



CHOOSING THE RIGHT SPOUSE

Most people are called to marriage, which is God's natural design for fulfilling the desire for companionship and intimacy. Until one is married, they are called to live in celibacy. For some, however, lifelong celibacy is a unique calling. In 1 Corinthians 7, the Apostle Paul teaches that both marriage and singleness are gifts from God. Regardless of one's status, we are called to honor and glorify God with our bodies.

In this season of life, it is important to seek God's direction on whether He is leading toward marriage or singleness. If one senses that God is calling them to marriage, then preparing for a biblically-rooted relationship is essential. Pursuing a spouse requires both trusting in God's guidance and actively doing one's part. But what does it look like to approach this intentionally?

Marriage is a gift from God, created and governed by Him. He establishes its boundaries and purpose. It is a lifelong commitment, meant to honor His design. Therefore, once a person begins dating, they should ensure that the person they are dating is someone they would consider for marriage. Dating without the intention of marriage can lead to self-centered motives, where one risks giving away parts of the heart that might be reserved for a future spouse, or worse, taking pieces of someone else's heart that are not meant for them. This is not fair to either person.

Instead, singles should approach relationships with the intent to honor God's purpose for marriage, focusing on building a connection that aligns with His will.

STEP ONE: SEEK GUIDANCE IN CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

In today's world, hyper-individualism often weakens our sense of responsi-

bility to community. Yet, God calls us to build vibrant relationships within our families and the body of Christ. These communities play a crucial role in our growth and can provide valuable support in finding a spouse. Despite the popularity of online dating, marriage experts find that introductions made through friends, family, and church often lead to some of the strongest marriages.

While online matchmaking can also be effective, it is wise to approach it with care. Having trusted friends to help navigate the process can provide accountability and support, ensuring one stays grounded in their values and intentions.

STEP TWO:

MOVE BEYOND RECREATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

The Bible calls singles to sexual purity, emphasizing this commitment as foundational for a godly life and relationships. In 1 Corinthians 6:18, Paul writes, “Flee from sexual immorality. Every other sin a person commits is outside the body, but the sexually immoral person sins against his own body.” This teaching is echoed in Ephesians 5:3, which states, “But sexual immorality and all impurity or covetousness must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints.” Colossians 3:5 further urges believers to “Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry.”

In a culture that often treats relationships as casual or recreational (or my body, my business), God’s Word calls us to a higher standard. Culture does not set the rules for what is acceptable; God does. God’s guidelines are not meant to restrict us but to protect us, just as a loving father sets boundaries to keep his children from harm.

Choosing purity is an intentional step toward building a healthy, God-centered marriage. Couples who commit to sexual purity honor God and shield their relationship from the confusion and heartache that can come with physical intimacy outside of marriage. This commitment allows them to establish a foundation rooted in trust, respect, and shared values, laying the groundwork for a strong and lasting union.

STEP THREE: SEEK A LIKE-MINDED PARTNER

A study by the National Marriage Project found that 94 percent of young adults believe they should marry their “soul mate,” “the one,” often leading them on an elusive quest for the “perfect” person. This idea may sound romantic, “they’re out there somewhere,” but it is also unrealistic.

The Bible and marriage research emphasize that a strong foundation is built on shared spiritual commitment, not perfection. Paul advised that

a spouse must be a believer (2 Corinthians 6:14–15; 1 Corinthians 7:39), encouraging believers to find a spouse with whom they can serve God better together than apart. Christians seeking a mate with shared biblical values understand that “all have fallen short,” so they aren’t waiting for someone flawless. Instead, they look for a mate to honor God with, realizing marriage is a lifelong commitment to serve one another selflessly.

Marriage is meant to be for life, not as a burden, but as a beautiful commitment. Difficult seasons do not mean divorce is the answer; rather, they are an opportunity to rely on God’s grace, which is always sufficient. Loving and respecting one’s spouse is a command, and God empowers us to fulfill it. Even when it is challenging, couples can ask God to give them a renewed love for one another. Since we are commanded to love, singles should choose someone easy to love, someone whose character and values make it natural to love and support them. Marriage is much more joyful when one chooses a partner who is easy to value.

STEP FOUR: BE PROACTIVE

Living in purity and community makes finding a mate with shared spiritual values easier, but there are also practical steps one can take as they steward their future marriage. Titus 2 encourages young men and women to learn from older mentors. Beyond general Christian discipleship, singles should ask mentors for feedback on how they can grow and prepare for marriage.

They may even know other singles seeking a godly spouse. Above all, singles should pray faithfully about their journey to marriage. As they pray for guidance, for single friends, and for God’s glory in their path, He will open their eyes to opportunities for proactive steps. While waiting for their “one,” singles should work on becoming “theirs.”

It is also essential for men to take a proactive role in seeking a spouse. Genesis 2:24 states that a man will leave his parents and “hold fast” to his wife. Proverbs 18:22 says, “He who finds a wife finds a good thing and obtains favor from the LORD.” This shows that marriage is not something men “stumble into” but a calling to actively pursue a woman of character. Men of faith should be willing to face rejection and demonstrate gentle leadership when seeking a wife, after all, he will become her spiritual leader (Ephesians 5:23).

GOING FURTHER: RESOURCES

Get Married: What Women Can Do to Help it Happen by Candice Watters

A Guy's Guide to Marrying Well. <https://www.boundless.org/podcast/mawage-episode-43/>

Boundless.org



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