

WHY IT'S IMPORTANT TO MARRY A CHRISTIAN

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THE BIBLE SAYS NOT TO!

- *“Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness?”* (2 Cor. 6:14).
 - ❖ In its context, this verse does not specifically speak about marriage. However, this verse condemns all unequal yokings. Therefore, marriage to non-Christians would be included.
- Consider various other translations of this verse:
 - ❖ **NRSV** – *“Do not be mismatched with unbelievers.”*
 - ❖ **GNT** – *“Do not try to work together as equals with unbelievers.”*
 - ❖ **NIV** – *“Do not be yoked together with unbelievers.”*
 - ❖ **NET** – *“Do not become partners with those who do not believe.”*
 - ❖ **NASB** – *“Do not be mismatched with unbelievers.”*
 - ❖ **CEB** – *“Don’t be tied up as equal partners with people who don’t believe.”*
 - ❖ **NLT** – *“Don’t team up with those who are unbelievers.”*

THE BIBLE SAYS NOT TO!

- What is a “believer?” One who has met the initial conditions of salvation; a member of the Lord’s church:
 - ❖ **“And believers were increasingly added to the Lord”** (Acts 5:14a).
 - ❖ One who meets the initial conditions of salvation (see Acts 2:38-47).
- Merriam-Webster defines “yoked” as:
 - ❖ “To become joined or linked.”
- Merriam-Webster defines “marriage” as:
 - ❖ “The state of being united as spouses in a consensual and contractual relationship recognized by law.”
 - ❖ “The institution whereby individuals are joined in a marriage.”
 - ❖ “An intimate or close union.”
- Matt. 19:6 shows that marriage is a “yoking:”
 - ❖ **“So then, they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate.”**

THE BIBLE SAYS NOT TO!

- Many will contend, “What about 1 Cor. 7:12-13 and 1 Pet. 3:1-2?”
 - ❖ *“But to the rest I, not the Lord, say: If any brother has a wife who does not believe, and she is willing to live with him, let him not divorce her. And a woman who has a husband who does not believe, if he is willing to live with her, let her not divorce him”* (1 Cor. 7:12-13).
 - ❖ *“Wives, likewise, be submissive to your own husbands, that even if some do not obey the word, they, without a word, may be won by the conduct of their wives, when they observe your chaste conduct accompanied by fear”* (1 Pet. 3:1-2).
- Whereas 1 Cor. 7:12-16 explains the reason why the believing spouse must not depart from the marriage, 1 Peter 3:1-2 explains how the believer should act in that marriage if they want to save their unbelieving spouse.

THE BIBLE SAYS NOT TO!

- Neither 1 Cor. 7:12-13 nor 1 Pet. 3:1-2 appear to serve as approvals of believers marrying unbelievers, but instead seem to explain what the believers' response should be if they put themselves into that situation.
- Consider two parallels:
 - ❖ ***“If a man finds a young woman who is a virgin, who is not betrothed, and he seizes her and lies with her, and they are found out, then the man who lay with her shall give to the young woman’s father fifty shekels of silver, and she shall be his wife because he has humbled her; he shall not be permitted to divorce her all his days”*** (Deut. 22:28-29).
 - ❖ ***“My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous”*** (1 John 2:1).

THE BIBLE SAYS NOT TO!

- God has always intended His people to not intermarry with the world.
 - ❖ This was true in the Old Testament.
 - **See Josh. 23:11-13; Deut. 7:1-4; Ezra 10:11.**
 - ❖ This remains true in the New Testament.
 - **See 1 Cor. 9:5; 1 Pet. 3:7; 1 Cor. 7:39; Eph. 5:17.**
- If we marry a non-Christian, we cannot terminate the marriage like the children of Israel were required (see **1 Cor. 7:12-13; Ezra 10**), but we are expected to avoid ever putting ourselves in that situation.

WILL NON-CHRISTIANS RESPECT LAWS OF MARRIAGE?

- In Mark 10:9, Jesus said, “*What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate.*”
 - ❖ Since God is the author of marriage, mankind does not have the right to conclude it without His permission.
- Paul reiterated this expectation of permanency when he wrote 1 Cor. 7:10-11:
 - ❖ “*Now to the married I command, yet not I but the Lord: A wife is not to depart from her husband. But even if she does depart, let her remain unmarried or be reconciled to her husband. And a husband is not to divorce his wife.*”
- One thing that is unique about marriage is that no other human to human relationship requires such permanency.

