

A Pre-Marriage Guide for
Priest and Chaplains



FOUNDATIONAL TEACHING FOR
THE BODY OF CHRIST

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Marriage is one of the most important relationships, into which a person can enter,

But in many instances there are inadequate preparations made before the man and

Woman marry. More preparation is made for the wedding ceremony and reception

than the relationship itself. It comes as no surprise that many marriages end in

divorce. The time preceding marriage is extremely important because it is the

time when the foundation for the marriage is built. However, what foundation will

be laid? Will it be Jesus Christ or the foundation of self-centeredness? The most

important elements that should be found in the man and woman are God-

centeredness and a servant's heart. The two must be willing to place God first and

their future mate before themselves. Before entering into marriage, the man must

understand the necessity to lay down his life daily for his wife, and the woman

must gain understanding of what reverence for her husband really means. In the time

preceding marriage much work should be done in each preparing them for this union.

In Song of Songs, the time before the marriage is a time of preparation in which godly

characteristics are developed within the bride-to-be. The Lord is not in a hurry to

take His betrothed, but waits until she becomes a fruitful garden, in which the

work of God can be seen and in time eaten. This example of waiting until God's

work has progressed, should permeate the thinking of the man and woman.

Waiting for inner qualities to be developed will help avoid potential future problems. Then the two can focus upon the will of the Lord instead of being

concerned about things that should have already been corrected. The growth of

Christ's character within them will bring about a marriage as God intended and

will bring glory to Him.

Bishop Rev + John P. Johnston

PRE-MARRIAGE

FOUNDATIONAL TEACHING FOR THE BODY OF CHRIST

By The Most Rev. John P. Johnston

I. Being "born again" is essential for marriage to be successful.

John 3:3 "Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee,
Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

John 1:13; Gal. 6:15 - "new creature"
Eph. 2:1; Titus 3:5

¶ Being born from above is necessary for the *proper foundation* for building a good marriage. Both the man and the woman should have had a salvation experience from which can be seen the fruit of righteousness. When a person gives his life to Jesus, he puts Jesus first and himself second. This is a pattern that should continue in marriage. The other partner is to come first. This is impossible to do correctly without having an inner change take place because we are all self-centered by nature. That is why our nature needs to be changed. We must be in Christ having a new nature.

2 Cor. 5:17 "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are

passed away; behold, all things are become new.”

John 1:12; Eph. 2:8-9

¶ This fundamental truth is to be the basis for any serious involvement with the opposite sex, which may eventually lead to marriage. Fellowship and communion are to first find their root in Jesus Christ. With this essential element, one can move toward a lasting relationship.

1 Pet. 1:23 “Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.”

II. Being equally yoked is necessary.

2 Cor. 6:14 “Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?”

2 Cor. 6:14 “Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness?” (NIV)

A. Involvement can lead to becoming yoked with another.

The Bible is very clear regarding sex outside of marriage.

1. Physical involvement

1 Cor. 6:18; 1 Cor 7:2; 1 Cor 10:8
1 Cor. 5:11 – We are not to fellowship with fornicators
1 Cor. 6:9-10 – Fornicators shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

Exo. 20:14 “Thou shalt not commit adultery.”

Lev. 20:10; Gal. 5:19

Gen. 2:24 “Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.”

Physical involvement was meant to be with one's wife only.

2. Emotional involvement

Jer. 17:9

Prov 4:23 "Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life." (NIV)

The word "heart" means the feelings, the will, the intellect, emotions and passions, mind, thinking, and memory.

¶ The individual Christian has the responsibility to keep himself pure (James 1:27) "... and to keep himself unspotted from the world." That means pure in spirit, mind, and body. Emotional involvement can be subtle and before one knows it, one can allow certain emotions to flow out from them to another. Certain feelings are to be held within and only shared with the one to whom one marries. Often emotional damage had already occurred and we have the idea that if we share deep emotions that they will be healed through talking. Only Jesus Christ can truly heal the emotions. Holding certain emotions can be very difficult to do, especially for a woman. But it can be done through dependence on the Lord Jesus (Phil. 4:13). However, if there is a necessity to share certain emotions, two observances should be followed:

1) Talk with someone of the same sex, 2) Make sure that person is spiritually mature.

