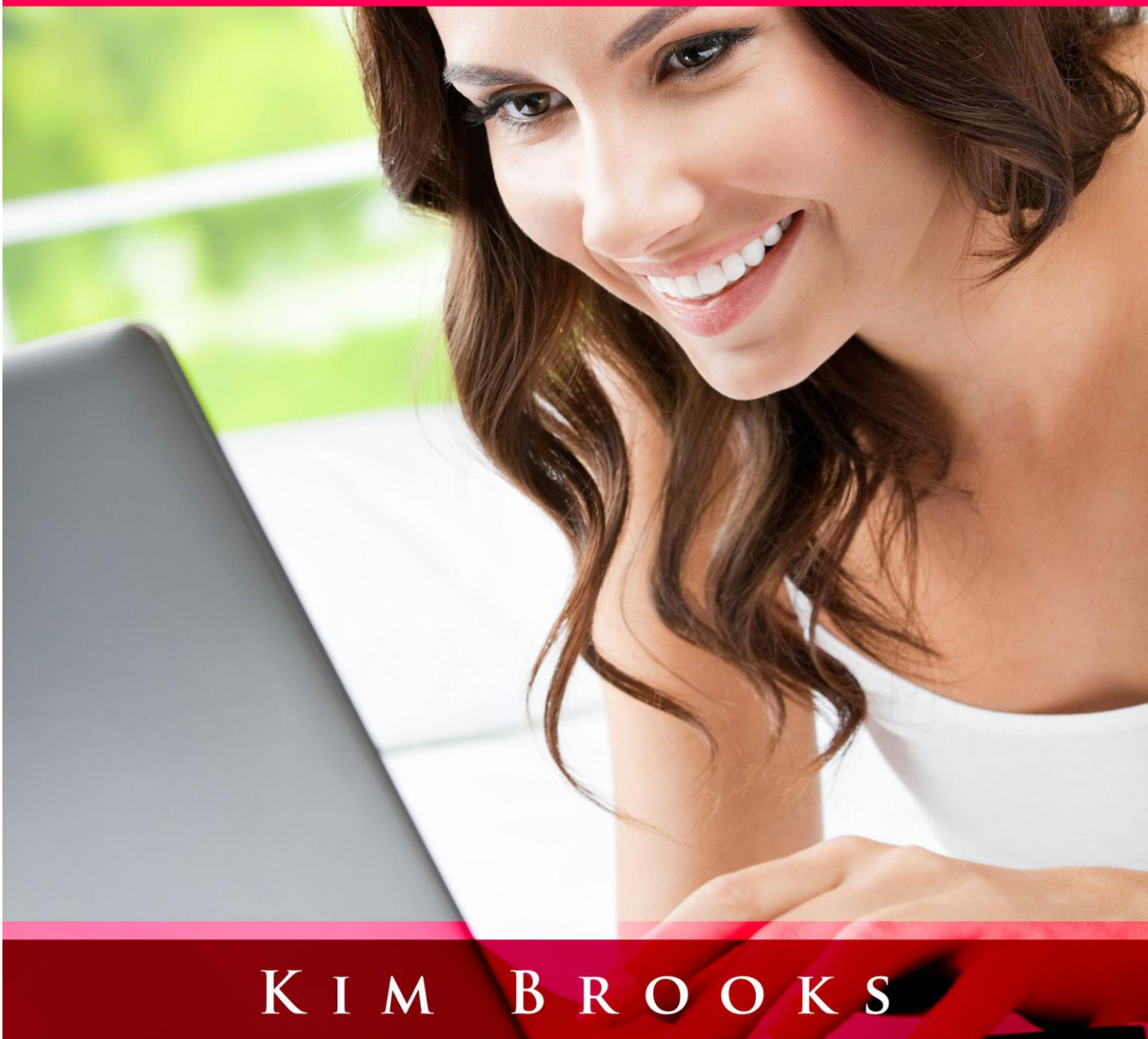


THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO
**CHRISTIAN
ONLINE DATING**



KIM BROOKS

The Ultimate Guide To Christian Online Dating

by Kim Brooks

A Woman's Guide To Safe Christian Online Dating

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Introduction

It's finally here.

An all-inclusive guide to help you navigate the online dating scene and still keep God in the driver's seat.

In this technological, real-time communication driven society you may have noticed that more and more people are initially meeting and connecting online, in some manner, which lead to meaningful relationships and even marriage.

No longer is online dating just for not-so-attractive introverts or socially inept coo-coos. More and more appealing professionals who simply don't have time – outside of work, home and church – to go out and meet someone noteworthy are choosing to initially connect in the cyber world to see if they'd eventually like to move the conversation to their own inner world.

Whether through social media or through the advent of “mutual friends,” which make it easier to connect to people either you already know or should know, more people are spending more time chatting with and connecting with people online.

The average Facebook user currently spends over an hour a day on the social media platform, which has over 650 million active users. I, personally, am aware of couples that initially connected through Facebook online then dated offline and are now either happily married or seriously dating.

Also, more Christian dating websites are popping up, encouraging users to meet other like-minded individuals as they feature winning testimonials of married couples who initially met online.

Now consider the traditional way of meeting people.

For example, you walk down the street and someone asks for your phone number. Next thing you know you're going out regularly and now you're a couple – meeting his parents as he meets yours and the two of you eventually you go from casually dating to now seriously dating.

Well, if you and your boo decide to marry and end up staying married for fifty years, is it really going to matter that you both initially met in a seemingly random manner outside?

The same goes for Internet dating.

Sure, there are some extra precautions you will have to take (which I'll cover thoroughly within the pages of this book), but at the end of the day if you meet, date and marry a good, godly man, then who's going to care that the two of you initially met online?

Before you meet and get to know *anyone*, he is a complete stranger, whether you meet him online, in your neighborhood, at a mutual friend's birthday party or at the club (and I *know* you're not going out to meet men at the club, are you? Just checking lol).

Speaking of which, a lot of Christian women that I minister to would like to date but aren't about to go to the club, say no one is sliding them their phone number after church Sunday morning, and aren't noticing that many guys show up for the singles conferences and singles events – so outside of random encounters such as in the grocery store or while running errands, how *can* you really meet someone?

I, personally, know of at least five women of God who were found by their now husbands through a Christian online dating website,

and some have been happily married now six years (and were abstinent with each other until marriage, I might add).

Does this mean that because they initially connected in an untraditional and unconventional manner that their marriage is not heaven-sent? Of course not.

What God hath joined together, let not man put asunder still holds true regardless of how the initial connection took place.
(Mark 10:9)

God blesses two believers' marriage the moment they say, "*I do.*"

The moment two consenting adults who both love the Lord say, "*I do*" to each other, God gives that couple the same tools, in the form of prayer, a divine covenant and a new "oneness," in order to sustain that marriage through good times and bad, 'til death do they part.

Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh. - Genesis 2:24

So, I, personally, see nothing wrong with meeting and dating someone you initially met online – if that's what you choose and are led to do (we'll get into that more in this book as well).

Scripture says in *James 2:20* that faith without works is dead, so how can you claim to be in faith for a mate yet you don't go out, don't fellowship with both men and women (and not just with women...thank God for women's conferences but sometimes you have to, on purpose, go out and mingle with both sexes) and choose to keep God in a box when it comes to advancements in technology?

News flash – technology is not the devil.

Just like advances in medicine, God has gifted mankind with the ability to create and be innovative with their God-given abilities. While it is true that man has a tendency to take what God meant for good and turn it into something evil, God can still use technological advancements for something good such as a way to spread the gospel, and a way to connect two God-fearing people together to accomplish His plan and ultimate purpose for their lives in the earth.

Even with that said, I understand some folk still would rather continue to shy away from computers altogether, and especially from social media (not that, lol).

Some may even reference Jesus and say He didn't use a computer, however in Biblical times they didn't have vehicles, television or telephones – they had no way of staying in communication with one another except for in writing, which was why so many letters were passed around and sent throughout palaces decreeing things and making announcements. Paul wrote plenty of letters from jail which had to be disseminated through different cities by others by foot, beast or boat, sometimes taking days, weeks or even months to arrive to their final destination, whereas now you can contact someone immediately with the click of a button through email, IM or text message.

Now ask yourself, *“If Jesus were around today, would He use social media to spread the gospel?”*

I believe so; mainly because Jesus was known for going where the people are.

Remember in the book of Matthew when He was convicted by the Pharisees for dining with sinners:

And it came to pass, as Jesus sat at meat in the house, behold, many publicans and sinners came and sat down with him and his disciples. And when the Pharisees saw it, they said unto his disciples, Why eateth your Master with publicans and sinners? - Matthew 9:10-11

Jesus' response:

But when Jesus heard that, he said unto them, They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. - Matthew 9:12-13

So Jesus never shied away from going where the people are – the people He knew needed salvation.

I believe Jesus would have His own Twitter account with over a billion followers as well as His own Facebook page.

