

Selecting a Companion

A happy home begins with a wise choice of a marriage partner. We therefore submit the following questions as a guide for our young people as they seek out their companion for life.

1. Is this person eligible for marriage? There are those who have a right to marry according to the laws of our state, but who do not have a right to marry according to the law of God. God's authority is supreme, and the Christian must abide by His law whenever there is a conflict between His law and governmental law.

God's law is that only those who are divorced for the cause of fornication have a right to remarry. "And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another, commits adultery, and whoever marries her who is divorced commits adultery" (Matthew 19:9). If one's marriage partner is guilty of marital infidelity, he can put that partner away for that cause, and marry another. If the divorce is for any other cause, he is ineligible for marriage.

2. Is this person a Christian? Many problems can arise when a Christian is married to a non-Christian, especially when it is the wife who is the Christian. Before any young lady marries a non-Christian, she should consider the following problems which often face the Christian in a mixed marriage.

- **Problems in attending services** - She should ask herself, "What will I do if my husband some Lord's day drives away in the car, leaving me with no transportation to the services?" "What will I do if my husband announces that his company is moving us to some city where no church of the Lord meets?" Many women have faced these problems.
- **Problems in giving** - The young lady loves the Lord and His work, and wants to give liberally in support of it. Her husband, however, does not share her convictions. He feels that a dollar is plenty to give.
- **Problems in training children** - Some have succeeded in bringing up their children to be Christians without the help of their companions. Eunice succeeded with Timothy. But the influence of a father is great, and many are the women who have not been able to overcome this influence to see their children become Christians.
- **Problems in overcoming the influence of one's companion** - Marrying with the hope of reforming one's companion is a dangerous thing. Often the companion is lifted to a higher standard, but seldom to the standard of a Christian. Instead, as the non-Christian's standards are raised, the Christian's standards are lowered, so that the two meet somewhere in between. The young lady should realize that the man she marries will be the greatest influence of an earthly nature on her life, and she should ask herself, "Will this man help me to go to heaven?"
- **Emotional problems** - Recently a godly woman, having just received word of her husband's death in an automobile accident, cried, "Why couldn't it have been me or one of the children, for my husband was not ready to die?"

Is the reader thinking she will convert her husband after marriage? She may be able to do so, but statistics show that her chances are not very good. The risk is too great. The only safe course is for Christians to marry Christians.

3. Does this person possess strength of character? Many boys and girls seem to want to do right, but are just too easily influenced by their associates or by the circumstances which surround them. Such weakness of character does not make for a good marriage partner. If one wants a happy home, he should choose a companion who is dependable, whose word can be trusted, who has the strength to do right, even when all around him are doing wrong.

After all, if that young man or woman lies to his parents or employer, he will some day lie to you. If he is excessively jealous and possessive during courtship, he will manifest the same weaknesses after marriage. If he is quick-tempered -- or flirty -- or a "show-off" -- or a spendthrift -- or a "tightwad" -- now, he will be after marriage. One cannot marry a moral weakling, and expect a happy home.

Yes, there will be faults and eccentricities that must be accepted and tolerated in any happy relationship between two people. But there are certain conditions that are practically intolerable, and we hope that this article will help some young person avoid such.

- by *Bill Hall*

Must A Thing Be Prohibited?

Some think they are at liberty to introduce anything into God's worship, providing God has not, in so many words, prohibited it. This is evidently a mistake. Such a plan of procedure would open the flood gates for innumerable innovations. On this principle every kind of food and drink might be brought into the Lord's supper, and burning incense might be added to the worship. We must remember that law is inclusive and exclusive, including the things commanded and excluding all things else. This principle is too well known to need argument. Besides, in religious matters God alone has the right to guide men, and when man undertakes to add forms of service or worship not authorized by God's law, he assumes prerogatives which belong exclusively to God. He is presuming to take the office of God, one who has proper reverence for God so regards him.

- by *C. R. Nichol*

The Challenges of Prosperity

There is no debate -- all agree -- the evidence is abundantly clear. We are the richest people who have ever lived in the history of the world. We are more prosperous than any society that has ever existed, and we are more materially blessed than any other people living today. These indisputable facts should prompt several necessary responses from us:

Thanksgiving: We should never imagine that all of this abundance has resulted from our own initiative and effort. Instead, we must realize that our unique situation has resulted from many things done by others that have preceded us. Ultimately God deserves the credit for "every good gift" (James 1:17). Be thankful!

Benevolence: "But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?" (1 John 3:17). In our prosperity, let us not forget to look for opportunities to "do good unto all men" (Galatians 6:10). Surely God will not hold us guiltless if we hoard our wealth and refuse to assist the legitimately needy.

Liberality: In the episode of the widow's mites (Mark 12:41-44), Jesus commended the widow for her sacrificial giving while noting that others had only given of their abundance. What about us? In regards to our giving to the Lord's work, are we sacrificial? Or, do we only give what's left over after we have spent for everything else that we want?

Caution: Jesus said: "Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth" (Luke 12:15). If there ever was a people that need this warning, it's US. There's a great danger that we will begin to measure our life by money and things instead of recognizing the true value of our spiritual service to God. Be careful. Don't let prosperity cause you to set the wrong priorities in your life. God must be first - always!

Our great prosperity poses tremendous challenges to us all. Think!

- by *Greg Gwin*