

Marriage and Families

Lesson 14 – Parents must teach their children about whom to marry

The two most important days in a person's earthly life are the day they are married to Christ in gospel obedience (**Romans 7:4**) and the day they are joined to one of the opposite sex in holy matrimony. In regard to the latter institution, the Bible says in **Hebrew 13:4**, "Marriage is honorable among all, and the bed undefiled; but fornicators and adulterers God will judge".

As we talked about in lesson 11, we have a great responsibility as both Christians and parents to train our children in the way of the Lord. Part of that responsibility is teaching our children the seriousness of choosing a mate. This training must begin early in a child's life. Why? It is during this time (from infancy to around age 18) that parents have the time, the opportunities, and the greatest obligation to so train the individual child that he or she will have the background which will compel him or her to choose for life a Christian companion. This must take place before a child begins dating for our children will marry someone they date.

Let parents determine to teach their children to prepare themselves to be the very best possible marriage companion, and then to marry someone who has made the same kind of preparation. It is foolish beyond description for one to spend the years preparing to be a good, faithful, Christian marriage partner, and then marry someone who has not made the same such preparations.

We must teach our children to marry someone who will help them live faithful, Christian lives, and who will help them to "bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."

In lessons 2-7 we discussed the marriage vow, roles of the Christian man and woman in marriage, failures, and successes in marriage. Each lesson can help our children's preparation for marriage.

This lesson will deal with other lessons we should teach our children regarding marriage.

1. Marry a Christian

- 1.1. Marriage is primarily a spiritual relationship. It is more a union of souls than of bodies. Since this is true, we would naturally expect that one's spiritual relationship with Christ would affect the spiritual relationship that exists between the two marriage partners.
- 1.2. The bible stresses oneness in a marriage, but when a Christian marries an unbeliever, the very area (spiritual area) in which oneness is needed most, will be sorely lacking. There is no greater aid to spiritual growth than biblical unity between husband and wife. Nothing is more important than spiritual growth (**Matt. 6:33; Col. 3:1-2**).

- 1.3. When one partner is a Christian and the other is not, they cannot truly worship God in spirit and in truth together (**John 4:24**). Their attitudes toward God and his teachings are not the same. Consider such scriptures as **II Tim. 3:16-17**; **I Peter 4:11**; and **II Peter 1:3, 21**.
- 1.4. The scriptures indicate that husbands are to “love your wives, even as Christ loved the church” and that wives are to “submit to your own husbands as unto the Lord” (**Eph. 5:22, 25**). In situations where one or the other spouse has not obeyed the gospel, they have no concept of the biblical teachings, and the implications of those teachings, regarding marriage.
- 1.5. Marriages have a much better chance of succeeding when you marry a Christian. Never fool yourself into thinking that you will convert them later.
- 1.6. Bringing your children up in the “nurture and admonition of the Lord” is much easier when both parents are Christians. No thinking child of God would desire that their precious children be influenced to such an extent by one who has failed to recognize the importance of purifying his soul by obeying the truth (**I Peter 1:22-23**).
- 1.7. “Seek ye first the kingdom of God” is our command in **Matthew 6:33**. When choosing a spouse, you must ask yourself, “will this person help me obey this command” and “will this person help me get to heaven”?
- 1.8. **Joshua 24:15** – “as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD”
2. Understand who can and cannot marry without committing sin
 - 2.1. There are only three categories of people who can marry without committing sin
 - 2.1.1. Those who have never been married before
 - 2.1.2. Those who have previously married but whose former companion has died.
 - 2.1.3. Those who have previously married, but are now divorced because their former companion was guilty of fornication.
3. Marry someone who brings the following qualities to the marriage altar:
 - 3.1. Purity of person
 - 3.1.1. Joseph, in **Genesis 39**, refused to commit fornication with a woman who sought to seduce him into a highly immoral web. Notice his words in **Genesis 39:9**, “How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?”
 - 3.1.2. **Romans 12:1**; **I Timothy 4:12**; **I Timothy 5:22**; **I Corinthians 6:18-20**
 - 3.1.3. The Bible clearly says that those who practice fornication, uncleanness, and lewdness will not inherit the kingdom of heaven (**Gal. 5:19-21**; **Eph. 5:3-5**). These works of the flesh spring out of an evil heart (**Mark 7:21-23**). Christians are to abstain from fornication and keep themselves pure and holy for the Lord’s sake (**I Thess. 4:3-5**; **I Cor. 6:13**). Flee fornication is the charge of the scriptures (**I Cor. 6:13**) for God will judge whoremongers and adulterers (**Heb. 13:4**) and cast them into eternal damnation (**Rev 21:8; 22:15**).

