
PART FIVE

THE CHRISTIAN GIRL AND COURTSHIP

To girls of a Bible College, many unmarried, a word of caution about the marriage you expect to make someday and I hope you all do, for it is the normal, happiest life.

WHY MARRY?

"Life is the most important thing in the world.

Love is the most important thing in life.

Marriage is the most important thing in love.

Do not fall in love, rise to it."

The Apostle Paul gave his approval of marriage in these scriptures:

Heb. 13:4 marriage is to be had in honor by all.

I Tim. 4:3 men are not to be forbidden to marry.

I Cor. 9:5 Paul himself had a right to marry.

There are three main reasons for marriage to a person one loves: (1) to establish a home, (2) to keep that home, (3) to rear a family. The younger widows were admonished by Paul to remarry and occupy themselves with the home so that they might not become a reproach.

The officers (elders and deacons) in the early church were commanded to be married, for the rearing of children, acceptable to the Lord, makes men better qualified to care for the church, the household of God. 1 Tim. 3:4-5.

Marriage is the most sacred relationship in the world. Marriage for money is loveless and unhappy. No amount of money can buy love, real love; a happy marriage and love are inseparable. Love is the foundation of a home, the one thing man has left from Eden, the one sacred relationship man took with him, for he no longer could walk with God.

I Tim. 5:14 stated very plainly that God definitely intends for woman to work at home. In our day that statement is set aside for no real reason at all, to the detriment of wife, husband, and children. There are reasons that make it necessary for a wife and mother to work some times. I mean when the father is ill, in case of accidents, in time of a death, or when abnormal debts are incurred by any of those incidents. Then a temporary job for mother may be imperative. However, too often the temptation is too great, and she continues to work after the need is met.

WHOM SHALL YOU MARRY?

One definite, positive age-long prohibition by God, for man's own good was that His people should not marry out of the faith. In such a close relationship there was danger of God's people going into idolatry (as in the Old Testament), or away from Christ into the world (as in the New Testament).

LOOK AT THESE ILLUSTRATIONS OF MIXED MARRIAGES:

- Gen. 6:1-3 Cause of sinfulness before the flood and brought the flood.
 1 Kings 11:1-4 Solomon's unbelieving wives brought his downfall.
 1 Cor. 7:39 Mixed marriage forbidden for Christian widows.

The Holy Men of old were very particular about choosing marriage partners for their children. Read:

- Gen. 24:3-6 Abraham gives careful instructions concerning Isaac's wife.
 27:46 Rebecca and Isaac were concerned
 28:1-5 for the marriage of Jacob
 Ex. 34:14-16 God told Moses the result of mixed marriages.
 Num. 25 We find God commanded Israelites to be slain for marrying Midianites
 Josh. 23:11-13 Joshua repeated the warning given by Moses.
 Kings 16:31 Ahab's marriage to Jezebel caused him to be the worst king of all kings.

In the New Testament the warnings are the same. 2 Cor. 6:14, 17. Do you think God will change his laws for you? Think well before you so incur God's displeasure. Let marriage be according to God's will and for life. Remember, "What God hath joined together let not man put asunder." Do not marry a man who cannot or will not support you for it is easier to support yourself than a "mouse that wears clothes and wants a ham and egg breakfast." (Mr. Mankamayer.)

WHEN SHALL YOU MARRY?

Do not marry until you are sure you are ready to exclude all others. As a rule hasty marriages are risky. There are few exceptions. Take time to know the man you marry. Many fine, polite appearing, clean, considerate, apparently pleasant young men are a great disappointment when you know them. Time is the only way to bring out the whole character. We can have happy homes when pure hearts come to the altar, unstained, fully knowing each other, and loving each other above all else.

Hasty marriages are a result of rush courtships, aggravated by petting and by being too much together alone. "Marry in haste, repent at leisure" is a wise old adage. There are a few exceptions. Love at first sight is a rarity, it is risky, it is not recommended, for it often proves to be only a passing infatuation leaving two disillusioned, brokenhearted people in a divorce court.

PLAN FOR CHILDREN IN YOUR HOME

It is a poor home indeed without children, no matter how luxurious. Have a definite understanding with the one whom you marry that you desire to have children. Misunderstandings in this bring heartaches. Children are another reason for a careful choice of a companion. Your life's partner and his people plus your own life and your people equal your children. You may think this unnecessary to you but don't be too sure. It is not unusual for Christian girls to lose their heads in marrying. You accept God's age old rules for His people. 'Be warned, be obedient, be happy'. Marry in the Lord!¹

¹ Dr. Jerry Rushford of *Pepperdine University* terms those who marry unbelievers as "spiritual singles."

PLAN TO LIVE BY YOURSELVES

Plan to live by yourselves, not with the parents of either side. This plan has been recommended since the time of Abraham. Gen. 2:24; 12:1. After marriage, accept parents' counsel and advice but not, dictation. Christian parents will never try to interfere nor dictate. They will gladly share their best judgment when it is asked. My father once said, "I will be glad to help with any problems you two may face, but if there are any differences between you two, you must settle that yourselves."