

## Marriage Made in Heaven, Part II

Last week we began this glorious discussion concerning finding and knowing you have a marriage made in heaven. The first three points are: (1) Believe God has prepared a certain one for you, (2) When you court, do so with one who is appealing to you, and (3) The things you have in common should outweigh the differences. Continuing this theme, consider:

### (4) Spiritual aptitude should be high.

The disposition of the potential spouse should rank high on spirituality. Paul said, *"And this they did, not as we hoped, but first gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God"* (II Corinthians 8:5). In Christian service the ministry that moves beyond the peripheral occurs when the participant first gives himself or herself to the Lord.

Sometimes our children would say they did not understand why we had certain convictions and why they must abide by them if they personally did not share them. I would often remind them they may borrow mine until they formulated their own. Now this is fine for parent/child relationship, but when it comes to husband/wife relationships, you had better make sure you are on the same spiritual page together.

There is no area where walking in the flesh is more devastating than within the marriage. It gives disunity to unity, disestablishes the authority, and disables the consecrated. If you are courting someone who you have discovered is a sham or fake, get out of it now! Don't wait any longer. And beware about commitments they make in order to keep you from breaking up. *"Can two walk together, except they be agreed?"* (Amos 3; 3) The commitment has to be real and it has to be from the Lord. It is not real until it's personal!

### (5) Only marry with the blessing of your parents.

*"Honour thy father and mother; (which is the first commandment with promise ;) That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth"* (Ephesians 6:2, 3).

Parents should be regularly consulted and trusted. God often identifies Himself as the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. He is a God that likes to see the blessing from one family fall upon the next generation. Mom and Dad should not be resented, they are under obligation to God to rear you up properly. A godly dad and mom always want what is best for their kids. Our Lord has bestowed upon them wisdom to guide the youth. *"Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it"* (Proverbs 22:6).

It needs to be said, in the case where either parents are not Christians or totally dedicated to Christ, remember God is sovereign. He could have placed you into any home He so desired. He has allowed you to have the parents you have. We can learn from the mistakes as well as the good things our parents do. But what we are not permitted to do is show incorrigibility, disgust, and disrespect to our parents. It is never right to do wrong in order to get a chance to do right! Only eternity will show how many parents converted to Christianity because of the Christ-likeness that shone through their kids. Demanding your way to date whomever you chose or the way in which you chose in contempt to your parents will is a sure way to bring anything but the blessing of God on your future marriage. Again, God is sovereign; He can take those in authority and bend them to His plan. *"The king's heart is in the hand of the LORD, as the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will. Every way of a man is right in his own eyes: but the LORD pondereth the hearts. To do justice and judgment is more acceptable to the LORD than sacrifice"* (Proverbs 21: 1-3).

I need to say an added word to moms and dads. Just because God has given us this authority, let us not become overbearing and un-thoughtful of our child's desires. Be a thoughtful counselor to your kids. I don't believe it is wrong to set up your child with another parent's child, but only as the Lord wills and the child has a God-given attraction. Remember, your kids have different tastes than you. Their idea of a

great personality may be different than yours. If you must step in to stop or delay a romance, make sure it is for a good biblical reason, not just because he or she is not your type. In the Old Testament spouses were not chosen over the will of the one doing the marrying. Consider for instance, Abraham's servant came looking for a bride for Isaac. Rebekah's family asked: "*And they called Rebekah, and said unto her, Wilt thou go with this man? And she said, I will go*" (Genesis 24:58). Parents and children, be a team! Work together, not against each other.

**(6) The more serious you become, the more intense your prayers should be.**

This is no time to backslide! Actually there is never a good time to wander from God, but especially in this time of your life. Seeking God should have the highest priority in your life. You should awake in the will of God and stay in His will all through the day. "*But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you*" (Matthew 6:33). "*But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof*" (Romans 13:14). A person that doesn't walk with God cannot properly hear from God. Oh how we need His voice to coach us through our days! "*Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths*" (Proverbs 3:5,6). "*...and as thy days, so shall thy strength be*" (Deuteronomy 33:25).

**(7) When God reveals His will, act on it arightly.**

The word "arightly" comes to our English tongue from our predecessors, the Anglo-Saxons, who used the word "gericht," meaning rightly, in good form, or without mistake or crime. Therefore, act now, without procrastination, an unsure mind and sinfulness.

I have often been asked, "How do you know when you have met the right one?" People are different, and so the response will be different. The common response that we have the right man/right woman chemistry is:

A. You will both feel strongly about each other. God will not reveal this important lifetime commitment to one and leave the other in the dark.

B. You will not see someone else you could be just as satisfied with. There is a deep sense of "one and only" that should accompany your decision to spend the rest of your life together. On this point there will be differences of opinion, but I personally lean toward marriage by destiny and God's Providence rather than marrying someone who is the top of a list. As far as I'm concerned, if you still have a list of possibilities in your mind, you have either not found the right one or you are not ready.

C. There is an overwhelming peace that comes into the heart of the right man/right woman when you understand that God's perfect will is to be married.

*"Live joyfully with the wife whom thou lovest all the days of the life of thy vanity, which he hath given thee under the sun, all the days of thy vanity: for that is thy portion in this life, and in thy labour which thou takest under the sun. Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest"* (Ecclesiastes 9:9,10).

I believe in marriages made in heaven! Go for it! And if you have one, thank God for His great gift!

- Pastor Pope -

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