

Wait For My Boyfriend to Get Saved Again?

Tim Conway | illbehonest.com

Question: This comes from Alvarina. And she asks this question: "If I broke up with my boyfriend because he stopped being a Christian, is it ok to wait for him till he comes back to Christ, or do I have to move on?" It sounds kind of high school, right? "If I broke up with my boyfriend because he stopped being a Christian is it ok to wait for him till he comes back to Christ, or do I have to move on?"

Discussion:

Tim: When I hear a question like that, my first thing is not yes or no. My first thought is, where is this girl going to church? What kind of pastor is she sitting under? Is she going to church? If she is, what is she getting taught? Who are her parents? What are her parents allowing her to do? What are they teaching her? Those are the first questions that come into my mind. "If I broke up with my boyfriend because he stopped being a Christian, is it ok to wait for him till he comes back to Christ, or do I have to move on?" I mean, in that question, she kind of sees Christianity as something you pop in and pop out of. Well, he's a Christian, and then... he stopped being a Christian. And maybe he'll just pop back in and he'll become a Christian again. And so, should I wait for him? You get the picture of what's going on.

But what is it to be a Christian? I think if this was a young lady in the church, and she sat down with me, she'd just come or her family had moved here or however - she came with a friend. And she asked this question. You know, the first thing I would want to ask Alvarina is do you have a good idea about what it is to be a Christian? Because the thing that came to my mind is being a Christian is miraculous. It's supernatural. It's a mighty work of God. And it's permanent. I mean, truly being a Christian is permanent. This "you're in, you're out" and we know people can make false professions, and we know people can come face to face with truth. And we know people can claim to be a Christian today and make shipwreck tomorrow.

But one of the things that you see in Scripture is to once have been in that light and depart from it is extremely dangerous. It's like the seed that comes up and the persecution comes and away it goes. Making shipwreck of the faith. They were there and they're not there. Demas never comes back again. Judas never comes back again. There's a point of no return as we see in Hebrews 6. All these things about this flippant view of Christian - you're in, you're out, you're exposed to the truth, you're back and forth, you claim to be a Christian, you're not a Christian. It's kind of missing the supernatural flavor of what Christianity's all about. I mean as I'm thinking about it, a series of texts start coming through my mind just about Christianity. The first thing I think of is that text right out of Jonah; salvation is of the Lord, it's not something men do, it's not just this decision. Yes, men make decisions, but it's not basically, ultimately at the level of decisions of mankind. It's at the decision of God. Salvation is of the Lord.

And you've got, of course, John 1:12-13, that says that we were born of God, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. This is something that God does. A text very much like it in Romans 9. He says to Moses, I will have mercy upon whom I will have mercy; I will have compassion upon whom I will have compassion. So that it depends not on human will or exertion, but on God who has mercy. I thought of Hebrews 7. Christ saving to the uttermost.

This picture of Christianity: Well, we're kind of in, we're kind of out, we're in, we're out, we're in... back and forth. Being saved to the uttermost, that's complete; that's permanent. He says eternal life. I give them eternal life. He says all that the Father gives Me, where is that, John 6:39? All that the Father gives Me, He says He's not going to lose any of them. And He says He's going to raise them up in the last day. He says He gives them eternal life. Where is that? John 3:36. If you believe in the Son, you have eternal life. Eternal life is eternal. It doesn't go away. Now we know men make shipwreck of the faith. We know people take Christianity in a flippant way, we know they do that. But that's what's going on here. True Christianity is permanent. True Christianity doesn't go away.

I thought of the text in 2 Corinthians about being a new creation. When you're a new creation, you're a new creation, and you don't get uncreated. When God creates something, it's created. It doesn't stop being created. It doesn't go into oblivion. It's not like He created today, and then you're not created tomorrow, and then you can come back and be created again, and you're just going back and forth in and out of being this new creation. None of that.

And so, I was thinking, if I actually sat down with this young lady, I'd be saying, have you even been taught what true Christianity is? The radical nature; the miraculous, the mighty nature, the permanent nature of what it is to be a true Christian, and have you experienced this yourself? Are you viewing Christianity the way you are because perhaps you're not even aware yourself of what this looks like. But then I thought, too, she uses this term, "broke up with my boyfriend." "Broke up with my boyfriend."

What do you guys think about that terminology? What do you think about a girl breaking up with her boyfriend? You got any thoughts, Abraham? You start thinking, think about the relationships between a man and a woman in Scripture. I find three God-condoned, appropriate relationships between men and women. Can you tell me what they are? Marriage. You won't find courtship in there. What do you find? Betrothal. Betrothal's in the Bible. And then what else? What's the third relationship?

(from the room) Father and daughter?

Tim: I'm just talking about a man and a woman. Obviously, there's brother/sister, father/daughter, there's all those relationships, but I mean, father/daughter would fall into this category, but young men and young women here, it's appropriate for you to be married, it's appropriate, perhaps, for you to be in a betrothal where you're headed to marriage, and what

would be the third that's appropriate? Yeah, you live together in the same world, or in the same church or in the same society and you're pure. Those are the three God-condoned relationships between a man and a woman. And you think about marriage. Marriage. When we're talking about intimacy, there is no other place where intimacy is condoned in Scripture, other than marriage. Proverbs 5:18 Let your fountain be blessed; rejoice in the wife of your youth; a lovely deer, a graceful doe, let her breasts fill you at all times with delight, be intoxicated always in her love. You've got 1 Corinthians 7:2, because of temptation to sexual immorality, each man should have his own wife and each woman her own husband.