In the same manner, in Biblical times there was no way to connect with people relationally online; instead they traveled on foot and beast to find their suitable helpmeet.

For example, remember when Abraham's eldest servant was charged by Abraham, on Abraham's deathbed, to find a suitor for his son, Isaac? To carry out his master's request, the servant immediately went where he knew women would be and eventually found someone he thought would be perfect for Isaac. Once Abraham's servant returned with Rebekah, sure enough Isaac fell in love with her, however if she had not been at the place where the women went to draw water, she would have never met Abraham's servant to offer drink for him and his camels too.

Or maybe you recall Esther – how she was found by her husband. Esther was summoned along with hundreds of women who were pampered and primped for a year in order to be appropriately presented before the king and he had to choose which one he

wanted. Esther had favor with him, became his bride and ended up saving her entire race of people because of the position and power she held on the throne.

Lastly, consider Ruth – a woman of God who, like Esther, has an entire chapter in the Bible named after her. Ruth’s mother-in-law, Naomi, told Ruth, then a widow, exactly where to glean in the field where both men and women were. Ruth eventually found favor in the sight of the wealthy landowner, Boaz, who inquired about her and eventually married her.

So all throughout the Bible there were unconventional ways virtuous women of God connected and married, yet the end result was still blessed.

So while the Bible does not dictate, verbatim, whether or not online dating, itself, is endorsed by the Lord, one thing we know for sure is that, above all else, God endorses two born-again believers who love each other and choose to marry, for the only expectation set by God for two people to become one successfully is that they both be saved.

Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? - II Corinthians 6:14

Don't become partners with those who reject God. How can you make a partnership out of right and wrong? That's not partnership; that's war. Is light best friends with dark? Does Christ go strolling with the Devil? Do trust and mistrust hold hands? - II Corinthians 6:14 Message Bible

With this in mind, I’m not proclaiming from the rooftops that every single saved sister should go run out and set up fifty profiles on fifty Christian dating sites to go get her Boaz.

Christian online dating is not for everyone – I repeat, Christian online dating is NOT for everyone – and I’ll cover why within the pages of this book.

As mentioned previously, there are still some spiritual and practical precautions you’ll have to take if you choose to try online dating.

Also note, whether or not you choose to date online is totally up to you.

Use your own discretion and pray about it as ultimately you want to be led and your decision to do so should be between you and the Lord.

So while I, personally, am not liable for what happens should you choose to date online, what this book will provide is a series of suggestions as to how to date online safely and securely while keeping God as the center focus.

Chapter 1

Don't Run With the Vision!

So you met a guy online.

It was actually kinda cute how he reached out to you – he saw your profile then messaged you about how he liked what he saw and read and would like to learn more about you. You check out his profile and believe he's got a good head on his shoulders based on his pictures and comments. You even notice a few comments that reference Jesus and his spirituality. Cool points! Now you're even more excited! Besides the handsome face that initially caught your eye and his salvation profession within the text of his profile, you're thinking this single man whose profile claims he's never been married with no kids has lots of potential – he must be the One!

So now you're calling all your girlfriends and even telling “mama'nem” that you've found the One and that you're getting married in six months and that this must be it – even before you've had a single phone conversation with the brother.

Hold up, Sister Shirley Prayright!

No matter how much God may have told you, or that it has been prophesied over you that you were going to meet your Boaz this year, or even this month – don't run with the vision!

Don't run with the vision – meaning, as soon as the first person shows some interest (and with online dating you may get used to more than one guy showing some type of interest) don't get his number to contact him offline and close your online dating account because he must be it!

No matter how fine his pictures look or how much he's filled his profile with "Christianese," make no conclusion about that man's character or intentions until you've gotten to know him and found out from him, verbatim, what his intentions are.

Even if, after a few conversations he tells you he's looking for his bride and he believes you're it, don't allow anyone – I don't care how fine he is or how saved he claims to be – don't allow anyone to pressure you into making a life-altering decision until you've really gotten to know him over time (which we'll cover in a later chapter) and weighed everything carefully and objectively, which is why it's so important that you not run with the vision, nor wear your heart on your sleeve and that you keep, or guard your heart with all diligence, especially in the very beginning.

*Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.
- Proverbs 4:23*

Since the Bible was translated from Hebrew in the Old Testament and from the Greek in the New Testament, I'd like to point out that the word, *keep*, in this passage of Scripture is the Greek word, *natsar*, which means *to guard, watch, watch over, to preserve, guard from dangers, keep secret, kept close*.

So even though you may really sense this may be it and he may be the One, still guard, preserve and watch over your heart, hold your peace and don't make any conclusions until you verify his fruit.

Verify his fruit.

Scripture says you shall know him by his fruit – not by how cute his profile picture is, nor how he looks like a good dad holding his young daughter if he's a single dad, nor how eloquent and "Spirit-filled" his profile description sounds...you shall know him by his fruit.

Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them. - Matthew 7:20

The word, *fruits*, in this Scripture is the Greek word, *karpos*, which means *work, act or deed*. It also means, *that which originates or comes from something, an effect, result*.

His work, how he behaves and what he does not only for himself but for others as well, is an indication of his fruit – or who he really is.

For example, if he claims to love God then his fruit would match his confession meaning he would not insist on sex before marriage because Scripture says in *John 14:15, If you love me, keep my commandments*.

If he claims to be a great single dad yet you discover he hasn't paid child support in over five years, his fruit, or his work and behavior, does not match his confession.

If he claims he can't wait any longer and wants to marry you in a week or he might go crazy, then you discover his divorce from a previous marriage was never finalized, then his fruit does not match his confession.

So more than going by what he says – and I'm not discounting the power of words for I do believe that out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks (*Matthew 12:34*) – just make sure what's coming out of his mouth matches his fruit.

Hold your peace.

Scripture describes how Abraham's servant held his peace after meeting Rebekah – Isaac's soon-to-be bride.

On Abraham's deathbed, Abraham's eldest servant was given a charge to find a suitable bride for his son, Isaac.

Once the servant went to find a bride for his master Isaac (in other words, he went where he knew potential women capable of being his master's suitor would be) in his heart he wanted her to be not just any pretty face, but a caring, unselfish young lady who thought not only of herself but others as well.

Behold, I stand here by the well of water; and the daughters of the men of the city come out to draw water:

And let it come to pass, that the damsel to whom I shall say, Let down thy pitcher, I pray thee, that I may drink; and she shall say, Drink, and I will give thy camels drink also: let the same be she that thou hast appointed for thy servant Isaac; and thereby shall I know that thou hast shewed kindness unto my master.

- Genesis 24:13-14

He asked God for the young lady who offers him water and offers water to his camels to be a sure sign that she is the one for Isaac.

Unlike now, where we, believers have the Holy Spirit to lead, guide and direct us (*John 16:13*) – meaning we have no need for signs or fleeces – in the Old Testament in most cases they did follow signs as a way of verifying God's hand or His blessing on something.

Once Rebekah indeed offered water for Abraham's servant and his camels, instead of shouting, "*Girl, you the one my master has been*

waiting for! Put on this jewelry, get on my camel and let's go back home to my master, Isaac, because you about to get married, girl!"— Scripture states that the servant held his peace until he knew, without a shadow of a doubt, that Rebekah was surely the chosen bride for his master.

And it came to pass, before he had done speaking, that, behold, Rebekah came out, who was born to Bethuel, son of Milcah, the wife of Nahor, Abraham's brother, with her pitcher upon her shoulder.

And the damsel was very fair to look upon, a virgin, neither had any man known her: and she went down to the well, and filled her pitcher, and came up.

And the servant ran to meet her, and said, Let me, I pray thee, drink a little water of thy pitcher.

And she said, Drink, my lord: and she hastened, and let down her pitcher upon her hand, and gave him drink.

And when she had done giving him drink, she said, I will draw water for thy camels also, until they have done drinking.

And she hastened, and emptied her pitcher into the trough, and ran again unto the well to draw water, and drew for all his camels.

And the man wondering at her held his peace, to wit whether the Lord had made his journey prosperous or not. - Genesis 24:15-21

Just like Abraham's servant held his peace, in the same manner, you want to avoid a major trap that I believe many get into while dating online – the trap of getting too anxious once you instantly connect with someone online and immediately start envisioning yourself with him for a lifetime.

Again, instead of running with the vision, hold your peace, enjoy your time of getting to know each other on an acquaintance, then friendship level while keeping in the back of your mind that you're brothers and sisters in Christ, first, before you're anybody's spouse.

Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. - Philippians 4:6

The Amplified Bible version of this Scripture reads:

Do not fret or have any anxiety about anything, but in every circumstance and in everything, by prayer and petition (definite requests), with thanksgiving, continue to make your wants known to God. Philippians 4:6 - Amplified Bible

So relax, chill – and don't be overly anxious.

Instead remain sober and vigilant at all times.

Be sober and vigilant.

*Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:
- 1 Peter 5:8*

The word, *sober*, in this Scripture is the Greek word, *nēphō*, which means *to be calm and collected in Spirit, to be temperate and circumspect – or watchful and discreet.*

The word, *vigilant*, in this Scripture is the Greek word, *grēgoreō*, which means *give strict attention to, be cautious, active*.

It also means *to take heed lest through remission and indolence some destructive calamity suddenly overtake one*.

Don't let the enemy take what God may have initially meant for good and turn it into something evil by running with the vision, moving too fast, placing your "new boo" above God or being overly anxious while dating.

Doing any of these things is an open door for the enemy to get you off track so that the person you thought you were dating for marriage turned out to be nothing but a big ol' distraction sent by Satan, himself, to take you off the course of your destiny and out of the perfect will of God for your life.

Though in your heart you may want to move ahead full force, still be mindful of the fact that just because he's fine, says he's saved and claims to be abstinent, if the first time you go out he asks to come inside your place at midnight and you oblige – don't find yourself having sex that night then wondering what went wrong because you just knew he was the one sent by God for you.

Don't allow your own anxiety and desire for marriage like yesterday to knock you off your 'A' game and take you off course from your calling, purpose and destiny.

As a *Proverbs 31* virtuous woman who will be a crown to her husband, a prudent woman of God and an anointed wife, remember that *you* are the prize and that you are your future husband's reward.

Whoso findeth a wife findeth a good thing, and obtaineth favour of the Lord. - Proverbs 18:22

A virtuous woman is a crown to her husband: but she that maketh ashamed is rottenness in his bones. - Proverbs 12:4

House and riches are the inheritance of fathers: and a prudent wife is from the Lord. - Proverbs 19:14

Don't get too excited once someone online expresses interest; a woman of God who's got it going on will find many will be interested, which is why she will have to take extra precaution to guard her heart, be sober, vigilant and proceed with caution while verifying his fruit along the way and not running with the vision.

Chapter 2

Be Safe

There are some precautions you should take when interacting and navigating through Christian online dating websites.

Just because the creators of the site decided to market to Christians as their target audience of choice doesn't mean there will be no crazies or demons posing as so called "men of God" setting up profiles because they want to prey on single, saved and what they may consider lonely and desperate single Christian women who haven't dated in years and are looking for a good time. Such a man may be on the hunt for a sugar momma, a submissive-type woman to control or access to someone's Visa card if he's from another country.

Most online dating websites do not have a screening process regarding who they allow to set up a profile, so proceed with caution.

The following are some suggested precautions to take:

Make sure he is who he says he is and that he resembles his online portrayal.

Unfortunately, there is something known as catfishing, which is a scam that involves fake profile creations made with false profile pics and false online portrayals.

Urbandictionary.com defines, *catfishing*, as the phenomenon of internet predators that fabricate online identities and entire social circles to trick people into emotional/romantic relationships (over a long period of time).

It describes, *catfish*, as someone who pretends to be someone they're not using Facebook or other social media to create false identities, particularly to pursue deceptive online romances.

Unfortunately some have fallen prey to this deceitful tactic.

To avoid being “catfished,” before you go out for the first time, verify he is who he says he is and that he looks like he claims by Skyping each other at least once or using FaceTime or some other webcam service.

This way, you are able to verify his identity and also whether or not he looks remotely like his pictures, because unfortunately some men (and I'm sure some women, too) lie about their age online, then post pictures from twenty years ago knowing good and well that six-pack is now a full keg, and that instead of looking like a potential suitor he actually resembles someone you should call Grandad.

No matter how eloquent and “saved” his profile reads, still know him by his fruit.

As mentioned previously – know him by his fruit.

Some men know how to manipulate their profile responses to posed questions online to make it sound ideal for the type of woman they would like to attract.

For instance, if a man is hoping to attract a single, saved woman with marriage on the brain, then he knows how to make himself appear to be her exact Boaz and knight in shining armor.

Just like the saying, *“Tell them what they want to hear,”* some know how to word their profile responses in order to let them, *“read what they want to read,”* so they can appear to be not only the finest thing since sliced bread but also a saved woman’s dream come true.

If someone approaches you online and this appears to be the case as he seems to be too good to be true, feel free to explore and examine him more deeply than what his profile reveals. Now don’t come across sounding like a CSI cross-examination – simply ask polite questions, when going back and forth through the site’s internal messaging system, that peek into his lifestyle.

For example, if he reaches out to you on a Sunday afternoon, ask him how his day went. He’ll let you know what he did and if he mentions nothing about church, take note of that while asking if he’s a regular churchgoer.

Men don’t mind answering questions as long as they don’t come off as investigative, demanding or assuming – so just weave it into regular conversation whether online or on the phone while noting his responses.

Check his background.

Is he a convicted felon? Not saying convicted felons don’t need love, too, but whether or not he is one is something you may want to find out so you can decide, based on discovered information, whether or not this is someone you want to continue seeing.

Check mugshots.com – a site that publishes mug shot photos from anyone who has been convicted of anything in the past, anything from increased parking tickets that led to an arrest to a murder conviction. Because mug shots are, technically, public information, the site has it where the convicted person would have

to *pay them* to have their mug shot removed and, in most cases, the convicted felon doesn't. They just allow it to be on display for anyone to see or, in most cases, aren't even aware that it's even out there for public display.

Ask for his full name and birthday in casual conversation, then Google it.

See what comes up once you do a search for his name, and also click the images tab because if he's a convicted felon once you Google his name and do an image search it'll come up as well. You may consider Googling his home and cell phone number, too.

Check his social media presence.

Check social media sites such as Facebook and Twitter to peek into his lifestyle by scrolling through previous posts. Not saying how he presents himself on Facebook is a surefire indication of how he is as a person, still if you see your potential date posing with one hand cupping half-naked women and the other gulping down a forty-ounce in several pics, then that alone should send up red flags. Sure Jesus may be His Savior as indicated on his Christian online dating profile, but is He the Lord of his life?

You may be surprised what a little pre-investigation may warrant you – you may discover whether or not he's actually already married, or, if there are no red flags, if nothing else you now have a renewed sense of peace of mind.

Chapter 3

The First Date

So you've conversed back and forth online, Skyped each other at least once, talked on the phone for two or three weeks and you feel like you're interested enough to want to at least go out on a first date.

Before we mention the first date, allow me to go back and mention this: Don't go out on a date with a man you met online unless you feel totally comfortable with doing so. This is why I suggest conversing on the phone at least two or three weeks before going out so that you're sure this is someone you wouldn't mind spending a few hours with in person.

Even if he asks you out on the first date after the first phone conversation, don't accept the date offer until you feel totally comfortable and at peace with your decision to meet him in person. Simply let him know that you are interested in getting to know him better and that you wouldn't mind going out eventually but that you first want to continue talking on the phone a couple more weeks to lead up to that point – or you can let him know the soonest you will be available for a date would be two or three weeks from now. If by that point you have changed your mind and don't want to go out, simply tell him you've changed your mind.

If a man is really interested he'll respect your decision to wait, and he doesn't mind waiting as long as you're headed in the direction he's seeking. Know that you control the speed at which the relationship goes and that if he really likes you he won't pressure you to do anything you wouldn't want to do.

Now back to the first date; below are suggestions in order to keep you safe on your first date with someone you met online:

Drive in separate cars and meet somewhere in public.

Whether it's at a museum, a nice restaurant or ice skating, let your first date be something fun and interactive so that you can get to know each other as you date to collect data about the other person.

Don't allow him to pick you up and find out where you live on the first date.

Though he sounds sensible on the phone, you still want to see how he responds to you and others in person before you give him your home address. Drive in separate cars the first few dates or until you're comfortable enough to let him know where you stay.

Give someone you trust your and his contact information and the location of your first date.

If it's a close girlfriend who, of course, should already have your number, it's still a good idea to give her his cell as well and let her know where you'll be going in case something happens and she needs to reach you right away.

Set a curfew for yourself and communicate it to your date.

I know it may sound like high school all over again, but we're talking about safety here. Whether your curfew is ten p.m. or midnight, let your date know, up front, what time you'd like to be home and also let your trusted confidante and accountability girlfriend who has his phone number know as well.

Designate a time when your trusted confidante and accountability friend will give you a buzz in order to check on you if necessary.

For example, if your first date is at a restaurant and you decide to go somewhere afterward and next thing you know it's getting late or past your designated curfew, have your girlfriend call at a certain time to remind you that it's time to head home.

Chapter 4

Be Spirit-Led

After the first date, if you decide to continue on the dating process while getting to know each other and ultimately learning if this is someone you may want to date seriously, remember to keep God as the center focus of your new relationship.

Don't get so caught up in the "new" – new relationship, new boo, new hanging buddy – that you leave God on the back burner and forget to pray every day, forsake going to church because now you want to hang with your new man on Sundays and forsake God altogether.