The best situation is to come to the marriage healed of any emotional scars, but all too often people arrive at marriage with scars from previous relationships. (Marriage, dating, family, childhood, etc.) But in Christ all healing abides.

¶ As the husband it is an awesome responsibility to be used as an instrument by God to bring healing to the wife. As the wife, it is difficult to always respond favorably to your husband. Both become possible in Christ.

¶ When remembering your childhood it may be hard to forgive a parent that has not been there to protect you from various hurts.

¶ The parents have the responsibility to guard their children (Deut. 4:9) from emotional hurt which can occur in or out of the home. The parents are to be the covering for the children, even when they become a young adult. Many times when children become young adults, they think they can cover themselves, and become emotionally involved with another sharing things that should only be shared with the one they are to marry. As

coverings, the parents need to guard their children from people and situations that may be harmful.

Prov. 23:19 “Listen, my son, and be wise, and direct your heart in the way.” (NAS)

Prov. 28:26 “He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool: but whoso walketh wisely, he shall be delivered.”

Mrk 14:38; Prov. 3:21; Prov. 11:16

3. **Spiritual involvement**

Deut .22:10 “Thou shalt not plow with an ox and an ass together.”

Dan. 2:43 “And just as you saw the iron mixed with baked clay, so the people will be a mixture and will not remain united, any more than iron mixes with clay.” (NIV)

mixture = to mix or join together

¶ Becoming spiritually involved with intimate matters, outside of marriage, dilutes the spirit. One can become spiritually involved (mixed) by sharing intimate things pertaining to the Lord that should only be shared with one’s mate in Christ (Judg. 16:16-18… Samson’s choice, Delilah, was not God’s choice and the result was a diluted spirit); Matt 7:6. We are to be tied (yoked) to the Lord. This leaves no room to be yoked to anyone else except the one the Lord chooses for us. This togetherness with Jesus is what will become the pillar in marriage. The intimacy that is gained in relationship with the Lord will flow out to your mate. Marriage is to be the place for spiritual intimacy between couples, giving themselves to their partner.

¶ These three types of involvement (physical, emotional, and spiritual) can take place with another Christian in whom the Lord has not chosen for you, and can become displeasing to the Lord. Just because you have an attraction (physical, emotional, or spiritual) to someone does not mean they are the right one for you.

Psa. 101:2 “I will be careful to lead a blameless life-- when will you come to me? I will walk in my house with blameless heart.” (NIV)

The Bible teaches that we are to be joined to the Lord and that the man is to be joined to his wife.

1 Cor. 6:17 “But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit.”

Mat. 19:5 “...and shall cleave to his wife...”

B. Association (to keep company with) will produce likeness.

1. God warns against marrying the unbeliever.

Exo. 34:14-16; Deut. 7:2-4; Ezra 9:1-2; Neh. 13:1,23-

27

2 Cor. 6:14

2. Israel mingled with the heathen and became just like them.

Psa.106:34-35

3. Do not associate with immoral people, even if they call themselves

Christians.

1 Cor. 5:9,11

4. Do not mix with disobedient Christians.

Do not fellowship with, or be intimate with such brethren.

2 Thes. 3:14

Rather warn them and be an example to them.

5. As a believer, you should not even consider marrying someone

whom is not a Christian.

1 Cor. 7:39 “...only in the Lord.” Deut. 7:3-4; Mal. 2:11

III. Man's self-choice brings problems.

1 Cor. 15:47 “The first man is of the earth, earthy...”

The earthly man always leans toward self-choice, self-strength, and self-dependence.

A. Samson chose.

Judg. 14:3 “..Get her for me..”

Judg. 16:1 He chose this harlot for a night.

Judg. 16:4 He chose Delilah “...he loved a woman...whose name was

Delilah.”

¶ Samson’s self-choices caused the strength and power of God to leave him. This path eventually led to a total loss of vision.

¶ Self-choice will destroy a marriage. That is why it is important that Jesus become the foundation for He can change one’s heart from self-choice to self-sacrifice.

B. Lot chose.

Gen. 13:11 “Then Lot chose him..”

