italian, Mexican, Brazilian, Costa Rican and prepare a dish of that country
  - Have some books from a local library about the culture and people of those countries and discuss
  - To spice things up you can wear some of the clothes or hats or boots of that country.
24. **Go to Library or Community Center Date**
- Go to local library and check out some books or videos you'd both like.
  - Many cities have great community centers or sports centers with lots of free activities.
25. **Amusement Park or Fair Date**
- Most amusement parks are now having low cost specials to get in and some are free on certain dates.
  - The State fair, local fairs like Fruit Fair, Vegetable Fair are many times free.

## 26. Concert Date

- Many concerts are free or low cost if you check around, especially during summer month's
- Piano, symphony, musical, bands, pop concerts, jazz music, theater

27. **Go for an Ice Cream Cone Date:** No explanation needed

## 28. Make Something Together Date

- Ceramic pottery, a garden, a painting, write a piece of music, home-made cards or many other things.

## 29. Farmers Market Date

- Go to a local Farmers market and shop for vegetables, fruits and other things together.

30. **Pick Your Own Vegetables or Fruit Date;** These are usually local farmers or orchards where you can pick your own apples, strawberries, cherries, corn and other vegetables. Find out what your area has.

31. **Gold Panning or Rock Hunting Date:** Many areas have unique quartz or rocks or gold panning and there is even one park where you can hunt for real diamonds.

32. **Treasure Hunt Date:** Do a treasure hunt together or with other couples, you can find many types of treasure hunts on the internet free.

33. **Car Rally Date:** There are groups that do Car Rally's or you can make your own car rally and do it with your own couples group. A fun one is called a "Gimmick Rally" where a group in a car work together to find their way on a pre-determined course. You find your way by answering questions from the material provided before you start. Typically it takes 2-3 hours to get through the rally course. Search internet for more data. Call Jim at 931-209-2609 to learn more.

34. **Fireside Date:** If you don't have a fireplace at your home, then go to a local hotel lobby that has a nice one or make a small fire at the beach / mountains, choose a safe location where it is permissible. Make something warm to drink.

## For Tips For Caring The Children For Free

**Organize a Kids Exchange** Co-op with family, neighbors and friends you trust. The Exchange Co-op provides free babysitting in an exchange type of format. You watch other children free for an hour and you get a free hour in an exchange. Some people have put their babysitting exchange hours on the web with schedules to simplify things.

**Other Key Tips:** Turn off the TV and go on a TV "fast" for 1 month. If you have trouble with conversations make a list of things you'd like to talk, these lists will help stimulate your thoughts. Enjoy and live out your Christianity in these dates.

## Introduction To "Before You Say I Do" Questions

**God wants to spend time with you or in today's language hang out with you, so you can develop a deep relationship with Him. You can do this alone, small groups or as a couple that is married or just dating.**

**God uses marriage as a picture to reveal Himself to us. God wants to court us so we can know Him as He really is..... passionate and delighting Himself over you --- just like a Groom rejoices over his bride.**

**Your God is passionate about you !** God wants you to continue in knowing Him with a passion as well. He wants to be your friend, He wants you to let Him love on you !

**Isa. 62: 4-5** <sup>4</sup> You shall no longer be termed Forsaken, Nor shall your land any more be termed Desolate; But you shall be called Hephzibah, and your land Beulah; For **the LORD delights in you**, And your land shall be married. <sup>5</sup> **For as a young man marries a virgin, So shall your sons marry you; And as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, So shall your God rejoice over you.**

**John 17: 3 ---** And this is eternal life, **that they may know You**, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.

The word **know** as used in **John 17:3** is the same word as used in **Genesis 4:1** Now Adam **knew Eve his wife**, and she conceived and bore Cain,

**Luke 19: 9-10** <sup>9</sup> And Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, because he also is a son of Abraham; <sup>10</sup> for **the Son of Man has come to seek and to save** that which was lost."

**Definition of seek:** actions and words to make pursuit of another. In this case Jesus is pursuing us in order to ensure we know clearly what the Gospel of Kingdom and His love, His acceptance and His salvation is all about.

**John 3: 29 We are the bride of Christ and He is the Bridegroom.**

<sup>29</sup> He who has the bride is the bridegroom; but the friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly because of the bridegroom's voice. Therefore this joy of mine is fulfilled.

**Rev. 21: 1-2** <sup>1</sup> Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea. <sup>2</sup> Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, **prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.**

**Rev. 22: 17 The Spirit and the bride are in unity saying --- Come**

<sup>17</sup> And the **Spirit and the bride** say, "Come!" And let him who hears say, "Come!" And let him who thirsts come. Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely.

### [Before You Say I Do: The 20 Essential Getting To Know You Questions](#)

**The questions are for each of you to learn more about each other on the dates or in pre-marital counseling.**

### **Before You Say I Do --- Or --- Things You Should Know If Already Married**

1. Define Marriage. What do you believe is the Purpose of Marriage?
2. List 5 ways that you are different from your fiancé or spouse?
3. List 5 ways that you are similar to your fiancé or spouse?
4. List 5 – 7 expectations you will have for your future or current spouse. These can be as simple as, "I expect my husband to go shopping with me each week," or "I expect to be intimate sexually x times a week"
5. Write 3 goals you have for your marriage and share them with one another.
6. Did you know that communication is 7% what you say or the words you use, 38% is tone in how you say it and 55% is non-verbal or the attitude or manner in how you say it? Discuss how this could affect your marriage.
7. How much money do you plan on spending on your wedding / honeymoon / first home or apartment?
8. How much total debt does each partner have? Please include a complete budget of current finances?
9. Do you pay your bills on time / How many late payments have you had to make in the past 2 years?
10. Who balances the check book or pay the bills in this marriage? How is that going now?
11. How many children would you like to have?

