

# The Ishbane Conspiracy

## Sexual Purity: Dating

### Ice Breaker/Game:

### Book Study:

#### **Dating: What's the Big Deal?**

*Time: about 60-90 minutes*

*Students will learn about the themes of "The Ishbane Conspiracy" by Randy Alcorn, more specifically what are healthy boundaries for dating and sex.*

**Supplies:** Bibles, *The Ishbane Conspiracy* by Randy Alcorn, 2 White Boards, black and red markers.

Start the study out with a big group discussion of the students' reactions and insights of chapters 16-18.

**(15 min)**

Ask: **What stood out to you in chapters 16-18?**

**What part of the story did you identify with this week?**

**What do you think about Rob and Jillian's relationship?**

Say: **Tonight we are going to talk about Worldly dating and Christian dating and what the difference is.**

Break out into gender specific groups.

**(15 min)**

Ask: **What do you think is the difference between 'Worldly dating' and 'Christian dating'?**

**Do you think there should be a difference?**

Read *1 Corinthians 1:2* and *Ephesians 1:4*

<sup>2</sup>To the church of God in Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus and called to be his holy people, together with all those everywhere who call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ—their Lord and ours:

<sup>4</sup>For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love

Ask: **What is the common theme in both of these scriptures?**

**What does holiness have to do with dating?**

**Say: When decide to follow Jesus, we are set apart from the world. If we are seeking holiness, we should do EVERYTHING differently – including dating. The purpose behind dating, when done God’s way and in His time, is to find God’s choice to eventually build a life with.**

**Ask: So, what’s the big deal? Why not just have fun, like everyone else?**

**What’s wrong with ‘just dating’?**

**What problems have you seen in your life or others when we date without Biblical purpose?**

**Say: You should never date just for the sake of dating. If you can’t see yourself with that person forever, then it is not worth the consequences to “just date”.**

Gather back together in a big group.

## **Great Date vs. Horrible Date**

*(25 min)*

*(Activity based on Innovative Tools by Group Publishing)*

Form two groups. Have each group come up with a short skit for The Worst Date Imaginable. They only have 10 minutes to come up with it. For example, a guy and girl could be eating at a restaurant. The guy brags and talks throughout the entire meal, never letting the girl say anything. All waiters ignore them. When the waiters finally pay attention, they accidentally spill drinks and food on the couple. A waiter brings out the whopping bill, hands it to the guy who gives it to the girl, and says, “This meal’s on you, honey.”

Have students present the skits.

**Ask: What makes a date bad? good?**

Give groups each a white board and a black marker. Have groups each title their white board “The Great Date.” Have groups use their black markers to write down qualities of a person they’d love to date, such as “fun,” “Christian,” and “good sense of humor.” As a large group, share these qualities.

**Ask: What qualities appeared in both groups?**

**What unique qualities appeared?**

**Say: God has given standards for the kind of person that you should attach yourself to.**

Have the groups Read *1 Corinthians 13:1-7* and *Hebrews 10:24-25* and have them use the red marker to write Biblical qualities on their white board.

If I speak in the tongues<sup>[a]</sup> of men or of angels, but do not have love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. <sup>2</sup>If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. <sup>3</sup>If I give all I possess to the poor and give over my body to hardship that I may boast,<sup>[b]</sup> but do not have love, I gain nothing. <sup>4</sup>Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. <sup>5</sup>It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. <sup>6</sup>Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. <sup>7</sup>It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.

<sup>24</sup>And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, <sup>25</sup>not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

Ask: **According to these verses, what qualities would a great date have?**

**Which qualities are similar to the ones we already listed? Which ones are different?**

**Why is it important to date someone that meets God's standards?**

Say: **We need to make sure that we are not "unequally yoked".**

Read *2 Corinthians 6:14*.

<sup>14</sup>Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness?

Say: **This verse isn't about egg 'yolks' but a yokes. A yoke is s stable gear that joins two draft animals at the neck so they can work together as a team.**

Show them a picture of what a yoke looks like.

Say: **In marriage you need to work together as a team. If you are going in different directions, like having different goals, you aren't going anywhere. If we shouldn't marry someone who isn't a Christian, why would we date someone who isn't? Think of it this way: unless we are going to have an arranged marriage, someone we date is going to be someone we marry. Let's start off with someone who believes and has a relationship with God like we do because the only way that a relationship will work is if God is in the center of it.**

Break back out into gender specific groups.

**(20 min)**

**Say: I am going to share with you a story. It is about a Christian girl about your age. This girl and this guy met at church and started a friendship four years ago. They became very good friends. They would hang out at each other's houses, when the parents were home. They would hang out in groups, talk on the phone. They each considered the other as their best friends. The guy liked the girl but the girl didn't want anything to hurt their friendship, so they stayed friends. He is a year older than the girl and he graduated and went off to college. They still talked and remained friends. At some point a short time ago she started liking him and wondered if there was something there for them. They started to hang out more when he was in town to see if there was any chance of there being anything more to their friendship. He told her that he wasn't a virgin; she is and plans on staying that way till she gets married. She told her mom that she was surprised but she was ok that he wasn't a virgin until he told her that he has no regrets and would do it again and plans on being with a girl again in the very near future. When she heard this she was very upset and told him that there is no way she could go out with him anymore, she had no desire to be the girl in 'the very near future'. She was waiting for marriage and that they need to be just friends again. The guy wants nothing to do with her now, no phone calls, no emails and he even deleted her as a friend on Facebook. She is now, with the help of God, her family and friends, mending a broken heart.**

**Ask: Do you think she did the right thing by not wanting to date him?**

**Say: You cannot assume that just because someone goes to church that they share your beliefs or that they are even Christian! These are two young people who met in church and have totally different beliefs on sex before marriage.**

**Ask: What are the standards that God has given us for dating in a righteous way?**

**Say: We need to be vigilant of what situations we are putting ourselves into, so that we are not tempted to sin.**

**Ask: What are some bad dating situations that could tempt us into sexual sin? (Examples: Being alone, watching unclean movies, compromising values)**

**Where and what are good places to go out for a date? (Examples: Spending time with each other's family, friends, cook together with others around, volunteer at the Foodline...)**

**Say: When you start dating someone you need to ask yourself some questions. Like: Is my relationship with God better now? Does this person want to grow with God and me? Are they ok with God being #1 in my life? Am I a better person, with God, family, and friends, because this person is in my life?**

Have a student read *James 4:7*.

<sup>7</sup>Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

Say: **When we submit our relationships to God, putting Him in the center, we can be sure that even if we have to walk away from someone that we feel strongly for, it is the best thing for us. Really, it all comes down to trust... If we believe that God knows what is best for us, then we can trust him for direction in everything, especially dating.**

Close with Prayer.