¶ Lot’s choice was based upon what he saw with his eyes: the “well watered” plain of Jordan. He never considered God in the decision making process, rather chose after the natural. Lot’s choice eventually led him to live in Sodom.

¶ If you choose, you will lose! You may choose what is beautiful (a mate) and may think you have lost nothing, but a lot of the work of God that could have been done in you and through you as an instrument will go unfinished. The personal will of God is not always beautiful but will always produce beauty.

C. David chose Bathsheba.

2 Sam.11:2-4

¶ This choice caused heartache and broken relationship with the Lord.

The best thing that a man and woman can bring into the marriage is two hearts devoid of self-centeredness.

D. It is best that you seek not!

Num. 15:39 “... and that ye seek not after your own heart and your own eyes...” (KJV)

Num. 15:39 “...and not follow after your own heart and your own eyes...” (NAS)

1 Cor. 7:27 “Art thou bound unto a wife? seek not to be loosed. Art thou loosed from a wife? seek not a wife.”

1. Seeking causes unrest.

God of his Samson's heart was seeking a woman instead of the strength and consequently he never found rest.
Judg. 14:1-2

2. Seeking will lead you astray.

2 Sam. 11:2-4

3. If one is seeking a mate, his or her heart is going in that direction instead of toward God.

2 Chron. 12:14

Phil. 2:21 "For they all seek after their own interests, not those of Christ Jesus." (NAS)

4. Seek not your own will.

Mat. 26:39; John 5:30; Psa. 40:7-8

Col. 3:2 "Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth."
Set your mind, interest, and direction on things above.

5. We are to seek the Lord!

1 Chron.16:10-11; 1 Chron. 22:19; Psa. 34:10; Psa. 63:1

¶ The heart that seeks a mate expresses itself through dating. Dating is usually a self-choice based upon the desire of the individual. All self-choices will take one away from the will of God, even if that choice is entered into innocently. The importance of marrying the correct person is monumental, and that choice should be given to the Lord because He knows best. When the selection process is left in God's hand, many of the problems that can arise when married can be avoided, and where death would have been produced, life is produced instead.

E. See beyond the physical

¶ This can be very difficult because the teaching of the world is to go after that which is physically beautiful. In society, that which is physically beautiful is placed on a pedestal and that which is unattractive is pushed aside. Children are taught this at a very young age, whether at home or through mass media.

Look further than the physical to see if there is any character of God within. The enduring relationship will be the one that is built upon character instead of beauty.

James 4:14 “Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It

is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.”

1 Pet. 1:24; 4:7; 1 John 2:17

¶ Realize that in marriage sex will play a smaller part as time goes on. Not that sex is not important, but that it is not to be the basis of relationship between two people.

IV. God “brought” the woman to the man.

This is the scriptural pattern regardless of culture, tradition or our thinking.

God’s ways are not our ways, and His thinking is higher and different.

Isa. 55:8-9 8 “For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. 9 For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.”

¶ We think from an earthly and many times a cultural viewpoint; God sees from an eternal perspective. He must renew our minds and conform them to His thinking. Many times this is difficult because of our tradition and because we hold to our views. But with God all things are possible.

Dating as a means to meet one’s mate, is not found in the Bible.

GOD’S BEST FOR YOU!

A. God brought Eve to Adam.

Gen. 2:22 “...brought her unto the man”

¶ God set the example, not just for Adam but for all men who will believe.

B. God brought Rebekah to Isaac.

Gen. 24:1-67 (v63-64)

¶ Abraham knew the importance of having his son Isaac marry one who had faith in God. Marrying an unbeliever would only create unnecessary problems. Marrying Rebekah, God's selection, would be the *best* choice.

C. God brought Ruth to Boaz

Ruth 3:7

¶ One way Boaz showed his love for God was by waiting upon the Lord for a wife. This demonstration of love shows that the character of God was being developed within him. Boaz waited for God's best and at the appointed time, he was blessed with Ruth. His love for God formed the basis for the fulfillment of love (phileo – fondness) toward Ruth.

D. God will bring together the right match.

1. Do you have faith in God to provide for you the one He knows is best?

Heb. 11:6

God desires faith in his children and not impatience, doubt, fear, worry or panic.

