



Things to Consider Before Saying "I Do"

Proverbs 24:3-6

Proverbs 24:3-6 *3 By wisdom a house is built, and through understanding it is established; 4 through knowledge its rooms are filled with rare and beautiful treasures. 5 A wise man has great power, and a man of knowledge increases strength; 6 for waging war you need guidance, and for victory many advisers.*

As I talk about *Things to Consider Before Saying "I Do"*, it's my observation that many marriages fail before they ever begin!

This is a "preventive" message - to help us to get a grip on things we really need to consider before we say "I do."

QUESTIONNAIRE

A questionnaire (see last page), *What Do You Believe About Love?* check true/ false as I read...

If you marked FALSE on all ten items, you DO understand something about the true nature of love (vs. infatuation, and raging hormones).

Isn't it amazing that states have tougher laws for getting a driver's license than getting a marriage license?

Little girl asked to draw a picture on what she wanted to be. . . "I want to be married but I don't know how to draw it."

I want to help you to understand marriage from the front side.

Article in Good Housekeeping *"Five Ways to Learn Everything You Need to know about a man before you marry him."*

1. Watch him drive in heavy traffic
2. Listen to him talk to his mother when he doesn't know anyone's listening.

3. See how he treats those who serve him such as waitresses and waiters.
4. See what he is willing to spend his money to buy.
5. Look at who his friends are.

Those are pretty good, but I think we can do better this morning. So, I want to share with you: **Six Things to Consider Before You Say "I Do"** - by asking six questions

I. "AM I THE RIGHT PERSON?"

Marriage is more than finding the right person, it is being the right person.

It is not marriages that fail, it is people that fail. What marriage does is *"show people up who people really are."*

Tony Campolo "Many people marry because they think that marriage will overcome the inadequacies of their own personalities, becoming complete persons through the complementary qualities of their mate. You should never marry hoping that the other person will compensate for inadequacies. You only overtax and destroy the other person in the process. The people who ought to marry are people who have become complete persons in their own right and bring to the relationship the fullness of personhood to be shared with another."

Marriage works best for people who can as easily stay single -- I worry about marriage for people who feel they HAVE TO get married.

Single people - if you have a bad attitude, miserable and have problems, don't get married - then you have two people with bad attitudes, miserable and problems.

John Maxwell is a nationally known Christian speaker. His wife was once asked at a pastor/wives conference, "Does your husband make you happy?" *"No, John does not make me happy. I came to realize in the first six months in our marriage that John would never make me happy. (hurry, meetings, papers) I also realized that the only person who can make me happy is me. Since that realization -- that I have to plan for my happiness, I have found that my John has immeasurably added to that happiness."*

Remember that list of *Convenience vs. Commitment People* from last week? Start focusing on *who you are* and that will help you have a great marriage.

Be the Right Person.

II. IS MY BOY/GIRL FRIEND THE RIGHT PERSON?"

People get married before they know each other and get divorced when they do.

Once again, let me remind you of that Convenience/commitment list.

Also, there is a relationship between **family background** and a good marriage.

- Teens/unmarried/engaged -- when you marry someone, you DO marry that family.

Five things to check: **Family Background Checklist:**

1. *Childhood happiness*
2. *Parent happiness - how about mom and dad - do they enjoy life? _____*
3. *Home Discipline - was/is there discipline in the home? Not talking harsh or unreasonable, but have there been rules and guidelines? It will secure the marriage.*
4. *Family history of substance abuse (alcohol) or Physical abuse?*
5. *Is there a sense of Security there? Is there a lot of unconditional love?*

III. "AM I EQUALLY YOAKED?"

The only biblical command directly related to the selection of a marriage partner is 2 Corinthians 6:14-16

2 Corinthians 6:14-16 *¹⁴Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness? ¹⁵What harmony is there between Christ and Belial? What does a believer have in common with an unbeliever? ¹⁶What agreement is there between the temple of God and idols? For we are the temple of the living God. As God has said: "I will live with them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they will be my people."*

The Unequally Yoked Principle: Do not get emotionally involved/connected with unbelievers.

