FIELD GUIDE

THE MENTORING PROJECT

WHAT IS A SPOUSE? GODLY FOUNDATIONS FOR A LASTING MARRIAGE



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INTRODUCTION

Before we ask what the Bible says about a godly spouse, we first need to slow down and ask a more basic—but often overlooked—question: what is a spouse? In everyday language, the word is used freely, yet rarely defined. People speak about marriage, dating, and commitment, but few pause to reflect on *what is a spouse* according to God's design rather than cultural expectations.

So, what do you mean by spouse when you think about marriage? For many, a spouse is simply someone you love, feel compatible with, or want to build a life alongside. While those elements matter, Scripture invites us to see something deeper. Biblically, understanding *what is a spouse* begins with recognizing that marriage is not merely a personal arrangement, but a spiritual union shaped by God's intention.

This leads many to wonder, does God choose your spouse, or is marriage entirely left to human choice? The Bible does not present marriage as random, nor does it treat it as purely emotional. Instead, it shows that God cares deeply about who we unite our lives with. When we truly understand what is a spouse, we begin to see marriage as a decision that affects our faith, direction, and calling—not just our feelings.

A godly spouse is not simply someone who fits our preferences, but someone who fits within God's purpose for marriage. That's why asking *what is a spouse* matters so much. If we define a spouse only by attraction or compatibility, we risk missing the spiritual weight of the covenant. But when we define what is a spouse through a biblical lens, marriage becomes less about convenience and more about obedience, growth, and shared faith.

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Throughout Scripture, marriage is treated with seriousness because a spouse is not meant to walk beside you temporarily, but to journey with you in life and faith. Understanding *what is a spouse* helps us ask better questions before committing our hearts and futures. It shifts our focus from "Who makes me happy?" to "Who helps me honor God?"—a distinction that lies at the heart of seeking a godly spouse.

This guide is designed to explore that question carefully and prayerfully. Rather than following cultural definitions, we will return to Scripture to understand what is a spouse, what God intends marriage to reflect, and how a godly spouse fits into His greater plan. Only when we understand what is a spouse can we begin to discern wisely, love faithfully, and build a marriage that honors God.

1

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY ABOUT A GODLY SPOUSE?

Key Scripture: 2 Corinthians 6:14

"Do not be yoked together with unbelievers..."

Choosing a life partner is one of the most life-changing decisions anyone can make. Before asking *who* we want to marry, it's important to ask a deeper question: what is a spouse according to the Bible? In Scripture, a spouse is not merely a romantic partner but someone called to walk alongside you in faith, purpose, and obedience to God.

Nowadays, relationships are often formed based on feelings, compatibility, and attraction. But what is a spouse from a biblical perspective goes far beyond emotions. God has a deeper purpose for marriage. A godly marriage is not simply finding the person you love, but choosing someone who obeys God, lives by faith, supports you, and helps you grow spiritually. This understanding is reinforced throughout Bible verses about spouse, marriage, and covenant.

2 Corinthians 6:14 warns, *"Do not be yoked together with unbelievers."* While this verse applies to various relationships, it strongly highlights the importance of shared faith in marriage. When we ask what is a spouse, Scripture shows us that a spouse is someone equally committed to God. Marriage works best when two people share the same faith and dedication to the Lord. Relationships grounded in God are strengthened by something far more powerful than emotions—a spiritual bond designed by Him.

So, what does a godly spouse look like in daily life? What do wives and husbands Bible verses teach us about commitment, love, and responsibility? The Bible provides clear guidance on the biblical roles of husband and wife, offering wisdom on how marriage is meant to function in harmony with God's design. Understanding what the Bible says about a husband and a wife helps us see marriage not as a competition, but as a partnership built on love and service.

A Godly Spouse Puts Christ First

One of the clearest answers to *what is a spouse* is found in priorities. A godly spouse's most important trait is loving God with all their heart—everything else flows from that. Their faith is not merely spoken; it is practiced daily. They seek God's guidance through prayer and Scripture and desire to live in obedience to Him.

Matthew 6:33 reminds us, *"But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well."* A spouse who puts Christ first naturally brings this focus into marriage. This principle reflects the biblical role of husband and wife in marriage, where both partners rely on God rather than expecting each other to fill every need.

A relationship rooted in Christ allows both husband and wife to face challenges with patience and wisdom. Many Bible verses about spouse relationships show that faith is what sustains marriage through trials.

A Godly Spouse Shows Love Like Christ

People often define love as a feeling, but the Bible defines love as action. A godly spouse loves the way Christ loves—with patience, kindness, and selflessness. These qualities are central to the characteristics of a good husband according to the Bible and are equally important for wives.