2. The Lord desires a waiting heart.

Psa. 25:5,21; Psa. 27:14; Isa. 40:31

¶ Men are taught to be the aggressors in seeking the woman and this has become the norm in many societies. However, in Christ waiting is the pattern. It can be arduous waiting for the Lord to move, but the Christian should prayerfully continue to hold his or her heart before the Lord. The more self-strength one has the more difficult waiting is. However, if by the grace of God He has broken self-strength within, waiting becomes a delight because truly the waiting is for Him. In each scriptural example above, those who waited were blessed far beyond what they ever dreamed. If man would follow the guidelines laid out in the scriptures and wait for the right person, not one would lack. The right person would not be chosen based upon beauty, money, or social status, and many unattractive people would find their mate because self-choice based upon attractiveness would be eliminated.

E. Also remember that not everyone in Christ is meant to marry.

¶ A few Christians will remain single for the kingdom of God. They are given grace to maintain an attitude of indifference toward fleshly desires and temptations.

Mat. 19:12 For some are eunuchs because they were born that way; others were made that way by men; and others have renounced marriage because of the kingdom of heaven. The one who can accept this should accept it." (NIV)

V. Realize that each other are different.

A. Men and women think differently.

¶ Generally speaking, men tend to think and act more from a logical basis and women tend to think and act more from an emotional basis. Neither is wrong, just divergent.

Moab. That
emotions

Ruth 1:14 Orpah kissed Naomi and went back to
decision was strongly influenced by her
because of her desire for a husband.

Ruth 1:16 Ruth's thinking to go with Naomi was also influenced by her emotions.

¶ There are times when a woman should not act upon her emotions and take a more logical approach to things.

1 Tim. 5:11 "As for younger widows, do not put them on such a list. For when their sensual desires overcome their dedication to Christ, they want to marry."
(NIV) (an emotional approach)

Eph. 5:25 "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it" (an approach not based upon logic)

¶ Men should learn to see things through the eyes of their wife instead of always through logic.

B. The woman's emotional composition is different.

¶ Women are inclined to act from this area. Many times their actions and reactions will stem from an emotional basis. One reason for this can be found in Gen. 2:23.

Gen. 2:23 And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.

“taken out” – Heb = removed.

¶ When God took Adam's rib out He took more than just a rib. He took the female attributes that were within Adam and gave them to another, Eve. After this Adam says, Gen. 2:23, “This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.”

¶ Gen. 2:23 “bone of my bones” means bone, but also means essence and substance. This is one reason men and women are so different in their thinking and emotions. That which was once in Adam is no longer there in the same measure. The woman became the recipient of certain characteristics that were once in Adam alone. Now to be complete, the man and the woman must be joined in a way God had intended from the beginning, hence *becoming one*.

VI. God has guide lines for singles.

¶ Why does God restrict sexual activity? When two people are attracted to one another is it fair for God to say no? Why does God warn against sex outside of marriage?

A. The devil has perverted sex.

1 Cor. 6:9

¶ The devil has planted the thought that if one does not satisfy their sexual desires that they are missing out. He has convinced many that adultery and fornication is all right and that it brings satisfaction to the relationship. It can bring temporary gratification but in fact carries dissatisfaction, restlessness, violence, agitation and damage into the relationship.

B. Adultery and fornication has an effect upon the individual.

1. Damage to the mind.

¶ One must deal with memories that God has never intended, and knowledge we were not equipped to cope with apart from a life-long commitment to one marriage partner. Prov. 7:26

2. Damage to the will.

¶ When a person becomes sexually active outside of marriage, the devil creates a stronghold in them that is not easily broken. Because they have chosen this course of action means that their will was involved. What then takes place is that the will becomes weaker and is more easily bent again. Prov. 6:32

3. Damage to the emotions.

¶ The emotions were made to experience a life-long commitment to one person. Once intermingling with another takes place and there is a withdrawal, damage to the emotions occurs. Prov. 7:25

4. Damage to the spirit

¶ When one chooses to have sex before marriage, they have chosen spiritual death, regardless of their own personal views. We choose life by obeying the Lord's commandment and death by disobeying.
Deut. 27:26; 30:19-20

¶ Because adultery and fornication have damaging effects upon an individual, they are not just physical acts. In addition, they affect the spirit and mind.

