

May 25, 2014

Marry A Strong Christian

by Bryan Hodge

I firmly believe that who one marries is one of the most important decisions one will ever spiritually make, it may determine where you spend eternity. Marry someone who will help you to heaven. Do not marry anyone who would hinder your from making it to heaven. It may determine where your children and even grandchildren will spend eternity. Marry someone who will help them to heaven. Do not marry anyone who would hinder them from making it to heaven.

1. Old Testament

Israel was warned against entering into religiously mixed- marriages (Ex 34:11-16; Duet 7:1-4). They were told - "You shall not give your daughter to their son, nor make their daughter for your son. For they will turn your sons away from following me, to serve other gods" (Deut 7:4). They did not listen (cf Judge 3:5-6). "King Solomon loved many foreign women . . . his wives turned his heart after other gods and his heart was not loyal to the Lord his God, as was the heart of his father David" (1 Kings 11:1-4). "Ahab . . . sold himself to do wickedness in the sight of the Lord, because Jezebel his wife stirred him up" (1 Kings 21:25). "Ahab . . . took as wife Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal, king of the Sidonians; and he went and served Baal and worshipped him" (1 Kings 16:29-31). God fearing parents of old were greatly concerned over whom their children married. Abraham was (Gen 24:1-4). Rebekah and Isaac were (Gen 27:46-28:2; 26:34-35 cf 28:8-9). Manoah and his wife were (Judges 14:2-3).

2. New Testament

Paul, if he married, would select a Christian for a wife. He wrote, "Do we have no right to take along a believing wife, as do also the other apostles, the brothers of the Lord and Cephas?" (1 Cor9:5). It is true that one reads about Christians who were married to non-Christians (1 Cor 07:12-16; 1 Peter 3:1-6). However, this does not mean that such was being encouraged. Johnny Ramsey commented on 1 Corinthians 7:12-16 "Marriages between Christian and unbelievers, a situation which arose, not from Christians marrying unbelievers, but from conversion of one couple" (Bruce Curd, Marry Only in the Lord, p.125). This may be correct, never does one read about a Christian marrying or contemplating marrying and unbeliever.

3. Statistics

(a) "Divorce occurs three times as often in mixed marriages as in marriages between members of the same religious convictions" (Curd, p. 1).

(b) "Of every 100 Christians marrying, out of the church, it is estimates that 20 convert their companions, 24 live a divided life, and 56 quit the church" (ibid, p.103).

(c) A congregation in Oklahoma studied the lives of 143 of their young people. 79 of them married outside the church, of this number 57 left the church, only 22 were still faithful, just 14 had converted their mates (ibid, p.214).

4. Danger to Self

"Olivia Langdon was a believer who married Mario Twain, an unbeliever she thought that her sweet spirit and devout faith would soon win her husband. During the first few months of their marriage, they had thanks before each meal and read a chapter in the Bible every day. Such was soon stopped as Twain complained about the formality of it. They ceased going to worship at the little chapel. Olivia gave up some of her religious conviction, having her faith in the providence and promises of God shaken through her husband's philosophy when she came to face the dark valley of the shadow of death, and knowing that her life was short Twain said to her 'Livey, if it comforts you to lean on the Christian faith do so.' She answered, 'I can't . . . I haven't any'" (Warren, *Your Marriage Can Be Great*, p. 268). Hugo McCord remarked, "A wise Christian will offer a ring to no unconverted girl no matter how promising the union appears and an informed Christian girl will resolve to accept the ring of no unconverted man regardless of what he promises. If one cannot convert a person in the days of courtship, he deludes himself that it will be possible later. If reforming of any kind is needed, religious or otherwise, experience has shown it had better be done before marriage" (Curd, p.105).

5. Danger to Children

Likely children will come. Do you want a non-Christian teaching them and influencing them? What if you died young? Would you be comfortable with the non-Christian proving their religious training?

6. Illustration

"Imagine that a young man living in Atlanta is going to fly to Los Angeles. At the airport, he meets an attractive young lady, and he gets into a conversation with her. He asks her where she going and she replies to Chicago.' 'Well,' he says that's marvelous, I'm going to Los Angeles - let's travel together so we can enjoy each other's company!' . . . They cannot travel together in opposite directions. What no intelligent man or woman would do in travel, many attempt to do in marriage." (Curd, p. 28).

7. What if I am married to a non-Christian?

Do not compromise. Be faithful in attendance and in principles. If you are not serious about things, why should your spouse ever be? Live the Christian life and try to win them over by your conduct (1 Peter 3:1-6). It is important that you do not provide a reason for your spouse not to respect and take seriously Christianity.