

CHAPTER 13

CHOOSING A MATE



The following guidelines are given so that you might discover God's wonderful method for determining your partner for life. God makes no mistakes! Blessed is the man or woman who entrusts the future into His hands!

1) REALIZE THE IMPORTANCE OF THE DECISION.

The choice of a marriage partner is the second most important decision in life. What is the most important decision in life (John 3:18 and compare Matthew 27:22)?

_____ When you were saved you entered into a personal, eternal relationship with the Son of God! When you are married you enter into a personal, lifelong relationship with another person. This is certainly not something to rush into without much prayer and careful thought.

2) REALIZE THE PERMANENCE OF THE DECISION.

When you came to Christ and believed on Him (assuming you have truly done this), that was a permanent decision. A person does not decide to become a believer one day and then three weeks later change his mind and decide to become an unbeliever. Though there are some people who only believe for a while ("for a time") and then fall away from the faith (Luke 8:13; Hebrews 3:12), the true believer will continue in the faith. As the familiar chorus says, "I have decided to follow Jesus, no turning back, no turning back." Likewise, once two people are married, they cannot turn back! The husband who desires to honor the Lord cannot say, "I've made a terrible mistake! I've married the wrong person! I need to get a divorce and find someone else!" Even if a mistake were made, it's too late to abort the marriage! Thankfully, God's grace can override man's mistakes. We must never forget that marriage is a permanent, lifelong commitment. The Lord Jesus said, "What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder" (Matthew 19:6). Though divorce is commonly practiced in our day, divorce is no option for the child of God (1 Corinthians 7:10-11), for God hates it (see Malachi 2:16 where the term "putting away" signifies divorce). The choice of a marriage partner is important! You may live with your choice for 50 years or more! How important that we look to God and ask Him to direct us to the right person in His time.

3) REJOICE THAT GOD SAVED YOU EARLY IN LIFE.

If you are saved and single, you have every opportunity to have a Christian marriage and a Christian home—if this is what you really want and if this is God's will for you. Many who are saved later in life must experience the difficulties and trials that come from having an unsaved partner, though God's grace is certainly sufficient for every situation. Those who are saved early in life have the advantage of building a marriage on a solid foundation right from the start.

4) DON'T EVEN CONSIDER AN UNEQUAL YOKE.

God's command is clear: "Be ye not _____ together with _____" (2 Corinthians 6:14). In the examples below, circle the ones which would be an unequal yoke:

- a. an ox and an ox
- b. an ox and a donkey
- c. a donkey and a dog
- d. a saved husband and an unsaved wife
- e. a saved husband and a saved wife
- f. an unsaved husband and an unsaved wife
- g. an unsaved husband and a saved wife

In the above examples, underline the one combination that you desire for your marriage.

According to 1 Corinthians 7:39, a wife whose husband has died is free to marry, but she must marry someone who is "in _____" (and only saved people are "IN CHRIST").

Some try to justify marriage to an unbeliever by saying, "Once we are married, I am going to witness to my partner, bring him/her to church and win him/her to the Lord!" According to Deuteronomy 7:1-4, what is most likely to happen? Will the saved partner convert the unsaved partner or will the unsaved partner convert the saved partner?

Here are some urgent questions for any person who claims to be saved: How can you love someone who does not love Christ? How can a child of God peacefully cohabit with a child of the devil? What fellowship does light have with darkness (2 Cor. 6:14-16)? How can a divided house stand (compare Matthew 12:25)?

5) LOOK FOR MORE THAN A MERE PROFESSION.

Just because a person *says* he is a Christian (professes to be saved) does not prove that he really

is. Look for someone who not only says he's a Christian but who shows he's a Christian. If someone claims to be an apple tree, then let him *show* some apples (Matthew 7:16-20)!

Look for a healthy believer. Look for a growing believer. Beware of someone who has only been saved a short while, even if they really seem to be growing (Luke 8:13). Let some time pass by. Look for someone who is steady and stable. Look for someone who loves the Lord and loves the Bible and loves the church and loves the brethren. Look to yourself that these things are true of you!

Thought question: If a husband and wife are both Christians, does this guarantee that they will have a Christian marriage (see Ephesians 5:21-33)? _____ Do believers always act and live like believers should? _____

6) LOOK FOR A BEAUTIFUL PERSON!

Make sure that the person you marry is beautiful--on the inside. Inner beauty is something of great value. Look for it in others; cultivate it in yourself. The beauty of the Lord should shine forth through the believer.

Outer beauty is not the real issue. If you marry a person only on the basis of "good looks," you will be in for a great disappointment. What will you do 30 years later when your partner approaches old age with wrinkles and possibly added pounds and who knows what else that might affect one's physical appearance? And what will be true of your partner will also be true of you! You will change with age also. Or, what if your partner were to be burned on the face and scarred for life? Did you marry a face or did you marry a person? Did you fall in love with a face or did you love the person who belongs to the face? Look for that beauty that is more than skin deep.

7) DO NOT CHOOSE A LIFE PARTNER.

Instead, let God make the choice. God gives the very best to those who leave the choice with Him. Only God knows which two people are best suited for each other. Only God knows what a person will be like 10, 20 or 30 years from now.

8) DON'T MAKE HASTE; BE WILLING TO WAIT.

A few years of patient waiting for God's best is little time compared to the many years of married life. It is not uncommon for a couple to be married 30 or 40 or 50 years or more. If a few added years of waiting prior to marriage can make a person better prepared for marriage, then it is certainly worth it.

