

Home Builders **GUIDE**



By Charles Willis

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Finding A Mate	Page 5
2. Marriage Law	Page 6
3. The Godly Husband	Page 7
4. The Godly Wife	Page 8
5. A Home Built On God	Page 9
6. Overcoming Problems	Page 10
7. Home Additions	Page 11
8. Following God's Blueprint	Page 12
9. Learning To Love	Page 13
10. Teaching Teens	Page 14
11. Downsizing	Page 15
12. The Role of Grandparents	Page 16

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Finding A Mate

Foundation Principles

It is a modern phenomenon that we select our own spouse. To some extent I am certain children have always voiced their desires, but parents arranged marriages in most cultures, and some still do. This is because parents objectively look at a potential spouse rather than emotionally, which is not always good. Nevertheless, it points out a real concern that young people must take many things into consideration when choosing a mate. Even more so for those who are Christians.

What guiding principles should Christians understand when looking for a mate?

1. II Corinthians 6:14-18
2. 1 Corinthians 15:33
3. 1 Kings 11:1-11

Examine the following passages and relate what traits should be sought or avoided in a mate.

1. Proverbs 31:30
2. Proverbs 11:22
3. Proverbs 14:1
4. Proverbs 27:15-16
5. Proverbs 21:19
6. Proverbs 12:15
7. Proverbs 13:20
8. Proverbs 15:27
9. Proverbs 22:24-25
10. Proverbs 23:29-30

Think About This

1. Describe how most Americans select a mate.
2. What was Abraham's concerns in finding a wife for Isaac (Genesis 24:1-9)?
3. Discuss which is more important, and why:
 - A. Planning a wedding.
 - B. Planning a marriage.

Applications

Create a list of "rules" to adopt for yourself or to recommend to your children/grandchildren when choosing a mate. Try to provide a Scripture for each rule.



Marriage Law

Foundation Principles

Our society is currently changing laws about marriage, but God's laws can never be changed. We must know God's will and apply it to ourselves. Many have disregarded God's law about marriage and have endangered their soul, and the soul of their spouse. God created man and woman, God established marriage, and we are right to view Scripture as God's marriage manual.

Examine the following passages and define God's law of marriage.

1. Who is to marry? Genesis 2:22-25 and Romans 1:26-28.
2. Explain leaving and joining (cleaving - KJ). (Genesis 2:24, Matthew 19:6, and Romans 7:2)
3. What is meant by one flesh? (Genesis 2:24 and 1 Corinthians 6:16.)
4. Do civil laws about marriage apply to the Christian? (Romans 13:1-2 and 1 Peter 2:13-17)

With any proper examination of the subject of marriage, some study of divorce is also needed. Define God's marriage law in relation to divorce.

1. Malachi 2:16
2. Matthew 19:9 and Luke 16:18
3. Matthew 19:10-12 and 1 Corinthians 7:10-11

Think About This

1. Why do people get married? What is the understanding in our society?
2. What is the God-given purpose of marriage?
 - A. Genesis 2:18
 - B. 1 Corinthians 7:2, 9
 - C. Genesis 1:28
3. When should a man and woman interested in marriage study God's marriage law? Why?

Applications

How does an understanding of God's marriage law impact our relationship within a marriage?

What general principles about the marriage relationship are demanded by God?

- A. 1 Corinthians 7:3-5
- B. 1 Corinthians 7:32-35
- C. Ephesians 5:22-24
- D. Ephesians 5:25, Titus 2:4



The Godly Husband

Foundation Principles

1. Describe what is meant by the husband being the “head” of the wife (Eph. 5:23; 1 Cor. 11:3).
2. In what ways should a husband be a spiritual leader (Josh. 24:15; 1 Cor. 14:35; Phil. 2:12-16)?
3. Define various aspects of love a husband is to exhibit (Eph. 5:25; 1 Peter 3:8-13).
4. How does God say a husband is to honor his wife (1 Pet. 3:7; Prov. 31:28)?
5. How does a husband demonstrate commitment (Heb. 13:4; 1 Cor. 7:2-3; 1 Thess. 4:3-7)?
6. How does God expect a husband to support his wife (1 Tim. 5:8)?