Prov.7:22-23 “He goeth after her straightway, as an ox goeth to the slaughter, or as a fool
to the correction of the stocks; 23 Till a dart strike through his liver; as a
bird hasteth to the snare, and knoweth not that it is for his life.”

¶ The relationship may feel right and it may seem so right,
but fornication is never right in the Lord eyes. God's warnings against this type of behavior are to keep two people from damage. With this in mind would you say to this person, I love you so much I want to damage you?

C. Sex outside of marriage always lacks commitment.

¶ It may please a temporary physical need but will never satisfy the inner need of the spirit. Adam was created for one woman, his wife
Eve. Sex outside of marriage is a commitment to self-desire devoid of a life-long promise to one person. There is lack of faithfulness and adherence to a mate, which frustrates the fullness God has intended through marriage. True commitment will unfold when two people resolve to become married and devote the rest of their lives to one another. Pre-marital sex undermines this type of commitment regardless of what the individuals say.

Mat. 19:4-6

¶ Commitment = the state of being bound to a person. Faithfulness is a characteristic of God that makes you a person
who can be relied on.

¶ Some people have said, what does a marriage ceremony and a piece of paper mean if two people really love each other? They mean the difference between true commitment and the lack thereof.

¶ This part of the marriage vow has not been fulfilled by many today. For better or for worse, for richer or for poorer, in sickness and in health, until death do we part. It does not say until I change my mind, or until my sexual desire takes me elsewhere. The marriage vows are to strengthen the commitment that should already be in the heart. We are to say and mean, "I will be committed to you."

¶ Do you have a commitment to God that is not based upon self-gain?

¶ God has set the example for man in that He made a covenant, which is an agreement between two in which they keep certain promises. The Lord always keeps his side of the agreement. He made a covenant with Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, David, His people Israel, etc. God made a commitment to man then and now. God promised to bless His people and make them His special people, and they were to remain faithful to Him. These exmples of commitment should be guidelines for singles.

D. Sex outside of marriage destroys true intimacy.

¶ True intimacy is a relationship brought together and developed by the Lord. This first relates to us being brought together by the Lord to Himself. We were brought to Jesus to form a relationship with Him. If we have moved forward in connection to Him, a bond forms within which is to be kept unbroken. Jesus becomes first! If someone or something comes before Him, our intimacy with Him is broken.

In the O.T. spiritual adultery destroyed Israel's intimacy with God.

Exo. 20:3 "Thou shalt have no other gods before me."

Hos. 4:17 "Ephraim is joined to idols: let him alone."

Ezek. 23:37 "For they have committed adultery, and blood is on their hands. Thus they have committed adultery with their idols..." (NAS)

Ezek. 16:36-38

¶ This same truth applies to sexual relationships outside of marriage. Adultery and fornication will destroy our intimacy with the Lord and also will destroy or negatively effect other relationships. (Our marriage, children, friendships, etc.)

¶ Intimacy is what our beings truly crave. Let it be true intimacy with the Lord and the one the Lord provides. That will satisfy our inner need.

E. Who thought up sex?

Gen. 1:27-28

Who created the attraction and the chemical changes within?

Gen. 2:23

¶ God knows and understands the attraction. God brought this beautiful woman to Adam. Do we believe God understands? If we believe He does, we should believe He will provide that special one for us.

F. Some of the problems that may arise when a person arrives at the marriage bed having been intimate with others.

1. Guilt (from past relationships)
2. Fear (of the past disrupting the present)
3. Lack of trust (suspicious of their partner)
4. Insecurity (thoughts that similar problems may develop)
5. Memories (haunting past experiences which the devil can use)

G. Even kissing should be reserved for the one you are going to marry.

¶ Kissing can inflame the passions and cause chemical changes within which can pressure the individual to physically go further.

1 Cor. 6:18 “Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body.”

“flee” = to run away; to avoid by flight

“committeth fornication” = to prostitute one’s body to the lust of another. To

permit one’s self to be drawn away by another.

