

Transcript of Interview with John

[BACKGROUND NOISES]

[JOHN CHIRPS]

Me: It's going to be a part of the conversation—

John: Just do it. Just go for it.

Me: Ok, so I should preface.

So, I write for this BYU website—it's kind of like a blog—where you can, umm, ask—like anybody can submit questions, and then you get answers to them...umm, and so a lot of—we get a lot of dating/relationship questions, kinda thing—

[RUSTLING NOISES]

Me:...yeah, that'll be good.

John: I'm nervous. I'm holding—

Me: Okay—

John: Let the record show I am cuddling my Kevin Durant 8 basketball shoes—

Me: Yes

John: In fear.

Me: He really is.

So, the—so he asks a question and then he kind of gets into more details, so I'll paraphrase the details, but this is the first question: "Can anyone explain to me the concept of dating around? Like, I understand going on dates with different people until you find one that works, but I'm not sure how people go on dates with different people at the same time."

So this is how he goes in—he's like, "say I'm dating, like, these three girls—"

John: 'Kay.

Me: And, the first scenario is like "Oh, say I really like one, but I don't really like any of the others, like, that's fine; I just go on with that." He's like, "But, let's say that things start going really well with this first girl, and then—but things are also going really well with the second girl." He's like, "What do I do?"

John: That's a good question.

Me: Yeah. So...and then—and then he's like, "I could..." So yeah. He's like "So let's say I decide for whatever reason to date [Girl 1] exclusively. Now that I've chosen someone else over her, [like], is [Girl 3] no longer an option forever?" kind of—

John: Yeah.

Me: So—

John: Yeah.

Well, I think, first and foremost, that...you need to understand, that the f—if you decide to commit...seriously to any one of these girls, then you need to commit f—one hundred percent, in the sense that you don't go with things seriously with one of the girls and then still linger around the others. That's not fair to any of the girls, and also to yourself. So, first things first. Once you make your decision, you gotta go with it.

...

Umm...That's the other thing, too, is that—now we don't live in a polygamous society, and we don't—we live with this problem, where there are many beautiful women in the world, and...you must pick one. And...I don't think there are a lot of subjective—or, sorry, a lot of objective things that determine the outcome of who you should pick...(to be more serious) but I feel a lot of it is a—is subjective, and it's based off your personal preferences, and maybe explaining all the reasoning to someone else doesn't make any sense, but it has to make complete sense with you and you have to commit that way, I think.

But, I don't think there is a right or wrong answer; I just think there's a decision. And, I don't think that you have to decide immediately; I think you can just take your time, and then if things don't work out, if you t—while taking that extra time, then that's fine. Just, you gotta be able to take all the time you need, and I think with time, it'll develop naturally as well, just...It'll just—the answer will come to you as you—as you think about it, you just gotta live with it longer. I don't think there is a right or a wrong answer.

Me: Yeah, and it's gonna be kinda something that, like—thinking about it right now, before any of—because this question's completely hypothetical—like, before any of this is actually happening, it seems like kind of a hard decision, kind of thing, but in the moment, you think it might get a little bit easier?

John: ...Umm...what do you mean?

Me: Well, so I think—like...Well, so, like, is it going to be easier in practice to choose one of these girls over the other if it—if it should happen that way, or—'cause, like, I can see where he's coming from, in theory, because, like, in theory you're like, "Okay—" If he's feeling like, the same way about both of the girls, but he kind of decides that he wants to...Well, actually, now that I say that, that's kind of a weird thought, so...

John: I think with time, like let's say that you're at a moment in time where you, for some reason, feel the same way about two or more people of the opposite gender. With time, that won't exist.

Me: ...So eventually you'll start feeling stronger about one of them than about, like, the other—

John: Yeah, I think that's a very natural thing. You'll just become more drawn to one...I don't think, naturally, we function like that, we don't naturally cling to multiple things. I mean, I think initially we can be attracted to multiple things, but I think, umm, over time we—we see the relationship develop at a deeper level, and that's where we can make that decision, make our relationship more, more, uh,

serious.

Me: Mmhmm. 'Kay. I like that.

John: --

Me: No, yeah, I like that. That's—I'm just trying to—

John: I just think it takes time.

Me: It just takes time.

