

PREPARATION BEFORE MARRIAGE

"Later I passed by, and when I looked at you and saw that you were old enough for love, I spread the corner of my garment over you and covered your nakedness. I gave you My solemn oath and entered into a covenant with you, declares the Sovereign LORD, and you became mine." (Ezekiel 16:8)

Many people are ready for wedding yet not all of them are prepared for marriage. Some enter into marriage for wrong reasons; some marry because marriage has become peer competition and they also want to win. Others marry just because they are lonely, some also marry because of financial problems, but obviously a person who marries someone just because of money actually needs a job and not a spouse. Don't marry just because of money or because you are lonely, marry because you are ready and prepared.

When should a person start preparing for marriage then? Preparation for marriage should start when a person starts having a feeling for the opposite sex. God creating people to have a feelings for the opposite sex when they is not ready for marriage is an opportunity to start preparing for such a noble institution, and not to indulge in sexual sin.

The Bible does not state any specific age for marriage. However, the Bible shows some level of maturity and preparation one has to reach before entering into marriage. Because marriage is not for boys and girls but for men and women. This preparation can be grouped into physical, spiritual and mental preparation.

PHYSICAL PREPARATION

First of all, a man who is physically prepared for marriage should have a sustainable source of income. Genesis 2:15 says; "The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it." After that "The LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him" (Gen 2:18). From the texts you realize that God gave Adam a work before giving him a wife. A man

who is physically prepared for marriage should therefore have a work he does for living such that he can provide for himself, his wife and children.

Again, a man who is physically prepared for marriage should be able to physically protect a woman and children. Adam was not only given work but was also tasked to “take care” of the Garden. The King James Version says; “and to keep it”. The Hebrew word for the ‘keep’ here is ‘shâmar’ which meant to ‘guard’, and to guard means to protect.

This means Adam was capable of protecting the garden before a wife was given to him to protect. From this we can say a man who is physically prepared for marriage should be able to physically protect a woman and children. God created men to be muscular and to have more physical strength not to abuse women and children, but to work and protect them.

SPIRITUAL PREPARATION

There is also a level of spiritual preparation and maturity one has to reach before entering into marriage. For the Christian, this means having a personal relationship with God. Adam had a personal relationship with God when he was given a wife. It's therefore good for a person, especially a man who has no personal relationship with God to be alone. Else he being the leader may lead the whole family into a pit.

People who have personal relationship with God need not always to be told before they read their Bible, fast, pray or perform other spiritual Christian activities. A man who always needs supervision before carrying out his religious activities is obviously not prepared spiritually to take a wife. For how can he lead a wife and children when he can't even lead himself?

A woman should therefore be cautious not to accept proposal from a man who can't lead himself. Because he is going to be your head after marriage, and if the head is sick, the whole body can be in danger.

MENTAL PREPARATION

Apart from physical and spiritual preparation, one also needs to be prepared mentally. A person who is mentally prepared for marriage should be able to take some good decisions by the help of the Holy Spirit without consulting any human. It's not bad to seek advice, but people who always need to consult others before taking decisions are obviously not prepared enough for marriage. Because after marriage you won't need to consult parents or friends before you takes every decision.

Again, people who are mentally prepared for marriage should also know their roles in a marriage relationship. Men should understand the duties of husbands and women should understand the duties of wives in the family. They should also understand that being married is different from being single and should be ready to sacrifice some of their interests for the interest of their spouse.

It's better to remain single and happy than to marry wrong and weary. Don't marry for any bad reason; marry because you are prepared and ready.