

“In The Beginning...”

**“The Importance of a
Good Marriage”**

Gen. 2, 24, 26, 28

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I. The Importance of a Good Marriage

A. Preparing for a good marriage.

- 1) Are you thinking or have you ever thought about marriage or the selection of a spouse?
- 2) Do you date/have a boyfriend or girlfriend?
- 3) If you're dating or thinking about dating, you should be thinking about marriage.
- 4) What can you do now to prepare for a good marriage?

B. Biblical basis.

- 1) Abraham (Gen. 24:1-4)
 - "...you will not take a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites..."
 - "...you shall go to my country and to my family, and take a wife for my son Isaac."
 - Isaac makes the same demand of his son Jacob – "You shall not take a wife from the daughters of Canaan." (Gen. 28:1-2)
- 2) Jehoshaphat, King of Judah
 - One of Judah's best kings. (2 Chron. 17:3-6; 19:3)
 - His weakness – his association with the house of Ahab, the wicked king of Israel. (2 Chron. 18:1; 21:5-6)
 - The marriage of Jehoshaphat's son Jehoram to Ahab's daughter Athaliah undid sixty years of spiritual and physical prosperity and expansion in an entire nation in just a few, short years! (2 Chron. 21:6)
- 3) Of these two godly men, only one made godly preparation a priority with regard to the marriage of his son.

II. The Bible's Objective Approach To Love

A. Love is to abound in knowledge and discernment. (Phil. 1:3-9)

- 1) Paul's affection for the Philippians:

- Based on a long history of fellowship in the gospel. (v. 5)
 - Paul has a great longing to see the Philippians. (v. 8)
 - With this longing, Paul prays on their behalf – “...that your love may abound still more and more in knowledge and all discernment”
- 2) What does it mean to “...abound...in knowledge and all discernment”?
- Abound – overfilled, running over. (Luke 6:38)
 - Knowledge – knowledge that is advanced, precise and full. (Col. 3:2)
 - Discernment – judgment, perception, making use of (knowledge). (Heb. 5:14)
- 3) Results of objective love:
- You will approve the things that are excellent. (1 Thes. 5:21-22)
 - a. Implies that, without knowledge and discernment, you can approve of things that are wrong.
 - b. Beyond right and wrong, you need to choose the better over the good and the best over the better.
 - You will be sincere (pure) and without offence (because you've made wise choices).
 - You will be filled with the fruits of righteousness.
 - a. Practice what is right.
 - b. See the product of those practices.
- 4) This general principal of biblical, objective love needs to apply to every relationship in which a Christian is involved. Can you see how this applies to choices regarding dating and marriage?

B. A worldly misunderstanding of love.

- 1) The world talks about love:
- In religion – “God loves you.”
 - In possessions – “I love my car.”
 - In satisfaction of physical desires – “I love this cheeseburger.”

- Love becomes nothing more than a feeling to describe the particular moment we're experiencing.
- 2) Love in the Bible is qualified – it abounds in knowledge and discernment.
 - 3) There is a "love" that is blind, ignorant and without discernment.
 - Prov. 7:18 – *"Come, let us take our fill of love until morning; let us delight ourselves with love."* This is not the objective love described in the Bible!
 - The young man was not prepared.
 - a. Prov. 7:7b – *"...a young man devoid of understanding,"*
 - b. Prov. 9:16 – *"Whoever is simple, let him turn in here...who lacks understanding..."*
 - We must see love as more than what *feels* right.
 - a. The immoral woman looked right (v. 10)
 - b. She said all the right things (v. 21)
 - The result of this worldly "love": *"He did not know it would cost his life."* (Prov. 7:22-23,26-27; 9:18)
 - 4) Relying on worldly "love" in your preparation for marriage will prove costly.

III. Abounding in Knowledge and Discernment In Choosing Whom You Date

A. What Does He/She Value?

- 1) Determining God's place:
 - Is He first? *"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind."* (Luke 10:25-27) *"Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is man's all."* (Eccl. 12:13)
 - a. Is He first above personal aspirations? *"But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ."* (Phil. 3:4-11)
 - b. Is He first above possessions? *"You cannot serve God and riches."* (Mat. 6:24)

- His word
 - a. Does he/she value God's word? (Ps. 119; 2 Tim. 2:15; 3:14-15)
 - b. Does he/she view the word as the sufficient, authorized standard of what God wants us to know? *"All Scripture is given by the inspiration of God...that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work."* (2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Pet. 1:3)
 - c. Does he/she recognize and accept that the word of God will be his/her judge? *"...the word that I have spoken will judge him in the last day."* (Jn. 12:48)
- Determining the place of God in another's life should provide insight into your own value system.
 - a. Are you putting God first?
 - b. Is it *important to you* that someone you date or consider marrying places that *same priority* on his/her relationship with God?
- How to Determine God's place.
 - a. Don't wait to fall in love, get engaged or get married before studying with them.
 - b. Forge friendships first. The absence of any intimate emotional connections allows for an objective evaluation of a prospective mate's priorities with regard to God.

