



True Love Dates: Your Indispensable Guide to Finding the Love of your Life

Debra Fileta

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In True Love Dates, Debra Fileta encourages singles not to 'kiss dating goodbye' but instead to experience a season of dating as a way to find real love. Through reading powerful, real-life stories (including the author's personal journey) and gaining insights from Fileta's experience as a professional counselor, readers will discover that it is possible to find true love through dating.

Christians are looking for answers to finding true love. They are disillusioned with the church that has provided little practical application in the area of love and relationships. They've been bombarded by Christian books that shun dating, idolize courting, fixate on spirituality, and in the end offer little real relationship help.

True Love Dates provides honest help for dating by guiding readers into vital relationship essentials for finding true love. Debra is a young, professional Christian counselor, and True Love Dates offer sound advice grounded in Christian spirituality. It delivers insight, direction, and counsel when it comes to entering the world of dating and learning to do it right the first time around. Drawing on the stories and struggles of hundreds of young men and women who have pursued finding true love, Fileta helps readers bypass unnecessary pain while focusing on the things that really matter in the world of dating.

True Love Dates: Your Indispensable Guide to Finding the Love of your Life Details

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Molly Evangeline says

As a single girl in my mid-twenties praying someday to soon meet my future husband, I'm always interested in finding good Christian books on dating and relationships. So I jumped at the chance to read and review True Love Dates. There are so many anti-dating books and opinions that make it sound like courting is the only right way, and if you date, then you're carnal and headed for disaster (as if what you call it means the same thing to everyone). It can be confusing and frustrating for anyone trying to figure out the best way to pursue a Godly relationship. While I agree with purpose for courting, maintaining a pure relationship, I don't think there's a "one size fits all" method for relationships, so I was curious to read something a bit different this time.

I thought the book was well written and had good, practical advice that can be applied to all relationships instead of setting up a rigid formula. We are, after all, individuals and every relationship is going to reflect different personalities. Debra Fileta did a good job at presenting a Christ-centered relationship and the consequences of compromise without limiting it to her personal opinions on the subject. If you're like me and interested in preparing for a future relationship or to help in a current relationship, I recommend it as a good source of information and advice to add to your collection.

I received this book free from BookSneeze® in exchange for my honest review.

Reagan Welch says

This is a book in disguise. It seems like a cheesy "find a Christian boyfriend" book, but it actually has deep biblical principles and pinpoints a lot of flaws in today's mindsets on "dating" and "finding the one". I am convicted, comforted, and inspired.

Mary Haynes says

Even though a lot of the things Fileta discussed were perhaps obvious or typical of any dating book, I found True Love Dates to be a good heart-check, as well as useful for considering actual boundaries to set in one's dating life. That said, the chapter that I actually found the most helpful was "What Relationships Can't Do," since the things Fileta explained apply to all relationships, not just romantic ones.

SusanandDavid Kalman says

She talks about 3 types of dating: yourself, potential spouses, and God.

1. If you know yourself, you know what you need in a mate.
2. If you know what you need in a mate, you'll only date those types.
3. Knowing God and his plan for your life is essential for 1 and 2.

Amber Stokes says

When I came across a positive review for this book on a blog I follow (Emily Rachelle Writes), I was intrigued. Modern romance seems fraught with complexities and uncertainties that have to be navigated, so any solid advice is welcome - and it's always encouraging to read about the various ways couples find each other and discover love.

True Love Dates is divided into four parts: Dating Inward, Dating Outward, Dating Upward, and a section dedicated to FAQs and the author's responses. I really appreciate Fileta's perspective, looking at dating in its place within one's whole life rather than focusing only on the act of dating itself.

For "dating inward," the idea that you should be comfortable with yourself - with your goals, your desires, and your identity - instead of rushing into a relationship and letting the relationship define you makes a lot of sense. And for "dating upward," the reminder that God's plan for our lives (in light of eternity) encompasses more than one relationship resonates with me. There seemed to be a bit of a disconnect regarding Fileta's opinions on living in the present of a dating relationship and planning for the future, but there's still a lot of great food for thought within the pages. (And if you've known me long in the blogosphere, you know I enjoyed the "seasons" analogy in the "dating outward" section!)

From sharing her thoughts on common concerns that young people have about dating, to helping the reader keep the big, hopeful picture in mind, Fileta has written a book with heart that has a lot to offer those who have questions about love.

