

TWO BECOMING ONE

Introduction: God created each one of us uniquely with a specific purpose in this life. He is control and aware of every aspect of our life. The families we were born into, the culture we were raised in and the experiences we have been through are all a part of God's plan for us. He knew all about it before it ever happened. Look at this verse:

*"You saw me before I was born. **Every day of my life** was recorded in your book. **Every moment** was laid out before a single day had passed." - Psalm 139:16 (NLT)*

The path we have been on since birth is what makes us who we are today. Who we are today, is the person we are bringing to the table when we consider marriage. It is important that all these aspects of our life are considered when we think about what our marriage is going to look like. It is quite possible that the married life we enter may look nothing like the life we have been living. Why is this important? It is important because of the transformation that takes place when a man and a woman are joined in marriage. God described this transformation when he created marriage with Adam and Eve.

Genesis 2:21 NLT

So, the LORD God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep. While the man slept, the LORD God took out one of the man's ribs and closed up the opening.

Genesis 2:22 NLT

Then the LORD God made a woman from the rib, and he brought her to the man.

Genesis 2:23 NLT

"At last!" the man exclaimed. "This one is bone from my bone, and flesh from my flesh! She will be called 'woman,' because she was taken from 'man.'"

Genesis 2:24 NLT

This explains why a man leaves his father and mother and is joined to his wife, and **the two are united into one.**

The transformation is the process of two people becoming as one person. The blending of two lives into one harmonious life. This process can be difficult at times. That is why it is important that we know the person we are going to marry is the one God has chosen for us. Consider the story of Abraham as he seeks a bride for his son Isaac:

*"Abraham was now a very old man, and the LORD had blessed him in every way. One day Abraham said to his oldest servant, the man in charge of his household, "Take an oath by **putting your hand under my thigh. Swear by the LORD, the God of heaven and earth, that you will not allow my son to marry one of these local Canaanite women.** Go instead to **my homeland, to my relatives,** and find a wife there for my son Isaac."*

The servant asked, "But what if I can't find a young woman who is willing to travel so far from home? Should I then take Isaac there to live among your relatives in the land you came from?" "No!" Abraham responded. "Be careful never to take my son there. For the LORD, the God of heaven, who took me from my father's house and my native land, solemnly promised to give this land to my descendants. He will send his angel ahead of you, and he will see to it that you find a wife there for my son. If she is unwilling to come back with you, then you are free from this oath of mine. But under no circumstances are you to take my son there." - Genesis 24:1-8 (NLT)

There were 4 things that Abraham believed was important in getting the correct woman for Isaac. Let's take a look at those 4 things and see what we can learn from this.

1. **SPIRITUAL BELIEF** - "... **you will not allow my son to marry one of these local Canaanite women**. Abraham did not want his son to marry one of the local Canaanite women. Why? They did not worship or follow the same God that Abraham and Isaac worshiped. The true God of Heaven. The spiritual unity of the man and woman is vital to the success of a Biblical marriage. Both man and woman must be believers and followers of Jesus Christ, or the marriage will eventually falter. Both must trust the truth of the Bible as the guidebook for their life.
2. **CULTURE** - "**Go instead to my homeland, to my relatives...**" Abraham sent him to his homeland and his relatives. This was important because of the culture and the way Isaac was raised. In our world today, culture has a big impact on how we live. How we are raised, where we grew up, the kind of people we grew up around all have an impact on what our life is like. Some good, some not so good. These things must be discussed before marriage to make sure both parties fully understand where they are coming from and how they will merge their different cultures into one unique life for themselves. This does not necessarily mean that both must come from the exact same culture. However, it must be considered and discussed.
3. **GOD'S WILL** - "**He will send his angel ahead of you, and he will see to it that you find a wife there for my son** ..." Abraham was trusting God to provide the right person. When we enter marriage, we must be convinced that our mate is the person God has chosen for us. This will help us during difficult times as we remember this is God's plan for our life and He will help us.
4. **WILLINGNESS TO BE MARRIED** - "**if she is unwilling to come back with you, then you are free from this oath of mine.**" Abraham said that if the woman would not willingly come, the servant was no longer responsible. Both man and woman must come into the marriage willingly knowing it is the right thing to do. It is better not to be married than to marry the wrong person.