Think About This

1. Discuss how our adoption (or lack of adoption) of God’s righteousness in marriage makes it easier (or harder) for our spouse to live righteously.
2. “It is not good for the man to be alone; I will make him a helper suitable for him” (Gen. 2:18). Discuss how the husband must allow the wife to be his helper and why he should desire her help.

Applications

What can a husband do to maintain and improve his relationship after he has exhibited unrighteousness toward (or before) his wife?

In addition to spiritual and physical needs, discuss how a husband supports his wife emotionally and socially.



The Godly Wife

Foundation Principles

1. What does it mean for a wife to be in subjection to her husband (1 Pet. 3:1; Col. 3:18; Eph. 5:22)?
2. Why did God give the wife the role of subjection (1 Tim. 2:12-14; Gen. 3:16)?
3. What responsibility is enjoined upon the wife when it says she “must see to it that she respects her husband” (Eph. 5:33)? (See also 1 Pet. 3:2.)
4. What attitudes in a wife does God find precious (1 Pet. 3:1-6)?
5. What does it mean to “keep house” (1 Timothy 5:14)? Compare with “workers at home” (Titus 2:5) and Proverbs 31:10-31.

Think About This

1. How does the wife help her husband learn to be the head?
2. Is it unscriptural for a wife to work outside of the home (Prov. 31:13-24; Acts 16:14; 18:1-3)?
3. How can employment become abused (by either or both husband and wife) and so effect the marriage?

Applications

What can a wife do to maintain and improve her relationship after she has exhibited unrighteousness toward (or before) her husband?

“It is not good for the man to be alone; I will make him a helper suitable for him” (Gen. 2:18). Discuss how the wife helps the man with companionship, even though many men seem to not desire companionship.



A Home Built On God

Foundation Principles

The wise newly married couple will quickly get to work establishing spiritual habits for the family. If these are put in place early in the relationship the husband and wife will have a better marriage, draw closer to God, and provide a godly environment appropriate for potential children to learn about God.

1. Who is in charge of the home (1 Cor. 11:3, Ps. 127:1)? What exactly does this mean to you?

2. What rules will govern the relationship and household (Matt. 6:33; 7:24-27)?

3. From Titus 2:11-14, define the following and tell how they provide a basis for a godly home.
 - A. Sensibly

 - B. Righteously

 - C. Godly

 - D. Zealous of good deeds

Think About This

How will each of the following help a couple if habitually practiced together?

1. Prayer (Matt. 6:11; Phil. 4:6-7)

2. Bible Study (Acts 17:11; 2 Tim. 2:15)

3. Worship/Fellowship (Heb. 10:24-25; Acts 2:42)

4. Singing (James 5:13; Eph. 5:18-19)

5. Giving (1 Cor. 16:2; 2 Cor. 9:6-7; Eph. 4:28)

6. Service (Gal. 5:13; Eph. 4:16; Rom. 12:6-8; Heb. 13:16)

Application

Discuss how a couple working together can be effective in evangelism (Acts 18:26; Rom. 16:3-5).



Overcoming Problems

Foundation Principles

For each of the following topics, examine the Scriptures, identify the problem and tell how we are to biblically overcome it.

Communication

Ephesians 4:25-26, 29-32

Philippians 2:3-4

Colossians 3:13

James 1:19

Proverbs 19:13-14

1 Peter 3:10

In Laws

Genesis 2:24; Matthew 19:6

Money

Budgets

(2 Cor. 9:7; 1 Tim. 5:8; Luke 14:28; 1 Cor 13:4)

Debts

(Prov. 22:7, 26-27; 17:18; 13:11; Eccl. 5:10; Matt. 6:24; 1 Tim. 6:10; Rom. 13:8)

Possessions (Luke 12:15; Prov. 23:4-5; 15:16)

Contentment (1 Tim. 6:6-11)

Drawing Apart

Time Together lacking (Deut. 24:5)

Know Each Other (1 Cor. 7:33-34; 1 Pet. 3:7)

Think About This

1. Describe the benefits of habitually reading Scripture together. How does this help overcome problems?
2. Relationship problems will occur. The important thing to learn is how to deal with them. What have you found effective in preparing to initiate a conversation about a problem?
3. What is wrong with not talking about a problem, or leaving the room, or just giving someone the “silent treatment”?