12. What type of birth control if any were you thinking about?
13. Describe your first or next Christmas as a married couple?
14. Do you tithe currently? If yes how much? Do you enjoy giving and see it as a good investment? Be honest
15. If you had a son named Johnny, aged 8, who stole a bike and damaged it. How would you handle this?
16. If after 1 year of marriage, your sister call's and wants to borrow money from you – what do you do?
17. Your brother always is asking you to watch their kids and never returns any favors – what do you do?
18. Your father just passed away and your mom asks if she can move in with you. What do each think about that option?
19. List other questions you think would be wise to know before you “say I do”? Share with us!
20. **Marriage couples fight about:** Money, lack of intimacy, children, other family members, one or both not doing their share, lack of communication, use of hurtful words, knowing what buttons to push, lack of respect for the other.
  - 20.1 What areas from #20 do you each need to guard your heart on most as an engaged or already married couple?

### **Building A Family Heritage**

Definition of Heritage : Things passed down from generation to generation, a tradition or legacy left to others especially your own immediate family.

#### **3 Key Purposes of Marriage**

1. **Love is a Commitment:** Love is not a feeling or something you “fall in and out of” – love is a commitment to your spouse no matter what. **God wants us to learn about Love as a Commitment** once the couple has made the choice together to move forward into marriage. **See Grace and Faith Marriage Builder Guide called Foundations For Loving and Healthy Relationships Part I and Part II and the Work Book. It is free to all who ask.**
2. **Heritage of Lord Passed To The Next Generation:** Another purpose of marriage is to establish a heritage in the Lord. Married couples without children can pass the Heritage in the Lord several ways. One is adopt, the second is to mentor and help build children who don't have any parents or only 1 parent. Many married couples do have children so it is passing that inheritance to the Lord to your next generation. Go to [www.GraceAndFaith.Buzz](http://www.GraceAndFaith.Buzz) to help equip yourself.
3. **Unity With Lord For Fulfilling His Kingdom Purposes:** Another purpose that goes along with the others is that the Lord desires the marriage couple to come into unity with Him --- and as they become unified in Him they will be in unity with each other. Unity also brings extra strength so that the full heritage or full inheritance of the Lord can be fully realized in that entire family.
4. **Enjoy Each Other:** Couples and families are to enjoy each other and grow in the love, faith and hope together!

#### **Verses on Heritage of The Lord Passed To Next Generation**

**Genesis 17: 6-7** <sup>6</sup> I will make you exceedingly fruitful; and I will make nations of you, and kings shall come from you. <sup>7</sup> And I will establish My covenant between Me and you **and your descendants after you in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and your descendants after you.**

**Psalms 127:3** Behold, children *are* a heritage from the LORD, The fruit of the womb *is* a reward.

**Genesis 2: 18-24** <sup>18</sup> And the LORD God said, “*It is* not good that man should be alone; **I will make him a helper comparable to him.**” <sup>19</sup> Out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the air, and brought

them to Adam to see what he would call them. And whatever Adam called each living creature, that *was* its name. <sup>20</sup> So Adam gave names to all cattle, to the birds of the air, and to every beast of the field. But for Adam there was not found a helper comparable to him. <sup>21</sup> And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall on Adam, and he slept; and He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh in its place. <sup>22</sup> Then the rib which the LORD God had taken from man He made into a woman, and He brought her to the man.

<sup>23</sup> **And Adam said:** “This *is* now bone of my bones And flesh of my flesh; She shall be called Woman, Because she was taken out of Man.” <sup>24</sup> Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, **and they shall become one flesh.**

### Unity in Marriage to fulfill plans and purposes of God and to overcome satan’s deception

**Genesis 11:6** -- Power of Unity <sup>6</sup> And the LORD said, “Indeed the people *are* one and they all have one language, and this is what they begin to do; now nothing that they propose to do will be withheld from them.

One can put 1,000 enemies to flight, 2 can put 10,000 enemies to flight.

**Eccel. 4: 9-12** <sup>9</sup> Two *are* better than one, Because they have a good reward for their labor. <sup>10</sup> For if they fall, one will lift up his companion. But woe to him *who is* alone when he falls, For *he has* no one to help him up. <sup>11</sup> Again, if two lie down together, they will keep warm; But how can one be warm *alone*? <sup>12</sup> Though one may be overpowered by another, two can withstand him. And **a threefold cord** is not quickly broken.

- Create a caring and loving and safe environment for each other and the children
- Share your very life with each other, your children and family. God has shared with us.....

**Deut. 4:19** <sup>19</sup> And *take heed*, lest you lift your eyes to heaven, and *when* you see the sun, the moon, and the stars, all the host of heaven, you feel driven to worship them and serve them, which the LORD your **God has given to all the peoples under the whole heaven as a heritage.**

### Unity With Lord For Fulfilling His Kingdom Purposes:

- **Take turns reading together Psalm 133: 1-3**
- **Take turns reading together Ephesians 5: 21-33** (submitting one to another)
- **Take turns reading together First Peter 5:5**

### Enjoy One Another

- **Read together Psalm 37**
- **Dig deeper and make your own list of verses about enjoying one another**
- **Dig deeper and learn to pray together as a couple and pray for one another too!**

### Next Steps in Foundation For Healthy Relationships Part I and II

1. Complete the **Couples Work Book For Foundation For Healthy Relationships Part I and Part II**  
Email [Jim.McHood@gmail.com](mailto:Jim.McHood@gmail.com) for a free copy.