Still keep God as the center focus, invite your new interest to attend church with you one Sunday, or visit his church.

Don't forsake your life just because you've met someone new; find ways to include your new male friend in your life so he can add value to what you already have going on (which is why it's so important to actually have a life before you start dating someone – good men like women who have other things going for themselves besides wanting to spend all their time with them).

The thief comes only in order to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have and enjoy life, and have it in abundance (to the full, till it overflows) - John 10:10 Amplified Bible

Also, regarding prayer – don't just pray about a relationship, pray *through* the relationship.

Pray throughout the entire dating process.

Don't just shoot a prayer up to God once you begin your online dating profile while proclaiming, "*Lord, send me a fine, saved honey with some money!*" and then the first attractive man who sends a wink to your profile page then you check his page and notice he mentions he loves Jesus and makes six figures that he *must* be it and that's the last time God hears from you until you ask for His blessing at the altar.

No, pray through every thing.

Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak. - Matthew 26:41

A major way to avoid entering into temptation and stay on course while dating is to pray.

Prayer is simply communication with God.

For example, after the first date, pray and ask God what *He* thinks about the man you just went out with.

Ask God to open your eyes, or shall I say your spiritual eyes, and to show you this man's heart as you date and get to know each other.

Pray that God will order your steps and provide you with the purpose of your new acquaintance.

Order my steps in thy word: and let not any iniquity have dominion over me. - Psalm 119:133

Pray that God will show you anything you need to see or know about your new interest, and follow peace.

I introduce in my book, [*How To Date and Stay Saved*](#), a concept called the Holy Ghost traffic signal. I'll go over it here in more detail as well.

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While dating you always want to pray along the way and watch out for any inward signs the Lord sends you which may be an indication of the direction you now need to take.

For instance, if you're dating someone and you have a check in your spirit – you may not be able to put a finger on it, but for some reason you sense something isn't quite right about the person you're dating – well, that sensing that “something isn't quite right” may be the Holy Spirit warning you and telling you to put on the brakes, or the red traffic light of STOP in the relationship.

Sadly, I've ministered to several divorced women at different times who all told me that before they married the person they ended up getting divorced from they “knew” deep down on the inside that something wasn't right, but instead of taking heed to the Holy Ghost warning and all the red flags, they went ahead and married the person anyway.

Holy Ghost is a gentleman.

He will never force you to do something you don't want to do, but He will always lead, guide and direct you to where you need to be as long as you remain open to His leading.

Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. - John 16:13

When you pray, as you take heed to God's warnings by remaining open to His feedback about the person you're dating, know that God, by way of the Holy Ghost also known as the Spirit of Truth, will tell you the truth about whether or not you should end a relationship because He knows the future. God knows what is to come and simply wants to, in most cases, protect you from future danger and even heartache. He'll never steer you wrong.

If God tells you to end a relationship, end it.

The sooner the better.

Don't allow the enemy room to get in your mind and tell you, "*But you invested so much TIME in the relationship, and there's no one else out there for you so he MUST be it.*" No, that's a lie from the pit of hell.

The devil wants you to be stuck in the concept of "invested time" which actually could very well be past, wasted time with the wrong one while God is trying to move you forward to His best for you as He is always thinking ahead.

While we sometimes get stuck in the "now" – meaning all we're consumed with is the man we're dating "now," or the boo who's buying us fancy gifts and taking us out "now," or the man who's being nice to our kids "now" – we have to remember that the God we serve loves you enough to think about not the you of "now" but the you of ten years from now.

God sees how that man will treat you ten years from now, which is why He may warn you today with a red light of STOP if he doesn't see that man loving you in the future like Christ loves the church.

Relationships are either destiny, or a distraction.

If the person you're dating, whether you initially met him online or not, doesn't encourage you and cause you to become the best, most honorable woman of God you were meant to be, then know that he may simply be a distraction whose purpose is to get you off track of your own God-given purpose while ultimately tearing you away from the God you serve.

With God you're either growing spiritually or declining.

There is no in between.

The person you date, if he really loves God like he claims to, should cause you to want to be a better Christian because he exhorts and helps bring out the best in you as you do the same for him.

He will not pressure you to have sex before marriage because, as a true Christian, he, himself wouldn't want to either. Instead he will seek ways to respect and honor you while demonstrating his growing adoration and love for you in the form of kind words, thoughtful gifts, acts of kindness and spending quality time with you.

With that said, the first moment the person you meet online makes you feel uncomfortable, such as by making sexual suggestions during initial phone conversations, Skyping inappropriately or sending out extremely suggestive text messages and photos, don't ignore it or just write it off as, "*Oh, he's just being a man,*" or, "*He's just having a day.*" Take that as an initial warning from the Holy Ghost that this man is either a pervert or a bag of flesh wanting to prey on as many unsuspecting women as he can so he can "hook up" with, or shall I say sleep with as many women as he can from the online dating world.

Yes, perverts posing as prophets hang out online as well.

With online dating, you have so many choices that it's okay to delete someone from your profile and not look back because your initial hunch, which should never be ignored, more than likely is correct.

As Christians we are led by inner unctations from the Holy Ghost; don't grieve Him by ignoring initial checks in your spirit.

And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. - Ephesians 4:30

*Don't grieve God. Don't break His heart. His Holy Spirit, moving and breathing in you, is the most intimate part of your life, making you fit for himself. Don't take such a gift for granted.
Ephesians 4:30 - The Message Bible*

The Word, *grieve*, in this Scripture is the Greek word, *lypeō*, which means *to make sorrowful, to affect with sadness, cause grief, to throw into sorrow.*

God loves you.

He wants you to be happy more than you want to be happy.

He simply wants you to trust His leading, guiding and direction so if you get a check in your spirit about someone or are led to cease communication and go in another direction – obey the initial warning from God because He knows and only wants what's best for you.

YELLOW

Sometimes, in relationships, God may not be telling us to completely stop and break things off... He may simply warn us to take it slow.

Many are familiar with the concept of “moving too fast,” especially when everything is still fresh and new such as when you first meet in person the person you initially met online.

You look longingly look into each other’s eyes, fireworks go off in your heart and next thing you know at the end of the date he’s inviting you up for a “nightcap” and you accept, and the next morning instead of going to church to get your praise on, you’re going to church crying and feeling bad about what went down last night with a man you barely knew.

Sexual sin doesn’t just happen.

This is why, again, it’s so important to remain objective as much as possible and pray through the relationship.

Don’t get caught up in your new date and end up falling in love with him in two weeks, when really you may just be falling in love with being in love, because you barely know the man.

Don’t allow the fact that you hadn’t dated in a while cause you to be overly anxious about wanting to please this man so you decide tonight you’re going to give him whatever he asks you for – or in other words, sin now and repent later.

Again, sexual sin doesn’t just happen. It starts with a seed – most often in the form of the thought. Thoughts, whether good or bad, manifest themselves based on how you respond.

Before you even go out on a first date with someone you met online, I don't care how fine he looks or how much you "clicked" over the phone, determine in your mind to remain abstinent in your dating relationship and also let him know your abstinent expectation up front as well.

If he's a true man of God and a true Christian like his profile claims, then that fact will not scare him off. In fact, it should cause him to respect you more and want to honor you all the more for it.

If he tries to rush you or test you to see how far you are willing to go (yes, even Christian men will do this) remember that you are in control and that you have the ability to put on the brakes at any time.

So during your prayer time, Holy Ghost may not necessarily lead you to end the relationship, but He may advise you to slow down because He sees where you're headed, and He wants to give you and your date (if He really loves the Lord and is concerned about pleasing Him) the opportunity to regroup and get back on track so the two of you will move forward glorifying God with your bodies and being a testimony couple for others to witness and emulate.

For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's. - 1 Corinthians 6:20

GREEN

It is very important that you follow peace throughout your relationship.

The color green reminds me of peaceful pastures – a peaceful place of rest.

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.
- Psalm 23:1-2

As you meet and get to know someone online and eventually date him, you want to constantly check in with God and pray about him and if you sense peace in your spirit about this person you're now dating, then know that it's God's way of telling you that it's okay to proceed in the relationship.

Oftentimes God offers peace in your spirit when your new relationship glorifies and pleases Him and when God sees the two of you edifying and being a blessing and major source of encouragement to one another, which pleases God as well.

You know God is pleased when, at any given moment, Jesus Himself would be invited to join you on your date and not feel compelled to leave because He's offended at what's taking place in front of Him.

If Jesus can come along on your date as a "third wheel" and still have a good time, then that's a good indication that the person you're dating may be the one for you.

Even during times of disagreements in the relationship, pray to God about what happened, examine yourself and ask God where you may have gone wrong. Assess the situation and ultimately check your spirit to see if you have that “peace” inside – no, not the warm and fuzzy feeling because that feeling could go away at any time based on the circumstance, but the peace that passes all understanding – the peace that your mind may not be able to comprehend but in your spirit you know that in spite of what may be going on with the two of you right now, you still have peace that this person is the one you should continue dating.