John: Yeah, I mean, at the moment you're like "Oh man, this—" it's a crazy situation, but you're--at two weeks, and you'll have the answer.

Me: 'Kay. So, umm...I guess, just kind of as a follow-up...

[BOUNCING NOISES]

Me: That actually might kind of affect the, uh—

John: Oh, sorry.

Me: [LAUGH] You're good. I just realized that—

John: Let the record show I was bouncing my shoes on the table, creating a ruckus.

Me: [LAUGHS] You're good.

Um, so, just kind of as a follow-up to that, umm, so...you're putting your head down: is this distressing you?

John: Yes, it is stressing me.

Me: Don't be stressed—

John: This is why I got married, so I don't have to deal with this stress anymore.

Me: [LAUGHS]

So, umm, but let—Okay, so let's say he does come to this point: how do you think he would—like what do you think would be a good strategy for telling the girl that he doesn't choose, kind of like "Hey, I'm kind of...not interested in going on dates with you, anymore...?"

[TAPPING NOISES]

Me: 'Cause, we're—'cause, I guess the way I see this scenario, like, it's gone pretty far, like it's been going on for a pretty long time with either of them.

John: Well if this man is lucky enough to have three women that are—

Me: [LAUGH]

John:--that are actively pursuing him, maybe this isn't a big of a problem as he thinks it is.

Me: [CONTINUED LAUGH]

John: Yeah. But, umm...You do it one of two ways, and I don't think either one's better or worse than the other. So if you're not committed to being in a serious relationship with a girl, you don't really owe anything to her.

Me: Mhmm.

John: So I don't have any qualms with you slowly weaning off communication, whether that be face-to-face communication, over social media, text, calling...but there has to be some concerted effort to wean off conversation, because then...Keeping that constant conversation is leading that girl on. So, you can either just slowly kind of taper off, or, you can tell her straight up. If you really think that's a smart idea, you can just say "Hi, I wanna talk," like "Hi, to be honest, I've really enjoyed going on these dates with you, I really had a good time getting to know you, but I've been going on dates with other girls, and although I haven't been getting very serious with them, with you—or with you either—like, I haven't been leading anyone on, I just want you to know that I'm not going to be asking you out on dates more. I'm kind of just interested in this other girl."

And I think that's going to be fine! Nothing wrong with that, and I think that she would appreciate that because then she can move on with her life, you know what I mean?

Me: Mhmm.

John: And maybe tapering off, like, leaves that lingering question, like "Oh my gosh, why did he stop talking to me? Why'd that happen?" then like, if he was more clear about it, saying "Hi, I honestly just—I found someone else that I'm really interested in. I'm really excited to start dating them," I think they might appreciate that more.

Me: ...yeah—

John: Or they could hate you forever, like that's—

Me: [LAUGH]

John: --that's...but who cares, you know? Like, whatever. Y-You don't owe anything to her.

Me: Mhmm. Well, yeah, and I—I can, uh...yeah, I can appreciate the, umm, just having, like, a clear end to things, umm—

John: Yeah, like imagine I was, like, really hung up about this girl, right? And then for some reason she just, like, stopped communicating—I'd be really confused. But, like, if for some reason she was like "I want you to know, like, I'm starting to, like, be really interested in this other guy," like "Oh, that makes sense."

Me: Mhmm. Yeah.

John: It's like my brain making up all these situations of her...running away with Fabio...

Me: [LAUGHS]

John: ...on a bareback horse, into the sunset...

Me: I think that's what would happen, actually.

John: Yeah.

Me: Probably.

John: Probably.

Me: Probably.

John: Darn you Fabio.

Me: So just—just as a follow-up to that, do you think that there's any level—like, if the—is there any level of communication that you think is still appropriate, with that?

John: Umm—

Me: I suppose it kind of depends on the girl who's not getting—like who's getting, quote-unquote, “dumped,” a little bit. Like it's not an actual dump 'cause there's no commitment, but like if she was fine to keep talking, do you think that's something you would do? Or would you kinda want to close that door, for the moment?

John:...Umm...I don't know. I don't know if I'm the best example for this, because in my personal experience I don't really talk to girls that I took on dates and don't really—aren't interested in them anymore...

...Not a single one.

