

Marriage - Only in the Lord

- I. **WHAT?** The disciples of Jesus Christ are only allowed to marry in the Lord (I Cor 7:39; 11:11).
- A. This limiting commandment is similar in wording to the one in the beginning (Gen 2:16-17).
 - B. Since the beginning with Cain and Abel, conflict existed between the godly and the wicked.
 - 1. Marriages of godly men and worldly women brought the flood (Gen 4:25-26; 6:1-7).
 - 2. Abraham married his half-sister Sarah to avoid such women (Genesis 11:29; 20:12).
 - 3. See Abraham's zeal to find a wife for Isaac. Note the details (Gen 24:3-4,27,37-38).
 - 4. Esau vexed Isaac and Rebekah marrying unbelievers (Gen 26:34-35; 27:46; 28:8-9).
 - 5. Jacob became the third generation to marry a close relative (Gen 28:1-5; 29:9-14).
 - 6. Judah married a Canaanite, but God cut his wife and three sons (Ge 38:2-10; 24-30).
 - C. God often warned Israel about mixed marriages (Ex 34:10-16; Deut 7:1-4; Josh 23:11-13).
 - 1. Consider Samson, who had problems with Philistine women (Judges 14:1-3; 16:1,4).
 - 2. Consider Ahab, who greatly aggravated his situation with Jezebel (I Kings 16:31).
 - D. Solomon, a blessed man with unlimited potential, was ruined by such wives (I Kgs 11:1-13).
 - E. Ezra led a national divorce from mixed marriages that lasted two months (Ezra 9:1 - 10:44).
 - 1. Read "the holy seed have mingled themselves with the people" (9:2 cp Mal 2:11,15).
 - 2. See Ezra's zeal correcting this sin before the Lord (9:3-6; 10:1-5 cp Neh 10:29-30).
 - 3. Consider Nehemiah's zeal condemning the guilty in these marriages (Neh 13:23-27).
 - F. We are commanded to avoid unnecessary unions with unbelievers (II Corinthians 6:14-18).
 - G. What does "in the Lord" mean? Is it eternal, legal, vital, practical, or final salvation?
 - 1. It practically describes "being in the kingdom and service of the Lord Jesus Christ."
 - 2. It cannot refer to eternal, legal, vital, or final phases; and a profession is not enough.
 - 3. It must be as much Christianity as our communion and hopefully more so – hot zeal.
 - 4. How can we possibly accept a modern concept that all churchgoers are in the Lord?
 - 5. Obstnacy about a power cord on a jigsaw can leave one a pagan (Matthew 18:17).
 - 6. Scripture is absolute in its intolerance of false doctrine (Rom 16:17-18; Gal 1:6-9).
 - 7. Heretics and unbelievers are to be avoided and rejected (Tit 3:10-11; II John 10-11).
 - 8. Is a believer a believer because he says he's a believer? What about Satan (Jas 2:19)?
- II. **WHY?** There are several spiritual and natural blessings to obtain by this godly choice.
- A. God commands it, so we humbly esteem His precept in this matter supreme (Ps 119:128).
 - B. We want to leave a godly seed in the earth – this requires a godly marriage for holy children.
 - 1. Remember the mingling of the holy seed that God hates (Ezra 9:2 cp Mal 2:11-16).
 - 2. Unbelieving wives or weak and carnal wives will lead our children away from God.
 - 3. Marriage is "leading about a sister": a fellow heir of eternal life (I Cor 9:5; I Pet 3:7).
 - 4. Our families must present godly Christianity to the world and produce faithful saints.
 - 5. We are in a war as before the flood – the sons of God against the daughters of men.
 - C. We must avoid sour marriages bringing grief and shame to us, our children, and the gospel.
 - 1. How can two walk together, except they be agreed (Amos 3:3)? Marriage needs it.
 - 2. It is intimate, personal, life altering, permanent, and costly (Pr 12:4; 30:23; Ec 7:26).
 - 3. Two are better than one, but only if compatible and united spiritually (Eccl 4:9-12).
 - 4. Marry wisely and expect peace, performance, leverage, holy home, blessing, etc.
 - D. How are differences, problems, or questions best resolved in a marriage? This is important.
 - 1. God created love, sex, and marriage. Therefore, let us heed the Creator's manual.
 - 2. Scripture is relevant and sufficient for perfection (II Ti 3:16-17; Ps 19:7-11; Is 8:20).
 - 3. Two Christians should be able to solve any marriage problems easily by Scripture.

4. Most marriage problems are from selfish pride. What is the best cure for this poison?
5. Wives need leverage. Yelling? Sex? DSS? Pouting? Coldness? Sarcasm? Slander?
6. Husbands need leverage. Force? Anger? Yelling? Sarcasm? Silence? Money?
7. A wife should be able to say, "Lord, *the Bible says*, 'I will set no wicked thing . . .'"
8. A husband should be able to say, "Dear, *the Bible says*, 'Reverence your husband.'"
 9. In both cases a believing spouse should be submissive, cooperative, and converted.
- E. How can a fulfilling, loving, secure, peaceful, friendly, and fruitful marriage be obtained?
 1. God created love, sex, and marriage. Therefore, let us heed the Creator's manual.
 2. Two people led by the Spirit of God submissive totally to all of Scripture will obtain.
 3. If two people simply obeyed the Bible toward each other, it would be wonderful.
- F. Can we isolate a few basic requirements for a marriage with great potential for success?
 1. We start with the fear of the Lord - both parties must totally fear God and His word.
 2. Then we add open, knowledgeable, supportive, realistic, and exemplary parents.
 3. We then need a bold pastor who will teach the whole Bible with necessary follow up.
 4. And last we should have godly brethren who can encourage, rebuke, and instruct.
- G. It is more crucial than ever, for we're living in the prophesied perilous times of the last days.

