

The Broadmoor Bulletin

A Monthly Publication for the Christians at Broadmoor

August 2008

How to Pick a Mate

Nothing is quite as frustrating as talking to 18 and 20 year old kids about their choice of a boyfriend or girlfriend, especially when the selection has been made for all the wrong reasons. Something many call "chemistry" develops between these young folks, and no amount of common sense can diffuse the oneness and rightness the two feel about one another.

Chemistry is important between a man and a woman, but feelings must not allow young people to ignore completely other important factors in picking a mate for life. While this is a difficult subject for parents and older adults to discuss with teenagers, a few basic warnings about the realities of what makes a good companion are in order.

1. Pick a mate who respects and obeys the word of God.

God's simple plan of salvation from sin is a good starting point. When a prospective mate does not accept God's plain teaching of faith, repentance, and baptism by immersion for the forgiveness of sins (Mark 16:15 – 16, Acts 2:38, Acts 22:16, Rom. 6:3 – 4, Gal. 3:26 – 27), Christians have little hope that their mate will see the need to assemble on the first day of the week to break bread (Acts 20:7), grasp the principle of the silence of the scripture and worship in the absence of mechanical instruments of music (Eph. 5:19), and understand the basic principles of biblical authority (2 John 9) and local church autonomy (Acts 14:23, 20:28, 1 Pet. 5:1 – 3). This should signal to Christians that conflicts will be abundant and divisive.

2. Pick a mate who has spiritual goals and values.

Humanists have managed to incorporate "values clarification" into our school systems, and so many young people today place material and physical values above what's in the best interest of the soul. In many cases, greed, physical appearance, and pleasure take precedence over contentment, purity, and spirituality. Even abortion and homosexuality are now viewed as morally neutral. Does a Christian want a mate who dresses immodestly and goes to public pools with the kids, who enjoys pleasure and worldly attractions more than assembling with the saints, and who puts name-brand clothing and entertainment for the kids above Bible classes and spiritual training? These issues will determine how your children are reared and what their values will be.

3. Pick a mate who offers more than physical attractiveness.

"Beauty is skin deep" is a fact that all humans rebel against. That men of all ages are leaving their wives for young beautiful women shows that it is not limited to youth. That handsome male strippers are now the rage among all ages of women demonstrates that even females have not escaped the lure of physical beauty. Think, therefore, how vulnerable teens and young adults are to this false standard for choosing a companion (Prov. 31:30).

(Continued on Page 2)

Where God's Love Is Best Learned

"Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong" (2 Corinthians 12:10).

God's love is a strong thing, and strong things are not fully appreciated until we are surrounded by weakness. The ugly, painful hardship of human experience does not contradict or call into question the love of God. To the contrary, that is where we learn God's love the best. The way to God is not over, under, or around our difficulties -- it is through them.

Job is the classic example of how this works. He was not anything less a godly man before his sufferings began (Job 1:8), but it was only afterward that he could say, "I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye sees You. Therefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes" (Job 42:5, 6). God's trustworthiness had become so much more real to Job that he was ashamed to think how little faith he'd had before. Likewise, when Paul prayed for the removal of his "thorn in the flesh," God's answer was, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness" (2 Corinthians 12:9).

But if God's love for us is best learned in hardship, the same is also true of our love for God. We value most highly those things that have cost us something significant, and it is not likely that we'll love God deeply until we've passed through some serious suffering with His love as our guide. When Jesus explained to Peter that Satan would "sift" him as wheat, He said, "But I have prayed for you, that your faith should not fail; and when you have returned to Me, strengthen your brethren" (Luke 22:32).

When we live for no higher goal than to be pain-free, supposing that God "loves" us too much to let anything "harmful" happen to us, what happens is something very harmful indeed: we lose our best chance to learn what God's love really means. The best things in life get away from us when we grasp them too tightly. Life is found in the losing of it. "Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake," Paul said. "For when I am weak, then I am strong."

"The love of God is the ultimate reality, the deepest and strongest force in the universe; and it is revealed to the man who resolutely girds himself to the conflict" (David Smith).

Gary Henry

The LORD'S lovingkindnesses indeed never cease, For His compassions never fail. They are new every morning; Great is Your faithfulness. "The LORD is my portion," says my soul, "Therefore I have hope in Him."

Lamentations 3:22 – 24

How to Pick a Mate

(Continued from page 1)

All people in their sober moments know that no direct relationship exists between physical attractiveness and qualities for a successful marriage. Love, care, personality, maturity, unselfishness, thoughtfulness – even sexual prowess are not determined by the degree of bodily beauty in which they are wrapped. If they were, most of those Hollywood marriages would be rousing successes.

