

Choosing a Spouse

If I conducted a poll and asked women to list their top three qualities or characteristics they thought were most important to look for in choosing a good husband, what responses do you think I'd get? Or, what if I asked men to do the same relative to choosing a good wife? Take a minute or three to think about this, and form your own mental list before proceeding.

Now, would the women's list of important qualities in a potential *husband* include:

- *Basic Leadership Skills*, since he is to be not only your "*head*" but also that of potential children born to the union, [Eph.5:23](#)?
- The capability of *Self-Sacrificing Love*, since that is required of *headship*, [Eph.5:25,28](#)?
- *An Aptitude for Spiritual Knowledge and Leadership*, since he will be the primary *spiritual leader* for both you as a wife, [Eph.5:26](#); [cf.1Cor.14:35](#); and your children, [Eph.6:4](#); [cf. Col.3:21](#)?

Or would the list instead be a composite of all the sappy notions of "love and romance" and "manhood" dribbled out of Hollywood and across social media platforms? I've long stressed the importance of trust in choosing a husband. You can learn to love a man you trust completely with all your mind, body, heart, and soul to become and be the kind of husband God requires. But loving a man you don't or can't trust in that way is a sure recipe for a miserably disastrous marriage.

But let's not forget about the men's list of important qualities in a potential *wife*- do you think the guy's would include:

- *Subjection/Submission Skills*, since you won't be able to fulfill your role of *leadership* to/for a wife who is unable or unwilling to *follow*, [Eph.5:22,24](#)?
- The capability of *Self-Sacrificing Love*, since it is required of a *wife* and *mother*, [Titus 2:4](#)?
- *An Aptitude for Revering and Respecting* her husband, since a lot of people, including but not limited to women, have real "issues" with not only *subjecting themselves*, but also having and demonstrating true *respect* for authority while doing so, [Eph.5:33](#)?

Or would the list instead be a composite of all the fanciful images and notions of "beauty, power, and womanhood" dribbled out of Hollywood and across social media platforms? To the men I say the same as to the women: Don't underestimate the importance of trust in a relationship, or allow it to be overshadowed or excused on the basis of "love." A potential spouse must be someone you can trust completely with all your mind, body, heart, and soul to become and be the kind of wife God requires.

To be "successfully" married, which necessarily requires us to be "divinely" married according to God's instructions and requirements, it's going to take the complete commitment of your minds, bodies, hearts, and souls. Now, does "she" or "he" have the characteristics, skills, and temperament to become and be the "wife/mother" or "husband/father" God requires and you deserve? If so, marry and love her/him as Christ does the church, [Eph.5:25](#). If not, either work with her/him to help develop those traits and abilities BEFORE you wed, or "kick 'em to the curb" and keep looking. Your eternal soul, and that of your future children, may well depend on the choice you make.

(Philip C. Strong; Southport Church of Christ; 7202 Madison Ave, Indianapolis, IN 46227; online at southportcofc.org)