2) Does he/she value you?

- There is an empty love that is based on nothing but attraction and desire.
- Will you be set aside for the pursuit of careers, hobbies, families or friends?
- Does he/she respect and appreciate the roles God has assigned. (Mat. 19:4-5; Gen. 3:16b)
 - a. Men.

i. As leaders. (Eph. 5:23, 25-31; Josh. 24:15b)

ii. As the father of children. (Gen. 18:19; Eph. 6:4)

iii. As providers. (1 Tim. 5:8)

b. Women.

i. In submission. (Eph. 5:22; 1 Pet. 3:1, 5-6)

ii. As the mother of children (Tit. 2:4b)

iii. Managing the home. (Tit. 2:5; Prov. 31:13-19)

- Can you recognize the more intangible qualities of a godly husband or wife in those you choose to date?
 - a. Find a woman that a man can trust to always work in his best interest. *"She does him good and not evil all the days of her life."* (Prov. 31:12)
 - b. Find a man that can understand and accommodate emotional and physical needs that are significantly different from his own. *"Husbands... dwell with them with understanding, giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel..."* (1 Pet. 3:7)

3) Do you see (potential) value in him/her?

4) **Know** your prospective mate.

B. What is His/Her Depth of Character?

1) How will he/she respond in the face of adversity?

- Will he/she rely upon the godly values professed?
- Will he/she yield to the will of others to please them or keep the peace?
- Is he/she committed to these values even at personal cost?

2) When challenged in moral purity? Joseph – *"How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God? ...But he left his garment in her hand, fled and ran outside."* (Gen. 39:6-12)

3) When pressured by worldly peers? Daniel – *"But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself..."* (Dan. 1:3-14)

4) When difficulties arise among God's people?

- Joshua/Caleb – *“Only do not rebel against the Lord,”* (Num. 14:1-10)
- Paul – *“...to whom we did not yield submission even for an hour, that the truth of the gospel might continue with you.”* (Gal. 2:1-5)

IV. Clouding Your Judgment – Impediments to Making Wise Choices In Dating and Marriage

- A. Rom. 13:14 – *“...make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts.”*
- 1) Provision – forethought, care, or supply.
 - 2) When you make provision for a guest in your home, you prepare everything they might need or desire during their stay at your house. You make these preparations before they arrive.
- B. You must avoid relationships that are founded on or sustained by fleshly lust and sexual desire.
- 1) Know the dangers such as your weaknesses and situations that may expose them.
 - 2) Even relationships that seem headed for marriage can be tainted when circumstances allow unthinking feeling to momentarily replace knowledge and discernment.
 - The excitement of a future life together.
 - Physical contact and/or visual stimulation.
- C. Immodest dress – *“...whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart.”* (Mat. 5:27-29)
- D. Physical contact should be as appropriate as between a brother and sister. *“...younger women as sisters, with all purity.”* (1 Tim. 5:1-2) In doing so, you show you care about your soul and theirs.
- E. Choices in locations, activities and companions.

V. The Importance of “Love Abounding...In Knowledge and All Discernment” When Preparing For Marriage

- A. God’s life-long plan for marriage between a man and a woman.
- 1) *“...at the beginning...the two shall become one flesh...what God has joined together, let not man separate.”* (Mat. 19:4-5; Gen. 2:24)

- 2) You will live with the choice you make now for the rest of your life.
- B. A life of struggle and difficulty awaits “two who have become one”; yet find they are striving in two different directions. *“Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers.”* (2 Cor. 6:14-15)
- 1) Contemplate spending fifty years leading a woman who doesn’t wish to be led. *“Better to dwell in a corner of a housetop, than in a house shared with a contentious woman.”* (Prov. 21:9)
 - 2) Would you like to spend fifty years submitting to an ungodly man who does not honor you? (1 Pet. 3:1-2,7)