III. **HOW?** We must make choice to use the means we have to limit our children to godly spouses.

- A. The fear of the Lord must be kept absolutely preeminent over any other criteria (Pro 31:30).
 1. "Favour" is doing things to please or win, and such efforts deceive and mislead.
 2. "Beauty" is looks; which decays, blinds to character, entices, and is of little value.
 3. If carnally minded, we will choose carnally; if spiritual, we will choose spiritually.
 4. Spiritual initiative, depth, and zeal are crucial – not activities, professions, or favors.
- B. Let us demand faithful, holy, zealous, sanctified, Spirit-led, truth-seeking, Christ-loving, sin-hating, Bible-exalting, world denying, counting, paying, praying, and extreme spouses.
 1. We must suspect "Baptist," "Christian," "Bible," "moral," "good," and "nice."
 2. Many claim "Christian" here, but few love the roles, duties, and truth God requires.
 3. Perfect spouses fear God totally, bear the Spirit's fruit, and prioritize by the Bible.
 4. "He's a professing Christian." So were Judas Iscariot, a rich young man, and Demas.
 5. "His zeal is just a little cool now." Our Lord Jesus has an opinion (Rev 3:15-16).
 6. "He believes in God." Great. So do the devils, but they tremble at it (James 2:19).
 7. "He says he knows God." Great. But he appears a liar by his actions (I John 2:4).
 8. "He was saved ten years ago." Great. At a Billy Graham crusade or youth party.
 9. "But Daddy, he'll change." Are you kidding? Why will he change later, if not now?
 10. "But Daddy, did you hear his prayer?" I didn't darling, I was reading Proverbs 20:11.
 11. "But Daddy, he's the nicest guy I know." So was Jack the Ripper during the day.
 12. See the attached outline listing and defining numerous measures of true godliness.
 13. Virginity is important. Lack of it shows poor character. Moses' law esteemed it.
- C. We never marry with the presumption of conversion or wisdom later. It must come first.
 1. Should we ordain bishops this way? Promote staff this way? Hire painters this way?
 2. This is tempting God, which is a sin. We do not presume on miracles to cover folly.
 3. We do not marry "hope" or "potential." These are deceiving words hiding disaster.
 4. And any such dating or courting unless severely guarded will have very high risk.
 5. Learn the "Rule of 10": faults before marriage are ten times worse after (Pr 30:23).
 6. If they can't pass the tests or meet the criteria before marriage, they won't after it.
- D. Be not deceived by compatibility – whatever it is – true compatibility is mutual fear of God.
 1. Mutual interests in dating are no indicator at all of handling marital stress later.
 2. Similar tastes in food, recreation, music, and Polynesian basket weaving are vanity.
 3. Dating is a mutual choice to do each other favors for specific times to deceive.

- E. Use tests. Making a prospect comfortable is not wise. Prove their willingness to obedience.
- F. If Christmas or anything is “nonessential,” what will keep you from compromising further?
- G. Our great differences with many are not our fault – they have fallen away in these last days.
 1. What about Christmas, instruments, invitations, and preaching? All once held these.
 2. What about election, John 3:16, prophecy, regeneration? These were once esteemed.
 3. Should we compromise the truth to accommodate heretics and a form of godliness?
- H. Are we really making it difficult by being so exclusive as the truth of God’s word?
 1. Convince the five husbands of the five truth-loving wives who are listed below.
 2. Do you trust God or not? He got you through conception and birth, but not marriage?
 3. Will He be more or less willing to bless us seeing that our criterion is His own fear?
 4. Is it worth it? 50 years of hell. Leaving a godly seed in the earth. Is it worth it?
- H. Noble souls want anything from Scripture as Gail, Rhonda, Gloria, Tammy, and Magdalena.
- F. Consider how God’s Providence blesses our efforts with His gifts – we must have both.
 1. We plan our best approach with wisdom and zeal (James 4:13-15; Psalm 127:1-2).
 2. We trust the Lord to take care of details we cannot see (Pro 16:9; Ruth 2:2-3; 3:6-7).
 3. We keep God’s revealed will and trust His secret will (Dt 29:29 cp Ps 37:4; 84:11).
 4. We know the criteria He expects in a spouse; and He knows the desires of your heart.
- I. Dating and interaction with the opposite sex must keep marriage in mind. Don’t get trapped.
 1. Dating is a foolish thing that has shown its own folly: more dating = more divorces.
 2. Dating those unqualified for marriage is playing with fire regardless of intentions.
 3. Remember: dating is a mutual agreement to deceive plus temptations to fornicate.
 4. Arranged marriages in the Lord bring proper seduction within marriage (Deut 24:5).
- J. Dating, courting, or arranged marriages are liberty. God neither requires nor condemns.
- K. For us to seek and expect such exceptional spouses, we must train and provide the same.
- L. This study has not dealt with “how to find” such spouses. But there are many options for us.
- M. We have two great opportunities: (1) be the holy seed of God and (2) raise the holy seed.
- N. This is the commandment of Paul. Anyone marrying out of the Lord will be excluded.
- O. Our youth should band together for encouragement, mutual prayer, and maybe attraction.
- P. We should not approve any marriage to unbelievers or to believers without living godliness.
 1. The hurt of a disappointed child for two weeks does not match 50 years of hell.
 2. Do you have the authority? Try the Bible’s arranged marriages – some sight unseen.
- Q. Are your children married? Then as a grandparent you can help protect your grandchildren.