

Before You Marry

Standing in a courtroom before a judge, waiting for his granting of a divorce, is not the picture God wants us to have of marriage. But far too many end up there. What is often heard today are expressions such as: “*He is not the person I married*” or “*the person on the outside is not the person on the inside.*”

How can someone know? How can they keep from making a major mistake in their life? Not enough is emphasized about what happens *before* you marry. Consider these thoughts: (they apply for both men and women)

1. **You marry a person as he is** not as he may promise to change, or the person you hope to straighten out. How does this person act when you take a closer look at him/her?
 - **How does he drive in traffic?** Is he dangerous? Does he take unnecessary chances? Does he ignore the warnings signs of the road? Does he get angry easily?
 - **How does your date talk to his parents?** Is he respectful? Does he shout? What does he say about his parents to you? What does he say about *your* parents and *their* values? Does he get you back home on time?
 - **How does he treat those who serve him?** (restaurant waitresses, people behind the counter) Is he polite and generous? Is he rude and demanding?
 - **Who are his friends?** What kind of people are they? Are these the kind of people you would choose your friends from? How does you date act when his friends show up? Does he treat you differently when his friends are around?
 - **How does he treat you?** Does he really listen to you? Is he honest with you? Will he accept “no,” if you tell him? Is he interested in the things you are interested in? Does you family interest him? Is he attracted to your good looks or to you as a person? Does he keep up his part of the relationship? Does he apologize or make excuses when wrong?
 - **How does he spend money?** Does he have a savings account? Does he have any financial plans? Is he always having to borrow money from others? Does he pay his bills on time?
 - **How does he act when playing sports?** Can he get beat without becoming angry and upset? Does he play fair? Does he quit?
 - **How is his outlook and nature in life?** Is he positive and up-beat or is he negative, and complaining? Is he hopeful, excited and full of ideas and plans?

- **How does he act toward his own brothers and sisters?** Does he like them? Is he nice to them? How does he act toward your brothers and sisters? Does he like being around kids? Does he respect their things?
- **What does he like to talk about?** Is it good things? Is it unrealistic and pipe-dreams? What kind of music does he listen to?
- **What do your parents and grandparents think about him?** Are they glad you are dating him? Are they trying to get you to slow down and take a real look at him? If they don't like him, why?
- **Where is he with God?** Does he believe in God? Does he want to be right with God? Does he respect your commitment to the Lord, or is he always trying to get you to miss church "just this one time?" Is he stronger spiritually than you are? Does he feel comfortable sitting in church services? What does he do during church services? Is he a Christian? Does he want to go to heaven? Does he care about you spiritually?

These are all very fair questions. They reveal the character of a person as he/she is right now. If you can't honestly answer these questions, or the answers are negative, why are you dating this person? Don't make a mistake later by ignoring what you see today.

'FOR THIS CAUSE A MAN SHALL LEAVE HIS FATHER AND MOTHER, AND SHALL CLEAVE TO HIS WIFE; AND THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH?' "Consequently they are no longer two, but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate." (Mt. 19:5-6)

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