And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful. - Colossians 3:15

WATCH and pray.

So now that we’ve discussed in detail how to be led by the Holy Ghost traffic signal while praying throughout your relationship, now I’d like to talk about the first admonition from *Matthew 26:41* in order to be led by God in relationships which is to *watch*.

Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak. - Matthew 26:41

The word, *watch*, in the Greek is, *grēgoreō*, which means *to give strict attention to, be cautious, be active*.

It also means, *to take heed lest through remission and indolence some destructive calamity suddenly overtake one*.

It is important, during the dating process, that you not only pray but that you also watch, or pay strict attention to and remain cautious while dating so that nothing will catch you off guard or get you off track.

As mentioned earlier, the purpose of dating is to collect data.

Collect data about his past, about his present and about his future – which all helped shape the man you're dating today.

Sure he may have been delivered from a tainted past, but still discuss it and watch and observe whether or not he's totally healed from it.

While dating, God's ideal is to connect two whole and complete people with each other so that together they can accomplish more for Him and add to one another's life instead of subtracting from each other.

You want someone to add to the joy that's already inside your heart, not someone who's going to take it away and suck the life out of you because they're not quite whole and complete themselves.

Make sure you, and the person you're dating, are already complete in Him.

And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power: - Colossians 2:10

Also, a good idea on the first date is to ask him about his personal testimony of how he came to know the Lord.

Ask him to share his journey, and as you converse watch and observe how he responds to you and how he responds to others such as the waiter, in the case of a dinner date, or others in his immediate surroundings.

Watch and observe his behavior and whether or not he has the character qualities that you are believing God for in a mate.

Character reveals itself over time, which is another reason it's important to date someone long enough to identify his character.

Sure he may be all lovey-dovey kind and sweet during what I call the wooing phase, or the first three months, but after the comfortable phase, or the first six months, see if his behavior remains consistent.

Consistent behavior reveals character.

Whether you're looking for someone who is, for example, trustworthy, loves people and loves God or someone who is saved, mild mannered and loyal - know up front what you're looking for, and ultimately be open to God's leading because though you may think you know what you want – God knows what you really need.

Watch his fruit.

Watch and observe his fruit and what he produces in his life.

If his life produces nothing but drama, headache and disorder – then know that that could be an indication that his fruit is bad.

Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.

- Matthew 7:17-18

His consistent behavior, lifestyle and what his life consistently produces are all clues as to who this man really is – more telling than what his online dating profile reveals.

Watch his reputation.

Observe whether or not others such as his fellow church members, family members, friends and acquaintances have good things to say about him.

If he is someone others speak highly of and is described with words such as “integrity,” “faithful” “reliable” and “true man of God” then you may have a real gem on your hands.

A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches, and loving favour rather than silver and gold. - Proverbs 22:1

Watch his community.

Watch and observe his community, or his surroundings regarding who he is influenced by and who he lets have his ear.

If possible, as you continue to date be sure to eventually meet his friends, family and any other close associations.

So called “secret” lifestyles are eventually revealed once you have a handle on who the major influencers are in his life.

Scripture admonishes us to sharpen one another as “iron sharpeneth iron” so you want to make sure and know who he not only receives counsel from but who also speaks into his life and sharpens him during his time of need.

*As iron sharpens iron, so a friend sharpens a friend.
- Proverbs 27:17 New Living Translation*

The time is coming when everything that is covered up will be revealed, and all that is secret will be made known to all.

- Luke 12:2 New Living Translation

Pray and ask God to reveal any thing you need to know about the new person you're dating, and be cautious, pay strict attention and "watch" his fruit, his reputation and his community of associations while you date.

The purpose of watching and praying throughout the relationship is so you'll remain objective and not get caught up in the romanticism of it all and that you won't get caught slipping and fall into temptation with the wrong one.

Date to collect data to determine whether or not the person you initially connected with online has the potential to be someone you may want to continue dating and getting to know for the purpose of marriage.

Chapter 5

Be Not Deceived

Scripture states in *Galatians 6:7 Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.*

The word, *deceived*, in this Scripture is the Greek word, *planaō*, which means, *to cause to stray, to lead astray, lead aside from the right way, wander, to fall away from the truth, be led into error and sin.*

Dictionary.com defines, *deceive*, as *To mislead by a false appearance or statement; delude.*

It is possible to be deceived with online dating, Christian or not, by getting caught up in appearances and presentations which will cause you to be led astray and turn away from the truth.

Don't allow the person you're dating to cause you to stray in your relationship with God.

Don't get so caught up in the "new boo" you met online that you allow him to sweep you not only off your feet but also away from your Creator.

Take heed to yourselves, that your heart be not deceived, and ye turn aside, and serve other gods, and worship them;
- Deuteronomy 11:16

While an advantage of online dating is that you may be presented with several interested prospects at once, it also increases the chance of some of the crazies and predators to slip in there in order to prey on the unsuspecting and unassuming.

For these reasons and more, it's important that you guard your heart, be led by the Spirit and that you take the necessary precautions, including the following, so that you will be not deceived with Christian online dating:

Let not your eyes be deceived.

As mentioned earlier, with Christian online dating it's easy to be mesmerized by a cute profile picture and a dashing smile that oozes charisma right through the computer screen – and if, on top of that he mentions he's saved and the name of his church home – then you may think you hit the Holy Ghost jackpot! Hey!

Many say men are visual, well, I'd like to propose that women are visual, too.

Women would prefer to have a fine man on their arm just like a man would want a fine woman, except we want him to be not only fine but also say the right things to keep us interested.

For this reason I believe many women are visual and led by what they hear as well.

In the online dating world, your eyes guide you.

Your eyes guide you as you peruse the many different profile pictures, and your eyes even guide you as you read their profiles.

If you exchange communication with someone online you think is cute and has a nice profile page, don't let your investigation end there.

Make no conclusions about his character or anything until you've dug a little deeper into who this man really is.

Just because he states on his profile that he's saved doesn't mean he's heaven-sent.

He could be the devil in disguise.

And he said, Take heed that ye be not deceived: for many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and the time draweth near: go ye not therefore after them. - Luke 21:8

Again, instead of assuming anything, if you like what you see and like what he has to say on his profile page, make sure during your initial communication exchange online or on the phone that you still verify his fruit.

Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them. - Matthew 7:20

The word, *know*, in this Scripture is the Greek word, *epiginōskō*, which means, *to become thoroughly acquainted with, to know thoroughly, to know accurately, know well, to recognize by sight, hearing or certain signs, to perceive who a person is, to know, to perceive, to find out and to understand.*

The beginning phase of Christian online dating is the acquaintance phase.

Remember you don't know each other yet, even though you may *feel* like you know him after you read his thorough, heartfelt profile page – you don't know that man. So during initial communication, whether it's through the site's internal email system or on the telephone, you're still getting to know your new acquaintance so that you can know his fruit, or be able to recognize

whether his fruit is good or not, because all bad fruit you want to toss to the side.

A word on communicating via telephone:

Know that you don't have to give every man you meet online your telephone number if they ask.

As mentioned earlier in this book, don't feel obligated to share any personal information until you're comfortable and have complete peace about who you're dealing with. Even if this means going back and forth on their internal email system for weeks or online communicating through a private phone system that gives you the option to not share your personal line (some online dating sites have this feature such as eHarmony) do whatever is comfortable for you.

You don't want to end up giving your personal cell number to someone who ends up being a stalker who doesn't know how to go away.

Other suggestions would be to get a free Google voice number to share instead of your private line, and it also may be a good idea to install the Mr. Number app on your phone which allows you to block unwanted callers.

Now back to not being deceived – oh yes, don't get so caught up in his looks and salvation profession that you end up side-tracked and deceived.

Like the title of my debut novel, [*“He's Fine...But is He Saved?”*](#) Make sure that he's fine and saved...for real.

Also, it's easy to be solely focused on looks as you peruse the various options on the Christian dating site.

Don't just pass up the "okay looking" brother and not even peek at what he has to say on his profile page because, to you, he's not "fine enough." Still see what he has to say – you may discover a true man of God with a heart of gold.

Let not your heart be deceived.

It is possible, after interacting online and on the phone, to end up dating someone and being led by your heart and not by your Spirit while dating which could ultimately lead to deceit as well.

Though society often says "*follow your heart*" – it sure sounds nice – but that's actually the worst thing you could do.

The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it? - Jeremiah 17:9

Scripture describes the heart, itself, as deceitful above all things.

The heart may want to do one thing while the Spirit may want to do the total opposite.

For example, the heart may say this fine man seated across from you at the restaurant appears to be an awesome man of God based on his conversation about how he serves in three auxiliaries at his church and feeds the homeless, but your Spirit may, at the same time, give you a check and have you concluding something isn't quite right about this man – yet you can't put a finger on it.