Me: [LAUGHS] Well, and—

John: And I, but—that's just maybe my bad personal skills, but...I didn't—I think it depends on you, it depends on the girl, it depends on what you're both comfortable with, and I don't think there's one blanket answer that applies to everything. I think everyone has a certain social—comfortableness that they have with—I don't know, and—I don't know, I don't think there's a right or wrong answer.

Like, sure, like...I guess you guys can talk, and maybe get lunch when you see each other, but, like, I don't—I don't know.

Me: No, I—

John: I don't think there's a right or wrong answer; it just depends. It just depends.

Me: I think that's fair. I mean, like, in my case, like, the girl I was dating, we broke it off completely, mutually, and we, like, still do stuff. And we're completely comfortable with that. It's—actually, kind of weird, we still talk to each other about, like, other people we're going on dates with, it's, uh...kind of an awkward situation, but at the same time that's kind of both what we feel comfortable with, both what we—

John: Yeah.

Me:--want, and that may change, but—

John: Yeah, 'cause maybe—I don't know, 'cause, personally, I don't need that.

Me: Yeah.

John: I don't need that, but some other people might like that and enjoy that, but—but I don't need these persistent relationships with people that I've already dated.

Me: Mhmm.

John: And I think that's just kind of me.

Me: Yeah, I think that's a very personal thing.

John: Yeah, I don't know. It's just either or.

Me: M'kay.

Umm...so another question he kind of puts up—'cause he's talking, like we've kind of talked about how he feels like it's a lot more complicated to try and develop things with multiple people at the same time. Umm, do you see any advantages of trying to go on dates with multiple people—

John: Oh yeah.

Me:--at the same time, rather than just focus on one at a time?

John: I think that's the whole point of dating. I think that if you're just dating one person at a time you're—you're living beneath your privileges, like you're fishing with only one fishing pole when you have six in the back of your car.

Me: [LAUGHS]

John: There's nothing wrong with dating lots of girls at the same time. I think that's the most effective way to learn about what you want in yourself, what you want in a per—in a, in a future partner, what you want from dating...I just think it's a very healthy thing to do, just to ask lots of girls at the same time. Ask lots of girls on dates at the same time: I think it's a very healthy thing to do.

Me:...And what about that is more—is more healthy, in your opinion, like what's...'cause I mean, like, so just being devil's advocate here, you could say the only difference is really time, that like, yeah if you focus on one it's like—it's not going to go anywhere, like you've just focused on that one and now you have to go, like, start over again, and so, like, you're—

John: Uh-huh

Me: Instead of investing, like, three hours in a week you're only investing one hour in a week: it maybe takes you longer. So that's—

John: Yeah...

Me:--a counterargument.

John: Yeah, but I think...

...

...Umm...

...

...Well, I think that kind of applies to anything that you do in your life: the more you commit...time, and energy, and resources into something, the more you'll get out of it. And so if dating is a high priority to you, it—then you'll commit time, and energy, and resources to it, and you'll see the benefits from it, which is getting to know more people, getting to know more about yourself, uh, having a good time with other people and actually finding a future partner, and potentially a spouse.

Me: Mhmm.

John: And, I think, if you're looking from a religious perspective, that's a very well, umm, reason, well-justified use of time. And that dating is.

I don't know, I think it's all about putting energy and time and resources into things. I don't know.

Me: Yeah, I can see that, too. Well, and—I think a big advantage, at least, like, just from my point of view, is, like, it might take the same total amount of time, but if you're doing, like, multiple dates at the same time, then you're, like, condensing all of that, and so it's actually probably going to happen faster.

John: Yeah.

Me: I mean, there's no guarantees on any of this—

John: No.

Me:--but just, in my mind, I'm like, it seems like if you're dating multiple people at the same time, or like going on dates with people, multiple people, at the same time, then that's going to help you find something that's stronger and longer lasting more quickly than if you were just doing it one at a time.

John: Yeah, it's just probability.

Me: Mhmm.

John: Yeah.

Me: Probability.

John: It's just math.

Me: [LAUGHS]

John: Dating is math.

Me: Dating is all just math.

John: Yeah.

Me: Umm, well that's a lot of it; I'm just going to scan over what he's submitted to see if there's any aspect of this that we didn't...cover. How are you feeling about this?

