

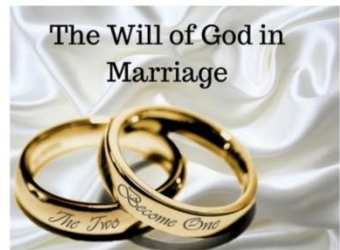
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Whom Shall I Marry?

As one grows in his / her spiritual amid physical maturity, one would be seeking to settle down with someone of the opposite gender in a marital relationship. Except for those who have a special calling of being single (which is a gift from God), many of us would end up marrying someone at one point or another. As believers, we would want to seek the will of God for we know that His will is the best for us in such an important phase of life. How then do we discern God's will in this important matter of life? The following are a few brief but useful pointers to consider for this vital aspect of our lives.

Firstly, with much prayer to the Lord, **the person you want to marry must be a regenerate man or woman who loves the Lord** (2 Cor 6:14-18). In the choice of a spouse for his son, Isaac, Abraham insisted that his servant go all the way back to his hometown to look for a mate and not one of the heathen Canaanites that was nearby (Gen 24:3,4). This may seem pretty

obvious to some but in practice, truth is stranger than fiction. When emotions are involved, some do not see things objectively and are prepared to compromise and rationalise. I remember speaking to a young person one day about her close relationship with a non-Christian friend, she replied that her friend was a morally upright man and was even better than some male Christians she had met. Granted that it is true, it still does not change the fundamental biblical axiom that light has no dealings with darkness as Paul puts it. (see 2 Cor 6:14-18) Beware of so-called Christians who try to please you in the short term but have no real change of heart. Two persons with diametrically different basic paradigms of life will find it extremely hard to live together and agree on many practical issues of marital life. Evangelistic



marriages are definitely out of the question and if our spouse does embrace the faith during the course of marriage, praise the Lord, but realise that this is the exception rather than the rule and we must not confuse the two.

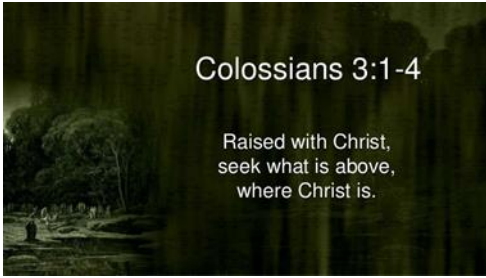
Secondly, I would venture further to add the point that other than being a believer, **does the person share the same spiritual convictions, vision, and goals in life with you?** This point is of vital importance because unless 2 persons have a common goal and purpose in spiritual things, it would prove problematic later in marital life. If one wants to serve the Lord and the other is nonchalant and lethargic about spiritual matters, it will have an adverse effect on the relationship and humility in the Lord after marriage. (i.e., I shared my calling with Angie, my wife-to-be before we were married and that was significant to me). Solomon said astutely in Proverbs 16:22, 'Whoso findeth a wife findeth a good thing, and obtaineth favour of the LORD.' The opposite is also true.



Thirdly, in seeing God's will concerning a life partner, we must also **consider and examine the character and disposition of that person whom we intend to marry.** Proverbs 31:10 says, 'Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies.' A God-fearing and prayerful spouse will go a long

way to edify, exhort, and build you up spiritually, morally, intellectually, and socially (Lk 2:52; Rom 12:12). Does that person depict Christian graces of meekness, temperance, holiness, patience, and care and concern for others and for the cause of Christ? Does he or she only bother about you and neglect everyone else? Is there a consideration, a caring and gentle disposition for others, and a sensitive regard for the well-being of other people? How does he or she treat his mother or father? Do you see Philippians 2:3,4 manifested in the life of that person? These are important signs to be discerned in order to understand the person well. A good gauge is the Fruit of the





Spirit in Galatians 5:22,23. Does he or she have a heavenly mindset (Col 3:1) or is that person only enthralled, with worldly pastimes and desires? Proverbs 31:30 says, '....beauty is vain: but a woman that feareth the LORD, she shall be praised.' Do not be taken in by external beauty that is temporal,

rather, heed the advice of Peter in 1 Peter 3:2-4, 'While they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear. Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.' These are vital things in a happy Christian marriage. If there is indifference, lack of respect for God and for authority, lack of desire for prayer, Bible reading, worship, fellowship, Christian service and the gospel, then it will invariably affect the whole direction of the family including the children to come. Are you able to accept this person as the father and mother of your children one day? These are important considerations to be thoughtfully prayed about and meditated before we make any decision concerning significant matters of life.

