

NEW LIFE BAPTIST CHURCH

Marriage is the most serious long-term contract a couple will make in their lifetime, but many enter into it with a lack of maturity and knowledge. The growing number of divorces shows how imperative it is that both young and older people be adequately prepared for marriage.

Here are a few helpful principles for prospective marriage partners:

- A good marriage is not “made in heaven,” but on earth. Love is a fragile commodity which needs to be cultivated and nourished constantly. Of course, those intending to marry should look to God for His guidance, but the success of the marriage will be largely dependent on the couple and their efforts in response to God’s leading.
- A good marriage is not based on idealism, but on reality. The Cinderella syndrome where every girl finds a prince and “lives happily ever after” is usually just a fairy tale. Far too many marry with unrealistically high expectations, and then spend years suffering and adjusting if they stay together at all.
- A good marriage is based on respect for oneself and for the partner. A poor self-image, inherited from a stressful home background or the product of immaturity, can lead to stormy seas. A solid relationship with Jesus Christ and an understanding of oneself in the light of that relationship are very important. A poor understanding of each other can also lead to misunderstanding and conflict. It does not take too much discernment to realize that males and females are different physically, but how many anticipate that their partnerto-be is just as different emotionally and mentally? Each partner must realize this and be prepared to make the necessary allowances and adjustments. “He created them male and female, and blessed them.”
(Genesis 5:2)
- A marriage where there are similarities in the partners has a better chance to succeed.

This means:

- * The same religious background
 - * Similar cultural and social backgrounds
 - * Comparable economic levels
 - * Equal educational advantages
 - * A stable home situation
- Marriage was never intended to be a reform school! One who marries another with the hope of “correcting” problem behavior is courting a disastrous future. What could not be changed before marriage is not likely to change at all. This should especially be taken seriously in those instances where alcohol, drugs, or immorality are involved.
 - Couples who marry “in the Lord” (1 Corinthians 7:39) have the potential for a much better relationship than those outside of Christ.

Scriptures

“By wisdom a house is built, and through understanding it is established; through knowledge its rooms are filled with rare and beautiful treasures.”
(Proverbs 24:3–4, NIV)

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“Do two walk together unless they have agreed to do so?”
(Amos 3:3, NIV)

“Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ. Wives, submit to your husband’s as to the Lord. . . . In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself.”
(Ephesians 5:21–22, 28, NIV)

“Likewise you husbands, dwell with them with understanding, giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers may not be hindered.”
(1 Peter 3:7)

Other suggested Scriptures:
2 Corinthians 6:14–15, NIV