You've got Hebrews 13:4, let marriage be held in honor among all and let the marriage bed be undefiled, for God will judge the sexually immoral and adulterous. Clearly, the author of Hebrews is saying this: The marriage bed is the only place of intimacy condoned by God. Everything else falls into that category of being that which is sexually immoral and adulterous and those that God is going to judge. Now, we see betrothal in Scripture which might be akin to engagement in our time. Why? Both of them involve a commitment and both of them are headed to marriage. And both of them are to be radically pure, because only the marriage bed is the place where God allows that intimacy. And God is very serious about that.

We can look at Joseph in the New Testament acting as a righteous man and he's ready to put Mary away because of some perceived infidelity on his part when they were in this betrothal period. But under Moses, it was very pronounced. Deuteronomy 22:23 If there is a betrothed virgin and a man meets her in the city and lies with her, then you shall bring them both out to the gate of that city, and you shall stone them to death with stones. The young woman because she did not cry for help, though she was in the city; and the man, because he violated his neighbor's wife. So you shall purge the evil from your midst. If in the open country, a man meets a young woman who is betrothed and the man seizes her and lies with her then only the man who lay with her shall die. This betrothal period - it even inter-uses betrothal and marriage, because it was something that you actually had to have a divorce to break. It was that permanent. Our engagements, although they involve a token of that pledge in a ring typically, and there's a commitment, and usually when there's an engagement there's a marriage date set. But we don't count it as binding in our society. But nevertheless, it's a period of commitment. Marriage is the goal. And absolute purity is to be maintained. The other one is where you're just existing side-by-side. You're friends. Or maybe you're not friends. Maybe it's a father/daughter; maybe it's a brother/sister; whatever. Every other relationship is single and pursuing purity. I guess one of the parties or both of the parties could be married, but we're talking about the specific relationship between any man and any woman.

What we're doing is we're answering the question that this young lady has posed. And look, she's talking about "if I broke up with my boyfriend..." What does breaking up with a boyfriend even look like? Well, it's a very worldly terminology. It's the idea of dating, boyfriends, going out, casual dating, going steady, whatever. There's lots of different ways that it's said today. But it's this idea that I specifically have a relationship with this person over here with no commitment. It's not headed towards marriage. We're not married. We're not getting married. Why do they do

that? What do they want? Well, they want something from the other person without commitment. That's basically what is wanted. Typically, in our society today, it runs into enjoying the fullness of all the intimacy that is had in marriage and it's just done without any commitment. It's done in high school, it's done in middle school.

And what Scripture says is you have this spoken to Timothy, "do not rebuke an older man," in 1 Timothy 5:1-2. "Do not rebuke an older man, but encourage him as you would a father; younger men as brothers; older women as mothers." And Timothy, this is how you're supposed to deal - Timothy is a young man; this is how you deal with young women. How? In all purity. You want a blanket statement from the apostle as to how young men and young women who are not engaged and headed towards marriage; who are not in marriage. Well, even if you are engaged, but this is the kind of summary statement. Purity, purity, purity. All purity. 1 Timothy 2:22 "So flee youthful passions; pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace along with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart." Of course, you have 1 Corinthians 6:18 that says, "Flee from sexual immorality."

And so, my point to Alvarina, listen, it's like she's saying this: "Well, I thought this guy was a Christian, and I had to break up with him because he stopped being a Christian. Is it ok for me to wait for him to come back to Christ?" To do what? Well, so that she can go out with him again. Or do I have to move on? Move on to what? Some other guy that professes to be a Christian. She really needs a pastor, she needs a father or mother in her life that's telling her, look, this isn't even an acceptable kind of relationship before the Lord. The Lord wants purity.

What in the world kind of relationship are you getting into and why are you getting into it? What does it mean? You go out on dates? It's totally inappropriate. It's not specified in Scripture. There's no such recognized relationships like this that God gives to us. The only one where any kind of intimacy is accepted in Scripture is the marriage bed and everything else is to be kept absolutely pure. Everything else. And so, there needs to be a fleeing from youthful passions, a fleeing from sexual immorality, and certainly, we know it, you can be blind and you understand, that all this casual dating that's going on in our world, all this going out and going steady, and having this girlfriend/boyfriend stuff. Even down into probably elementary schools now it's leading to all manner of sexual immorality, and all sorts of wickedness. It's done for a reason. And most of us here were lost and are first generation Christians. We were lost when we were in elementary school and middle school and high school, and we know exactly what it's all about. We know. And I hope we don't have any parents in this church that would ever condone that kind of relationship between young people. So anyway, that's basically how I would answer Alvarina if I was able to sit with her face to face. God wants a commitment in relationships. Why? Because ultimately what this leads to is marriage, which is what? It's a foreshadowing of the relationship between Jesus Christ and the church. And our Lord has relationship with people by way of covenant. He's committed. He's all out committed to that relationship. And that's the only kind that is honoring to God. Everything else is dishonoring.