

What should I look for in a spouse?

*Equality, Distinction, Headship,
Submission, Respect, Love, Parents, Sin,
Salvation, Beliefs, Passions, Self-control...*

“Singles make up 41% of
American adults 18 years and
older.”

- Forbes, Aug. 2007

Outcomes?

■ **Singles** (*all ages*)

- Help you balance the desire for marriage with the weight of being a responsible mate.
- Help you begin prayerfully developing convictions if God brings you a mate.
- Challenge you to consider other criteria that will impact your fulfillment in marriage.
- Help prepare you to be a mate that will bring a blessing to a marriage.

■ **Married** (*all ages*)

- Give you the tools to assist both your children and the singles around you.

This message...

- Is not a quest for a perfect mate but to help you enter marriage with your eyes open (Gen.2:22).
- Comes as an outcome of over 3,500 hours of individual, pre-engagement, pre-marriage and marriage counseling (Prov.15:22).
- Recognizes that God's grace can allow for fruit to come despite our frailties and shortcomings (Rom.5:20).
 - Our choices aren't always perfect but recognize that the selection of a marriage partner is a life-changing decision.
- Contains principles that can be gleaned from Scripture but aren't all direct commands (2 Tim.3:16, 17).
- Is not communicating that every single must marry.

(1) Opposite Gender

■ MEN

- God has created you to have a woman be your companion (Gen.1:27).
- Is she comfortable being a woman?
- Is she feminine (1 Pet.3:4)?
- If she has struggled with gender identification issues has she experienced a long season of healing?

■ WOMAN

- God has created you to have a man as your companion.
- Is he confident being a man?
- Is he masculine; not just macho?
- If he has struggled with gender identification issues has he experienced a long season of healing?

(2) Christ-follower vs. a “Christian”

■ MEN

- Has the “one” placed their faith in what Jesus did for them on the cross (John 10:27; 2 Cor.6:14)?
- Is she merely a spiritual person who was “raised” in the church (John 3:3)?
- Is fruit evident in her life (Matt. 7:20)?
- View of the Bible (2 Pet.1:21)?
- Doctrine (2 Tim.3:15-17)?
- Jesus (John 1:1; Hebr.1)?
- Trinity (Matt.28:19)?

■ WOMEN

- Men know how to posture themselves to appear to be whatever appeals to a woman (Jer.17:9).
- Has he placed his faith in Jesus (Rom.10:9; 1 Cor.15:3-4)? And is he living out his faith in Jesus?
- Is fruit evident in his life?
- View of the Bible?
- Doctrine?
- Jesus?
- Trinity?

(3) Work-ethic?

■ MEN

- Is she diligent, willing to labor and industrious (Prov.31:13-16)?
- Does she **complain** about the need to work hard?
- Does she **avoid hard work**?
- How has she performed on **past jobs**?
- Does she know how to take **care of herself**?
- Can you see her working hard to help you?

■ WOMAN

- Does he **have a job** (Gen.2:15)?
- Can he **keep a job** (Prov.13:4)?
- Does he have aspirations for the **future of his career** (Prov.22:29)?
- Does he **value** working hard or hardly working (Prov.10:4)?
- Is he always late or is he conscientious about **punctuality**?
- Is he looking for a wife to take care of him vs. him taking care of her?

(4) Growing Relationship with Jesus?

■ MEN & WOMAN

- Actively seeking to **obey** what God says in His Word?
- Reading God's Word and spending time in **prayer** with Jesus?
- Demonstrating a **passion** for Jesus? If so, how?
- **Confess** and **repent** of sin against God and you?
- Making themselves **accountable** to a local church?

(5) Value and Respect?

■ MEN

- Does she respect you as a man who is able to lead her (Eph.5:33)?
- Does she honor you publicly and privately?
- Does she lead you or do you lead her (Gen.3:16)?
- What will she offer you as a man?

■ WOMAN

- Does he cherish you as a woman of value (Eph.5:29)?
- Does he encourage you and seek to spur you on?
- Does he make comments often that devalue you and belittle you (Matt.12:24)?
- Has he taken steps towards starting to protect you? How?

(6) Headship and Submission?

■ MEN

- Does she have a biblical **understanding of headship** (1 Cor.11:8-9)?
- How does she feel about **submitting** under your headship (Eph.5:22)?
- How is she **surrendering** under your leadership right now (Prov.31:12)?
- Are you ready for the responsibility to **love her** unconditionally?

■ WOMAN

- Does he have a biblical understanding of headship?
- How is he **loving like Jesus** right now?
- Can you confidently follow him?
- Is he passive in areas that are important to you?
- Does he look out for your best interest?

(7) Finances?

