

## ARE WE READY FOR MARRIAGE?

**Introduction:** Marriage is a life changing decision. It is about two lives merging into one. It also includes personal sacrifice. When God brought the first man and woman (Adam & Eve) together he said this in **Genesis 2:21-24**:

“So, the LORD God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep. While the man slept, the LORD God took out one of the man’s ribs and closed up the opening. Then the LORD God made a woman from the rib, and he brought her to the man. “At last!” the man exclaimed. “This one is bone from my bone, and flesh from my flesh! She will be called ‘woman,’ because she was taken from ‘man.’” **This explains why a man leaves his father and mother and is joined to his wife, and the two are united into one.** “

God tells us that when a man and woman decide to become husband and wife, they are becoming one. Merging their lives together in unity. They also are forming a bond that transcends all other relationships except that with God himself. This transition from one person to two people becoming as one person requires work, change, compromise and patience. In other words, marriage will cost us something. The question is, are we ready to commit ourselves to married life and all that it brings with it? God spoke of this principle in Luke 14 as he was describing to a crowd of people what it would take to become one of his disciples.

### Luke 14:25-33

“A large crowd was following Jesus. He turned around and said to them, “If you want to be my disciple, you must, by comparison, hate everyone else—your father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters—yes, even your own life. Otherwise, you cannot be my disciple. And if you do not carry your own cross and follow me, you cannot be my disciple.

**“But don’t begin until you count the cost.** For who would begin construction of a building without first calculating the cost to see if there is enough money to finish it? Otherwise, you might complete only the foundation before running out of money, and then everyone would laugh at you. They would say, ‘There’s the person who started that building and couldn’t afford to finish it!’

“Or what king would go to war against another king without first sitting down with his counselors to discuss whether his army of 10,000 could defeat the 20,000 soldiers marching against him? And if he can’t, he will send a delegation to discuss terms of peace while the enemy is still far away. So, you cannot become my disciple without giving up everything you own.

God pointed out to the crowd that in order to be one of his followers, it would cost them something personally. It would be a change in the way they lived compared to the way they currently lived. His admonishment to them was to **“COUNT THE COST BEFORE YOU MAKE THE DECISION!”**

The same principle holds true with marriage. Since marriage will cost us something we should take a close look at life and count the cost before deciding. With that said, we want to look at 5 areas of life where cost and change may be required. As we look at these areas, we must be willing to honestly evaluate whether we are truly ready to pay the price to be married.

Marriage requires a level of maturity physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually. Physical maturity comes with time and growth. Mental, emotional and spiritual maturity comes through training which includes instruction and practice or experience.

Listen to these verses in Hebrews:

### Hebrews 5:11-14

*“There is much more we would like to say about this, but it is difficult to explain, especially since you are spiritually dull and don’t seem to listen. You have been believers so long now that you ought to be teaching others. Instead, you need someone to teach you again the basic things about God’s word. **You are like babies** who need milk and cannot eat solid food. For someone who lives on milk is still an infant and doesn’t know how to do what is right. Solid food is for **those who are mature, who through training** have the skill to recognize the difference between right and wrong.”*

The writer of Hebrews says that someone who is mature listens and puts into practice the things they have learned thus resulting in maturity. As a mature person they have the skill to recognize and make proper decisions about right and wrong. The same holds true in marriage. Sometime immaturity is just a lack of training. Sometimes it is a lack of listening and putting into practice what they have learned. Either way, when we enter into marriage it is critical that we have the skill to make right decisions, so we do not create unnecessary difficulty and fall into the trap of the devil. Remember it takes time so we must be patient with each other as we learn and grow.

Here are 5 areas to watch out for:

#### 1. Wanting to live a single lifestyle while being married.

*“So, the LORD God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep. While the man slept, the LORD God took out one of the man’s ribs and closed up the opening. Then the LORD God made a woman from the rib, and he brought her to the man. “At last!” the man exclaimed. “This one is bone from my bone, and flesh from my flesh! She will be called ‘woman,’ because she was taken from ‘man.’” This explains why **a man leaves his father and mother and is joined to his wife, and the two are united into one.**” - Genesis 2:21-24 (NLT)*

Marriage is a choice. To choose married life, a person must want what married life is. That’s why it’s critical to understand what married life involves. If a person likes the single life, they should remain single until they decide they want married life over the single life. For example,

when we are single, we make decisions based on one person, ourselves. Once we are married, we make decisions considering two people not just ourselves.

