

Practical Theology Class - Grace Bible Church
Dating, Courtship & Marriage

Resources: [Practical Theology Class 2024/2025](#)

Sermons: [God Established Marriage](#) (5/19/2024), [Marriage: It's Purpose & Symbolism](#) (5/26/2024),
[Dating, Courtship & Marriage](#) (9/14/2003), [Courtship vs. Dating](#) (1/30/2021), [Finding a Godly Spouse](#) (10/13/24), [Marriage Sermon Series](#) (2024). [Pre-Marital Questionnaire](#)

Study Questions

- 1) Define Marriage according to:
 - a) The Bible
 - b) New York State
 - c) Practices in American Society
 - d) Islam
- 2) Does changing the definition of marriage change anything about God's commands concerning it?
- 3) What are God's purposes for marriage?
- 4) What are the common ideas that have been promoted in society about the purpose of marriage?
- 5) How does changing the definition of marriage affect the purposes of marriage?
- 6) How does a person's understanding of the purpose of marriage affect who will be sought after to marry and the manner in which the potential marriage partner will be pursued?
- 7) What factors make a couple Biblically qualified to get married?
- 8) What factor would disqualify a couple from getting married?
- 9) What are some of the common reasons a couple will live together as if married and yet not marry?
- 10) Arranged marriages are still a common practice around the world. What are the pros & cons of an arranged marriage?
- 11) Dating: What is dating?
What is the purpose of dating?
What are the common practices of dating?
When did dating become the popular and dominant practice in the United States?
What are the pros and cons of dating?
What Biblical principles would apply to dating?
- 12) Courtship: What is courtship?
What is the purpose of courtship?
How does courtship differ from dating?
What are the pros and cons of courtship?
What Biblical principles would apply to courtship?

- 13) What are some practical ways for a man or woman to find a suitable marriage partner? What are the pros & cons of each. Be sure to include online dating / match-making sites.
- 14) What are the Biblical boundaries for a couple that is not married? What consequences for breaking those boundaries were set in the Mosaic Law? What consequences still exist for breaking those boundaries?
- 15) It has become common practice in the United States for a couple to live together prior to marriage. What are the common reasons given for this practice? What is God's view of this practice? What are the practical dangers of it?
- 16) Engagement:
 - What is the meaning and purpose of being *Engaged*?
 - What are reasonable parameters for the length of an engagement? What factors should determine the time frame?
- 17) Wedding
 - What is the actual purpose of a wedding?
 - What are the cultural purposes of a wedding?
 - What factors determine the expense of a wedding? How will godly wisdom affect each of those factors?
 - What is the meaning of each of these common elements in a wedding? Bride's white dress, flowers, bride's bouquet, tossing of bouquet, unity candle ceremony, escort of bride by her father & giving away of the bride, wedding vows, wedding rings, pronouncement.
- 18) What is common law marriage and why do some states recognize it and other states do not?

Case Studies

- 1) What questions would you ask, what advice would you give to a man / woman that wants to get married but has not been able to find anyone that is both suitable and also interested?
- 2) A couple has just announced their engagement and have come to you for pre-marital counseling. What will be your general plan? What material would you use to help them prepare for marriage?
- 3) An individual who has been dating the same person for over a year comes to you for advice since the relationship seems stagnant and not progressing toward marriage as hoped. What general advice would you give? What specific questions would you ask to help them as an individual?
- 4) A couple new to the church comes to you convinced that they should get married since they have been living together for quite awhile. What questions would you ask them to help them to determine what would be best before God for them to do?
 - *Same as above except they already have several children together.
 - *Similar to above except they have wanted to marry for a long time but keep putting it off because they have not been able to afford the wedding.

- 5) A woman comes to you for advice. She has been dating a man for a couple of months and he is pressuring her to be sexually involved with him? What advice will you give her?
- *Same as above except she admits they have already been sexually intimate a couple of times?
- 6) A confused man comes to you. He asked a woman who has become a casual friend to go on a dinner date with him. She responded that she would not date a man unless he was courting her. He says he is interested in her, but does not know enough about her to know if he wants to pursue her as a possible wife. What advice can you give him about dating in general and in specific to this woman?
- 7) As you begin pre-marital counseling with a couple you find out they have been sexual active. What counsel will you give regarding their options for the future? What advice can you give them about setting appropriate boundaries so they can successfully wait until marriage?
- 8) As you have been doing pre-marital counseling with a couple and as the wedding is getting closer the tension between them is rising. What counsel would you give them if after questioning you find that the problem is related to:
- a) One of them is getting “cold feet” is not sure about getting married. How would you help them overcome normal fears? How will you help them explore legitimate reasons to post-pone the wedding in order to deal with the issues?
 - b) You determine that it would be unwise for them to marry and advise they break the engagement
 - c) Family interference in the wedding planning
- 9) As part of pre-marital counseling you go over the couples finances and initial budget. In the process you also find out that the cost of their wedding is far beyond their means. How will you help them set a more financially prudent budget for their wedding? What practical advice can you give them about how to cut down the cost of their wedding without cutting out the joy of their celebration?
- 10) You are asked for advice about attending the “wedding” of a same sex couple one of whom is:
- a) A co-worker
 - b) A friend
 - c) A relative
 - d) a son / daughter or grandson / grand-daughter
- 11) You are asked to attend / participate in / officiate the wedding of a couple in each of the following situations. What would you do? What additional information would you need in order to decide what you would do?
- a) The couple is already living together
 - b) Between two non-Christians
 - c) Between a professing Christian and a non-Christian
 - d) Includes at least one divorcee.