

Marry Wisely, Marry Well: Parts 1&2

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Introduction:
Fears among young people

Cohabitation numbers

Let's build (prepare for marriage) wisely.

I. Foundational issues

A. Growing in wisdom/growing in Christ

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Principle: Your relationship with Christ is the source from which all-else flows.

Harvard founding statement 1636: Let every student be plainly instructed and earnestly pressed to consider well the main end of his life and studies is to know God and Jesus Christ which is eternal life (John 17:3) and therefore to lay Christ in the bottom as the only foundation of all sound knowledge and learning. And seeing the Lord only giveth wisdom, let every one seriously set himself by prayer in secret to seek it of Him (Prov. 2,3).

B. God's purposes for marriage Why is this foundational?

C. Knowing your "heart" biblically. Not, "let your 'Heart' be your guide." Why is this foundational?

What is the heart?

II. First floor questions

- #### **A. How do I use my single years? (I Cor. 7)** Do you have the gift of singleness? Other crucial questions that I Cor. 7 raises.

B. What relationship character traits and skills do I need to develop? (Eph.2: 8-10; 4:1-2)

C. How will I know God's will?

- 1.
- 2.

The Bible teaches that (1) God does have one specific plan for your life and (2) the events and choices of your life irresistibly and sovereignly work that plan in every detail.... It has all your mistakes, blindnesses, and sins accounted for in advance. Without understanding providence, we will never be able to think clearly about God's daily involvement with our lives. Much of the confusion about God's guidance in Christian circles is caused by a lack of understanding of this historic doctrine (*Step By Step*, James Petty, page 59).

D. How will I know when I'm ready to get married?

To sunder one's parental relationships and join oneself in intimate, life-long union with a person who hitherto has been a stranger demands a considerable degree of maturity—as expressed in a capacity for self-giving love, emotional stability and the capacity to understand what is involved in committing one's life to another in marriage. Marriage is for those who have grown up (*Baker's Dictionary of Theology*, article on marriage, page 345).

1. Biblical womanhood as defined by Proverbs
2. Biblical manhood—a godly man has a sense of _____ to _____, _____ for and _____ women and family (adapted from John Piper, *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood*, chapter one).

Principle: These characteristics not only tell you what to be but also what to look for/be attracted to in spouse.

E. What method should I use to find a spouse?

1. It's a pretty confusing situation.

Definition of courtship

Definition of "casual" or "social" dating

Definition of “biblical dating” (or dating with a purpose): Keep in mind that romantic relationships in the Bible are about marriage.

2. What does biblical wisdom look like? Key principles:
 - Parental involvement (and guidance from biblically wise counselors)
 - Purity both internally and externally
 - Preparation
 - Prayer and patience
 - Purpose
 - People and places
 - Proper questions
 - Possible pattern

II. Second Floor—add the other person (premarital counseling)
There’s still plenty to do!

III. The Roof—a home that glorifies God and fulfills the principle of sowing and reaping!
(Please see “house model” diagram)

Conclusion:

Following this type of plan will help reduce the divorce rate, cohabitation numbers, and reduce the fear many young people feel about this whole process.