

10 BIBLICAL REASONS FOR MARRIAGE

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It amazes me how often the answer is “*love*” when I ask someone, why does one marry another?

Scripturally speaking, love is *NOT* the reason why a couple marries. The confusion probably comes from God commanding husbands to love their wives (Ephesians 5). But love is a commandment and something that a person purposely does. I am sure feelings are connected, but to LOVE is something we are *COMMANDED* to do. Jesus said to love your enemy (Matthew) – does that mean you should marry your enemy? (I expect no doubt some feel they have done just that.) Jesus said to love one another, and the law says to love thy neighbour – does that mean we should marry them? Not at all. A couple getting married should love one another – that will definitely help in the relationship, but regardless, each is commanded to love his or her spouse.

So then, why marry? We know God instituted marriage and therefore God-ordained (Genesis 2). We know this joining of man and woman is done of God, and what God hath joined let no man put asunder (Matthew 19). We know the man and woman become one flesh and I believe even one spirit (Genesis 2 and Malachi 2:15). IN contrast, we know so-called “civil unions” are contrary to God and his will, and a way of rebellious mankind to circumvent the laws of God. We know God made “Adam and Eve,” not “Adam and Steve” – although the world makes no distinction.

But the question should be asked before marriage: Why should I marry? And even more specifically: Why should I marry that person?

This paper will answer both questions.

First, let us consider the ten reasons why God created marriage or why people were married. (A good reading of Malachi 2:14-15 shows three of the main elements in marriage: Companionship, Covenant, and Children. One should have good understanding of these things before undertaking marriage.)

1. **Partnership** or Companionship – Genesis 2:18 – it was not good that the man should be alone, so God made an help for him.
2. **Protection** – since the wife is the “weaker vessel” (men being “weak”) and was first deceived (I Timothy 2:14), and likely to be led as a “silly woman”; God has provided the man to be the more sensible of the two. He is to lead and protect his wife from false doctrines or self destructive actions. The wife we know is more emotional and more in touch with feelings, but this can lead to hurt if not properly kept in check by a husband's more rational mind. He washes her by his words (Ephesians 5). Man also benefits in this relationship as the woman “completes” him and develops in him the finer things. In a more simple manner, the man is to protect his wife from physical harm also.
3. **Providence** – I Timothy 5:8 – If any provide not for his own house he is worse than an infidel. God designed marriage so a man goes and provide for the needs of his house, while the wife – the keeper at home – provides a place of love and comfort. This is also pictured by the relationship of the Saviour and the church in Ephesians 5 and Philippians 4).
4. **Procreation** – Genesis 1:28 – Be fruitful and multiply. Raise a godly seed according to Malachi 2. Raise up children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord (Ephesians 6). I am not perfectly clear whether one should *be* fruitful, *then* multiply; or if one is fruitful *as he* multiplies. I expect both apply. God intends for children to have married parents and a complete household.

5. **Purity** – I Corinthians 7:2, etc. – to avoid fornication let a man marry. It is better to marry than to burn. God knows man's desires as he created them in him. God also created a means by which these desires can be fulfilled in a godly and holy manner. We men have confessed to this, but I am still waiting to hear from the other side.
6. **Pleasure** – Hebrews 13:4 – the marriage bed is undefiled. God has given us marriage whereby we can enjoy certain physical relations without guilt and according to his plan. God also says that he will judge those whose partake of this fruit without marriage.
7. **Performance** – Ecclesiastes 4:9, 2 Corinthians 6:14 – two are better than one and have a better reward for their labour. God gave Adam an "help." Two likeminded persons working together (yoked) will accomplish much more in life than a single person. Even a Bishop has to be the husband of one wife. And, we all have heard the saying, behind every successful man is a successful woman....
8. **Preference of the Parents** – Isaac, Jacob, and others had their marriages arranged by parents. In fact, even Samson had his parents work out his marriage, although it ended in disaster. In many places marriages are arranged (which I prefer personally). And we all know about those "*shotgun weddings*" that have occurred from time to time.
9. **Provided by the Law** – according to Moses a brother was to raise up seed to his brother's wife if he died without children. We see this in a question offered to the Saviour by the Sadducees, in order to entrap him – "they all had her, in the resurrection, whose wife is she?" We see this carried out in a beautiful form in the Book of Ruth as Boaz becomes the "kinsman redeemer" and marries her. Other cases in the law provided for marriage, as when a man was caught with a maid, etc.
10. **Powers Ordained** – Biblically speaking, there are time when the *powers that be* simply commanded marriage. We see this clearly in the Book of Ester. She was brought to king per his command (as were others). I expect Solomon had a few weddings just because he said so, considering the fact he had 700 wives and 300 concubines. Some he decided to marry and some he did not. David took a few wives of his own, as did a lot of kings. And, even God commanded a marriage when he told Hosea to marry Gomer.

Above we list good things to consider as reasons for marriage, but a more *practical question* is why a man should marry a particular woman, or vice-versa. Why should I marry *that* person? Again, I say, "**love**" is not the reason. Because she is "real pretty" is not a good reason. Because "he is rich," is better than most reasons, but not always the right reason. *Love is blind, but marriage is a real eye-opener!*

Some believers would say, that in order to not be unequally yoked, as long as he or she is saved, then one is OK to marry that person. I disagree. There are all sorts of believers, religions, backgrounds, mental and physical attributes, etc., that come into play.

As I thought really hard on the right answer as to why a certain person should marry another certain person, I have arrived at the best answer: "***She (or he) is one that God provided, so that together we can better serve the Lord and fulfill his will.***"

That is not a real spectacular revelation, I am sure. And, to be perfectly candid, I think the answer, "*cuz she is real purty*" is the major motivation for most men marrying. However, the right answer above takes into consideration all the reasons why God created marriage, and provokes the person to consider what the will of God is for his or her life.

As a personal word of testimony, shortly before I was married, I was attracted to and had a nice relationship with a lovely woman ("cuz she was real purty") that I hoped would lead to marriage. In short order I

informed her that God called me to preach and pastor, and what her thoughts were on that. She stated she did not want to ever be a preacher's wife. That pretty much ended the relationship. I did ask my wife the same question before we were married and she answered rightly. How many men and women are stifled in their service to God and miss the mark of the high calling because of marrying foolishly. God hates divorce (Malachi 2). Those who are "stuck" have to remain so. Possibly through prayer and good works the will of God can be somewhat fulfilled by those "unequally yoked." But for our children's sakes, let us make clear to them how important it is to marry the right one.

In our family, we have trained our children to "let daddy decide" who marries whom. I can arrange courtship and I can end it before it even gets started. We do not accept dating as a way to meet and know people (which leads to a trail of broken hearts). We mind our business until God provides. Broken hearts get harder over time, and find it harder to love the next time (and there should be no "next time"). My hope is that my children's hearts will never know that heartbreak, but that each would marry rightly and honestly and purely give all their love to the spouse till death do they part.

What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.
(Matthew 19:6)

NSD 11/2/09