1 Corinthians 13:4–7 offers one of the most well-known wives and husbands Bible verses, describing love that is patient, kind, humble, forgiving, and enduring. A godly spouse may not be perfect, but they strive to reflect Christ's character through their actions—especially during difficult seasons.

A Godly Spouse Pursues Purity

In a culture where casual relationships are common, Scripture calls marriage to a higher standard. Understanding what is a spouse biblically also means understanding purity—both physical and emotional.

1 Thessalonians 4:3–4 teaches that God desires holiness and self-control. Purity is not limited to avoiding sexual sin; it includes honoring boundaries and protecting intimacy. Many Bible verses on intimacy with your spouse show that intimacy is a sacred gift meant to strengthen marriage, not harm it.

A godly spouse respects their partner, values faithfulness, and seeks to protect the relationship from anything that could weaken trust or spiritual unity. This aligns with the biblical roles of husband and wife, where love and purity work together to honor God.

A Godly Spouse is Humble and Teachable

To truly understand what is a spouse in God's design, humility must come first. A healthy marriage requires humility because no one enters marriage fully formed or flawless. Marriage is two people learning, growing, and recognizing their mistakes together.

Proverbs 15:33 states, *"Wisdom's instruction is to fear the Lord, and humility comes before honor."* A godly spouse does not see themselves as above correction but seeks God's wisdom and guidance. This humility is essential when couples are learning how to fall back in love with your spouse, especially during seasons of misunderstanding or emotional distance.

Humility strengthens relationships, while pride destroys them. A spouse who lives righteously understands that loving your spouse is not about winning arguments or proving a point. It is about serving, sacrificing, and putting the relationship above personal ego. This mindset reflects how to love your spouse like Jesus, who chose humility even when He was wronged.

A Godly Spouse Encourages Spiritual Growth

A holy marriage includes joy, support, and shared faith. When we ask what is a spouse, Scripture shows us that a spouse is someone who walks beside you spiritually, not just emotionally.

Hebrews 10:24 says, *"And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds."* A godly spouse supports your prayer life, encourages your faith, and joins you in seeking God. Praying together becomes natural, and a heartfelt prayer for a spouse becomes part of daily life—not only before marriage, but throughout it.

Both partners help one another fulfill God's purpose in a faith-filled marriage. They attend church, read Scripture, and grow spiritually together. This is often how God leads you to your spouse and continues to guide your marriage—through shared devotion and mutual surrender to Him.

A Godly Spouse is Kind and Gentle

How someone responds during conflict reveals their true character. A godly spouse chooses kindness even when hurt or misunderstood. Ephesians 4:2 reminds us, *"Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love."*

Gentleness becomes especially important when marriage feels strained and couples are searching for how to fall back in love with your spouse. Instead of reacting with anger, a godly spouse seeks resolution. Instead of holding onto past pain, they choose forgiveness. This is part of loving your spouse in a way that heals rather than harms.

Kindness allows space for grace. It reflects how to love your spouse like Jesus, responding with compassion instead of resentment.

A Godly Spouse is Trustworthy and Faithful

Trust is the foundation of marriage. Without it, a relationship cannot stand. A godly spouse practices honesty, loyalty, and consistency. Proverbs 12:22 says, *"The Lord detests lying lips, but he delights in trustworthy people."*

Scripture is clear about what God says about lying to your spouse—deception breaks trust and damages unity. Faithfulness goes beyond physical loyalty; it includes emotional honesty, dependability, and integrity. This is how to stay faithful to your spouse, even when temptations or challenges arise.

Some may wonder, *will God reveal a cheating spouse?* While Scripture does not promise exposure in every situation, it affirms that truth matters deeply to God. He calls spouses to walk in light, not secrecy, and to protect the covenant they entered before Him.

Understanding God's Purpose for Marriage

Marriage is not only about companionship; it is a covenant established by God. To understand what is a spouse, we must see marriage as sacred, not transactional. Unlike modern views shaped by personal preference, biblical marriage reflects God's truth, faithfulness, and commitment.

When two people marry, they step into a divine calling. God's purpose for marriage includes holiness, transformation, and shared spiritual growth—not just happiness. This covenant mindset shapes how to love your spouse like Jesus, choosing faithfulness even when love feels costly.

Marriage as a Covenant, Not Just a Commitment

Many view marriage as a contract, but Scripture defines it as a covenant. Ephesians 5:31–32 explains that marriage mirrors Christ's relationship with the church.

A covenant declares, *"I remain faithful regardless of circumstance."* This is the heart of how to stay faithful to your spouse—not because it's easy, but because God is faithful to us.

Marriage Reflects Christ's Love for the Church

Ephesians 5:25 says, "Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her." This verse shows that marriage is sacrificial, patient, and deeply rooted in love.

