

Wisely Choosing Your Helpmeet 12-01-19 AM

The most important decision we make is to become a disciple of Jesus Christ. The second most important decision we make is in choosing out help-meet for life. When God created Adam He said *"It is not good for the man to be alone; I will make him a helper suitable for him."* (Genesis 2:18). From the beginning, God has desired for men and women to have a companion to help them in this life. The word in the King James Version is "help meet". A spouse is the person who will enable us to satisfy the obligations of God.

God repeatedly tells us about His plan for marriage. In Genesis 2 He tells us that it is one man, one woman, for one life. Jesus restated this as His law of marriage in Matthew 19:3-9, and Paul taught this to the Corinthians in 1 Corinthians 7:10-11. Apart from discipleship, no choice you make has greater importance in this life than marriage.

How do we make this choice wisely? An excellent example of making wise choices in spouses is in the book of Ruth. In Ruth 2:4-11 we read about Boaz seeking out Ruth. He makes this decision purely on her character; he refuses to consider the exterior or unimportant things (such as her heritage or background). Then in Ruth 3:1-11 we read of Ruth choosing Boaz. Again, the external factors are not in consideration; she chooses him based on her kinship relationship and his virtuous conduct. Their marriage produces some of the most important people in the Old Testament. Theirs could be called the greatest love story in the Bible. What is important is to see that their choices were based on virtue and character and NOT based on appearances.

How we choose wisely might be seen in two ways. First, that we do not choose our spouse based on the wrong attributes or motivations. Second, that we focus on the best characteristics for someone who will be our companion.

First, we need to know what the wrong choices look like. Choosing by looks or worldly aspects is a terrible way to find the right person. *"Charm is deceitful and beauty is passing"* is the advice of Proverbs 31:30. Jesus commanded us not to judge by appearances (John 7:24). Another obvious point is that we should not choose someone who we know is not a good choice. Specifically, for Christians, this means an unbeliever is not going to help us get to heaven (2 Cor. 6:14). Finally, many choose their spouse purely on how they feel, on their emotions. This is an unwise motivator; emotions are deceptive, and can lead us into dangerous situations. *There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death* (Proverbs 14:12).

So what does the right choice look like? First, the right person is someone who loves God above all, including you. That might not seem to be the wise thing at first, but someone who loves God more than their spouse will actually be the best spouse they can be. God gave us commands on how to be the best kind of spouse (Ephesians 5:22-33). The best person you could have is a good spouse not because you deserve it (because you probably won't), but because God deserves it, and their first commitment is to God. Second, they need to be committed to marriage more than they are committed to you. Again, perhaps counter-intuitive at first, but most marriages fail

because of the absence of commitment to the covenant itself. Third, a wise choice is someone who already understands obligations, as Ruth did. Ruth's devotion to her mother-in-law was what made Boaz see her as the ideal woman. A Godly man or woman is first a servant to their family; if they honor their father and mother, they will likely honor their husband or wife. Finally, the right person will pursue sanctification over happiness. They are prepared to set aside what makes them happy to do the right thing.

This is the most important choice we make after choosing to follow Jesus. Indeed, a great part of our success in Christ will be placed upon having a partner who enables us to that pursuit. Choose wisely.