

Marry Right

“Now Jehoshaphat had riches and honour in abundance, and joined affinity with Ahab.”

II Chronicles 18:1

Introduction:

1. This short and simple study is not exhaustive by any measure, but introduces fuller documents linked below.
2. If married, you can pray and prepare for grandchildren, surely help other parents and children in the church, be thankful for your godly spouse, be the perfect godly spouse of this study, or help your spouse become one.
3. The word of God rightly understood and appreciated is by far the greatest manual for marriage ever written.
4. The consequences of compromise in this matter are very painful and far-reaching, corrupting family trees.
5. Parents are fully responsible to keep their children from involvement with less than the best spouses for them.
6. A lengthy exchange with a man on another continent this week helped convict and provoke me for this topic.
7. The contrast of families with unchristian marriages compared to true marriage in the Lord is incredibly stark.
8. Love has little to nothing to do with it: (a) most youthful love is only lust; (b) real love occurs after marriage.
9. God created love, marriage, and sex and all the details of each, and He knows better than all men combined.
10. Parents and children, short-term grief, no matter how severe, is nothing compared to 50 years of marital hell.
11. Marriage can be oh so wonderful or oh so terrible, depending on how parents and children fulfill their roles.
12. After picking on Jehoshaphat, identify the marital faults of Abraham, Jacob, Judah, David, and Solomon.

#1: Only in the Lord

- A. It is a sin to marry outside the Lord, which the Bible in both testaments declares (I Cor 7:39; 11:11).
- B. We understand “in the Lord” to mean serving Him according to the full doctrine of our church, which requires membership here or in a very similar church, holding the same doctrine and practice.
- C. If we allow “in the Lord” to be a Christian, who defines a Christian? Are Catholics? Are Mormons?
- D. Church membership is the bare minimum, as good fathers will demand much more for their children.
- E. Jehoshaphat, a great king of Judah with a godly heart, made a grave mistake with his son Jehoram.
 1. Athaliah may have been a cousin in Israel (the O.T. church), but her family did not fear God.
 2. This unholy marriage brought incredible trouble and judgment to Jehoshaphat and his family.
 3. He entered into battle with Ahab out of family obligation and was judged by God for doing so.
 4. He entered into business with Ahaziah out of family obligation and was by God for doing so.
 5. His son Jehoram learned all the ways of Ahab’s house and killed Jehoshaphat’s other sons.
 6. Athaliah herself killed all her grandchildren, except Joash, when Jehu killed her son Ahaziah.
 7. God rejected Ahaziah, Joash, and Amaziah, the grandsons of King Jehoshaphat (Matthew 1:8).
 8. His posterity was wiped out literally and genealogically after his death, and he lived his life in constant torment trying to do right but with his son in an ungodly, destructive marriage.
- F. For much more about marrying outside the Lord and God’s great judgment of this pernicious sin, see the following sermon outline ... www.letgodbetruer.com/pdf/marriage-in-the-lord.pdf.

#2: Independent Fear of the Lord

- A. The fear of the Lord is what makes a great woman or man, and it cannot be overstated (Prov 31:30).
- B. Every church member should independently fear the Lord, but they all do not, so you look for more.
- C. *Independent* fear of the Lord is true fear of God that is already within the person and not influenced at all by your relationship – they had it before you met them and/or will have it after breaking up, and they have all the initiative and zeal evident in their lives without any coaxing or coercion.
- D. What is independent *fear of the Lord*? Proven love of God by action and reputation, trust in Scripture, delight in the Lord, love of the truth, fellowship with Christ, zeal for worship, complete conversion, hatred of sin and the world, willing to learn and change, confident of eternal life, baptized, lives by faith, loves strong preaching, no fear of peers, fully honors parents, loves prayer,

holy life, despises man's wisdom, spiritually minded, hates false ways, humble to God and men, craves instruction, evangelistic, initiates spiritual conversation, wise, intolerant of sin, etc.

- E. A spouse that fears God will act in marriage as God intended – this is as good as marriage can be.
- F. With a marriage built on the fear of the Lord, then both spouses have leverage to deal with problems.
- G. A youth can seldom make this judgment correctly, so it depends on parents or other wise counselors.
- H. For much more about the fear of the Lord ... <http://www.letgodbetruer.com/sermons/god/fear-of-the-lord/sermon.php>.

#3: Virtuous

- A. This trait is found in Ruth 3:11; Proverbs 12:4; 31:10. It is in favor with God and men (Luke 2:52).
- B. **Virtuous.** Possessing or showing virtue in life and conduct; acting with moral rectitude or in conformity with moral laws; free from vice, immorality, or wickedness; good, just, righteous. [OED]
- C. This is far more than an opinion – this is an established reputation known and declared by many.
- D. We introduce it this way: great character, good name, wise, prudent, wonderful person, chaste, highly respected, praiseworthy, accomplished, moral, confident, decent, good, strong.
- E. A virtuous guy or girl will be exceptional, noble, prince-like, guileless like Nathanael, spotless, etc.

#4: Gracious

- A. This trait is found in Psalm 112:4; Proverbs 11:16; 22:11; Ecclesiastes 10:12; Luke 4:22; Col 4:6.
- B. **Gracious.** Enjoying grace or favour; in good odour, acceptable, popular. Winning favour or goodwill. Having pleasing qualities. Characterized by or exhibiting kindness or courtesy; kindly, benevolent, courteous. Condescendingly kind, indulgent and beneficent to inferiors. [OED]
- C. This is the most beautifying character trait of a person whether man or woman and a precious gift, and it is something that ought to be taught and pursued more than any academic subject (Pr 22:1).
- D. We introduce it this way: Courteous, charming, pleasing, polite, kind, condescending courtesy, compassionate, agreeable, thoughtful, sweet, agreeable, discreet, gentle.
- E. For graciousness ... www.letgodbetruer.com/pdf/graciousness.pdf & www.letgodbetruer.com/pdf/graciousness-again.pdf.

