

Considering Marriage

The Gospel & Relationships – Talk #12

Good to be single?

- Paul in 1 Cor 7:6-7 - *⁶ Now as a concession, not a command, I say this. ⁷ I wish that all were as I myself am. But each has his own gift from God, one of one kind and one of another.*
- How can Paul say this – “singleness is good” When so many of us think of it as a curse, torture!?
- Marriage has great power to affect your self-image
 - Spouse says much about you, impacts you
 - Plusses are great – minuses are great
- When married, in a bad marriage → much lonelier
- Singleness & married relatively good – plusses and minuses

Idols Common to Singles

Independence Idol VS Dependence Idol

Independence Idol

- Don't like commitment
- Hate it when people "get possessive"
- Freedom is important
- Independence is important
- Sex outside of marriage important to me
- I am too young to settle down
- Urge to Merge brings pressure
- When become Christian, more motivation to get married

Dependence Idol

- I must get married or I'll die
- Sex may be used to keep someone in a relationship with hopes it will lead marriage
- Sex may be only thing they agree upon and keeps them together

Questions When Considering Marriage

Prayer – “Father, Help us to know your purpose for marriage

- Help us to know how, who, when, for marriage of a particular person
- Help us to know and study our own hearts”
- How do you know if, when you are looking at a particular person, if you should marry that person?
- Marriage – an invention of late Iron-age society? Or by God?
- Just a human convention or given to us by God for our welfare & happiness?
- From God – how honor His prescriptions, like owner’s manual for a car?
- Three principles/ teachings
 - Essence of marriage
 - Purpose of marriage
 - Priorities of marriage
- Then turn these three principles/teachings into three tests
 - Can’t ask “should I marry _____? Unless I know what marriage is!
 - Tests grow from principles of marriage



Questions When Considering Marriage - Essence

Essence of Marriage – What makes a marriage a marriage?

- Deep affection, strong feeling, feel in love, long to be with that person
- Having children and raising a family
- Sexual attraction, sexual excitement, sexual chemistry

None of these are it – here's why:

- Deep affection?
 - Dogs have this! Tremendous loyalty & affection – always happy to see you.
- Have children & raise a family?
 - Rabbits do that, and better than we do!
- Sexual attraction?
 - These things don't last

What is essence of marriage according to the Bible?

- A public vow, commitment
 - Essence has nothing to do with sex, affectionate feelings or raising a family.
 - We hope all these things will be there, but if essence of marriage is any of these three things, then marriage would come and go – be there, not be there
 - Feelings come and go
 - Kids come and go
 - Sexual attraction comes and goes
- Vow/commitment – in spite of feelings, circumstance – this is how I will act toward you – a legal contract

Questions When Considering Marriage – Purpose & Priority

Purpose of Marriage – deep oneness & companionship

- Adam was alone – God made woman – Adam sees Eve: poetry!
- OT spouse called “haloop” = covenant partner, best friend
- To be married = absolutely vulnerable to that person
 - You see all the way to the bottom of each other!
 - Accept each other completely
 - Both feel radically understood
- Some ask, “How can I know unless I have sex with a person whether we are sexually in tune and adjusted to each other?”
 - Sex is a function of communication, not visa versa.

Priority of Marriage – because it has power to set course of life as a whole, unlike any other institution

- Two relationships #1 in your life:
 - 1) relationship with God
 - 2) relationship with spouse
- Marriage has to be the human relationship with priority over all other human relationships
- Marriage is vehicle of redemption:
 - If your marriage is strong – all else about you may be weak – move out into world as strong
 - If your marriage is weak – all else about you may be strong – move out into world as weak
- Why does marriage have this power? Why every culture has institution of marriage:
 - It is not a human invention – God invented it
- By design, you should marry your best friend

Questions When Considering Marriage

Essence - Friendship Questions

- Is this person a Christian?
- Does this person have the potential to be my #1 counselor? #1 best friend? List, then prioritize the elements you desire in a "best friend." To what extent do these describe _____?
- Has our friendship demonstrated impact upon each other for the better?
- Have we worked out relationship problems in line with the Gospel?
- Have we spoken into each other's lives winsomely with reproofs?
- Does this person listen to me? Understand me? Help me understand me?
- Are you a better person with _____?
- Do you like who you are with _____?
- Does this person encourage your walk with Christ or detract from it?

Purpose- Life-passions & Life-callings?

- Are you headed in the same direction?
- What activities have you done together that are the expression of your passion for Christ?
- What is your passion in life? What are you willing to spend to get it? Do you both share the same passion?
- Are you similarly willing to move out of your comfort zone to serve Christ?
- How are you different from each other? How the same? Where do you see differences complementing or conflicting?
- If you marry, would you want the husband go off and focus on one ministry while the wife focuses upon another?
- What level of financial expectations do you have?
- What type of church? What type of ministry? How deeply involved?
- What attitudes/roles for men/women do you have?
- What happens when kids come along? How many kids?
- How close to parents will you live? How much like parents will you live?

Priority - Commitment Questions

- Are you in any way ashamed to be with _____? or are you proud to be with _____?
- How much weight do feelings play in making and sustaining commitment?
- What are your feelings toward _____?
- If feelings, children, sexual attraction, projects come and go, upon what unshakeable foundation can you commit to this person?



End - Considering Marriage

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