Applications

Study this lesson with your spouse!

Discuss the importance of communication regarding finances and how this helps prevent problems. Include the idea of “hidden purchases.”

Our efforts to better our marriage often come at a crisis point. Relate what you have found to be effective “time together” moments which have helped to build your relationship before or after a problem arises. How do you overcome our “busyness”?



Home Additions

Foundation Principles

1. Read Psalm 127:1-6.
 - A. What should a parent think about having children?
 - B. What negative example is given about parental attitudes in Isaiah 49:15 and Exodus 22:22-24?
 - C. How does this impact our understanding of the modern concepts of an “unwanted pregnancy” and “abortion”?
2. What do the following verses teach about ruling the house (which parents need to learn) (Josh. 24:15; Eph. 6:1; Prov. 1:8)?
3. What are the differences between commands (Gen. 18:19) and instructions (Deut 6:7-9).
4. Identify four aspects of child development from Luke 2:52 and discuss the parent’s responsibility in each.
 - A.
 - B.
 - C.
 - D.

Think About This

1. Discuss changes in the relationship as husband and wife become father and mother. Be sure to consider potential dangers that must be avoided.
2. State the problems for the home if parents fail to avoid these concepts.
 - A. Partiality (Gen. 25:28; 37:3)
 - B. Inconsistency (in self and in relating to child) (Ezek. 33:31-32)
 - C. Revenge/Injustice (Col. 3:21)

Applications

Children learn faith from our example, whether good or bad (Ezek 16:44; 1 Kings 3:14). Discuss how children learn about marriage and parenthood from the example of the parents (Matt 6:33; Col. 3:1-2).



Following God's Blueprint

Foundation Principles

"Train up a child in the way he should go, Even when he is old he will not depart from it." (Proverbs 22:6)

1. Relate the meaning of the following from Ephesians 6:4.
 - A. "bring them up"
 - B. "discipline" of the Lord
 - C. "instruction" of the Lord
2. Read Hebrews 12:5-11 and answer the following.
 - A. Who is primarily responsible for discipline and ensuring a child behaves?
 - B. What motivates discipline?
 - C. What good is discipline that does not seem sorrowful to the child?
 - D. How do children learn to respect parents (Heb. 12:9; Col. 3:21; Eph. 6:4)?
3. What type of discipline should parents use? (Prov. 29:15, 17; 19:18; 22:15; Prov. 23:13-14; 13:24; 17:10; 20:30)
4. What are the rewards of training up a child in the way they should go (Prov. 29:17; 23:24-25; Heb. 12:11)?

Think About This

"It is important to understand that adolescence is a condensation or composite of all the training and behavior that has gone before. Any unsettled matter in the first twelve years is likely to fester and erupt during adolescence." (James C. Dobson, *Dare to Discipline*, p.33)

1. How early should discipline and training begin?
2. What real issues exist when a young child will not pick up their toys?
3. How will these same issues manifest in adolescence?

Applications

How do children learn responsibility (Lam. 3:27)?

Every parent tries to pass wisdom to their children. How should parents approach "teaching moments" (Deut. 6:6-7)?

How do children learn to follow Christ's example (Gen. 18:19; 2 Tim. 1:5; 3:15)?



Learning To Love

Foundation Principles

“For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome” (1 John 5:3).

1. Discuss how parents teach a love of God to their children. Specifically, how to demonstrate His commandments are not burdensome.
2. Explain how each member of the house is to learn and demonstrate love.
 - A. Father (Eph. 5:25, 28, 33; Ps. 103:13)
 - B. Mother (Titus 2:4)
 - C. Children (John 14:15; Eph. 6:1-2)
3. What attitudes about love should we ensure exist in our hearts and homes?
 - A. 1 Corinthians 14:1
 - B. 1 Corinthians 16:14
 - C. Romans 12:9
 - D. 1 John 3:18
 - E. Ephesians 5:2
4. What is significant about love being listed as a fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22)?

Think About This

1. How do parents teach siblings to love one another? (What hinders? What helps?)
2. “We should make it clear to our children that the merciful God of love whom we serve is also a God of justice” (*The New Dare to Discipline*, p. 228). Understanding the connection between love and discipline (discussed in lesson 8 from Hebrews 12), describe how to convey this to children of various ages.

