

Marriage Made in Heaven

I was recently talking to the one of our most loyal church members who does much behind the scenes to help Christchurch. One of his finest contributions is the help in organizing our church web site. Last night after our youth activity he was telling me that they are able to see where people travel when on our web site. I discovered the most often read of my *Pastor's Word* is an article I had written about marriage. He said to me, "Pastor, anytime you have written anything on marriage we receive a lot of hits." I went to sleep last night thinking about this. When I awoke this morning it was still on my mind. Therefore, knowing that this may become a well-read article, I want to enter these words with prayer.

Are there marriages made in heaven? And if so, how do I know if I have one? And perhaps if I don't, can it be arranged? The time invested in this space will not be enough to fully cover the subject and answer satisfactorily all of your questions, however, I hope, with the Lord's help, to speak the truth with the teaching of God's Spirit. First,

(1) Believe God has prepared a certain one for you.

I am definitely not of the opinion that anyone in general vicinity of your world will do. I believe just as surely as God made you, He has designed your counterpart that will become for a man, the help meet for him (Genesis 2:18) and for a lady, the one and only beloved (Song of Solomon 2:3; 6:13). As we search the Scriptures we see first that *"Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them"* (Psalm 139:16). So when God designed you, the individual members of your body were according to His blueprint. When a person becomes married the expression biblically is: *"This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman..."* (Genesis 2:23). Since a married couple is considered a one-flesh union, I believe God was preparing you for life with your future spouse even before you met, yes, even in your earliest stages. This is one reason why couples who realize they are partakers of God's love with another find it hard to believe they could feel so strongly for not having known the person for such a long period of time. I would suggest what to you seemed a brief period of time, but in the mind of God this future union you look forward to dates from before the foundation of the world. *"Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder"* (Matthew 19:6). *"Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began"* (I Timothy 1:9).

(2) When you court, do so with one who is appealing to you.

Look at the response when Rebekah met Isaac, *"And Rebekah lifted up her eyes, and when she saw Isaac, she lighted off the camel. For she had said unto the servant, What man is this that walketh in the field to meet us? And the servant had said, It is my master: therefore she took a vail, and covered herself"* (Genesis 24:64,65).

Boaz went out of his way to take care of the young lady who caught his eye. You can almost feel the excitement in the air when he speaks: *"Then said Boaz unto his servant that was set over the reapers, Whose damsel is this?"* (Ruth 2:5).

I am not going to argue the point of "love at first sight." People are different and their response is different. The one thing I do believe is that God will not bring someone in your life that will not be pleasing to you. God described Ezekiel's wife in this way: *"...the desire of thine eyes..."* (Ezekiel 24:16). I remember after meeting my wife and getting to know and love her, I actually thought there is no one I desire beyond her; this is it! In fact, when I prayed for God's will to be done before our marriage I

claimed: Psalm 37:4, which says, *"Delight thyself also in the LORD; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart."* It is sadistic to think God would be punishing you to make you marry someone in whom you could not enjoy the pleasure of his or her company. It should not be, "I've grown accustomed to your face," almost a ho-hum attitude of they'll do because I could do no better. Give me a break! When the person you love walks into the room, it should light up. Your heart should do a double take! When you marry, you are going to spend the rest of your life together. There will be plenty of time to cool off later. But for now in the early stages, if you can go for someone else, then do so, but do everybody a favor and never settle for anything else than God's best. They don't have to be the most beautiful person in the world to the rest of the world, but for you inwardly and at least to some to degree outwardly you should be able to say, "This is God's best for me, I like His choice; I could not have done better. Thank you Lord!"

(3) The things you have in common should out-weigh the differences.

When the Holy Spirit fell in power on the Day of Pentecost, the Bible says this: *"And all that believed were together, and had all things common"* (Acts 2:44). In a real sense, when God's Spirit falls upon a marriage with blessing and power, there will be a commonality.

It is true, as a rule, opposites attract. One couple said they were just alike and never had a cross word. Well, if that be the case, then one of them is unnecessary, since they are just alike. One of the greatest blessings is being married to someone different than you. This has much to do with personality.

On the other hand, the Bible says, *"Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?"* (II Corinthians 6:14). It is sinful and wrong to marry, let alone court someone who is not a Christian. For a happy marriage, marry someone of the same faith and genre of biblical convictions. You both need to be on the same page. One day, God willing, children will come into the marriage. What church they attend and ground rules for behavior become immensely important. I have always taught our youth: don't even become romantically involved with anyone who is not sold out to God. A person who doesn't love the Lord with all their heart is going to be selfish and carnal. Their judgment is going to be impeded in the decision-making process and they will live a life of misplaced values. To enjoy a marriage made in heaven, you both need to agree on these inspired words: *"Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths"* (Proverbs 3:5, 6).

Everyone will have differences, but they should be minor. You'd better get serious only with one who shares the big values in life. I would say you cannot truly be happy in marriage when the most important things to you are not the most important things to your potential spouse. *"O magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt his name together"* (Psalm 34:3).

These are only three ways you can be assured a marriage made in heaven. Stay tuned to this column next week when I discuss at least four more ways that we may know when have a marriage made in heaven.

I love you all!

- Pastor Pope -

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