#5: Diligent

- A. This trait is found in Prov 12:24,27; 13:4; 21:5; 22:29; 27:23-27; 31:10-31; Eccl 9:10; Rom 12:12.
- B. The trait that dominates the virtuous woman's resume is diligence – much hard work (Pr 31:10-31).
- C. If a spouse does not have a motor, you will live the rest of your life with things not getting done.
- D. This is easy to discover by how much work, school, cleanliness, volunteering, service to others, etc., remembering that diligence on the job is not enough, for they are paid to pretend diligence there.
- E. Ambition and drive are very godly things, and you need them to accomplish anything worthwhile.
- F. For Proverb commentaries about diligence ... <http://www.letgodbetruer.com/proverbs/topics/all.php?topic=24>.

#6: Selfless

- A. This trait is found in Matt 20:25-28; Rom 12:10; II Cor 12:15; Phil 2:3-4; Luke 14:12-14; Ac 20:35.
- B. If a person selflessly serves others, guess what kind of spouse they will be? Close on the contract!
- C. This is the second commandment and in some respects with the fear of the LORD is all you need.
- D. This is the difference between selfish and selfless introduced by our recent study of Romans 12:10.
- E. A girl/woman that is selfless is meek and quiet, submissive, reverent, and teachable, or quite perfect!
- F. Listen for a few minutes to see what a person is talking about – if about themselves, then walk away.
- G. For more about selfishness or selflessness ... www.letgodbetruer.com/pdf/selfish-or-selfless.pdf.

#7: Temperate

- A. This trait is found in Prov 14:29; 25:28; Gal 5:23; I Corinthians 9:24-27; Titus 1:8; 2:2; II Peter 1:6.
- B. **Temperate.** Keeping due measure, self-restrained, moderate. Not swayed by passion, gentle, mild, forbearing. Moderate and self-controlled as regards the indulgence of appetites or desires. [OED]

- C. Temperance is self-control, self-discipline, moderation, and the power to fully rule one's own spirit.
- D. This person rules their spirit, their mood, their words, and their conduct and brings all under Christ.
- E. Moody men or drama queens do not deserve spouses, for the pain of living with them is not worth it.
- F. For more about temperance, or self-control ... www.letgodbetruer.com/pdf/temperance-in-all-things.pdf.

Conclusion:

1. God does not care how you get your wife – dating, courting, arranged marriages, or grab one (Judges 21:21)!
2. Deficiencies discovered before marriage will likely be ten times worse after, due to the deception of courting.
3. Let every never-married child in this assembly, of any age, fully humble himself to parents and counselors.
4. Why ask school counselors (degrees) or bank loan officers (businesses) but not dissect marriage candidates?
5. Consider the advantages a father has to give wise counsel to a son about marrying the right kind of woman.
 - a. A father has more marital experience with a woman than his son has experience even being a child/youth.
 - b. A father is not emotionally involved with the girl, so he only can see clearly to judge based on evidence.
 - c. A father is not a stick of testosterone, so he only can make a calm and sober decision based on evidence.
 - d. A father loves his son with protective parental care, which the son cannot grasp and will only learn later.
 - e. A father has both eyes looking to his son's future, but his son cannot see tomorrow due to lust for today.
 - f. A father has more knowledge than his son has forgotten, from all the years he has lived beyond his son.
 - g. A father has a charge from God to obey the Lord and protect his son from odious and whorish women.
 - h. A father has experienced, witnessed, or shared in marital pain, and his son cannot see it or believe it.
 - i. A father has not dated the girl, so he is not foolishly thinking about love in marriage as dating with sex.
 - j. A father measures a girl by the woman she will be, but the son can only see the girl and her outfit today.
 - k. A father loves his son more and different than his wife will ever love him, so the son should trust him.
 - m. A father looks for the odious woman before marriage, knowing the risk, which the son will often miss.
6. What are you parents with children or youth doing to set the table and guarantee a future of godly marriages?
 - a. You can be teaching the desirable traits from fear of the Lord to any other while they are still very young.
 - b. You can mark those of the opposite sex their age, older, or even married as examples of a perfect spouse.
 - c. You can encourage young friendships to keep their eyes on those “in the Lord” rather than “of the world.”
 - d. If you do not make your family and children attractive and desirable for marriage, they will be ignored.
 - e. If you hinder or end a possible marriage for your child to a God-fearing spouse, you are playing with fire.
 - f. Are you giving your children plenty of hope on this front while cutting off so much of their social life?
 - g. No matter your marital state in the church, join in with all of us to pray for and pursue the best marriages.

For Further Study:

1. The sermon outline, “Marriage – Only in the Lord” ... www.letgodbetruer.com/pdf/marriage-in-the-lord.pdf.
2. Rate-a-date, “Who Can Find a Virtuous Woman?” ... <http://www.letgodbetruer.com/bible/practical/rate-a-date-women.php>.
3. Rate-a-date, “Looking for One Good Man,” ... <http://www.letgodbetruer.com/bible/practical/rate-a-date-men.php>.
4. The sermon outline, “The Magnificent Matchmaker,” ... www.letgodbetruer.com/pdf/magnificent-matchmaker.pdf.
5. A few Proverb commentaries about marriage ... <http://www.letgodbetruer.com/proverbs/topics/marriage.php>.
6. A sample marriage covenant detailing marital duties ... www.letgodbetruer.com/pdf/marriage-covenant.pdf.