3.1.3.1. Fornication means prostitution, unchastity, and every kind of unlawful sexual intercourse outside of marriage.

3.1.3.2. Lasciviousness is defined as indecent conduct, unbridled lust, filthy words, indecent bodily movements, and unchaste handling of males and females.

3.2. Maturity of mind

3.2.1. Marriage is for the mature. It is an institution that calls for adults to enter it. It is not for those who are just infatuated momentarily with each other because of a handsome build or attractive figure. It is for those who have established the love for one another God commands.

3.2.2. All three of these verses (**Genesis 2:18-24; Ephesians 5:31; Matthew 19:4-6**) specifically talk about leaving your father and mother and becoming one with your spouse. If you are not mature enough to leave your father and mother and make a separate home, you are not ready for a successful marriage. One of the biggest problems in new marriages is that one or both of the partners' tries to be parts of two households. They continue under the domination of parents rather than truly establishing their own home. This is *NOT* saying quit respecting your parents or seeking guidance or counsel from them.

3.2.3. Immaturity is characterized by:

3.2.3.1. Selfishness. Interested only in yourself and those things directly affecting you.

3.2.3.2. Marked by ingratitude for the love and devotion shown to you by your spouse

3.2.3.3. Demands to have your own way – will scream or say hateful, hurtful things to get your own way.

3.2.3.4. Little or no sense of responsibility or obligation.

3.2.3.5. Inability to meet the conflicts or problems of life without bad emotional reactions. Anger, jealousy, violent temper, envy. Maturity comes with the ability to have a good disposition, kindness, and gentleness. Ability to admit when you are wrong. Apply the teachings of **Romans 12** to your life.

3.2.3.6. Manifests itself in poor physical intimacy.

3.2.3.7. Poor way of trying to get love

3.2.3.7.1. If my spouse loves me they will do this, or that.

3.2.3.7.2. When they don't meet our expectations, we get mad

3.3. Permanency of marriage

3.3.1. God intends for marriage to be a lifetime union. Anyone, who does not enter into marriage with the same frame of mind, knows not God.

3.3.2. **Matthew 19:6-9; Romans 7:2-3; I Corinthians 7:10-11**

3.3.3. A spouse should bring to the marriage a firm resolve to live together, according to God's law, and the law of the land, "till death do us part".

3.3.4. You should prayerfully consider the implications before marrying someone whose parents are divorced.

- 3.4. Spirit of selfless service
 - 3.4.1. Paul's "be ye kind" philosophy of **Ephesians 4:32** is an imperative in marital relationships.
 - 3.4.2. The golden rule of **Matthew 7:12**
 - 3.4.3. The type of selflessness Christ showed
- 3.5. Trust
 - 3.5.1. **Proverbs 31:11-12** states the necessary trust needed in a marriage.
 - 3.5.2. No marriage can live in the fatal surroundings of deep jealousy and malicious suspicion.
- 3.6. Loyalty of love
 - 3.6.1. It should be the type of love Christ has for the church (**Eph. 5:25**)
 - 3.6.2. The kind of love described in **I Corinthians 13**
 - 3.6.3. The kind of love that is the bond of perfectness (**Col. 3:14**).
 - 3.6.4. It should be a fervent love and one that freely pays its binding obligations (**I Peter 4:8; Rom. 13:8-10**)
- 3.7. Has a love for home and homelife
- 3.8. Has the proper respect for marriage and the roles the husband and wife are given by God
 - 3.8.1. Husband is the head of the wife, as Christ is the head of the church
 - 3.8.2. The husband is to love his wife the way Christ loves the church. Thus, the husbands love is *NOT* dictatorial, tyrannical, overbearing or unreasonable in nature. This authority, being practiced in love, should not be disturbing or deplorable to the wife. Do we find our subjection to Christ distasteful? NO! Because of the love he has for us.
 - 3.8.3. Wives are to submit themselves to the husband, as unto the Lord.
- 3.9. Spiritual attitude predominant in their life
 - 3.9.1. Marriage is not a twosome relationship; it is a threesome arrangement. There is a triangle of marital happiness. God is at the top of the triangle, the husband at one base angle and the wife at the other base angle. When choosing a marital mate, the first question we must ask is, "will this person help me get to heaven?"
 - 3.9.2. Choose someone who has a strong faith in God
 - 3.9.2.1. True faith comes from only what the Bible says (**I Peter 1:3; Gal. 1:8-9; II Tim.3: 16-17**).

Make no mistake about it, marriage, as God intended, is for those who love God and one another. **I Peter 3:7** says, husbands and wives are "heirs together of the grace of life." No other way can we live in such a blessed relationship, than to follow the example of Zechariah and Elizabeth. They were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless (**Luke 1:6**).