With thanks to Zondervan and NetGalley for providing me with a temporary e-ARC of the book in exchange for my honest opinion.

Sheila Gregoire says

What a practical yet profoundly spiritual book on how to choose your life partner!

I love how Debra Fileta points out that the courtship movement isn't the **ONLY** Christian method of finding a spouse--and likely isn't even the best. She gets the focus back on our own hearts, but then shows us the responsibility that we have (not our fathers!) of choosing a mate.

And she deals firmly with the heartache and longing that so many people feel, dispelling those cliches like "Jesus is my boyfriend". We do long to be married; there's nothing wrong with that. But there's a lot wrong with marrying someone who isn't good for us and who will take us away from our real calling to live out for God.

Love this quote best: Fix your eyes on Jesus and the plans he has for your life. Look ahead, and run after him with all your heart. Then look around. Whoever has kept up with you, marry that person.

Huiqi Ho says

Honest, simple and beautifully written.

It took me three years to slowly get through the book because of circumstances in my life, but this book stood the test of time, and continues to be relevant in my time of singlehood and dating.

Many aptly relevant examples were also given through her experiences as a counsellor, which made the book holistic and a satisfying read. Through the Q&A section, Debra Fileta also attempted to answer many questions and addressed some misconceptions amongst single Christians today.

I would recommend this for single Christians who are wandering in this phase of their lives, needing some direction - then consider dating inward, outward and upward.

Nicole Pramik says

I'm a Christian single lass who seeks a godly marriage relationship. So why oh why do I keep buying Christian relationship books?

Concerning this particular book, I can sum up my sentiments in a single word...

True Love Dates is yet another Christian self-help/dating book that covers, as King Solomon put it, nothing new under the sun. Yes, there is good advice here but it's nothing a typical psychology textbook couldn't tell you, if I'm being honest. Likewise, the dating advice is, once again, nothing but rehash.

The premise of the book is fine: love yourself, love God, and love other people. That's good and Biblical but it's presented in a non-dynamic and, dare I say it, boring fashion. I know I'm in the vast minority of reviewers when I say this, but this book actually, literally bored me, so much so that I didn't finish it properly from front to cover. That might be because I've read so many similar books that everything just bleeds together after a while. I appreciated this book's organization of material but the material itself was nothing insightful.

So here is my advice to all the single ladies and gents out there - scrap these books.

Seriously.

When I date and wed, I want our relationship to be organic, not scripted and based on dating book "advice." Overall, if you've never read any books about dating, this might be an okay pick. But if you've perused even two similar titles, this isn't going to reveal anything those books, or common sense, hasn't explained.

Lindsay says

As someone who has been actively dating (and reading dating books) for 10 years, I would wholeheartedly recommend this book. Most dating books seem to say the same thing over and over again, and while I can't say there were any groundbreaking discoveries brought forth in this book, I still found myself wanting to

read more and thinking about things in a different way. I believe the difference is in the way the information is presented in this book. I especially appreciate that Fileta starts off by urging readers to examine themselves--what she refers to as “dating inward” before dating “outwards” and then “Upwards”. It is not often that we take the time to discover our own passions, purpose, and potentially pitfalls; instead we are quick to make a list of everything we want in a potential partner- and in turn, when things go wrong, we are usually quick to point the finger at the other person. The approach to dating laid out by Fileta is refreshing, and I believe it will lead to much healthier, happier relationships.

Jonny says

I enjoyed this particular text. As a pastor of a congregation filled with people who are dating, Fileta offers practical and Biblical advice about how one might approach such an often daunting and difficult endeavor. Fileta is both adventurous and sound in her approach. Safe and sacred, if you ask me. Recommended for pastors, parents, and people searching for their true love.

Aimee says

This is a book about approaching dating from a Christian perspective. It's not anything revolutionary, but the ideas are presented in a clear structure of dating inward (knowing yourself), dating outward (knowing what you want and progressing through relationships with others, and dating upward (keeping God/spirituality the focus). It was a pretty easy and relaxing read.

Iola says

I picked up this book for review after reading an interesting article by the author in Relevant magazine. I'm not a singleton looking for love. In fact, I'm about to celebrate my twentieth wedding anniversary.

But my marital status doesn't matter. Although True Love Dates is aimed at singles, I thought the advice was relevant for all ages, for anyone who is looking to improve their relationship with a date, fiancé or spouse—or even their child. I had a vision for my life in my teens, but marriage and children have taken over. I know who I am, but do I know who I want to be when I no longer have children at home? And do I know who God wants me to be, now and in the future?