With these four principles in mind, consider the following questions:

1. Why do we want to get married?

Marriage is one of the most important and impactful commitments we will ever make. It will require personal sacrifice, hard work and the realization that our life will be changed forever. With that in mind, why do we want to get married? The answer to this question will become an anchor that we cling to when our marriage goes through stormy waters. For that reason, the answer better be a real good one. We must want what married life is. In order to know if we want something, we must clearly understand what it involves. That is why we are going through these lessons. We must be convinced beyond a shadow of a doubt that God has called us to be married to the person we are about to commit ourselves to. We must know it is God's will and we are doing what God has told us to do and not just what **WE** want to do.

2. What do we expect to get from marriage that we don't already have?

Why is getting married so important to us? What is it that we can only have by being married? Let's consider two very common answers to these questions. First, a deeper and more intimate physical relationship is an obvious addition when we are married. God says, "*Marriage should be honored by all, and **the marriage bed** kept pure, for God will judge the adulterer and all the sexually immoral.*" - *Hebrews 13:4 (NIV)*. Physical intimacy or sex is blessed and designed by God to be a part of marriage. We will spend an entire lesson learning what God says about this. A second reason some people get married is to share the financial burden of life with their spouse. Nothing wrong with this reason either. However, while both are good reasons, they are not enough to sustain a marriage. The excitement of the physical will change, and money will not buy happiness no matter how much we have. Once again, we come back to the truth that we must want what married life is and know it is God's plan for our life.

3. How do we view the role of the husband and the wife in marriage?

Quite often this is influenced by how we grew up and what our home was like. The culture around us can also have an impact on how we view this. While the Bible will instruct us what the role of each should be, how we view these two roles right now is important. The differences will have to be addressed with the truth of the Bible so that we are on the same page at the time of our wedding.

4. How will we make decisions?

Consider how we make decisions now in our relationship. Do we make them together or does one person always make the decision? Decisions should be a joint effort.

5. How many children do we want to have?

Many couples get months or even years into their marriage and never talk about their desire for children. Children are a part of married life, when God chooses to give them. We need to make sure we have discussed our thoughts about having children prior to getting married and make sure we are on the same page. For example, what if one partner is unable to have children and the other has always wanted a big family? This is only one example of why this should be discussed before committing to marriage.

6. How will we raise our children relative to training, discipline, church, school, etc.?

The Bible is clear about the training of children, and we will discuss that in a future lesson. However, this is also a topic that needs to be discussed prior to committing ourselves to someone for the rest of our life. What if one partner comes from a home where “spanking” was common, and the other doesn’t believe in corporal punishment? These things need to be discussed and a decision reached before entering marriage.

7. How will we manage the money and pay the bills?

The handling of money in a marriage is critical to a happy home. While we will spend an entire lesson on this as well, it needs to be addressed here. How do we manage our finances now? Do we use credit cards or not? Are we currently in financial debt? Will that debt be brought into the marriage or settled prior to marriage? What types of behaviors are characteristic of how each person manages money? Money management is about behavior not amount. We will talk more about this later. Are we willing to be transparent with our partner when it comes to money? These questions need to be discussed and answered before the wedding.

8. How will we approach special times of the year such as Thanksgiving, Christmas, Birthdays and Vacation?

Holidays, vacations, and birthdays are special times in a person’s life. Many family traditions may have been established around one or more of these events when we were growing up. When we get married, all these traditions are brought into the new relationship. How will we mesh them together if they are not the same? For example, where will we spend Christmas each year? How about Thanksgiving? Where do we like to go on vacation, the mountains, or the beach? Believe it or not, these are all things that can cause major ripples in a marriage. Talk about them now so they don’t cause trouble later!

9. What involvement will our families and friends have in our lives after marriage?

Many marriages are made difficult or even ruined because of a misunderstanding of the place family and friends should play after marriage. When a man and woman decide to get married, they are forming their own family unit (two becoming one) which will take priority over every other relationship. It does not mean that we have no relationship with family and friends. However, family and friends play a different role in our lives once we are married. We will discuss this in more detail later.

When two people become one, a lot takes place and there will be change. These questions we have just discussed are all very practical aspects of married life that, quite often, are never considered or even thought about prior to marriage. Each one of these can cause issues as our marriage progresses if we are not prepared. Take the time to discuss them all and make sure there is a common understanding of what the expectations are once the knot is tied.

Next time we will attempt to answer the question, "Are we ready to get married?"