Applications

Discuss how each attribute of love in 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 should exist in all the relationships in the home. Try to provide some examples.



Teaching Teens

Foundation Principles

Parental Attitudes

1. How do parents learn to judge with a righteous judgment (John 7:24)?
2. Discuss how and why parents should not lose control in front of their children (1 Tim. 3:4).
3. How do parents serve as a peacemaker with teens (Matt. 5:9; Eph. 4:26)?

Common Things Parents Must Teach Teens

For each of the following relate how to teach God's will.

4. Self-Control (1 Cor 9:25; 10:13; Gal. 5:23; 2 Pet. 1:6; 2 Tim. 1:7; Titus 2:12)
5. Setting priorities (Matt. 6:33; Eccl. 12:1; 2 Tim. 2:22)
6. Choosing good companions (1 Cor 15:33; Prov. 13:20)
7. Serving Others (Matt. 22:39; Phil. 2:4; Gal. 5:14-16)
8. Being an example (1 Tim. 4:12)
9. Being "good," not sinning (2 Pet. 3:14; James 1:27)
10. Change your mind/attitude (Romans 12:1-2)
11. Stop Lying (Prov. 6:16-19; John 8:44; Rev. 21:8)
12. There will be consequences (Gal 6:7-8; Is 59:2)

Think About This

1. At what age does teaching teens begin?
2. Especially with teens, should you be your child's parent or buddy? Why?
3. What spiritual activities should you be teaching your teen?
4. What spiritual activities should you be certain your teen is involved in?

Applications

What is the value of spending time with your child (at any age)? Include value to parent and value to child.

If God's rules are the rules of the house, how does this help the parent relate to the child?

Discuss how to teach your teen the need to obey the gospel. Include in your thoughts a teen that is hesitant or uncertain.



Downsizing

Foundation Principles

Children play a large part in our lives and when they leave home there is often a void that some struggle to fill. Some find a need to establish a new focus for their life. Some marriages struggle during this time. While Scripture does not directly speak on this topic, some passages are helpful.

1. What should be our focus in life? Children?

- A. Phil. 3:12-14
- B. Psalm 92:12-15

2. Nurture Companionship.

- A. How will applying the principles of 1 Peter 3:8-12 help to renew a marriage relationship?
- B. Why is the spiritual companionship of marriage so important?
(Ecclesiastes 4:9-10; Proverbs 27:17)
- C. What principle from Ecclesiastes 4:12 can be helpful during this time of life? (See also Proverbs 18:24)

3. What new opportunities to do good should be explored?

- A. Titus 2:2-5
- B. Titus 3:14
- C. John 15:1-17; Jeremiah 17:7-8

4. To whom are we an example?

- A. Matthew 5:13-16
- B. 1 Peter 2:11-12

Think About This

1. Discuss how a spiritual mindset through child-rearing will enable us to avoid the so-called “empty nest syndrome.”
2. How will a life of godliness (being a good example) help a parent become a teacher and counselor to those who are younger? How might this help in personal spiritual growth?

Applications

List three spiritual habits that a married couple can profitably establish (or renew) after the children leave home.

- A.
- B.
- C.

What strengthens a marriage? What causes the relationship to grow?



The Role Of Grandparents

Foundation Principles

1. What God-given responsibilities do grandparents have toward grandchildren?
 - A. Deuteronomy 4:9; 6:6-7
 - B. Psalm 145:4
 - C. Proverbs 13:22
2. What lessons can be learned from the examples of Jacob and Lois about what to teach grandchildren?
 - A. Genesis 48:15-17, 4
 - B. 2 Timothy 1:5
3. List a few examples of how grandparents teach grandchildren in light of Job 12:12 which says, "Wisdom is with aged men, With long life is understanding."
4. How do grandchildren help grandparents (Ruth 4:15; Prov. 17:6)?

Think About This

1. Discuss the benefit and God-intended role of older Christians in the church.
2. How are grandparents to be a role model?
3. Why are so many people raising their grandchildren?

Applications

Discuss the responsibility of the grandparent when the parents are not raising the grandchildren in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Include in your thoughts the difficulties for the grandparent in maintaining a good relationship with the parent.