Here we see both loving your spouse and how to love your spouse like Jesus modeled clearly—through selflessness, service, and enduring commitment.

The Responsibilities of a Spouse in a Marriage

To fully grasp what is a spouse, we must understand the God-given roles within marriage. These roles are complementary, not competitive.

The Husband's Role

The Bible calls husbands to lead with love, humility, and responsibility. Leadership does not mean domination but Christlike service. This reflects how to stay faithful to your spouse through protection, provision, and spiritual guidance.

The Wife's Role

Scripture highlights the characteristics of a good wife according to the Bible—wisdom, trustworthiness, strength, and grace. Proverbs 31 portrays a woman who builds her home with faith and diligence, standing beside her husband as an equal partner in God's calling.

Marriage is About Unity

Genesis 2:24 describes marriage as two becoming one flesh. Marriage is the unity of hearts, minds, and faith. This unity requires humility, forgiveness, and daily choice—especially when emotions fluctuate.

A godly marriage is not about perfection but dependence on God. This understanding helps couples rediscover how to fall back in love with your spouse by anchoring love in faith rather than feelings alone.

Marriage is a Journey Full of Growth

A lot of people think that after they find the right person, everything will make sense and fall together. However, marriage is less about finding someone perfect and more about growing together over time.

As stated In Ecclesiastes 4:9-10, "*Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor: If either of them falls down, one can help the other up.*"

A marital relationship should involve great love and deep forgiveness. In a Christian marriage, we are called to refine and learn through our partners and help them become better people while we are on the journey

ourselves. Helping each deeply rooted person become more holy instead of just making them happy.

Marriage teaches grace, humility, and patience. Though challenging, with Christ's help, couples grow stronger together over time. God wants us to stretch and figure out what He intended for us with the right focus.

Discussion: What Aspects Make A Godly Spouse?

Marriage is one of your life's biggest decisions, and so is choosing a spouse. A godly spouse is not simply someone who brings joy, but they're someone who will help you grow in Christ.

What are the attributes to seek in a spouse?

- **Faith** – Do they love and follow God? Is their relationship with Christ their foundation?
- **Character** - Is the person honest, kind, trustworthy, and respectful towards other people?
- **Humility** – Are they ready to accept when they are wrong and seek God's help?
- **Commitment** – Are they dedicated to self-improvement, learning, and building a healthy, long-lasting marriage?
- **Patience and Forgiveness** – Can they handle conflicts with grace and choose love over pride?

"Before focusing on finding the right partner, ask yourself: Am I becoming the right person? Many people seek a godly spouse but overlook their own spiritual and personal growth. A strong relationship begins with a strong individual who is prepared for a Christ-centered partnership."

Strategic planning for a lasting marriage is essential rather than relying on chances. This cannot come without a solid structure of faith, character, and commitment. All these aspects should be met before meeting the partner.

Marriage is more than finding someone to love. It's about finding someone to devote your life to while serving God. When God is placed at the center of the relationship, your love grows with time.

2

PREPARING YOURSELF FOR A GODLY RELATIONSHIP

You must first ask yourself the correct questions before focusing on someone else: Am I becoming the right person? It is common for one to start selecting a spouse and forget to focus on themselves. Hence, the question is so that they can answer whether they are prepared for a God-honoring relationship.

Strategic planning for a lasting marriage is essential rather than relying on chances. This cannot come without a solid structure of faith, character, and commitment. These qualities including faith, character, and commitment, should be cultivated before seeking a life partner.

A Relationship with God Comes First

One's relationship with God has to be immediately prioritized if one expects to have a healthy Godly relationship. The Bible teaches that our identity, purpose, and fulfillment are found in Christ, not in a spouse or any other person.

Expecting a spouse to fulfill all your emotional and spiritual needs is unrealistic and can lead to disappointment. Being comfortable with oneself is a gift granted by God, who enables love. Without His grace, no individual will be able to take up the role.

Matthew 6:33 reminds us, *"But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well."* If we put God first, He will provide everything we need—including the right relationship at the right time.

A strong marriage isn't about two incomplete people trying to fill each other's voids, but it's about two individuals who find their wholeness in Christ and come together to honor Him.

Character Matters More Than Compatibility

When people think about relationships, they often focus on compatibility—having shared interests, similar personalities, or the same life goals. But the Bible teaches that character is far more important than compatibility.

Proverbs 31:10 says, *"A wife of noble character who can find? She is worth far more than rubies."* This verse highlights the true value of character. It is not about how charming or attractive someone is—it is about the integrity and faith they carry in their heart.

Instead of just asking, 'What kind of person do I want to marry?' a better question is, 'What kind of person am I becoming?'