If you followed your heart and ignored the check, or Holy Ghost warning in this instance, you could end up marrying this man only to find out soon after you say, “*I do*,” that he is a great manipulator and liar, hadn’t set foot in anyone’s church in over eight years, believes all Christians are a bunch of hypocrites – including you – and thinks all homeless people should be put in jail.

You may find out he was just a man who wanted a “saved sugar mamma” to pay all his bills while he lay on the couch and have you serve him dinner and have sex with him every night as an act of submission.

Now this is just an example – the point I’m making is, throughout the entire dating process (even in the initial acquaintance phase) follow your spirit and not your heart so as to not be deceived and led somewhere that God never intended for you to go in the first place.

Let not your mind be deceived.

Some women are intellectual type thinkers who may not easily be led by their hearts but are, instead, the objective type who, after weighing all the pros and cons and sizing up a man and all of his qualities on paper, conclude in their minds whether or not someone will make a suitable life partner.

It’s important to be not deceived not only in your heart but also not in your mind as well.

Though God has blessed us all with brilliant minds, still trust Him when it comes to making life-altering decisions such as who you will spend the rest of your life with and call your husband and the father or father figure for your children.

Whoever trusts in his own mind is a fool, but he who walks in wisdom will be delivered. - Proverbs 28:26

Here Scripture admonishes us to not trust in our own mind; instead trust in the Lord.

Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding.

In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.

*Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the Lord, and depart from evil.
- Proverbs 3:5-7*

Though God has gifted you in the area of intellect still trust in Him and His decision-making ability for your life with all your heart.

Acknowledge Him about everything, including your dating relationships.

Give control over who you should be with or entertain totally over Him and allow Him to direct your path.

If He leads you to continue in a relationship, then continue.

If He leads you to cut it off and go another direction, then cut it off and go another direction.

Remember God knows best and obedience is always better than sacrifice.

Rather than being wise in your own eyes, humble yourself before God and give Him total control of the steering wheel in the car of your life.

Don't place your thoughts high above God's so that your mind will not be deceived by someone you *think* should be the one for you.

For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord.

For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.
- Isaiah 55:8-9

Rather than trusting in your mind, allow God to speak through your renewed mind as it is constantly refreshed and re-filled through daily meditation of God's Word and sweet communion with His Holy Spirit.

And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God. - Romans 12:2

Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.
- Psalm 119:105

Follow the Spirit.

With Christian online dating, remain guarded until you know, which normally takes several dates, that this man is someone you can truly trust.

Don't end up like Eve whom the Bible described as one who was deceived by the enemy:

And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression. - 1 Timothy 2:14

Deceit only leads to sin; don't allow the enemy to cause you to slide down that slippery slope with anyone.

Instead be as wise as Ruth, as modest as Mary, and as Spirit-led as Esther.

Be wise as a serpent, yet harmless as a dove. - Matthew 10:16

Chapter 6

Dos and Don'ts of Christian Online Dating

DON'T chase.

It is possible to chase someone online.

One way of chasing is that you notice the person you're interested in doesn't respond to you regularly when you email him or send him or "wink" or any of your contact attempts through the dating site, or you may have exchanged phone numbers and talked to each other once or twice and you notice he stopped calling or texting so you call and leave him a voice mail and he doesn't return your call so you text him again the next day, and the next day, and the next day – still no response. At this point the two of you are no longer in communication with each other – the so-called "relationship" is now one-sided in that now you're chasing him.

If a man is truly interested in you he'll show it.

He'll show it through not only his words but also his consistent actions.

He'll call and text you regularly, he'll ask you out on a consistent basis and after any attempt on your part to contact him he will respond either the same day or definitely by the next day with an explanation.

Unfortunately a lot of men would choose to simply cut off communication instead of actually telling you that they're no longer interested or that they've gone on and started communicating with someone else. They may not want to hurt your feelings, or may not want to invite a confrontation or a "talk" about why their feelings for you may have changed; they simply

want to have the ability to move on with no drama. So one thing I'd like to point out with online dating is that you have to be aware of this possibility, in advance, and be strong enough to not take it personally but instead be able to move on gracefully and with no hard feelings as well.

DO maintain your standards.

If you're praying to have a Christian husband who not only loves the Lord with his lips but also reverentially fears the Lord with his life and you're also believing God who a man who is, for example, responsible with his finances, family-oriented and a kind gentleman, then don't lower your standards simply because a handsome face from a Christian online dating site asks you out.

Find out as much information as you can concerning his values and belief system even before you actually go out on a date.

Bring up different topics in casual conversation and see how he responds.

For example, instead of outright asking, "Are you family oriented?" ask him about his mother or about his siblings and ask when was the last time he spoke to them. Make it casual – non-investigative – and just let the conversation flow naturally.

Stick to your standards – the ones that are based on Christ-like character, one's core values and belief system, and consider altering superficial ones that are solely based on looks or what kind of car he drives and the like.

Don't discount a brother because he doesn't fit up to your standard in the natural. You don't know what God has in store for him and until you get to know him and collect data while dating, watching and praying, you don't know what's in that man's heart.

DON'T rush.

For women who desire marriage, like, yesterday, it's easy to feel like the first decent-looking man who reaches out to you and you connect on the first date must be the one so now you're making wedding plans a week later.

While this may feel good to the flesh, don't grieve the Spirit by rushing the dating process – instead use this time of getting to know each other on a personal level and allow it to grow deeper with each date and develop naturally into something that has the potential to last a lifetime.

Regarding how long you should date someone before marriage, while the Bible, itself, does not denote any specific time, practical wisdom says that you want to allow enough time to get to know someone as much as possible (note that I said, “as much as possible” because even after you get married you're still in the process of getting to know the person you're now married to on a daily basis).

I believe a couple should date at least a year before getting engaged – this way you're able to observe, or as I mentioned previously, you're able to “watch and pray” about the person you're dating throughout at least four seasons so that you know how the person you're dating responds to certain situations and how they respond to pressure. After a year you should be able to better assess whether or not this is someone you see yourself with in the long run.

Don't make lifelong decisions at the spur of the moment.

If you make it past the three-month "wooing phase" and the six-month "comfortable phase" then after a year of dating you should both have a better understanding as to whether or not you can see yourselves having a future together.

Don't decide if you want a man to father or be a father figure to your children in the wooing phase. Give the relationship time to develop into something real.

Give yourself time to really get to know and respect him as the man of God that God predestined him to be because at the end of the day love, for men, is spelled R-E-S-P-E-C-T and if you don't respect him, he'll sense it and that will not make for a happy home (okay, that nugget was free, now back to the amount of time you should date).

Even the founder of eHarmony, who is a Christian and a psychologist, Neil Clark Warren, in his book, [Date or Soulmate? How To Know if Someone is Worth Pursuing in Two Dates or Less](#), suggests getting to know someone at least two years before marriage, and he was the one who founded a dating website! Even *he* suggests not to rush.

Don't get caught in the danger of marrying someone you barely know too quickly.

If a man says he loves and wants to marry you now, then he should also love and still want to marry you six months from now or even a year from now.

Allow yourself enough time to really get to know each other before making the second most important decision you could make in your entire life by getting married – second to accepting Jesus Christ as your personal Lord and Savior.

That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. - Romans 10:9

He that is slow to wrath is of great understanding: but he that is hasty of spirit exalteth folly. - Proverbs 14:29

So again, take your time, be led by the Spirit, follow the Holy Ghost traffic signal and by all means don't rush.

DO realize it's an investment.

When you join a Christian online dating site, not only are you making a decision to try something new, you are making an investment. In most cases you have the option to pay for 3-6 months of service at a time, so this means you are making an investment of your finances. Because of this, make sure you are in a position, financially, where you can actually afford to date online long enough to meet someone noteworthy.

Don't allow the fact that you can only afford three months of service dictate to you that you must meet the man of your dreams in three months or you'll never meet him, because this kind of thinking only leads to a hasty spirit that may make foolish decisions.

Not only is Christian online dating an investment of your finances, it's also an investment of your time as you'll be spending time online, on the phone and in person getting to know different

people. Make sure you are in an ideal position emotionally and socially where you feel you are ready to date and that this is your season of going out and meeting people and not your season to receive healing from a past relationship or rest in the Lord while not putting yourself out there on the dating scene just yet.

The only way you will know this for sure is through your own personal prayer and private time with the Lord as your ultimate decision is between you and Him.

DON'T assume exclusivity immediately

If you just met and connected with someone online and after emailing each other back and forth and exchanging phone numbers and maybe even going on one date, don't assume that just because he's out with you now that he is not in current communication with someone else that he also connected with online.

Don't call yourself his "girlfriend" after one date.

I explain in my book, [How To Date and Stay Saved](#), that the purpose of Christian dating is to discover through prayer, the leading of the Holy Spirit, and through gathering information whether or not the person you are consistently and exclusively dating has the potential to be your spouse.

Just because you have gone on a date with someone you met online doesn't mean the two of you are now *dating*.