There is an 11 times greater success rate when you marry someone who has same religious faith.

Most important reason - because, even in marriage, God is to have first place in our lives.

When a committed relationship, marriage being the most committed, compromises that, we are instantly spiritually weakened.

IV. "AM I EMOTIONALLY PREPARED?"

Am I emotionally ready for it?

Allen age 10, "I don't know who I'm going to marry yet, but I'll tell you one thing, I'm going to have her sign a paper that she'll take out the garbage and I get to watch whatever TV shows I want."

That's funny because it's Alan and his age is 10. Know when it's not funny? When he's 20 or 30 and he's still a child emotionally.

A lot of people are not emotionally prepared for marriage when they get married. Not emotionally prepared to give it 100%. They're drawing lines and limiting their response.

Listen, you have to be emotionally prepared to give not 50%, but 100% to your mate. Have to be ready not just to not just get what you need, **but ready to give and ADD VALUE to the other person's life** - what you can give to make the other person more fulfilled, alive.

Three Signs of ADEQUATE EMOTIONAL PREPARATION

1. *There is no rush into the marriage.*

Show me somebody who is emotionally prepared, I'll show you somebody who can wait a few more months to get married.

When people are not real sure my best advice is "wait." (slow down, stall for time, if it's gonna work it'll still work, if not it'll start to show.

2. *Selfishness is under control.*

Kids are normally selfish. We're all selfish. . . But it needs to be under control when you enter into marriage. Under control is when we begin to put others before ourselves.

- want to get ready young people - practice putting others before yourself
3. *When their love is based on COMMITMENT and not on emotion. (two types of people?)*

We have this strange idea that love is a "feeling". When we do we get into trouble, because one day feeling is high, another it is low.. It goes up/down.

We all have the "wiggly line" . . . (All the time for every one.) Because of that, when we base our love on an emotional commitment we will find that we will fall "in love" and "out of love" all the time!

Kid wrote short story about Ben Franklin. "BF saw a pretty girl one day and suddenly he discovered electricity."

If you're not emotionally mature you will fall "out" of love real fast. Once you seek an emotion rather than a commitment you'll never make it.

V. "AM I FINANCIALLY PREPARED?"

Cute quote: Don't marry for money. You can borrow it cheaper.

Young adult SS class studied Abraham and how he and Sara were in their 90's when they had Isaac. Teacher said, Now class what can we learn from that? "They waited until they could afford it."

Financial preparation - very important.

VI. "AM I MORALLY PREPARED?"

Here is a truth no one is telling you in our moral freefall society - **if you're not morally prepared as a single person, when you get married you won't be morally prepared either.** How you conduct yourself morally is now is not just about now, but it's about the rest of your life!

- You're a very naive person if you think that married people are not tempted sexually
- You're also extremely naive if you think you can fix your problems of lust by getting married, thinking those problems will not come back to bother you again.
- You are naive if you think moral preparation is just for when you are single (to get you through), and when you say "I do" that somehow after that you will have your moral act together. If you don't have it together now, then there's no guarantee that you'll have it together when you're married.

So How Do We Keep Ourselves Morally Pure?

1. Commit yourself to a BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE

Basically two perspectives out there about your moral life - Biblical & world's view. God's word says don't commit adultery & fornication, we are his people and it should not be said of us that we are immoral.

The thought of the world says, - quote by a lawyer to a class 7th grade girls on the first national

"Take Our Daughters to Work Day" in Newsweek. She said, "Sleep around all you want, just don't get married." That sums up what the world thinks. How are we supposed to respond, react to that?