1 Cor. 6:15 “Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ? shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot? God forbid.”

H. God by nature does not want to restrict but to fulfil.

¶ He has the highest fulfillment and depth of pleasure in mind, but that is only found in the close union of marriage. God created pleasure!

He is the God who created taste buds.

Psa. 139:14 “I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well.”

¶ The taste buds were given to man to bring pleasure and delight through experiencing distinct flavors that we can appreciate so we can enjoy to the full the foods we eat. The true flavor of what God has created for man through sex cannot be experienced outside of marriage. True delight is not that of the flesh, but is an inner need that is satisfied by obeying God. Inner fulfillment will only find its depth in marriage to the one God has chosen for us.

So you think this person may be the right one for you?

Things to consider before moving toward a deeper relationship.

- Who are you?
Has Christ enriched your character?
Is His character being developed in you?

Rom. 8:29 “For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son…”

Is your life identified with Christ?

Gal. 2:20 “ I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.”

The Lord is to be our inner focus!

- Focus upon ministry.
In ministering to others you should learn *to give*, which will be the proper basis to begin marriage.
Ministry will teach one to *be a servant*. In the servant’s heart self-sacrifice is developed.

In ministry others become your focus. This becomes an important building block because one then has the ability to be a servant to their mate. A servant's heart is necessary to avoid certain problems that arise from self-centeredness

Ministering to others can bring many other desirable things, for example stewardship, accountability, faithfulness, humility, etc.

- Consider godly council from your parents (if applicable) or your pastor.

Prov 15:22 Without counsel purposes are disappointed: but in the multitude of counsellors they are established. (KJV)

Prov 15:22 Without consultation, plans are frustrated, but with many counselors they succeed. (NAS)

- It may be wise to take a wait and see approach.
Wait for the Lord to move circumstances.
Wait for Him to reveal what you are to do.
Wait for clear direction. If the relationship is meant to be, it can stand the test of time (if both are moving in God's will).
- Be in the will of God.
If you are moving according to His will, this relationship you are considering will begin to grow.
- Do you see in this person some maturity in the Lord or is there movement in that direction? This is not to be based upon their works but inner quality in Christ.
- Develop a friendship.
Your mate should become your best friend. All other friendships should be secondary, and should be treated as such.
- The revelation of God that he or she is the right one for you.
Has the Lord been drawing you toward mutual oneness with this person?
(Not a physical oneness but a spiritual relationship on a deeper level.)

Has the Lord created a flow in the relationship?

Is there an attraction, spiritual, emotional, and physical?
In the natural is there a chemical change within?

Oneness is an intermingling of two. This can take place on a spiritual level, an emotional level, or physical level.

- Are you ready for a serious, life-long commitment?
You must determine in your being that this commitment is going to be for life, severed only by physical death.

Look at the commitment contained in the marriage vows.

Do you solemnly agree before God and these witnesses to take this WOMAN to be your lawful, wedded wife; to love and respect her, honor and cherish her, in health and in sickness, in prosperity and in adversity; and, leaving all others, to keep yourself only unto her, so long as you both shall live?

Do you in like manner solemnly agree to receive this MAN as your lawful, wedded husband; to love and respect him; and to live with him in all faith and tenderness, in health and in sickness, in prosperity and in adversity; and leaving all others to keep yourself only unto him, so long as you both shall live?

- Are you prepared for the possibility of having children?
Are you prepared to loose some of your freedom to attend to your child?
Are you prepared to stay up nights because your child is sick?
Are you prepared for the responsibility of caring for another human being who is totally dependant on you twenty four hours a day, seven days a week?
Are you ready to care for a child's spiritual, emotional, and physical needs?

- Financial stability.
It is important that a flow of income be developed.

2 Thes. 3:10 "For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat."

This should not be a self-effort but should be done under the leading of the Lord. That does not mean that you should sit back and make no effort, and take the attitude the Lord will provide. The Lord will provide but he needs your legs to carry you to look for a job.

¶ Remember as a clergyman of the cloth, Use kindness and understanding and never judgmental of the couple in giving counseling.

These outlines can be copied for personal use or used for teaching purposes.

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