- Are you patient and kind?
- Do you practice humility and forgiveness?
- Are you honest and trustworthy?
- Do you seek to serve others rather than just expecting to be served?

Your character shapes your relationships. If you want a strong, godly marriage, you must first develop a strong, godly heart.

Emotional and Spiritual Maturity

Many people desire marriage, but not everyone is ready for the responsibility that comes with it. A healthy relationship requires emotional and spiritual maturity. It's not just about love—it's about being able to handle challenges, disagreements, and making sacrifices with grace.

Marriage will bring out the best and worst in you. It will reveal your strengths, but it will also expose your weaknesses. That's why it is important to work on your personal growth before entering into a relationship.

- Learn to control your emotions rather than letting emotions control you.
- Practice handling conflict with wisdom rather than reacting out of frustration.
- Cultivate patience because marriage will require a lot of it.
- Develop a strong prayer life because a marriage centered on prayer is a marriage that lasts.

If you struggle with insecurity, fear, or past wounds, take time to heal before stepping into a relationship. It is unfair to expect another person to fix what only God can heal.

Understanding Your Purpose Before Marriage

A godly marriage is not just about companionship—it is about purpose. Your spouse should not **be** your purpose; rather, they should complement the purpose God has already placed in your life.

Paul reminds us in 1 Corinthians 7:32-34 that singleness is a season where we can focus completely on serving God. Rather than seeing singleness as something to "end" as soon as possible, it should be seen as a time to grow, to serve, and to prepare.

Before looking for a spouse, ask yourself:

- Am I walking in my God-given purpose?
- Am I living a life that honors God, whether single or in a relationship?
- Do I have a clear sense of what I want my future to look like?

Marriage is not about finding someone to make life exciting—it is about two people coming together to serve God better as a team than they could individually, and even find purpose in having children to enjoy.

Setting Godly Standards in Relationships

One of the biggest mistakes people make in relationships is lowering their standards out of fear—fear of being alone, fear of missing out, or fear that no one else will come along.

But settling for less than God's best will always lead to heartache. It is better to wait for the right person than to rush into a relationship that pulls you away from your faith.

2 Corinthians 6:14 warns, *"Do not be yoked together with unbelievers."* This is not about rejecting people who don't share your faith but rather about protecting your heart and your future.

A godly relationship should encourage you to grow spiritually, not pull you away from God. If you have to compromise your faith, your values, or your relationship with God to be with someone, it is not a relationship aligned with His will for you."

Waiting on God's Timing

Many people feel pressured to find a relationship quickly, especially when they see others getting married. But rushing into a relationship out of impatience can lead to pain and regret.

God's timing is always perfect. His plan is better than anything we could create for ourselves. Psalm 27:14 says, *"Wait for the Lord; be strong and take heart and wait for the Lord."*

Waiting on God does not mean sitting around doing nothing. It means actively growing, serving, and becoming the person God has called you to be. It means trusting that God is preparing both you and your future spouse for the right time.

Instead of worrying about when you'll meet the right person, focus on becoming the right person.

Growing in Faith, Character, and Emotional Maturity

A strong, godly relationship isn't built on just love and attraction. It's built on faith, character, and emotional maturity. Before stepping into a relationship, it's important to grow in these areas—not just for the sake of finding a spouse, but because they shape who you are as a follower of Christ.

Faith: Building Your Life on God First

A godly relationship starts with a strong relationship with God. If your faith is weak, no relationship will ever feel fully secure. That's because people can disappoint you, but God never will.

Your faith should be the foundation of your life, not something you add in later. If you are fully dependent on a person to bring you joy, peace, and

security, then you are setting yourself up for disappointment. No person can give you what only God can.

Matthew 7:24-25 reminds us, *"Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, yet it did not fall because it had its foundation on the rock."*

A strong relationship with God is like building your house on a rock. When life brings struggles, your faith will keep you steady. But if your faith is weak, you'll always be shaken by what happens around you.

Growing in faith doesn't mean you have to be perfect. It means daily seeking God, reading His Word, and trusting Him with your future. Before entering a relationship, ask yourself:

- Is my faith strong enough to handle challenges?
- Am I making God my priority, or am I looking for someone else to fill that role?
- Do I trust God's timing, or am I rushing into something out of fear?

Character: Becoming the Right Person

Many people focus on finding the right person, but they don't think about becoming the right person. A godly relationship is built on strong character—integrity, kindness, humility, and patience.

Proverbs 10:9 says, *"Whoever walks in integrity walks securely, but whoever takes crooked paths will be found out."* Your character shapes how you handle relationships. If you struggle with honesty, trust, or patience now, those struggles won't disappear in a relationship. They will only become more obvious.