For the first date it's all about getting to know each other on the surface level, hearing about each other's testimonies and seeing whether or not you connect with each other in person like you did online and on the phone.

Regarding the topic of exclusivity, more than likely the man will let you know if he's seriously interested in getting to know you more by either continuously asking you out on future dates or plainly making it known to you that he is interested in you and would like to court (some men still use that term, mainly older men though) or date you for the purpose of building a future together.

So most men will let you know, but if not, after you've gone on a few dates and you want to know whether or not he's exclusive, it's okay to inquire, and it's also okay for you to still interact with others online during the initial stages as well.

Communication throughout the entire process is key – remain open and honest and make sure the two of you are on the same page regarding your new dating relationship.

One way to lead into this conversation is to eventually, after a few dates, bring up the online dating site you both use and your opinions of it – which may lead to the two of you discussing whether or not you're in communication with others and ultimately lead to how you feel about each other and whether or not exclusivity is in the near future.

Another key is to again, follow your Spirit – your inner hunch.

You should be able to sense whether a man is really into you, and interested in more than just what you may have to offer in the bedroom once married – by how he responds to you, communicates with you, makes plans to regularly see you, is attentive toward you and is genuinely interested in getting to know every thing about you – Why? Because he's sincerely and seriously interested in you in order to ultimately date each other exclusively.

DO have realistic expectations.

I'm sure by now you've seen the many TV commercials or even ads online showcasing couples who met and married after their connection through a Christian dating website. I'm sure that image may have sparked in your mind the possibility of the same thing happening for you.

Do you ever notice that a lot of those commercials and ads use some of the same people's faces, over and over again? I believe it's because some of the Christian dating sites are somewhat newer and it takes time to find successfully married couples who are willing to share their testimony publicly. This is not to say no one is meeting and marrying online, obviously some are and may not have been willing to publicly display how they initially met, but what the sites don't show is how long the couples took to actually connect.

With this said, for this section I'd like to encourage you to have realistic expectations with Christian online dating.

Because you're presented with different opportunities, it may take some time to connect with the right one for you.

It may take months, or even a year or longer. In most cases it's not free, so because it may take a while, again, you may want to ask yourself if this is something that you're in a financial position to do.

Christian online dating is not to be treated as a "get married quick" tool (again, you don't want to rush) and at the end of the day there are no guarantees.

In addition, view Christian online dating as simply yet another way to meet other hopefully like-minded individuals (again, you have to verify his fruit to prove this).

Also, don't view it as the only way God can bless you with a spouse.

Don't put God in a box.

Don't view online dating as your "last chance" to find love. View online dating as simply an additional way to meet new people.

With online dating, you come in contact with people you may never have met otherwise, especially in the case of relationships formed with someone from out of state (more on that shortly).

However, don't just put all your eggs in one basket, still keep your options open and be open to God's leading in your day-to-day affairs.

Still allow room for God to order your steps and place people in your path for you to meet and consider along the way.

Still have a life and enjoy yourself and don't be so consumed with your online dating profile that you feel if you don't get a "nudge" of some sort online or an email from a potential suitor that your life is over and that you'll never get married.

Have faith in the promise, not the process.

Allow God to do what He said He would do concerning the desires of your heart while leaving the "how" up to Him.

Order my steps in thy word: and let not any iniquity have dominion over me. - Psalm 119:133

Delight thyself also in the Lord: and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart. - Psalm 37:4

For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us. - 2 Corinthians 1:20

The thief comes only in order to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have and enjoy life, and have it in abundance (to the full, till it overflows). - John 10:10 Amplified Bible

Chapter 7

Long-Distance Relationships

Let's say you connect with someone online, discover you have a lot in common, are attracted to one another and have even had telephone conversations about each other's goals and dreams and the two of you seem very compatible...except for one little caveat – you're more than seven hundred miles away from each other. You live in the North and he lives in the South.

Distance aside – you can easily see yourself with this man in the long run based on your phone conversations and video chat sessions, but then reality sets in – the fact is that you won't really get to know him as a person until you actually spend time with him in person which means someone is going to have to have to make a trip down (or a trip up) to see the other person in order to see if there is really something there.

It is possible to appear to be totally compatible with someone based on their profile and even phone conversations, however it could be quite difficult to date to really get to know each other for the purpose of marriage if you're not within a decent driving distance from each other.

While possible, it does pose a challenge and could prove to be quite costly when you add flight costs or gas for those who may drive but in the end some may consider it well worth it if their “prize” is lifelong love.

It could work, and some people make it work, but you have to be realistic in realizing the challenges, and finally ask yourself is it really worth the time, effort and the extra expenses in the form of flights, hotel rooms and other travel costs.

So for those who are considering dating someone who lives in another state, here are some suggestions:

For the first in-person meeting, let him visit you.

Unless you had already planned to visit family and he happens to live in the same city, allow the man to take his rightful place as the leader and initiator and let him visit you first.

If a man is really interested, he will visit you first.

If you visit him first, you are taking all the work off of him, you're not allowing him to chase you and you're devaluing yourself to him as he now sees you as just another woman who wants him and you're not making yourself stand out from the rest.

Allow him to take on the extra expense whether it's flights or gas for a road trip; allow him to tame the roads in order to visit you. Besides, you're the prize and he should want to come see you, again, if he really likes you.

Don't stay in the same house or apartment together under any circumstances.

When he visits you, don't allow him to stay with you – suggest to him nearby hotels and allow him the privilege of continuing to respect you by getting his own room himself. You don't know him, and you don't owe him anything even if he did spend much of his last paycheck on his flight to come see you.

Give him a list of at least three nearby hotels, or he can book one in advance online for a good deal, and when he arrives meet him there.

Don't allow him to "play house" with you for a weekend in order to see if "this could really work," instead maintain your standards and dignity by dating one another for the weekend while he lodges somewhere else.

Even if you two vow to not sleep with each other when he's in town, the fact that you both are attracted to each other is temptation enough for two people to bear – I don't care how saved, sanctified and Holy Ghost filled you are.

The flesh is a beast and its cravings are real.

Don't feed it by creating tempting circumstances in which the flesh can have its way.

Abstain from all appearance of evil. - 1 Thessalonians 5:22

*...the Spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.
- Matthew 26:41b*

If he does visit you from his far-away hometown, this could be his demonstrating that he either really likes you or would at least like to see if there is potential in the two of you dating exclusively in the long run – otherwise he wouldn't have invested so much time, money and effort into the trip.

Now, on the other hand, if when he visits you he can't keep his hands off of you and continuously tries to have sex with you, then know that sex was the only thing on his brain during his journey, tell him "No, thank you" and send him packing.

Whether you decide to pursue a long-distance relationship is totally up to you, however, as mentioned previously, it can be quite challenging especially since you're not able to date regularly such as most weekends in order to effectively be courted by him, and

you're also not able to tell whether or not he's dating you long-distance via telephone while dating others locally. Of course communication is key, as you will have to be totally honest and up front with one another about your expectations, but you also have to really pray and ask God if a long-distance relationship is really something you would like to pursue.

Chapter 8

Don't Date Online If...

The following are reasons NOT to set up a Christian dating website profile.

Don't date online if...

...you need someone else to make you happy.

Don't place yourself in a situation to meet other people unless you are truly already happy with yourself.

As a Christian, your joy should be in the fact that you have a relationship with God and are in Him and not based on what someone else can do for you emotionally, financially or even physically in order to make you happy.

*For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring.
- Acts 17:28*

Be content, first, before you date.

The Apostle Paul states how he learned to be content:

Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. - Philippians 4:11

So it's a learning process that doesn't happen overnight.

Have joy and be at peace with yourself while single.

Abide in God's Word and abide satisfied first, even while single.

If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. - John 15:7

There will be times, in a dating or even a marriage relationship, where your future spouse or spouse may disappoint or possibly unintentionally do something that causes you pain. Instead of relying on the other person to make you happy all the time, find your joy, peace and strength in the Lord.

The he said unto them, Go your way, eat the fat, and drink the sweet, and send portions unto them for whom nothing is prepared: for this day is holy unto our Lord: neither be ye sorry; for the joy of the Lord is your strength. - Nehemiah 8:10

The person you date should add to the joy you already have in your heart – not be the source of it.

These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full. - John 15:11

If you're not already content while single, then you're not ready to date.

...you're lonely.

Don't date online if you're lonely.

First realize that with Christ you are never alone as He has said that He will never leave you nor forsake you. (*Hebrews 13:5*)

If you haven't really internalized this Scripture in your heart where you truly believe it, then don't date online because predators will

be able to smell the aroma of a lonely woman miles away, even in the cyber world.

Quite often the strong prey on the weak, so if you feel lonely then the other person may be able to tell by how you communicate and your overall persona.

Don't set up an online dating profile unless you know God truly loves you, is with you and will never leave you nor forsake you – don't try to meet a man in order to fill an empty space in your heart that can only be properly filled with God's love.