WILL NON-CHRISTIANS RESPECT LAWS OF MARRIAGE?

- When we marry someone who does not recognize the sanctity and permanency of marriage, we have no guarantee that the person truly promises to be bound to their spouse for life.
- ❖ *“For the woman who has a husband is bound by the law to her husband as long as he lives. But if the husband dies, she is released from the law of her husband. So then if, while her husband lives, she marries another man, she will be called an adulteress; but if her husband dies, she is free from that law, so that she is no adulteress, though she has married another man” (Rom. 7:2-3).*

**THERE IS NO GUARANTEE OUR SPOUSE WILL HOLD THIS VIEW
EVEN IF THE PERSON CONSIDERS HIM/HERSELF TO BE RELIGIOUS!**

WILL NON-CHRISTIANS RESPECT LAWS OF MARRIAGE?

“If a man or woman does not have enough respect for God and the word of God to obey what God says about becoming a child of God, why do you think he’s going to obey what God says about being faithful to you? If he doesn’t think enough of God to be faithful to God, will he think enough of you to be faithful to you?”

Courtship & Marriage

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HAVE YOU CONSIDERED YOUR CHILDREN?

- Marriage should mirror the gospel and our relationship with Christ (see **Eph. 5:22-33**).
- Do we really think a non-Christian spouse will hold our same values in child-rearing?
 - ❖ Will they support us in trying to raise our children in the nurture & admonition of the Lord (see **Eph. 6:4**)?
 - ❖ Will they stress the importance of obedience, or will they be hands-off and let the children do whatever they want without discipline (see **Eph. 6:1-2**)?
 - ❖ Will they recognize the importance of dressing our children modestly (see **I Tim. 2:9**)?
 - ❖ Will they look to the scriptures for the answers in raising their children, or will they look to the world for answers? How will these values impact our children?
 - ❖ Will an unbelieving spouse understand the importance of and respect, thus comply with, the plain and simple message taught in **Titus 2:3-5**?

HAVE YOU CONSIDERED YOUR CHILDREN?

Do we really want to bear children only to have them suffer the fate of eternal punishment due in part to a lack of support from our unbelieving spouse?

NOTE: I am not trying to discourage anyone from having children. I simply want us all to – as Jesus said in Luke 14:28 – “*count the cost*” and realize the battles we will surely face in raising children without the support we need from a Godly spouse.

HAVE YOU CONSIDERED YOURSELF?

- Let's not fool ourselves; the scriptures are correct. Evil company corrupts good morals.
 - ❖ ***Do not be deceived: "Evil company corrupts good habits"*** (1 Cor. 15:33).
- Marrying a non-Christian brings about countless temptations, even if they are religious.
 - ❖ Sexual.
 - ❖ Alcohol.
 - ❖ Materialism.
 - ❖ How money is spent.
 - ❖ Forsaking the assemblies.
 - ❖ Doctrinal / moral compromise.
- With the countless temptations that may come as result of marrying a non-believer, why would we ever want to put ourselves in that situation?

Marrying a Christian doesn't guarantee a successful marriage. We should want to be with one . . .

- Who loves the Lord with all their heart, and all their soul, and all their being (**see Matt. 22:37**).
- Who not only studies God's Word, but puts it into practice (**see James 1:22-25**).
- Who strives to be an imitator of God and tries to live like Christ more and more each day (**see Eph. 5:1-2; 1 Cor. 11:1**).
- Constantly gives thanks to God and leans on Him when troubles come (**see 1 Thess. 5:16-18; 1 Pet. 5:7**).
- Wants God to provide the solutions to the problems of life and not let the world provide the answers (**see Prov. 3:5-6**).
- Who wants to work together in unity of faith in pursuit of eternal life for their family (**see Eph. 5:22-33; 1 Pet. 3:1-7; Prov. 22:6**).

Let's make sure we don't settle for someone who has simply "gotten wet." Let's marry strong, faithful Christians, both for our own souls and our children's souls.