

## **Important Questions to Ask Before Marriage**

The following questions come from the book, “Preparing for Marriage” by John Piper.

### **Theology**

What do you believe about...everything? To get started, perhaps read through the Desiring God

Affirmation of Faith to see where each other is on various biblical doctrines ([www.desiringgod.org/affirmation-of-faith](http://www.desiringgod.org/affirmation-of-faith)).

Discover how you form your views. What is your “reasoning-believing process”? How do you handle the Bible?

### **Worship and Devotions**

How important is corporate worship and local- church membership? What about other kinds of participations in church life? What does it mean to be active in a local church?

How important is it to be part of a small accountability/support group?

What is the importance of music in life and worship? What are your daily personal devotional practices?

(prayer, reading, meditation, memorization)

What would our family devotions look like? Who would lead in this?

Are we doing this now in an appropriate way (praying together about our lives and future, reading the Bible together)?

### **Husband and Wife**

What is the meaning of headship and submission in the Bible and in our marriage?

What expectations should we have about situations where one of us might be alone with someone of the opposite sex?

How will we share tasks in the home (finances, cleaning, cooking, washing dishes, yard work, car upkeep, repairs, shopping for food, other household stuff )?

What are our expectations for togetherness?

What is an ideal non-special evening?

How do we understand who initiates sex and how often?

Who does the checkbook—or are there two?

### **Children**

If and when should we have children? Why? How many?  
How far apart?  
Would we consider adoption?  
What are our expectations for our children's' standards of behavior? Can these differ from one child to another and still be biblical?  
How do we distinguish between punishment and discipline?  
What are appropriate ways to discipline young children physically? How many strikes before they're... whatever? Up to what age? What other forms of discipline can be appropriate?  
What are our expectations of time spent with our children? Bedtime rituals?  
What signs of affection will we show them?  
What about school? Home school? Christian school?  
Public school?

### **Lifestyle**

Own a home or not? Why?  
What kind of neighborhood? Why?  
How many cars? New? Used?  
What kind of vacations will be appropriate and helpful for us?  
View of money in general? How much to the church? How will we spend our weekends and "time off " ?  
How do you make money decisions?  
What about buying clothes? New? Thrift store? In between? Designer label? Current fashions? Why?

### **Entertainment**

How much should we spend on entertainment? How often should we eat out? Where?  
How about grown-up toys? Recreational vehicles? Computer gaming?  
Sports equipment? Hobby gear? Should we have a television? Where?  
What is fitting to watch? How much?  
What are our criteria for movies and theater? What will our guidelines be for the kids?

### **Conflict**

What makes you angry?  
How do you handle your frustration or anger?  
Who should bring up an issue that is bothersome?  
What if we disagree both about what should be done and whether it is

serious?

Will we go to bed angry at each other?

What is our view of getting help from friends or counselors?

### **Work**

Who will be the main breadwinner?

Should the wife work outside the home? Before kids?

With kids at home? After kids?

What are our views of daycare for children?

What determines where we will locate? Job? Whose job? Church? Family?

### **Friends**

Is it sometimes good to do things with friends but without your spouse?

What will we do if one of us really likes to hang out with someone the other doesn't?

### **Health and Sickness**

Do you have, or have you had, any sicknesses or other problems that could affect our relationship? (allergies, cancer, eating disorders, venereal disease, depression, frequent illness, pain issues, etc.)

Do you believe in divine healing, and how would prayer relate to medical attention?

How do you think about exercise and healthy eating? Do you have any habits that adversely affect your health?

### **Differences**

How do you handle and live with differences between people?

How do you decide what can remain differences without jeopardizing the relationship?

Questions from other sources:

1) Have we discussed whether or not to have children, and if the answer is yes, who is going to be the primary care giver?

2) Do we have a clear idea of each other's financial obligations and goals, and do our ideas about spending and saving mesh?

3) Have we discussed our expectations for how the household will be maintained, and are we in agreement on who will manage the chores?

4) Have we fully disclosed our health histories, both physical and mental?

- 5) Is my partner affectionate to the degree that I expect?
- 6) Can we comfortably and openly discuss our sexual needs, preferences and fears?
- 7) Will there be a television in the bedroom?
- 8) Do we truly listen to each other and fairly consider one another's ideas and complaints?
- 9) Have we reached a clear understanding of each other's spiritual beliefs and needs, and have we discussed when and how our children will be exposed to religious/moral education?
- 10) Do we like and respect each other's friends?
- 11) Do we value and respect each other's parents, and is either of us concerned about whether the parents will interfere with the relationship?
- 12) What does my family do that annoys you?
- 13) Are there some things that you and I are NOT prepared to give up in the marriage?
- 14) If one of us were to be offered a career opportunity in a location far from the other's family, are we prepared to move?
- 15) Does each of us feel fully confident in the other's commitment to the marriage and believe that the bond can survive whatever challenges we may face?

#### 1. Do you want to have children?

It is a huge red flag in your relationship if you and your future spouse can not agree on whether to have children or not.

Thinking that you can deal with this issue later in your marriage is a mistake.

Making a decision to have a baby when one parent doesn't want to have children is not fair to the child or to your marriage.

#### 2. Can we talk about money?

The mechanics of how the two of you will handle your finances really isn't the issue. Many couples in successful marriages have separate checking accounts and many couples in successful marriages have one account. The issue is whether or not the two of you can calmly and practically talk about money.

