

The Christian Arsenal

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FINDING THE LOVE OF YOUR LIFE Marriage Matters

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Part 1

Proverbs 3:6

“Seek God’s will in all you do, and He will direct your paths” Prov 3:6 (NLT)

YOUR DECISIONS DETERMINE YOUR DESTINY.

EVIDENCE OF POOR DECISIONS

1. Broken Hearts
2. Broken Homes
3. Broken Lives

STATISTICS: One out of every 2 ½ marriages end in divorce.
The divorce rate has risen 240% since the 1940’s.

THE PROBLEM: No one teaches us how to choose a mate. Many of us end up in marriages for the wrong reason. The church needs to say, “Here are the Biblical principles on how you find God’s best for your life.”

MYTH: God chooses my mate for me.

In the final analysis, it is y our decision, it is y our choice. God will guide you, He will lead you, He will direct you, He will give you guidelines and principles, but in the final analysis, ultimately, it is your choice.

TRUTH: God wants us to build our lives on great principles, not petty rules.

HOW GOD GUIDES US

1. GOD GUIDES US THROUGH THE BIBLE.

“God’s word is a flashlight to light the path ahead of me and keep me from stumbling” Psalm 119:105 (LB)

“The will of God inside the Bible will never contradict the will of God outside the Bible.” Dr. James B. Crichton

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2. GOD SPEAKS TO US THROUGH IMPRESSIONS.

"I will instruct you and guide you along the best pathway for your life; I'll advise you and watch your progress." Ps 32:8 (LB)

You must be careful because not every impression is from God.
You could get impressions from:

- A movie you watched
- An emotional environment
- Your hormones
- Bad pizza

You should always check out an impression in light of these other channels.

3. GOD SPEAKS TO US THROUGH CIRCUMSTANCES

"God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God ..."
Romans 8:28 (NLT)

Have you ever said ...

- "That was a God thing?"
- "Only God could have put that together?"

WARNING: Not every circumstance is from God. You always use circumstances to confirm what God has said to you in light of these other channels. You don't use it as the sole basis for a decision.

4. GOD SPEAKS TO US THROUGH RESEARCH OR REASON

"It is stupid to decide before knowing the facts" Prov 18:13 (LB)

Example: If a train is coming toward you and you're on the tracks, you don't say, "I'm going to pray about getting out of the way."

WARNINGS:

- Don't get into a business you haven't checked out.
- Don't get into a marriage that you haven't checked out.

5. GOD SPEAKS TO US THROUGH ADVICE FROM MATURE CHRISTIANS.

"The wisdom of the righteous can save you" Prov 11:9 (GN)

The Bible says it's stupid to go get advice from people who don't know God.

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TRUTH: Anytime you make a major decision, it should be based on the cumulative evidence of God's guidance. That means, not just one of these channels but all five of them.

This is called "THE LAW OF UNITY."

This law says, "When God speaks, He never contradicts himself."

"God is not the author of confusion" 1 Cor. 14:33 (NIV)

If you are trying to make a decision and you are confused, you know one thing – GOD HASN'T SPOKEN YET!

SPECIFIC GUIDANCE ON FINDING THE RIGHT MATE

Two non-negotiables and one recommendation

If you want God's best for your life,

1. YOU MUST HAVE SPIRITUAL COMPATIBILITY.

God is absolutely clear about this. You must be on the same wave length spiritually in order to have oneness in Christ.

"...Do not unite yourself with an unbeliever; they are not fit mates for you." 2 Cor. 6:14 (NEB)

"Can a believer share life with an unbeliever?" 2 Cor. 6:15 (NEB)

If you have committed your life to Christ and He really is number one in your life, and you want to live for His plan that He put you on this earth for, you are not free to choose an unbeliever as your mate.

STATISTIC: Marriage and Divorce Magazine: One of every 2 ½ marriages ends in divorce, but when a couple actively attends church together, commits their lives to Christ and they pray and read the Bible together, the divorce rate drops to 1 out of every 1105. That's the difference Jesus makes!

2. IF YOU WANT GOD'S BEST FOR YOUR LIFE, YOU MUST HAVE LIFE PURPOSE COMPATIBILITY.

"Can two people walk together without agreeing on the direction?" Amos 3:3 (NLT)

"God has made us what we are. In Christ Jesus, God made us to do good works, which God planned in advance for us to live our lives doing." Eph 2:10 (NCV)

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TRUTHS:

- You are not ready to get married until first you have clarified and identified your life purpose.
- The tragedy is most people never discover their life purpose!

Example:

**My life's
purpose**

**Future mate's
life's purpose**

Will these two overlap and be compatible?

"One of the advantages of staying a single adult is you can have undistracted service" 1 Cor. 7:32-33

3. IF YOU WANT GOD'S BEST FOR YOUR LIFE, IT HELPS TO HAVE PERSONAL COMPATIBILITY.

There is no verse in the Bible that says you have to marry someone who is just like you – but, the more you have in common, the smoother sailing your marriage is going to be.

The more you have not in common, the more rough seas and strife and chaos you are going to go through in order to grow.

SOME FACTORS TO CONSIDER:

1. Background of family
2. Education level
3. Common intelligence level – verbal skills
4. Expected roles in family
5. Resolving conflict
6. Level of ambition
7. Child rearing views
8. Involvement with in-laws
9. Desire for verbal intimacy
10. The way to handle anger
11. Hobby and leisure activities
12. Energy level for physical activities
13. Sexual drive and sexual interests

As a pastor, the thing I've discovered is the absolute best marriages and the absolute worst marriages are those where the people are the most different. It

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can either make you or break you. It all depends on how much you're willing to grow, how much you're willing to change, how unselfish you're willing to be and whether you're willing to get help or not in that marriage.

TWO ERRORS PEOPLE FALL INTO WHEN IT COMES TO MARRIAGE

1. The Hollywood Error – All I need is a quiver in my liver as a justification to get married. If I am sexually attracted to you or I fall head-over-heels in infatuation or I think you are the most delicious bake I've ever seen, then that's good enough reason to get married.
2. The Heavenly Error – The Christian is sitting and waiting for God to make the decision for him/her.

IF YOU WANT TO GET MARRIED AND IF YOU WANT GOD'S BEST IN A MARRIAGE PARTNER, YOU NEED TO DO SIX THINGS:

1. You need to begin a relationship with Jesus Christ. That's foundational.
2. Make a commitment to God's standard in a marriage partner. Don't get in a hurry.

"Some of you want to light your own fires and make your own life. So go, walk, and trust in your own light to guide you. But this is what you will receive: A place of pain" Isaiah 50:11 (NCV)
3. Discover and clarify your life purpose.
4. Get involved in a church family or a Christian college where there will be a lot of other people who fit the parameters that God has laid out for you.
5. Go slow.
6. Get pre-marital counseling.