

## ***Prescriptions for the Heart***

### **Preparing for Marriage**

Marriage is one of the most important decisions that you will make in your life. When you find someone special and fall in love, you want to share everything with him or her, including your life. It's not just about planning the wedding and reception, marriage is about two people coming together as one to know each other and also to worship God. Marriage is a life-long commitment that was God's idea to start with. Before you get married, you must be sure that you and your future spouse are spiritually prepared. It is important that you both be consistent in your walk with God so that your marriage will be successful.

Starting your marriage with a strong foundation of shared faith will affect your life together in many ways, including helping you to face challenges that may occur in the future. God will bless you with a long and fruitful marriage as long as you both keep your faith and His Word central in your life. Being secure in your faith is important so that when your spouse disappoints you, will be able to rely on God for proper guidance. Here a few good questions to consider before getting married.

#### ***Are you both like-minded Christians?***

The Bible contains many stories of problems that are caused when people marry outside of their religion. It is unreasonable to think that you can alter someone's beliefs and influence them to be more like your own. The apostle Paul warns against becoming "yoked" with someone who does not share your faith, and many people think that this principle applies to marriage (see 2 Corinthians 6:13-15). However, if you are considering marrying someone who is not a Christian, you should take time now to discuss the differences in your faiths and then decide jointly how you will practice your faith after you are married.

#### ***Are you willing to serve each other?***

In order for a marriage to be successful, you must be willing to communicate with an open heart and to serve the best interests of the other. A wife should respect her husband, and a husband should be willing to love his wife, sacrificially. The primary focal point in both cases is mutual submission to the Lordship of Christ. "Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord. Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her" (Ephesians 5:22, 25).<sup>1</sup>

Marriage not only flourishes from love and excitement from one another, but from the faith and trust that is shown through each other's commitment to build and sustain the marriage, because the two have become one. That is why the Bible says, "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh." This life-long dedication and unity to one another is how couples discover true happiness.

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