Fourthly, you need to ask yourself honestly concerning the person you intend to marry whether he / she has a good report among man.

John commends Demetrius to the church in 3 John 12, that Demetrius had a good report



of ail men and of the truth itself and the Apostle John also bears the same record of him as well. And this can be said of Lydia and Phoebe too. Does the person have a good testimony, a good witness among others? What do your parents think of him or her? What do godly men like your redeemed parents, pastor, elders and deacons, and God-fearing brothers and sisters in Christ think of him or her? Does that person manifest faith in his / her words, walk, and works? Does he / she have a desire for prayer (i.e., does he or she come for prayer meetings) and the Word? Do you see marks of sanctification in the life of the person or is the person worldly and secular in his / her views, interests, and practices? Is he / she more concerned about

worldly music, money, clothes, leisure, and beauty than the things of God? It takes time to know a person and to discern the will of God (Eph 5:17).

Finally, what is generally God's will for us? Paul in 1 Thessalonians 4:3 reminds us, 'For this is the will of God, even your sanctification,' Any decision that we make must have this general perspective in mind. Does it hinder our sanctification, growth in holiness and in the knowledge of God, or in our spiritual combat against sin and worldliness? Does the person draw you deeper into the world or closer to heaven?



The marriage vow is a covenant and God is the witness between you and your spouse to be (Mal 2:14; Pr 2:17; Eze 16:8). Before you make that covenantal vow in the presence of God and men, to say that you are prepared to go through life together for better and for worse, for richer and for poorer, in sickness and in health

till death (not till divorce which should be out of the question for believers), make sure you understand fully what you are entering into. Divorce or separation is not an option for God honouring Christians. Do not even entertain it as a possibility that you can pull out of a marriage one day when you realise you have made a mistake for there are serious consequences. We need to seek the Lord and pray fervently, wait patiently upon the Lord (Ps 27:14), and let time take its course. Do not rush into matters of great significance and then only to live to regret it later. There are important decisions in life that have irreversible consequences and we want the Lord's blessings in every important matter in our lives.



Conclusion

Life is full of choices. Unlike choosing a shirt or what to eat for breakfast, the choice of a life partner is of utmost significance to the believer. A courtship that is too short (or even too long) has its difficulties because we need time to get to know a person. Time is a better and fairer judge and we need the wisdom of God as well. We dare not trifle with weighty matters of life by hasty and impulsive emotions that are devoid of prayerful consultation with God, godly man, and His word. It behoves to be sober and cautious in critical matters that will affect our direction in life such as a holy matrimony. May the Lord open our eyes (as it is said) and give us a spirit of discernment, godly prudence, and discretion to make the right choice before making that covenantal marital vow before God and men. Cry out like the psalmist in Psalm 25:4, 'Shew me thy ways, O LORD; teach me thy paths.' And the Lord will hear that fervent cry.

Jack Sin

Photo-News



*Dr Tan's SS class,
2 birthdays for July
and taking
temperature for the
worship chairman
and Dn Choo
Siang leading us in
the birthday
celebrations.*



A Practical Faithful Steward in Action

Our Lord Jesus Christ left behind the riches and glory of His heavenly kingdom. He came to Earth and willingly gave His life so that we could be saved. As God predestined His children to be conformed to the likeness of His Son (Rom 8:29), we are to emulate Jesus Christ then by serving and giving selflessly to the Lord the way He did. Our Saviour Himself told us, "It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35). Our greatest motivation for cheerful and generous giving should be that it pleases the Lord and reflects His gift of salvation to us.



2 Corinthians 9 reveals a number of inspiring truths that should help us become cheerful givers. As Paul wisely admonished the Corinthians, "Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully" (2 Cor 9:6). This indelible truth was also stated by Solomon earlier: that we honour the Lord with our wealth, with the first fruits



of all our crops; then our barns will be filled to overflowing (Prov 3:9-10). And Christ Himself told us to "Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured out to us" (Lk 6:38). Indeed, "Good will come to him who is generous" (Psa 112:5). Do we remember to pray and plan to give our tithes and offerings regularly to the extension of the Lord's kingdom, as we ought to joyfully as a faithful steward of Christ each Lord's day (1 Cor 4:2, Heb7:4-9, Lk 6:38)?