### 2. Lack of personal responsibility - Can we take care of ourselves? Have we cut the apron string?

Genesis 2:24 says a man should leave father and mother and be joined to his wife. The wife must also be willing to leave father and mother and be joined to her husband. When a man and woman choose marriage, they are forming their own family unit. This family unit must take priority over all other earthly relationships. This is the way God designed marriage to work. If we are not ready to “cut the apron string,” commit to our spouse and take responsibility for ourselves, marriage will be extremely difficult. If we are still dependent on parents or friends to help us pay our bills, clean clothes, buy groceries or any of the other necessary aspects of life, then maybe we should wait before getting married. The last thing we want is to be married and feel like we are parenting a child rather than doing life with a partner.

### 3. Financial instability

*“Do your **planning** and **prepare your fields** before building your house.” - Proverbs 24:27 (NLT)*

The book of Proverbs is a book of wisdom. One bit of wisdom given is the admonishment to prepare ourselves financially before establishing our own family unit. Marriage will require financial stability. Bills will need to be paid, children cost money, unexpected situations come up medically and otherwise. Proverbs 24:27 encourages us to plan and make sure our source of income is set (“prepare your fields”) and it is enough to begin a family (“Do your planning”).

Also, managing our finances during marriage is critical. Controlling our finances and not allowing our finances to control us is big part of a successful marriage. Consider this verse:

*“**Don't love money**; be satisfied with what you have. For God has said, “I will never fail you. I will never abandon you.” - Hebrews 13:5 (NLT)*

If we do not manage our money very well now, getting married is not a magic wand that will magically make us good at managing money. It is much better to learn to manage money before we get married. A good test would be, if we had to live on our own, would we be able to pay our bills and have plenty of money left over? Do we have a savings account where we are saving for emergencies? Once we are married our chances of having an emergency automatically double. We will discuss finances in more detail later.

### 4. Sexual issues

Two of the most common reasons for divorce are money problems and sexual frustration or infidelity.

*“Give honor to marriage and **remain faithful to one another in marriage**. God will surely judge people who are immoral and those who commit adultery.” - Hebrews 13:4*

Past sexual abuse, sexual promiscuity, broken relationships that were very physical as well as other unfortunate experiences involving a physical relationship can create problems in a marriage if they are not addressed before hand. We will address this topic in more detail later. However, be aware of the impact and the importance of the physical relationship in marriage. We must be willing to be pure and faithful to our mate if we want to have a successful marriage.

## 5. Spiritual differences

Are we ready for marriage spiritually? Here are two questions to consider:

Are you a believer and follower of Jesus Christ?

*“Don’t team up with those who are unbelievers. How can righteousness be a partner with wickedness? How can light live with darkness? What harmony can there be between Christ and the devil? **How can a believer be a partner with an unbeliever?**” - 2 Corinthians 6:14-15 (NLT)*

It is important that both husband and wife be on the same page when it comes to their relationship with God. They must both want the same thing spiritually and love God supremely. Satan will come after us and we must learn to stand together against him! Quite often you may have one person who has been around church and Christianity all their life while the other is very new to the idea of living for God. One person may have had a bad experience with religion or want nothing to do with God. Difference religious beliefs can also cause tension in a marriage. It is critically important that we are both on the same page when it comes to our relationship with God. Have we accepted Jesus as our personal Savior? Is he important in our life? How much do we know about the Bible? Etc.

Are you connected with a friend group that encourages you to follow Jesus?

*“Let us think of ways to motivate one another to acts of love and good works. And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, **but encourage one another**, especially now that the day of his return is drawing near.” - Hebrews 10:24-25 (NLT)*

Going to church does not make us a Christian any more than going to the hospital makes us a doctor or a nurse. However, the kind of people we build our life around will affect our marriage, our children, and everything about us. What kind of friends we have matters! Look at these verses:

**1 Corinthians 15:33** says, “Don’t be fooled by those who say such things, for **“bad company corrupts good character.”**”

### **Proverbs 1:10**

My child, if sinners entice you, turn your back on them!

### **Proverbs 11:9a**

With their words, the godless destroy their friends, ...

### **Proverbs 12:26**

The godly give good advice to their friends; the wicked lead them astray.

### **Psalms 1:1-3**

“Oh, the joys of those who do not follow the advice of the wicked, or stand around with sinners, or join in with mockers. But they delight in the law of the LORD, meditating on it day and night. They are like trees planted along the riverbank, bearing fruit each season. Their leaves never wither, and they prosper in all they do.”

As we can see, the people we make our friends do have an impact on our lives and ultimately who we become. That is why God said in Hebrews 10:24 that we should not forget to gather with Christian friends and encourage one another to do the right thing and live for Jesus.

Before committing to marriage, we should be sure to discuss all these things together and confirm to each other that we are truly READY FOR MARRIAGE!

Let's Pray.