1 Thess. 4:1-8 (Living Bible) Let me add this, dear brothers: You already know how to please God in your daily living, for you know the commands we gave you from the Lord Jesus himself. Now we beg you—yes, we demand of you in the name of the Lord Jesus—that you live more and more closely to that ideal. 3-4 For God wants you to be holy and pure and to keep clear of all sexual sin so that each of you will marry in holiness and honor—5 not in lustful passion as the heathen do, in their ignorance of God and his ways. 6 And this also is God's will: that you never cheat in this matter by taking another man's wife because the Lord will punish you for this, as we have solemnly told you before. 7 For God has not called us to be dirty-minded and full of lust but to be holy and clean. 8 If anyone refuses to live by these rules, he is not disobeying the rules of men but of God who gives his Holy Spirit to you.

Have a biblical perspective. Not my idea, but God's idea.

2. DON'T DATE EARLY

The earlier you date the more difficult it will be to stay morally pure.

Age of Dating	% Who Having Sex Before Graduation
16	20%
15	40 %
14	53 %
13	56 %
12	91 %

3. Establish a PERSONAL STANDARD OF PURITY

"Don't Date Early". Write it out, now.

The Law of Differences:

- Girls respond emotionally.
- Boys respond physically.

Girls play at sex for what they fundamentally want, Love.

Boys play at love for what they fundamentally want, SEX .

The Law of Progression “Expression”:

The more you do, the more you want to do.

The more you do the more it takes to satisfy you.

Sexual Progression Chart

Emotional Expression	Eye contact Words Symbols
Physical Expression	Holding hands Kissing Making Out
Violation of God's Moral Standard	Sexual touch Intercourse

The closer you get near to that big bold line when you're not ready to get married, you are in a whole lot of trouble (because there's a natural law of progression (expression) is leading you toward violating God's moral standard.)

SO Decide NOW that you are going to draw that line (It's easier to decide now on Sunday morning than waiting until Friday night.

4. Know the REASONS why you say "NO"

Not because the Pastor says so, or that God wants to inhibit your fun -- those will never hold up when the pressure comes.

Josh McDowell "History shows that when a generation fails to know 'why' they believe what they believe, their convictions are in danger of being undermined."

Single people, not knowing "why " they say "no" will lack moral conviction. They will not be able to resist when alone and challenged.

Two principles inherent in every seemingly negative command from God:

1. Protection
2. Provision

Protection from:

1. Sin against our bodies

2. An addiction to sex.
3. Sexually Transmitted Diseases (Slide on STD and Teens...)
4. Unwanted Pregnancy
5. Hindering _our relationship with God
6. Hardship of breaking up
7. Future Unhappiness
8. Comparison with others.
9. Struggle with purity after marriage.

Provision for:

1. Development of maturity
2. Clear conscience.
3. Waiting builds trust (If you break God's laws before marriage who's to say you not break it after)
4. Beauty in a marriage.

CONCLUSION

Couple of words of encouragement

No doubt some of you single people have already crossed the lines. The pressures for you to break that line is great. Great for married people too.

God loves you. God will forgive you. **Go back now and draw that line again.**

For you who have not crossed that line, today is day that I promise you, four to seven years from now I promise you you'll be grateful for a life time.

- Item 1: "Love at first sight" occurs between some people. True False
- Item 2: It is easy to distinguish real love from infatuation. True False
- Item 3: People who sincerely love each other will not fight or argue. (been there, done that?) True False
- Item 4: God selects one particular person for each of us to marry, and He will guide us together. True False
- Item 5: If a man and woman genuinely love each other, then hardships and troubles will have little or no effect on their relationship True False
- Item 6: It is better to marry the wrong person than to remain single and lonely. (not a marriage test, but an I.Q. test) True False
- Item 7: It is not harmful to have sexual intercourse before marriage if the couple has a meaningful relationship. True False
- Item 8: If a couple is genuinely in love, that condition is permanent -lasting a lifetime. True False
- Item 9: Short courtships (six months or less) are best. True False
- Item 10: Teenagers are more capable of genuine love than are older people. True False