Instead of asking, *"What kind of person do I want to be with?"* ask, *"What kind of person am I becoming?"*

Are you trustworthy? Do you treat others with respect? Are you growing in patience and self-control? The kind of person you are now will shape the kind of relationship you build in the future.

Emotional Maturity: Handling Relationships with Wisdom

Emotional maturity is crucial for a healthy relationship. It means knowing how to handle your emotions, communicate well, and respond to challenges without acting out of fear or anger.

Many relationships fail not because of a lack of love but because of a lack of emotional maturity. If you struggle with jealousy, insecurity, or controlling behavior, a relationship won't fix those things—it will only highlight them.

Here are a few ways to grow in emotional maturity:

- **Learn to manage emotions without reacting impulsively.** Instead of acting out of frustration, take time to pray and seek wisdom before responding.
- **Handle conflict with grace.** Disagreements are normal, but how you respond matters. Do you listen, or do you shut down? Do you seek peace, or do you let anger take over?
- **Take responsibility for your own growth.** If you recognize areas where you need to improve, don't ignore them. Work on them now before bringing them into a relationship.

Developing Godly Relationship Habits

A godly relationship isn't just about attraction—it's about habits and choices. The way you approach relationships now will impact the kind of marriage you build in the future.

Some godly habits to develop now include:

- **Praying for your future spouse.** Even if you don't know who they are yet, ask God to prepare both of you for a strong, Christ-centered relationship.
- **Practicing patience.** Rushing into a relationship out of fear or pressure leads to mistakes. Trust God's timing.
- **Setting healthy boundaries.** Respect, honesty, and self-control are essential in any relationship.
- **Learning to serve others.** A strong relationship isn't about getting what you want—it's about serving and loving one another selflessly.

- Relationships built on faith, character, and emotional maturity are the ones that last. Instead of focusing on *finding* the right person, focus on *becoming* the right person. When you do that, you'll be prepared for the kind of love that honors God.

Discussion: How Can You Develop Godly Relationship Habits?

Think about your relationships—past, present, and future. What areas do you need to grow in? Are there habits you need to change? What steps can you take today to prepare yourself for a relationship that honors God?

Growing in faith, character, and emotional maturity doesn't happen overnight. It's a daily process of trusting God, making wise choices, and becoming the person He has called you to be. Keep growing, keep trusting, and let God guide your steps.

3

DISCERNMENT AND SEEKING GOD'S WILL

Trusting God in relationships is not always easy. When emotions are involved, it's tempting to rely on feelings rather than faith. However, relationships are too important to be built on emotions alone. They require wisdom, patience, and discernment. That's why seeking God's will is essential.

God's Timing Over Our Own

One of the hardest things about waiting for a godly relationship is the uncertainty. You might wonder if you'll ever meet the right person or question whether you should take things into your own hands. But Proverbs 3:5-6 reminds us, *"Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight."*

This means surrendering your desires to God, even when it feels uncomfortable. It means trusting that He knows what's best for you—even when it seems like nothing is happening. God's timing is never rushed or delayed. He is always working, even when we can't see it.

The Danger of Rushing Ahead

When we get impatient, it's easy to compromise. We might lower our standards, ignore red flags, or settle for someone who isn't aligned with God's purpose for us. The world tells us that being in a relationship is what matters most, but a relationship outside of God's will can bring more heartbreak than joy.

Many people in the Bible struggled with waiting on God. Abraham and Sarah, for example, were promised a child, but instead of trusting God's timing, they took matters into their own hands. The result was years of conflict and struggle.

We make the same mistakes when we rush into relationships out of fear or impatience. But God's best is worth waiting for. His plan is always greater than anything we could create on our own.

Seeking Wisdom in Relationships

Discernment means seeking God's guidance before making decisions, especially in relationships. Instead of asking, *"Is this what I want?"* we should be asking, *"Is this what God wants?"*

James 1:5 tells us, *"If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you."*

God doesn't want you to navigate relationships alone. He provides wisdom through His Word, through prayer, and through wise counsel. Seeking guidance from spiritually mature mentors or friends can help bring clarity when emotions make it difficult to see clearly.

Praying for Clarity

Prayer is one of the most powerful ways to seek God's will in relationships. Instead of praying for what *we* want, we should be asking God to align our desires with His.

Some helpful prayers might be:

- Lord, if this relationship is not from You, give me the strength to walk away.
- God, help me trust Your timing instead of rushing ahead.
- Father, guide my heart so that I seek a relationship that honors You above all else.

When we pray for wisdom, God is faithful to provide it. He may answer through His Word, through circumstances, or even by removing certain people from our lives.

