

God designed marriage to be the most important human relationship on earth because marriage is meant to illustrate his relationship with us and to grow and change us to become more like Christ.

The following questions are designed not only to see if you are ready for marriage but to help you see if you are thinking about marrying the right person. You should spend intentional time prayerfully and honestly finding out the answers to these questions before you get engaged, as opposed to after you "pop the question" and before you say, "yes." Go through the questions first by yourself, then share your thoughts and reflections with the other. Let these questions serve as a springboard to deeper discussion as you explore each other's hearts.

Please Note—if your relationship involves physical intimacy, know that your perspective and discernment is impaired. Ask the Lord for mercy to give you eyes to see your relationship for what it really is as opposed to how it feels or what it does for you.

1. Questions to Ask Yourself:

- Relational Issues of Life
 - What is the purpose of life? What is your purpose in life?
 - What is your life centered upon? What motivates you?
 - Where does God fit into your life? Do you know how the gospel of Christ makes a difference in your everyday living?
 - Are you looking at marriage as a means to happiness and wholeness?
 - Have you begun to realize how self-centered and prideful you are?
 - Are you demonstrating a growing desire and ability to live a life of repentance and faith?
 - Are you able to receive feedback—truth spoken in love—without getting angry or overly defensive, and as a result, make necessary changes?
 - How do you handle difficulties? What are some of the things you have learned from the trials of life?

- Practical Issues of Life
 - Living on Your Own:
 - How well are you doing at living life on your own?
 - Have you demonstrated your ability to live on your own without any financial or supervisory assistance?
 - Are you ready to take care of someone other than yourself?
 - Work & Health Insurance:
 - Have you worked consistently at one job, earning sufficient wages and benefits to live on your own? [At a minimum, for the man]
 - What are your long-term vocational goals?
 - Do you provide health insurance for yourself—either through work or through purchasing an individual policy? [At a minimum, for the man]

- Finances:
 - Do you know how to balance a checkbook? Do you balance your checkbook regularly before paying your monthly bills?
 - Do you have a budget? Does your budget reflect the proper percentages for housing, groceries, savings, and other monthly or annual expenses?
 - Do you own a credit card? What is your strategy for using it and paying off the monthly balance? Do you have credit card debt—if so, how much?
 - If you have debt, what is your plan to get out of debt? Are you willing to cut back on budget items (eating out, entertainment, etc.). Are you willing to work two jobs until your debt is paid?

2. Questions About the Other:

- Is the other a Christian?
 - Can he/she articulate the foundational truths of the gospel?
 - Does he/she love Christ and his Word? What have you observed that leads you to say yes to the preceding question?
 - Does he/she resonate with the truths of God's word?
 - Have you observed a life of repentance and faith?
 - Which fruits of the Spirit have you seen in his/her life?
- Do either of you have relational complications from a previous marriage or relationship(s)? Be sure to discuss any prior relationships that involved sexual intimacy—not just a one-time discussion for 30 minutes, but multiple discussions over a period of time. Intentional and thorough discussions (you do not need to share all of the details) ensure that each of you have sufficient time to reflect and ask/answer any clarifying questions so issues from the past can serve as a context for understanding and relating to the other.
- Do you believe that the other is God's gift to you as a future spouse?
- **(For the Man)** Based on your time together up until now:
 - As you consider her for a wife...
 - Can you live without her? Do you desire to commit yourself to her for the rest of your life, even after the "honeymoon" is over and the "loving feelings" are gone?
 - How does she complement you—is she strong or gifted where you are not?
 - Can you lead her? Do you lead her spiritually in all aspects of life?
 - Does she submit and follow your leadership?
 - Is she the woman for whom you will sacrifice yourself, so that you will love her like Christ loves the church?
 - Does she respect and honor you?
 - Does she know your weaknesses as well as your strengths? Does she have a vision for you as a man of God and how you might grow in grace? Does she love you for who you are now rather than the person she thinks you will become?

- As you consider her for the mother of your children...
 - Does she want to have children? If no, why not? If yes, when and how many?
 - Knowing that she will be the one spending the most time with the children, do you want her to be the mother of your children?
 - Will she find joy in being a wife and mother?
 - What are her desires with regard to children and working outside of the home?
 - How will she complement you as a parent?
- **(For the Woman)** Based on your time together up until now:
 - As you consider him for a husband...
 - Can you live without him? Do you desire to commit yourself to him for the rest of your life, even after the “honeymoon” is over and the “loving feelings” are gone?
 - How does he complement you—is he strong or gifted where you are not?
 - Can you submit to his leadership? Does he lead you spiritually in all aspects of life?
 - Do you respect him? Does he honor you and respect you?
 - Does he nurture and cherish you as his woman?
 - Does he know your weaknesses as well as your strengths? Does he have a vision for you as a woman of God and how you might grow in grace? Does he love you for who you are now rather than the person he thinks you will become?
 - As you consider him as the father of your children...
 - Does he want to have children? If no, why not? If yes, when and how many?
 - Knowing that he will be the pastor of your home, do you want him to be the father of your children?
 - Will he find joy in being a husband and father?
 - How will he complement you as a parent?
- Relationship with Others
 - Would you say he/she is loving towards others?
 - Is he/she bitter or resentful towards anyone? If yes, how does he/she respond to your encouragement for him/her to love and forgive?
 - What is his/her relationship like with his/her parents? How often does he/she speak to his/her parents? Does he/she seek his/her parents for wisdom? What is his/her relationship like with siblings?
 - Is he/she a good, loyal friend to others? Have you gotten to meet his/her close friends? What are some of the common themes or phrases you hear when they speak about him/her?

3. Questions to Ask as a Couple:

- Is your relationship founded on and driven by Christ or is it founded on or driven by satisfying your desire for companionship and pleasure?
- Has your relationship included others or have you been like an island, isolated in your dream world?
- Has your relationship helped or hindered your relationship with Christ?
- Has your relationship compelled you to be the man/woman that God wants you to be?
- What do others tell you about your relationship? Do others think you are good for one another?
- Will either of you have difficulties in “leaving” parents and “cleaving” to one another?

A Parting Reminder...

If God has indeed brought you two together as his gift, then the enemy will do anything to keep you from coming together as one flesh. God envisions a husband and wife serving as a testimony to an even greater relationship—between Jesus Christ and his bride, the church, displaying the glory of God’s love and justice. God also intends for a husband and wife to live, work, and minister together to build up the Body of Christ and to advance his Kingdom. The enemy wants none of this; in fact, he and his spiritual forces will do everything they can to divide that which God wants together. Bottom-line: remember that the reality, purposes, and plans for your relationship go far above and beyond what you may imagine or even think.

Take the time to praise God and celebrate what he is doing in your lives! May the Lord bless your time together as you seek his will for your lives.