

Choosing A Mate, 1 of 3

A man who finds a wife finds a good thing and obtains favor from the LORD. - Proverbs 18:22
HCSB

We've probably all seen the sweet diamond commercial where the young couple walking through the park sees the elderly couple still holding hands after years of marriage. How do we find that special person to grow old with when we are surrounded by materialistic, shallow, worldly, narcissistic people? When looking into the eyes of another person, how do we know for a fact that this is the right kind of person, much less the very person we should marry?

The first question is not who you should marry, but whether you should marry at all. Some people are granted the gift of celibacy, the ability to live without a sexual relationship.¹ This is a very special gift because it allows the person who has it a unique opportunity to focus on ministry in a way that a married person cannot. A married person's attention is split between the Lord's work and his spouse. I have discovered that a married person is vulnerable in a way that a single person is not. Why do you think the military often selects single, unattached men for particularly dangerous missions?

However, most people are not gifted with celibacy. Most humans are not solitary but social creatures. It is generally not good for us to be alone and a good mate will provide help to not only survive but thrive in this world.²

If we must marry then, the first consideration must be our parents. If at all possible, we need to gain both sets of parents' approval for the marriage.³

Isaac let his father choose a wife, and he lived happily ever after with her, never seeking another.⁴ Samson took a wife over his parents' objections, and the result was disaster. His marriage lasted about a week.⁵

You say, "My parents are not Christians." Or you say, "My parents do not look for my best interests." As a pastor, I have found that even the most recalcitrant parent has a unique insight into his or her child. No one has known you longer than a parent. Even if they have not lived with you, they know the genetic predispositions you have! I'm not saying that you have to marry who they tell you to, but I am suggesting that you listen to their input! You need to also listen to your "person of interest's" parents. You will not be marrying the parents, but you are certainly stuck with them! It would be best to start off on the right foot.

God's will must be sought on the matter. It's not enough to be physically attracted. Sex appeal will inevitably leave. It's not enough to be financially well-off. Money has a habit of leaving too. A marriage that is grounded in the will of God – ah, now that's forever!⁶

¹ 1 Corinthians 7:28-35

² Genesis 2:18-23

³ Exodus 20:12

⁴ Genesis 24:1-4, 67

⁵ Judges 14:1-3, 17-20

⁶ Job 42:2; James 1:5