Trusting God's Plan

It's easy to believe that if we don't take control, nothing will happen. But God is fully capable of bringing the right person into our lives at the right time. His plan is never late, and His ways are higher than ours.

Isaiah 55:8-9 says, *"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways," declares the Lord. "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts."*

Waiting on God requires faith. It means trusting that He knows what's best for you, even when it feels like nothing is happening. It means believing that His plan is greater than any relationship you could create on your own.

Red Flags vs. Green Flags in Potential Partners

When it comes to relationships, especially those leading to marriage, discernment is key. It's easy to get caught up in emotions and overlook signs that a relationship might not be healthy. That's why it's important to seek God's wisdom and pay attention to both red flags and green flags in a potential partner.

Why Discernment Matters

Dating isn't just about finding someone you enjoy being around—it's about finding someone who will walk with you in faith. Marriage is one of the biggest decisions you will ever make, and choosing the wrong partner can lead to heartache, while choosing wisely can lead to a lifetime of love, growth, and purpose in Christ.

Proverbs 4:23 tells us, *"Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it."* This means being intentional and careful in relationships. It means not just following feelings but seeking God's direction and wisdom in choosing a life partner.

Recognizing Red Flags

Red flags are warning signs that something isn't right in a relationship. They might not seem like a big deal at first, but over time, they can lead to major struggles. Here are some common red flags to watch out for:

1. A Lack of Spiritual Growth

A relationship centered on God should encourage spiritual growth. If your partner shows little interest in growing in their faith or isn't supportive of your walk with Christ, that's a serious concern. 2 Corinthians 6:14 warns us, *"Do not be yoked together with unbelievers."* This doesn't mean you judge them, but it does mean that you should be on the same page spiritually.

2. Controlling or Manipulative Behavior

Love is not about control. If your partner is overly possessive, makes decisions for you, or tries to manipulate you into doing things their way, that's a red flag. Healthy relationships are built on mutual respect and trust, not control.

3. Disrespect or Poor Treatment of Others

How does your partner treat their family, friends, and even strangers? If they are rude, dismissive, or unkind to others, it's only a matter of time before that behavior affects your relationship. True character is revealed in how someone treats people when they think no one is watching.

4. A Pattern of Dishonesty

Trust is foundational in any relationship. If you catch your partner in lies—big or small—that's a red flag. Honesty is a reflection of integrity, and without it, a relationship cannot thrive.

5. Unresolved Anger or Unhealthy Conflict

Every couple argues, but how someone handles conflict speaks volumes. Do they shut down, lash out, or refuse to communicate? Do they blame others for their problems instead of taking responsibility? If so, these are signs that they may not be emotionally mature enough for a healthy relationship**.**

Green Flags

Green flags are signs of a godly, healthy relationship. These are the characteristics that indicate a person is not only a good match but also someone who will encourage your walk with Christ.

1. A Strong Faith and Love for God

A godly partner will love God more than they love you. Their faith will be evident in their words, actions, and priorities. They will encourage you to grow spiritually and build a relationship that is centered on Christ.

2. Consistent Kindness and Respect

How does your partner treat you in everyday situations? Are they patient, kind, and respectful? Do they listen to your thoughts and opinions, even when they disagree? True love is shown in actions, not just words.

3. Emotional Maturity and Accountability

No one is perfect, but a green flag is someone who is willing to grow. A healthy partner takes responsibility for their actions, apologizes when they're wrong, and works through conflicts with maturity.

4. Encourages You to Be Your Best Self

A good relationship doesn't pull you away from your purpose—it helps you grow into who God created you to be. If your partner supports your goals, encourages your faith, and wants the best for you, that's a sign of a godly relationship.

5. Trust and Open Communication

A relationship built on trust will feel safe. You won't have to wonder where you stand, worry about dishonesty, or feel like you need to walk on eggshells. Instead, there will be open, honest communication.

Trusting God in the Process

At the end of the day, no relationship is perfect. But the right relationship will reflect God's love, grace, and truth. That's why prayer and discernment are so important.

James 1:5 reminds us, *"If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to*

you." God wants to lead you to a relationship that honors Him. When you seek His guidance, He will give you clarity and peace.

Discussion: How Do You Seek God's Direction in Dating and Marriage?

Think about your relationships or the qualities you desire in a spouse. Are you prioritizing faith and character over surface-level attractions? Are you seeking wisdom in prayer rather than relying on your own understanding?

A godly relationship isn't about finding perfection—it's about finding someone who will walk with you in faith. And when you trust God with your heart, He will lead you to the right person at the right time.

4

BUILDING A CHRIST-CENTERED MARRIAGE

Marriage is one of the most beautiful relationships God created. But it's also one of the most challenging. It's not just about love and romance—it's about commitment, sacrifice, and choosing to honor God together every single day.

