

*Dating Differently: A Guide to Reformed Dating*, by Rev. Joshua Engelsma. Jenison, MI: Reformed Free Publishing Association, 2019. 160 pages, softcover. [Reviewed by Rev. Gary Eriks]

If you are looking for a 12-step program to finding a godly spouse and a happy marriage, you will not find that in this book. But you will not be disappointed because you will find a fresh, biblical, practical, God-focused, Reformed approach to dating guided by the principles of God's word. In a world where dating is self-focused and resembles what happens on a used car lot, Rev. Engelsma grounds dating in God's glory, marriage, and the relationship of Christ and his bride, the church.

The strength of the book is that the author roots dating in the goal of marriage. He applies the biblical truth of marriage to the way a man or woman finds a godly spouse. The author does a splendid job of applying the Reformed marriage form to dating. I believe this will aid young people and parents to navigate the dangers and struggles of dating.

Another virtue of the book is the practical approach. The author successfully takes the biblical wisdom of scripture and applies this to real life situations—some in his own life and others in the lives of others in his experience. Specifically he warns in a gentle, but firm way, of the sexual struggles that young people face in dating. He also dives into the subject of what to do on dates and who should plan the dates. In his balanced view he does not forget the goodness of the single life, to which God calls some so that those who are single are also encouraged. He enters into these areas without falling into the ditch of making all kinds of rules or the ditch of saying some of these things really do not matter. This approach, along with the discussion questions at the end of each chapter, will have the reader thinking through the tough issues of dating with the truth of God's word.

I am excited to give this book to my own children in preparation for dating and marriage! This book is a must read for young people and parents who take seriously God's call to marry only in the Lord. Take the time to read it thoughtfully!