This principle is unfailingly clear. Giving is pleasing to our gracious Creator and is our privilege and sacred duty. In Malachi 3:10 where He was addressing the offerings made unto Him by his covenant people, He asked them to prove Him and see if he will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that we will not have room enough for it if they honour him with their tithes (Lev 11:27,30,32). The words of Solomon echo this: "One man gives freely, yet gains even more; another withholds unduly, but comes to poverty. A liberal man shall be made fat; he who watereth others shall be

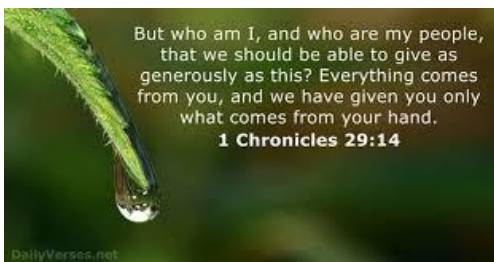
watereth also himself” (Prov 11:24-25). It is a joy to share what God has blessed us with for his glory and his work of the gospel and to serve the Lord in his church.

As Paul stated, “God loves a cheerful giver” (2 Cor 9:7). Cheerful giving of our tithes, (Heb 7:4-9) therefore, should be a way of life for the Christian who loves and understands the grace of God. When we give generously and with a willing heart, God honours our giving and He watches over us and provides for us in return (Isa 58:9; Psa 41:1-3; Prv 22:9; 2 Cor 9:8,11). It is not just our treasures

that we are to cheerfully give back to God. As King David pointed out, our lives, our time and talents, and all that we are and have comes from God (1 Chr 29:14). These include our talents, substance, and our time, and Moses said he will not appear

before God empty-handed. As our days are numbered (Psa 139:16), our lives and time indeed belong to God and any gift we have are also from Him.

Therefore, “each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve God and others, faithfully administering God’s grace in its various forms” (1 Pet 4:10) to others for his glory.



The Lord has blessed us with so much by his grace. Our ability to work and support our family comes from him and we are grateful to God. Paul Tripp speaks of choosing our functional treasures and laying it in heaven (Redeeming Money, 89). Remember that we are saved because our God so generously gave His Son (Jn 3:16). As His children, we are called to be “the light of the world” (Mt 5:14). When we trust God and honour Him by generously giving our tithes, time, treasures, and talents to advance his kingdom in his church and for missions, we are truly letting our light shine before men. Our goodness will reflect radiantly to the blessing of others on our Father in heaven. Do we love the Lord more than our own wealth? Are we faithful stewards of his substance that he gave to us? Let us be good examples in the Lord, putting Christ first, and not forfeiting ourselves of the joy and blessing of giving by withholding what belongs to the Lord.

(Adapted and edited from <https://www.gotquestions.org/cheerful-giver.html> and consulted Paul David Tripp, Redeeming Money, Crossway Books, 2018)

Memory Verse

John 2:5 His mother saith unto the servants, Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it.

Announcements

1. Welcome to our Worship Service! We thank God for we can resume our Worship Services in church. Refer to the list of safety measures available on the notice boards and comply with them.
2. Rev Jack Sin speaks today on “The First Miracle at a Wedding” (John 2:1-13), continuing the Jul to Sep 2020 theme of “Examining the Ministry & Teachings of Christ”.
3. Rev Jack Sin speaks next Sunday on “The Beatitudes Explained” (Matt 5:1-12).
4. Sunday School classes continues in church after the worship service
5. Chinese Fellowship meets on Sunday night at 7pm via Zoom.
6. Do send your prayer items to Pastor and join us for Church Prayer Meeting on Wed at 8pm via Zoom.
7. Those who would like to help with the cleaning or safe management procedures of the church, please see Dn Yue Kay.
8. Those who have a testimony to share may submit to Pastor for the weekly.
9. Pastor is still available for counselling via WhatsApp, Email or Mobile.
10. Love gifts, Offering and Tithes to the Lord can be given in the following ways:
 - **Cheque** payable to **Sovereign Hope Bible Presbyterian Church** and mailed to church address. (Kindly write the full name of the church as indicated.)
 - **Fund transfer** to Church **UOB** Account **392-308-825-1**
 - **PayNow** to Church UEN: **T19SS0116FSOV**