A Christ-centered marriage is different from just a "happy marriage." It's built on more than feelings or personal desires—it's built on faith, selflessness, and a shared commitment to growing in Christ. Ephesians 5:25 reminds us, *"Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her."* This kind of love isn't just about affection—it's about service, patience, and unwavering commitment.

A Marriage That Puts Christ First

When two people get married, they don't just become husband and wife. They become a team, working together to fulfill God's purpose for their lives. But if Christ isn't at the center, the foundation of that marriage can weaken over time.

A marriage centered on God means both spouses are pursuing Him first. It means decisions are made with faith, challenges are faced with prayer, and love is shown with grace. It's not about being perfect—it's about being willing to grow together in faith.

Love That Reflects Christ

The Bible compares marriage to Christ's love for the church. This is the highest standard of love—one that is unconditional, sacrificial, and enduring.

For husbands, this means leading with humility, not dominance. It means loving their wives with the same selflessness that Jesus showed. For wives, it means honoring and supporting their husbands as they walk together in faith. This isn't about control—it's about partnership. A marriage where both spouses serve each other in love is a marriage that reflects God's design.

Communication and Grace

One of the biggest struggles in marriage is communication. Misunderstandings, frustrations, and disagreements are inevitable. But in a Christ-centered marriage, communication isn't just about getting your point across—it's about listening, understanding, and showing grace.

Proverbs 15:1 says, *"A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger."* How we speak to our spouse matters. Words can either heal or harm. Learning to communicate with kindness and patience is essential for a strong marriage.

Praying Together

A couple that prays together builds a marriage on solid ground. Prayer isn't just something you do at church—it's a daily practice that invites God into your relationship.

When couples pray together, they surrender their fears, hopes, and struggles to God. They invite His wisdom into their decisions. They remind each other that no matter what they face, they are not alone—God is in the center, holding them together.

Forgiveness and Patience

No marriage is free from mistakes. There will be arguments, misunderstandings, and moments of frustration. But a Christ-centered marriage chooses forgiveness over bitterness.

Colossians 3:13 reminds us, *"Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you."*

Just as Christ forgives us, we are called to forgive our spouse. Holding onto resentment only weakens a marriage. But choosing to extend grace—even when it's hard—brings healing and growth.

Growing Together Spiritually

A strong marriage doesn't just happen—it requires effort, commitment, and a shared desire to grow in faith. Couples who grow spiritually together strengthen their bond. This can look like:

- Studying the Bible together
- Attending church and worshipping as a couple
- Encouraging each other in faith during difficult times
- Serving others and living out God's love in everyday life

A marriage that grows spiritually is a marriage that lasts.

Choosing Love Every Day

Love isn't just a feeling—it's a choice. Every day, a couple must choose to love each other, even when emotions fade, even when challenges arise.

A Christ-centered marriage is not about waiting for love to stay strong on its own—it's about actively nurturing it through faith, prayer, and selflessness. When both spouses commit to loving each other the way Christ loves, they create a marriage that not only lasts but thrives.

A strong, lasting marriage isn't about perfection—it's about two imperfect people relying on a perfect God. And when He is at the center, love is strengthened, patience grows, and the marriage becomes a beautiful reflection of His grace.

Prioritizing Faith, Love, and Commitment in Marriage

Marriage is more than just a legal bond or a romantic connection—it is a covenant designed by God. It is a lifelong commitment to love, serve, and honor each other in a way that reflects Christ's love for His church. But for a marriage to truly thrive, it must be built on a strong foundation of faith,

love, and commitment. Without these, even the deepest feelings can fade, and challenges can feel overwhelming.

So, how do we prioritize faith, love, and commitment in marriage? How do we ensure that our relationship remains strong and centered on God?

Keeping Christ at the Center

A Christ-centered marriage does not mean a perfect marriage, but it does mean that both husband and wife seek God first in everything they do. When faith is the foundation of the relationship, every challenge, decision, and moment of joy is handled with wisdom, patience, and grace.

Matthew 6:33 reminds us, *"But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well."* When both spouses seek God above all else, everything else in their relationship falls into place.

This means praying together, worshipping together, and turning to Scripture for guidance. It means making time for spiritual growth, not just individually but as a couple. When God is at the center, love is strengthened, and commitment deepens.

Choosing Love Every Day

Love in marriage is not just about emotions—it is a daily decision. Some days, love feels effortless, but other days, it requires patience, grace, and selflessness.

1 Corinthians 13:4-7 describes love in a way that goes beyond feelings. *"Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud."* Love is not about personal gain but about serving and uplifting one another.