...you're desperate.

Same as with lonely women, predators can spot the desperate woman as well. They can spot it in your anxious and overly eager demeanor such as if you always make yourself available, want to meet and go out right away and talk marriage on the first date.

Sure you may have not dated in over two years but he doesn't have to know that by your first date behavior. Don't act like someone who hasn't been out in a while.

Remain honorable and carry yourself like a lady who is well worth the wait.

Walk in confidence knowing that you are a beautiful queen who is deeply loved by God and fearfully and wonderfully made by him.

*I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made:
marvelous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well.
- Psalm 139:14*

The word, *fearfully*, is the Greek word, *yare'*, which means *to stand in awe, to honor and to respect*.

Not to say you should walk around with your nose stuck up in the air conceited – it's possible to be confident and not arrogant, and confidence alone, no matter how you look, is a very attractive trait.

So don't set up an online dating profile if you're desperate because you may accept the first person who gives you attention even if he doesn't portray values and character traits you're looking for.

Instead, meditate on Scriptures such as *Psalm 139:14* and tell yourself that you're beautiful and deserve to be loved like Christ loves the church.

Fall in love with your uniqueness and embrace who God made you to be.

Your confidence will always shine through and you will attract the kind of man you want instead of the kind you don't.

...rejection frightens you.

Don't date online if rejection frightens you.

Online dating is not for the faint at heart.

You're introduced to many people at once who fit your qualification (depending on the type of Christian dating site you join – some match you based on compatibility and some don't) and you may reach out to someone who doesn't respond in kind, or someone may initially reach out to you and you seem to click or even connect over the phone and you're feeling real hopeful and the next thing you know you don't hear from him ever again, or you may get flat-out rejected seemingly out of the blue.

Don't date online if you are "thin-skinned" and get your feelings hurt easily because there are many kinds of people who set up an online dating profile who lack pure intentions and effective communication skills.

If you're someone who takes things personally all the time, can't stand to be ignored and is frightened by thought of being rejected by someone outright (as some may reject you while others won't) then Christian online dating may not be for you.

Chapter 9

Benefits of Christian Online Dating

If used correctly, there are some benefits of Christian online dating. One of those is the presence of options.

Oftentimes as a Christian single woman or as a woman in general you hear and read about so many “doom and gloom” stories about how there are no good men out here and that all the good ones are either in jail, gay or married, that you may feel like your options are slim to none. However when you converse, even just on a “getting to know” basis, with men who have decent jobs, education and a sense of direction and on top of that God in their life, it gives you a renewed sense of hope, even if your encounter doesn’t necessarily lead to the altar.

Another benefit of Christian online dating is it builds confidence.

Because you have more options, you may find yourself meeting and conversing with more than one guy at a time, which is fine in the beginning stages.

With each new conversation or in-person encounter, you build up your own confidence and self-esteem as you laugh and enjoy yourself with someone who, hopefully – if he’s a good one – treats you like a queen for a night, opens your door and listens attentively to what you have to say. Again, even if the two of you decide to go in other directions and not date one other exclusively, you often find that you now have an easier time meeting and being more approachable to men offline because of your now glowing self-confidence.

And lastly, one of the obvious benefits of Christian online dating is that you may meet and marry your husband.

As mentioned in the introduction, I personally know of at least five Christian women who met and connected with their husbands initially through an online dating site, all locally, and are now happily married.

So the possibility is there, and we know that with God all things are possible.

Even if you don't meet the "One" online, you may still meet new male friends, or new brothers in Christ with whom you can now encourage and exhort in the things of the Lord, or as Scripture says, as "iron sharpens iron" which, for you, may be well worth it as well.

Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend. - Proverbs 27:17

Conclusion

You may have read this and determined that Christian online dating is not for you. If so, great!

My goal was to make you aware of both the dangers and benefits of Christian online dating and to show you how to be led so that you will ultimately make the decision as to whether or not it's something you'd like to try.

If you read this and feel led to set up a Christian online dating profile or continue on a dating site, that's fine as well – hopefully this book has fueled you with more information you can use so you can go about it more safely and securely.

Whatever you decide (and of course that decision is between you and God), I pray that you find peace and joy in your journey as you remain focused on Him while knowing that He has a bright and beautiful future in store for you and that He loves you with an amazing, unconditional love that none will ever be able to comprehend.

Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee. - Isaiah 26:3

But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day. - Proverbs 4:18

For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,

Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named,

That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man;

That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love,

May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height;

And to know the love of Christ, which passeth all knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.

- Ephesians 3:14-19

Appendix A
Safety First – More Online Dating
Tips

- Never give money to anyone who asks you for it online, delete or block any one who does and report them to the website administrator. Also, do not share your financial information such as your Social Security number, credit card number or anything similar with anyone.
- Initially keep your personal information private – including your full name. Feel free to use a made-up username or even just your first name until you feel comfortable enough and ready to share more information such as your whole name and personal phone number. Until then, utilize the member-to-member technology that many online dating sites are equipped with that protects your identity until you decide to reveal it. Also, leave personal contact information off of your profile page.
- Don't buy into others using words and phrases such as "destiny," "fate," "we're soulmates," or the infamous "God told me you were the one" to describe your initial online connection in order to get you to make a hasty, irrational decision based on emotion. Don't allow anyone to rush you with these words or cause you to be placed in an uncomfortable position such as meeting them in person before you're ready.
- Don't share your mailing address with anyone you just met online, even if he claims to need it in order to send you flowers or other gifts, including birthday sentiments.
- Don't date someone who is legally separated and not divorced.

- For someone who claims to be recently divorced, ask to see their divorce papers, or look them up yourself as it is public information.
- Use common sense and by all means don't ignore any "checks" in your spirit that something isn't right with the person you're interacting with online.

Appendix B

Online Dating Statistics

You Should Know

1 in 10 Americans have used an online dating site or mobile dating app.

66% of online daters have gone on a date with someone they met through a dating site or app, and 23% of online daters say they have met a spouse or long-term relationship through these sites.

42% of all Americans know an online dater, and 29% know someone who has used online dating to find a spouse or other long-term relationship.

54% of online daters have felt that someone else seriously misrepresented themselves in their profile and 28% of online daters have been contacted by someone through an online dating site or app in a way that made them feel harassed or uncomfortable.

5% of Americans who are currently married or in a long-term partnership met their partner somewhere online. Among those who have been together for ten years or less, 11% met online.

(Source: <http://pewinternet.org/Reports/2013/Online-Dating/Summary-of-Findings.aspx>)

11 percent of people who started a long-term relationship in the past decade say they met their partner online.

46% of people who use online dating sites say finding someone long-term is a major reason they use the sites. 25%, on the other hand, “just want to have fun without being in a serious relationship.”

(Source: http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/10/21/online-dating-misrepresenting_n_4134120.html)

Appendix C

Additional Resources

Free Report: The U.S. Federal Trade Commission's advice to avoid online romance scams:

<http://www.onguardonline.gov/articles/0004-online-dating-scams>

Access Full Background Check in 60 seconds:

<http://clixtrac.com/goto/?148493>

About Kim Brooks

Award-winning author, licensed minister, national speaker and songwriter Kim Brooks is the founder of Kim Brooks Ministries International, Driven Enterprises, LLC and Free Indeed Publications, all headquartered in her hometown of Detroit, MI.

Kim is the national best-selling author of the novel, *He's Fine...But is He Saved?* and its highly acclaimed sequel, *He's Saved...But is He For Real?* as well as non-fiction books *The Little Black Survival Book for Single Saints* and *How To Date and Stay Saved* along with other resources for Christian singles.

Kim has been a guest columnist for *Gospel Today Magazine*, has been featured in *JET* and on The Word Network and publishes a monthly eNewsletter, *The Single Heart*, and a free online daily devotional for single women which encourages thousands globally and is subscribable for free on her website, <http://www.KimOnTheWeb.com>

More Books by Kim Brooks

Non-fiction/Self-Help:

[How To Date and Stay Saved](#)

[The Little Black Survival Book for Single Saints](#)

Christian Fiction:

[He's Fine...But is He Saved?](#)

[Sequel: He's Saved...But is He For Real?](#)

Upcoming Christian Fiction Release:

[She That Findeth](#) (Simon & Schuster, May 2014)

[Subscribe to Kim's Free Online Daily Devotional for Single Women](#)

Visit Kim's Website and Blog for More Encouragement:

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Please share your thoughts on *The Ultimate Guide to Safe Christian Online Dating* by posting an Amazon review, and if this book blessed you and you believe it may also be beneficial to others, then share its Amazon Kindle link (as Kindle is now a free app on all smartphones and tablets) so they can download, read and be blessed by it as well.

Thank you for your time – I pray you were edified and enlightened by this book and as always, be and *STAY* encouraged!

-Kim Brooks

<http://www.KimOnTheWeb.com>