■ MEN & WOMAN

- Do they have a **biblical view** of money (Matt.6:24; 1 Tim.6:10)?
- Are they ready to become **financially one**?
- Are they aware of their **financial health**?
 - Are they in debt (Prov.22:7)? If so, how much? Can you live with it?
 - Have they had financial problems in the past?
 - Are you familiar with their credit report and score?
 - Have they ever filed bankrupt (Rom.13:7-9)?
- Are you aware of their **financial habits**?
 - Do they spend money recklessly?
 - Do they give to the kingdom of God?
 - Do they save money?
- Are they **teachable**?

(8) Relationship with parents?

■ MEN

- Does she **honor** her father and mother?
- Does she **respect** her father and love her mother?
- Has her father granted her every desire?
- How have her challenges (if any) with her **parents shaped** her view of men or woman?
- Consider your parent's observations and input.

■ WOMAN

- Does he honor her father and mother?
- Does he respect his father and love his mother?
- Is he a **momma's boy**?
- How does he **treat his mother**?
- How have his challenges (if any) with his parents shaped his view of men or woman?
- Consider your parent's observations and input.

(9) Awareness of others needs?

■ MEN

- Is she a person who **gives** to others (Prov.31:20)?
- Is she **sensitive** to other people or is she all about herself?
- Can she **rejoice** with others (Rom.12:15)?

■ WOMAN

- Does he try to keep you from **interacting** with others (Gen.2:18)?
- Does he **free you up** to be a blessing to others?
- Can he rejoice with others?

(10) Perception of Self?

■ MEN

- What do you think has shaped her perception of herself (Prov.23:7)?
- Is she able to receive love (Mark 12:31)?
- Can she admit her mistakes?
- Does she strive to live humbly or haughtily (Prov.13:10)?

■ WOMAN

- What do you think has shaped his perception of himself (Prov.23:7)?
- Is he stuck on himself (Prov.11:2)?
- Is he okay with showing his weaknesses or mistakes?
- Who are the people that he admires?
- Does he seek humility?

(11) Conflict?

■ MEN

- How does she respond to conflict and disagreements?
 - Avoid conflict
 - Seek to address conflict
 - Stuffer or Dumper
- Is she spastic or “over the top” emotionally when she doesn’t agree with something (Prov.21:9; 27:15)?

■ WOMAN

- How does he respond to conflict and disagreements?
 - Avoid conflict and isolate
 - Seek to address conflict physically
 - Stuffer, Dumper, Destroyer
- Is he always the victim or does he ever see himself (Matt.7:1-7)?

(12) Friends?

■ MEN & WOMAN

- Are you able to live with their **relationships with their friends?**
- What do their **closest friends** say about them?
- If they have close friends of the **opposite gender**, do they plan on staying closely connected?
- Are there closest friends **too close for comfort?**

(13) Attraction?

“Don’t marry a person you can live with,
marry a person you can’t live without.”

■ MEN

- What attracts you to this person?
- Are you attracted to the qualities that you lack?
- If what attracts you to this person fades or is never enhanced would you still be attracted to them?
- Can you see yourself with this person forever?
- If they never changed could you see yourself content with them?

(14) Passions?

■ MEN

- Does she have any **impulsive** behaviors that alarm you?
- Do you witness the spiritual fruit of **self-control** in different areas of her life?
- Is she **addicted** to alcohol, shopping, drugs, and porn?
- Do you have like passions for the things of God (Amos 3:3)?

■ WOMAN

- Does he have any impulsive or compulsive behaviors that alarm you? (Get counseling)
- Does he have a **uncontrollable lust problem?**
- Does he struggle with porn, drugs, alcohol, gambling and women?
- Do you have like **passions for the things of God?**

(15) Counseling?

■ MEN & WOMAN

- Are you open to a skilled counselor taking a peek at your relationship before you commit the rest of your lives together?
- Who have you allowed to give you advice and counsel about your relationship?
- Are you open to a thorough assessment of whether you all are mutually compatible?

Things to avoid:

- Don't set a wedding date until you've been through pre-engagement counseling.
- Never agree to a pre-nuptial agreement.
- Don't ignore red flags that alert your conscience.
- Rushing through counseling to get married.
- Never see the engagement as final.
- Settling for your choice and missing God's.
- Preventing trusted people from meeting and getting to know the "one."

To the already married...

- Rejoice that God has been faithful despite our choices.
- Revel in God's grace being extended in your marriage.
- Recognize that because you are married it is God's will that you stay together.
- Repent of any sin that is hindering you from glorifying God in your marriage.
- Welcome singles into your life – they are cool too...

To the singles...

- Continue to wait on God's choice for you...
- Don't feel incomplete because you aren't married; you are complete in Christ.
- Serve... Serve... and Serve Him.
- Guard your time and set boundaries so that you maintain your time with God.
- Enjoy married people – they aren't that scary.
- Enjoy God!