Choosing love means showing kindness in small moments—offering a gentle word instead of a harsh one, listening with understanding, and putting your spouse's needs before your own. It means staying faithful to your vows, even when challenges arise.

Commitment Through Every Season

Every marriage goes through different seasons—some filled with joy, others with struggle. The true test of commitment is not in the easy moments but in the difficult ones.

When challenges come—whether financial struggles, misunderstandings, or personal hardships—commitment means standing firm and working through them together. It means choosing not to walk away but to fight for the relationship.

Ecclesiastes 4:9-10 reminds us, *"Two are better than one because they have a good return for their labor: If either of them falls down, one can help the other up."* A godly marriage is built on mutual support. It is about being there for each other, no matter what comes.

Commitment also means guarding the relationship against anything that threatens to weaken it—whether it be distractions, outside influences, or even personal struggles. Prioritizing time together, setting boundaries, and keeping communication open help protect the marriage.

Practicing Forgiveness and Grace

No marriage is free from mistakes. There will be moments of frustration, disappointment, and even hurt. But what sets a strong marriage apart is the ability to forgive and extend grace.

Colossians 3:13 says, *"Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you."*

Forgiveness is not about ignoring problems but about choosing to let go of resentment. Holding onto past mistakes only creates distance, while offering grace brings healing. In a Christ-centered marriage, both spouses understand that just as God forgives them, they must forgive each other.

Honoring God in Marriage

Marriage is not just about two people—it is also about glorifying God through the relationship. A couple that honors God in their marriage is a light to others, showing what it means to love selflessly and serve faithfully.

This can be done by:

- Speaking words of encouragement instead of criticism.
- Choosing humility over pride.
- Praying for each other daily.
- Serving others together as a couple.

Ephesians 5:21 reminds us, *"Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ."* This means that marriage is about mutual love and respect, not control or selfishness.

Discussion: What Steps Can You Take to Honor God in Your Relationship?

Think about ways you can strengthen your marriage by prioritizing faith, love, and commitment. Are there areas where you need to grow spiritually as a couple? How can you make prayer and worship a bigger part of your relationship?

Marriage is a journey, and every day is an opportunity to grow closer—not just to each other, but to God. When a couple commits to loving as Christ loves, their marriage becomes a testimony of His faithfulness.



FINAL THOUGHTS

Choosing a life partner is one of the most significant decisions you will ever make. It's about more than chemistry, shared interests, or even love—it's about building a relationship that honors God and sets the foundation for a strong, lasting marriage. While it's essential to recognize both red and green flags, the bigger picture is about seeking wisdom, trusting God's timing, and committing to a relationship that aligns with His purpose.

It's easy to get caught up in looking for signs—checking off the good and bad traits like a checklist. But relationships aren't a perfect formula. No one is flawless, and every couple will face challenges. The key is not just avoiding red flags or seeking green flags—it's about cultivating a relationship that reflects Christ's love. That means committing to growth, learning from mistakes, and choosing to love every single day.

Discernment isn't about fearfully scrutinizing every flaw in a partner; it's about wisdom. It's about asking yourself, "Is this relationship drawing me closer to God?" "Are we growing together in faith and character?" The healthiest relationships aren't built on perfection but on two people willing to grow in Christ, forgive each other, and commit to walking together through life's ups and downs.

It can be tempting to rush into relationships, especially when emotions run high. But waiting on God's timing and seeking His guidance will always lead to the best outcome. Proverbs 3:5-6 reminds us, "*Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.*" This means surrendering your love life to Him. It means praying, listening, and trusting that God knows what's best for you—even when waiting feels difficult. A relationship built on faith is one that can withstand the storms of life because its foundation is unshakable.

Beyond dating, marriage is a lifelong journey. It's not just about being happy—it's about growing in faith, learning to love selflessly, and choosing commitment even when things get tough. A Christ-centered marriage is built on faith, seeking God together and keeping Him at the center. It's about choosing to love daily, not just when it's easy. It's about commitment, standing by each other through every season of life, and about forgiveness, extending grace and letting go of resentment. Communication plays a huge role—speaking with kindness, listening with patience, and solving conflicts with wisdom.

At the end of the day, relationships require effort, but when Christ is at the center, they flourish. Marriage isn't about perfection—it's about two imperfect people relying on a perfect God. Whether you're single, or married, seek God's wisdom, trust His timing, and build a relationship that reflects His love. When you do, you'll find that love isn't just about finding the right person—it's about becoming the right person, growing in faith, and walking the path God has set before you.

THE
MENTORING
PROJECT

Dr. Paul Allen has a PhD in Old Testament and has been teaching Bible for over 20 years. He loves serving the Lord and helping young generation grow in faith.