The book is in four main sections. The first three look at what Fileta sees as the three main stages of dating: inward, outward and upward.

The first section focuses on who I am, where I come from (and how that can impact relationships), and what I want out of life. As she says:

‘In order to proclaim “I do,” one has to know and understand “I.”’

The second section focuses on what to look for in a potential partner (with a focus on the major aspects of character, rather than the external characteristics of looks and money), while the third section focuses on our relationship with God:

“If you desire marriage, seek God. If you desire singleness, seek God. In the end, if you entrust your heart to him, God will use your desires to lead you in the right direction.”

The final section of the book is answers to the questions she hears most frequently in her counselling practice. (I especially liked her comments on ‘biblical dating’: that in Bible times, a woman’s spouse was pretty much chosen by her parents, who then paid the groom a dowry consisting of family treasures and a donkey or two. Should we return to ‘biblical dating’? I think not.)

I like the fact that Fileta is writing from the point of view of a Christian who lives in the real world. I've read Christian self-help books in the past that have been off-putting because the author has written from a Christian bubble where everything is rosy and no one ever has an unkind or impure thought. I find those books impossible to relate to (or recommend), as I live in a world full of sin where I constantly make mistakes (and so do those around me). It was refreshing to see dating examined in a way that is relevant and relatable. Recommended.

Thanks to Zondervan and NetGalley for providing a free ebook for review.

J. says

I don't think this book revolutionized my thinking, but I think it can prove to be an important resource.

Fileta is not always as precise in her language as I could desire, but for all that, I had first read some of her articles in Relevant magazine and then blog posts from her website, and I recognized that she genuinely loves Jesus, as do I. Some of the imprecisions that threw me off: saying, in the chapter about developing a vision for your life, that we need to "trust our spirit"--I think I know what she means, and agree with her meaning, but the language bothered me as something that seems like a slightly "Christianized" version of the world's "follow your heart" mantra, which is not biblical. I was also rather astounded that Fileta said we need to date inward before we date upward--huh? As someone who has become really emotionally healthy by God's grace over years of walking with Him and letting Him love me, I am much more inclined to think that we need God to be first, before we can even think about loving ourselves rightly. (But I think that in terms of how her book was structured, I like that "dating upward" was put last for maximum impact.)

For all that, though, there's a lot of sound counsel and wisdom in here. If none of it was particularly new to me, I still felt refreshed and encouraged by the reminders. Fileta has said before that *I Kissed Dating Goodbye* has led to huge pressure in finding true love, but I think she actually has more in common with, for example, Leslie Ludy from *When God Writes Your Love Story*, than one might initially suspect. They both really love Jesus and want Him to be first in relationships--which includes being emotionally healthy yourself first. The difference is that Fileta is coming from a counseling perspective with strong emphasis on healthy relationships, whereas Ludy talks more about what it means to honor God with every area in our lives. That being said, I appreciate that Fileta sees there's room for women to not only be in traditional roles, even though I would rather have the guy initiate the relationship and do dream of eventually becoming a stay-at-home mom.

Charmant Bba says

I Loved the 3 areas to focus on when dating : "Dating Inward", "Dating Outward", and "Dating Upward"

Sidong says

I started this book hoping to learn some dating techniques or advice. However, this is totally not what it is about. Written by a young counselor, this book covers many aspects of how Christians should deal with their emotions, insecurities, and their past before entering a relationship. It features many stories from the counselor's office, which makes this book readable and down-to-earth. Many of the people in the stories have family-of-origin problems, which need to be dealt with first before they are able to establish healthy relationships. There are quite some counseling concepts in the book. The author definitely has an advantage on this topic because of her profession.

I like how the author focuses so much on dating inward (love yourself, knowing your value, having a vision of life) and dating upward (align my life with God's will, putting Him as the top priority, trusting Him that he will provide all our needs). Afterwards, dating outwards can develop on good foundations. This book is very suitable for young people because the author apparently understands how young people think and what the culture is nowadays. She also offers much practical advice.

You can tell that the author is someone who loves God and follows God's calling. However, she also made mistakes and had struggles before meeting her husband. Her stories are very inspiring and encouraging. She also calls everyone to a higher ground, a better relationship with God, and pursuing the best model of marriage that connect physically, emotions, and spiritually.