The fact is that handsome and beautiful prospects are often egotistical, self-centered people who think mostly of themselves. A physically attractive female may be more interested in how she appears in public, how she looks in her clothes, and how her makeup enhances her beauty. Beauties sometimes turn out to be “airheads” who seldom entertain a thought of someone else’s well-being. So it is at times with those handsome hunks. As the warmth of a house at 20 degrees below is not based on the beauty of the architecture, so the warmth and intimacy of marriage do not rest on the great looks of the husband and the wife.

4. Pick a mate who agrees with you on the rearing of children.

“Train up a child in the way that he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it” is a well-known biblical proverb (Prov. 22:6). But what is the “way that he should go”? Does your prospective mate agree on this? Does he/she believe that the Bible is the final authority for the rearing of children? Is he/she willing to attend Bible study with you and see that the child is there Sunday mornings and Wednesday evenings for class? What will he/she teach the child in the home about morals, biblical issues, and the way of salvation? Does he/she have a denominational view of the church, God’s plan for salvation, and the importance of Bible authority? If these issues are not settled before marriage, there is little chance they will be after the knot has been tied. The lives and eternal destiny of little children depend on resolving this issue.

5. Pick a mate who views marriage as permanent.

More than half of marriages in modern times end in divorce. What does your girlfriend or boyfriend think about that? Do they hold to the ideal that “if it doesn’t work out, we can always get a divorce”? That dooms the marriage before you say the vows. It prepares in the mind an escape hatch that hinders serious discussion and change to preserve what God has joined together “until death do we part.” Nothing is more important to marriage than a respect for its permanency. When that is in place, then couples know that finding workable solutions to problems is the only choice they have. They “stick it out” and “work it out.”

Young people, don’t try to get around these issues or ignore them. They are as real and significant as the air you breathe. To ignore them is to endanger your spiritual health and the hope of life eternal for both you and your children. Your mate has more influence on your thinking, your life, and your destiny than any other earthly relationship. Pick a mate that loves God, that loves Son, that loves His word, and that loves His church – and if you do the same, you will “live happily ever after.”

L. A. Stauffer

Three Lessons from 1 John

The lessons in nearly every chapter of 1 John surround three major themes: love, fellowship, and life. We begin with love, because it is the foundation of the other two. Of all John’s teachings on fellowship and eternal life, love is the basis of them all. The first time John mentions love he writes, “By this (love) we know that we are in Him” (1 John 2:5). Fellowship, therefore, can only be gained through love. Similarly, the test of life is love. John writes, “We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brethren” (1 John 3:14). Everything in 1 John begins with love.

What is important to see is not just that love is the ground work of fellowship and eternal life but how John defines love. John describes love as “keeping His word” (1 John 2:5, 5:3). Love is not just a feeling but must be shown in “deed and truth” (1 John 3:18). John tells us that the one who loves walks in the light, overcomes the lusts of the world, lays down his life for the brethren, and stops sinning. With such stress placed on love, it’s no wonder why we usually think of 1 John as the book of love.

While love is certainly the major theme of 1 John, it is written to show its place in the plan of salvation. The first major result of this obedient love is having a relationship with the Father. John wrote this letter “so that we, too, may have fellowship with the Father” (1 John 1:3). Fellowship begins with love but is also dependent upon belief in Christ, continual confession of sins, practicing righteousness, and faith (1 John 1:6 – 7, 2:29, 4:15 – 16, 5:4). Fellowship is best seen as the perfection and goal of love where “we can be called the children of God” (1 John 3:1).

This family relationship with God and Christ is the reason for our hope. Those born of God are His children forever. The ultimate goal of John’s writing is for us to have eternal life in Christ (1 John 1:2, 4:9). In John’s own words, “He who has the Son of God has the life” and “the love of God was manifested to us ... that we might live through Him” (1 John 4:9, 5:12). Jesus was sent to show us love and bring us to fellowship that we might be with Him forever (1 John 4:9, 5:11).

The three major themes of 1 John – love, fellowship, and life are all interdependent. Love is the beginning and test of the other two, fellowship is the result of love, and eternal life is the reward of love and fellowship. “These things John wrote so that our joy may be made complete” (1 John 1:4). I can’t imagine anything that would make us happier than to know we have a loving relationship with God that will last for eternity.

Josh Kleinlein

Times of Service

Sunday Bible Class	9:00 a.m.
Sunday Morning Worship	9:55 a.m.
Sunday Evening Worship	5:00 p.m.
Wednesday Evening Bible Study	7:00 p.m.

Visit us on the web at <http://www.broadmoorchurch.com>