If how your money is spent, or saved, or not spent is an issue before you get married, it will be an even bigger issue after your wedding.

If your future spouse doesn't want to talk about money, or doesn't think talking about money is important, postpone your wedding until this issue is solved.

### 3. Can we talk about sex?

Christian couples need to be careful about discussing this topic, but it does need to be a discussion. There is no way of predicting the future when it comes to an individual's sexual libido.

Different ideas about sexual frequency, desire, preferences, expectations, etc. will tear the two of you apart. If you and your partner are unable to talk about the issues, or if your future spouse doesn't see any real problem, or doesn't want to talk about sex with you, cancel the wedding.

### 4. How much time will we spend with our in-laws?

They may be wonderful people who love you both, but your in-laws should not be allowed to interfere in your marriage relationship.

If either one of you will not set boundaries with your own parents when it comes to visits, phone calls, finances, children, etc., the problem with your in-laws will only worsen.

### 5. Will you clean the toilet?

If the answer is "no" or "why should I?" or "Isn't that your job?", you have several options.

You can hire someone to do the chores that neither of you wants to do. You can accept that you will be doing 90% of the chores around the house.

You can discuss the importance of sharing the household chores together. If none of these options work out, call off the wedding. This is another one of those issues that won't suddenly get better after you sign the marriage license.

### 6. How do you want to spend our days off?

The answer to this question will reveal several things.

How your future spouse likes to spend free time.

The value your future spouse places on having fun together.

Whether or not you will come first before work.

Balancing work and fun and family time and personal time is not easy.

Without talking about the time aspect of your life together, you may find yourself grumbling because your spouse is spending what you consider to

be too much time with old friends and extended family, or on hobbies, sports, the computer, etc.

Living a balanced life together will create the time you both need, individually and together, for vacations, quiet time, and fun time.

#### 7. How often do you drink?

The answer to this question, or to questions about smoking cigarettes, using drugs, or viewing pornography will reveal whether or not your future spouse has a potential addiction problem which could end up not only threatening your marriage but could also put you in legal and financial jeopardy.

#### 8. Have you ever hit someone?

If your future spouse has anger management issues, or tries to control who you see and what you do, or is causing you to walk on egg shells, cancel your wedding.

These are signs of a potentially abusive personality. Don't think you can "save" him or her. You can't. This is a problem that needs professional counseling.

#### 9. What do you think we'll be doing in thirty or forty years?

If your future spouse can't answer this or won't answer this, then the two of you need to talk about long-lasting marriage expectations. Why marry someone who doesn't think your marriage will last?

Check Off the following Questions as you work through them -

Other Questions -

- Why are we getting married? Pregnancy, financial security, loneliness or wanting to get out of the family home are not valid reasons to get married.
- What do we as a couple want out of life?
- What do you think we'll be doing in thirty or forty years?
- Do you think it is important to be faithful to one another?
- Do you have a criminal record?
- Are you willing to replace the toilet tissue roll?
- What was your childhood like?
- Was your family an affectionate one?
- Do you think we will have problems with your family during the holidays?
- What values do you want to bring from your family into our marriage?
- What do you like and dislike about your family?
- what do you like and dislike about my family?
- What do you like and dislike about your parents' marriage?

- What do you like and dislike about my parents' marriage?
- How would you describe yourself?
- How do you think I see you?
- Am I a jealous person?
- Do I have trust issues or feel insecure?
- How important is affirmation to me?
- Do I handle compliments well?
- What is your love language?
- Do you think we listen to one another well?
- Do you think it is important to know one another's physical and mental health histories?
- Can we talk about money?
- Are you a saver or spender when it comes to money?
- Do you want to have a budget?
- Should we have a joint checking account or separate accounts or both?
- Who is going to be responsible for making sure that bills are paid on time?
- Do you consider going to the movies and having a vacation every year a necessity or a luxury?
- How much do we owe in debts and what are our assets?
- Where does our money go?
- What are our financial goals?
- Do you have any outstanding fines or debts?
- What are our future plans for purchasing a home?
- Do we both know where our important financial documents are located?
- How are we going to divide up the household chores?
- What are your expectations about how we will spend our free time?
- How do you want to spend our days off?
- Do you believe that we should be doing everything together?
- Can we each pursue our own interests?
- Do you need time alone?
- How would you feel if I want a night out with my friends now and then?
- How will we make sure we have quality time together?
- Do you want to have children?
- Do we want to have children?
- If we decide we do, how many children do you want to have?
- How long should we be married before having children?
- What kind of parent do you think you will be?
- What is your parenting philosophy?
- Will one of us stay home after we have children?

- What type of birth control should we use if we want to postpone or prevent parenthood?
- How do you feel about adoption?
- How much time will we spend with our in-laws?
- Does religion play an important part in your life?
- Do you think faith and spirituality are important in a marriage?
- Can we talk about sex?
- Should we talk about sex?
- What are your expectations of our sexual relationship?
- How will we make decisions together?
- Are we both willing to face into difficult areas or do we try to avoid conflict?
- Do you think we have problems in our relationship that we need to deal with before our wedding?
- Do we handle conflict well?
- How are we different?
- Do you think our differences will create problems in our marriage?
- Do you expect or want me to change?
- Can we both forgive?
- Are we both willing to work on our communication skills and to share intimately with each other?