Don't be pressured by what other people think or say. If many of your friends are getting married, be content to wait on the Lord. Many have waited until they were a quarter of a century old *or older* to get married, and they were glad for it. Remember Isaac (Genesis 25:20)!!

A person can rush into marriage, but he should not rush out of it!

9) KEEP YOURSELF CLEAN AND PURE (1 Timothy 5:22).

Traditionally the bride is dressed in a beautiful white gown--a perfect symbol of purity, moral cleanness and virginity. How is the Lamb's bride dressed in Revelation 19:7-8?

Compare Ephesians 5:27. In the years prior to marriage a young woman should stay morally clean and pure (keep on the path of sexual purity!--see Chapter 6), lest the wedding gown should show forth a lie. Being a virgin was something that was very important in Bible times (Genesis 24:16; Luke 1:27; 2:36). God sees this as very important today. Do you?

In the movies and on television virginity is mocked and ridiculed. For those who only desire God's smile of approval, sexual purity before marriage is very important.

A word should here be shared about the terrible problem of venereal disease. Medical experts say that the surest way to avoid venereal disease is through abstinence. Chastity before marriage and fidelity during marriage are as foolproof as abstinence, as long as **both** spouses are faithful. The microorganisms that cause venereal disease require fresh new 'hosts' at frequent intervals or they die out. This is why promiscuity or even casual sexual relations with more than one partner are the major means by which gonorrhea and syphilis and the other venereal diseases are spread.

It is important to stay pure and clean. Do some reading and research about venereal diseases that are spread by immoral sex and promiscuity. These kind of diseases are not fun, and they are not easily cured, if at all. *WARNING: You do not want to contract these diseases! Sin does not pay!*

10) DON'T WORRY BUT WORRY.

In 1 Corinthians 7:32 the Apostle Paul writes to unmarried men and says, "I want you to be without carefulness" (without worry, don't be full of care and anxiety, be careful or anxious for nothing). Philippians 4:6 reminds us that we are not to worry about anything. There is often a tendency for unmarried people to begin to worry: "Where shall I ever find a wife?" "I'm fast becoming an old maid!" "When is God going to send the right person my way?" "Here I am 23 years old and not a husband in sight-- not even any good prospects!" "I've been waiting for years and I'm not one step closer to marriage than I was five years ago." Etc.

God was in essence saying through Paul, "You should not worry about any of these things. There is only one thing that an unmarried person should worry about. He that is unmarried **careth** (is concerned, is worried in a good and healthy way) for the things of the Lord, how he may **please** the Lord" (1 Corinthians 7:32).

This is God's answer to the dilemma facing so many unmarried people. *Don't concentrate on finding a mate.* Concentrate on pleasing your Lord and Saviour! Don't worry about the future (Matthew 6:34). What should you do instead (Matthew 6:33)?

What promise does

God give in Matthew 6:33?

11) SEEK TO BE A GEM.

Consider Proverbs 31:10 which describes a godly woman: "Who can find a _____ woman? for her price is far above _____." Why are rubies so precious and valuable? If people could go outside and find several rubies whenever they felt like looking for them, would they be very precious? _____ Why are godly women precious like rubies? _____ Are godly men plentiful or are they rare and difficult to find (Psalm 12:1)?

Because rubies are so rare and precious, they are in great demand! They are desired by many and possessed by few. Most unmarried people spend their time and energy *trying to find* a gem when they should spend their time and energy seeking to **be a gem!!**

Thus the best advice to the unmarried person is this: If you want to find a godly woman/man (a real gem!), do not concentrate on trying to find this godly woman/man. Rather, concentrate on *being* a godly man or woman so that you will be worthy of such a gem, should the Lord bring one to you! Remember, precious gems are highly valued and greatly sought after!

12) DELIGHT YOURSELF IN THE LORD.

If you really want God's best and if you are willing to wait for it, then you will have it! How do we know? God says so:

" _____ thyself also in the
_____ and He shall _____ thee
the _____ of thine heart" (Psalm 37:4).

"...no _____ thing will He
_____ from them that walk
_____" (Psalm 84:11).

If you are not happy with Christ alone, then you will never be happy with someone else together. God will honor those who honor Him (1 Samuel 2:30). The God who designed and instituted marriage certainly wants you to enter into its joys and blessings.

The Bible also speaks of a single alternative (see 1 Corinthians 7:32-38; Matthew 19:12-"for the kingdom of heaven's sake"). Some have been able to devote their lives to serving and pleasing the Lord without the "distraction" (1 Cor. 7:35) and responsibility that comes with having a family. Singleness, however, is the *exception* and not the rule. God's *rule* is found in Genesis 2:18 (and compare Proverbs 18:22)!

Marriage is an ancient institution. It is as ancient, in fact, as man himself. Established by God on the same day in which He created man, marriage remains to this day the only God-ordained relationship in which a man and woman may dwell together.



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The prayer of those who have given you these notes is that you might have that personal and real relationship with the living God, and that He would then give you His success and His joy as you share in all of life's relationships! It is only as we are right with Him that we can begin to be right with ourselves and with those we live with and with those we love.

FAMILY HAPPINESS FORMULA

Husband-Wife

“LOVE
ONE ANOTHER
DEEPLY, FROM
THE HEART.”

*Father-(Son
Daughter)*

*Mother-(Daughter
Son)*

JACK HAMM