John: I don't know. My advice to anyone that is dating is they date multiple people at the same time.

That's what my advice is, in the sense that, that math, you know, it's just more and more likely to—that it's going to work out with someone and that you're going to be happy.

I don't know. It's just—And I think that you'll just learn more about yourself, in a more accelerated fashion, by dating multiple people at the same time.

Me:... 'Kay. So—

John: I think it's very healthy. I think it's a very healthy thing to do.

Me: Yeah. I do, too. I think—So, well, and I think, umm—like I picked up another question that I think we kind of missed, so, he was like “If I do choose Girl A, is Girl C no longer an option forever?”

John: No...

Me: I think the answer, like, coming to that, in my perspective, I think the answer is, like, you don't know.

John: Yeah, you have no idea where she's gonna be after how long. Things may or may not work out with the girl that you may or may not choose.

Me: And the thing is, like, umm, it might...? Well, okay, yeah, so say she starts dating someone at the same time you start dating someone and then, like, you both break up, again, around the same time. I mean, that might present another opportunity, but there's a lot of... I think that question just kind of comes down to opportunity cost, wouldn't you say? Like, when—I mean, whenever we—

John: Yeah.

Me:--make any sort of decision, we are giving up the ability to make—

John: Other decisions.

Me:--future decisions. That's kind of just a fact of life.

John: That's another side-effect of living in the monogamous society that we live in now. It's a sin. It's a curse.

Me: Well, and I don't know—

John: I think what the reader is really trying to suggest is, what steps can we take, as a society, to make the government—to reinstate polygamous behavior? I think that's what he's really trying to get to.

Me: [LAUGHS]

John: 'Cause that would solve a lot of the questions that this reader has.

I think it's a valid point.

Me:... Yeah, I mean we were just talking about in Foundations of the Restoration about how polygamy had other reasons, and now that we have temple work those reasons are kind of moot, like they don't need to happen anymore. But, uh, yeah... I'm just realizing that I've been kind of leaning back here,

and if I lean back here, if you watch the light on the recorder it—

John: Oh.

Me:--it doesn't light up, but if I lean in here then it starts lighting up so I might have—I might not be super present on this but—

John: Oh, okay.

Me:--I'm interviewing you, so that's not, the—

John: I think I'm talking towards it.

Me: Yeah, that's true. You're kind of facing that microphone right there, so—

John: Umm. So...But there are societies in the world, in the present United States that do practice these things that this reader is looking for. And so, I ask, I ask the reader—

Me: Which this reader might be looking for...

John: Well, as the reader, if these things are a serious conflict, and things that he really thinks about, I would ask him to consider changing...

Me: I-I guess that's true.

John: ...communities, and maybe, potentially, religions. That might be something that might be necessary.

If this is something that troubles him so much.

Me: I—

John: Because nothing makes him live—he doesn't have to force himself to live in a monogamous life. He doesn't—if that does not seem appealing to him, then he has every right to choose a polygamous life.

Me:...It's a valid opinion. I think most of the readers of the site are BYU students who are not necessarily looking to, umm, join—

John: I don't know, but if it becomes that persistent of a problem, then what other decision—what other choice do we have?

Me:...It's [LAUGHS]

John: I'm trying to help the readers here.

Me: [LAUGHS]

John: They're looking for answers and they're obviously not finding them, so maybe we need to start looking somewhere else.

That's just my idea.

That is just my idea.

I'm not saying everyone should do it, I'm just saying it's an idea that people could exercise.

Me: It's true.

Well, I think, ummmmmmm, yeah, I think that just about covers it, as far as the questions he was asking us.

John: Hello.

Me:--

John: Hello.

Me: Are you on a real phone call, or—

John: Yes.

Hello.

Me: Oh.

John: Que les vaya bien.

Me: I think—I think his wife just called him.

John: No, it was an unknown phone—If the reader...If the reader is calling me at this moment, I would like them to know, that you can hide...

Me: [LAUGHING]

John:...But I will find you.

And when I do...

...I will ask you about your dating life.

Me: Okay, well—

John: Buena Suerte.

Me: Well,

Both: [LAUGHING]

Me: Thanks.

