Emmaus Seminar/SBC Evening Chapel/WOLBI Dr. Rick Griffith

8 June 2004/29 October 1998/18 February 2009/12 May 2016 Single Message

NIV 20 Minutes

**Walking in the Calling Together**

***Topical Message***

**Topic:** Marriage

**Subject:** How can you find the right marriage partner?

**Complement:** Be the right person as you trust God for a compatible mate.

**Purpose:** The listeners will concentrate more on personal character than on finding a mate.

# Introduction

### [Arouse Interest:]

Black

‘Twas the night before my wedding, and all through the house,

Not a creature was stirring—’cept this future spouse!

My good friend named Albert came near to show care—

in hopes to gain wisdom from this bachelare!

### That night before I got married, Albert and I stayed up really late talking. The whole wedding party was sleeping soundly—but Albert seized upon his last opportunity to ask me questions while I was a bachelor. Long after midnight, in the course of our conversation, he hit me with one of the most intriguing questions I’d ever been asked: “Rick, are you 100% sure that it is God’s will for you to marry Susan today?”

### Interestingly, no one had asked me that question—at least in such a direct way. I had told people that I believed that we were doing God’s will. She was a Christian, I was a Christian, we had met on the mission field and seemed to have like passions ministry-wise, our parents approved of our marriage, there wasn’t anything that seemed to stand in the way. Why did Albert have to be so direct, asking if I was 100% sure?

### Subject: But it did bring up a very relevant question: How can you find the right marriage partner?

Subject

#### Is it through designing your long list of qualities?

#### I once did this with a 4-page list! It even had abilities like being able to snow ski! Now that I now God called me to Singapore, I see how ridiculous that list was!

### Preview: So tonight we’ll look at three principles in finding the right partner. There’s many more, so as an issue comes to mind, write it down and we can talk about it in the Q & A session to follow. Here’s the first principle in finding the right partner…

# I. *Walking with* the right person begins with *being* the right person.

MP

[Be more concerned with the kind of person *your future spouse* will marry than the kind of person *you* will marry!]

How do you do this?

## Seek God, not a mate—this is the scriptural emphasis.

• Seek God

### But doesn’t the Bible say, “He who finds a wife finds a good thing” (Prov. 18:22)? Yes, this one verse is in the Bible!

• Finds

### But the rest of the book of Proverbs is about *being* the right person! The whole emphasis of Scripture is on character rather than decisions.

• Don’t seek

### Besides, if I read 1 Corinthians 7:27 correctly, this “finding” can happen without even looking: “Are you married? Do not seek a divorce. Are you unmarried? Do not look for a wife.”

• Balance

## Seek selflessness—because this is the key quality to have a good marriage as well as to be marriageable!

• Seek selfless

### Philippians 2:3-4 is probably one of the most important texts for a solid marriage [read].

### Some people don’t ever get married because their key concern is their own welfare!

## Be willing to remain single for life, knowing that it has many advantages (1 Cor. 7:32-35).

• Stay single

### Decision-making is easier.

### Moving is easier—less material things are needed, no children’s schooling concerns you, etc.

### My December 1981 commitment, “I’m willing to be single for life if that’s your will!” was followed two weeks later with a change in Susan’s heart.

# II. Don’t try to help God find a mate for you—He doesn’t need your help!

MP

## After I graduated from high school, I made it my mission to find a mate in college. In fact, I became engaged in college—but more on that later…

Hay U

HS

## Right after college I found myself on Campus Crusade’s “Crossroads” music team back in 1981. I thought that might be a great place to find a wife!

Crossroads

## However, my friend Bob decided not to play drums for our group. He was 25 and felt he couldn’t postpone marriage further by making a three-year commitment to the group. Yet after three years, 4 of the 7 singles on our team had married one another (including me as I met Susan during this time)—and when we got back to America, Bob was still single!

Black

Map

## Leslie moved to Dallas because it had the most single adults of any city in America—but after 18 months she hadn’t even gone on a date!

## Just serve Him and He will take care of the rest.

# III. Compatibility in calling is a must.

MP

## 2 Corinthians 6:14 says, “Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness?”

2 Cor 6

### The image here, of course, is of two oxen bound together in a single yoke.

Equal

### Try putting two unlike animals in the same yoke and you have disaster!

Unequal

### We normally think of 2 Cor. 6:14 in terms of contracts or especially marriages with unbelievers.

2 Cor 6

### But I wonder if the “unequal yoke” can apply to ministry calling as well as to whether one is believer or not.

## My friend Steve married a woman who had no heart for the Muslim world. This prevented him from ever becoming a missionary.

Black

## I broke off my engagement with a Christian woman I was engaged to at age 19 after seeing that our callings were incompatible. This was one of the best choices I’ve ever made. She later went on to marry and divorce—and ended up raising two sons on her own.

## Then, on the Crossroads music team, while singing in various countries like China, God sparked a romance between Susan and me.

Romance

S’pore

China

## Two years later we were married.

## Over the years God led us to Singapore and ultimately gave us three sons [explain slides]. Now we have been married 32 years (since 1983).

1991-2009

(So how can you find the right marriage partner?)

# Conclusion

### The issue is not *finding* the right person but *being* the right person as you trust God for a mate (MI).

WarwickMI

### So how did I answer Albert that night before my marriage when he asked, “Rick, are you 100% sure that it is God’s will for you to marry Susan?”

Black

#### I told him, “I don’t think anyone can ever say with 100% certainty that he knows God’s will in an area that is not specifically revealed by God in His Word.

#### “I heard of a groom who was killed in an automobile accident on his way to his wedding—and then the bride married someone else.

#### “So I can’t say I’m 100% sure now. But within 24 hours I’ll be 100% sure that He wants me to make the very best of the marriage that I have!”

### [If time then give conclusions on next page too before the song…]

Two Walk

### Optional: How does all this specifically relate to you as you seek the Lord regarding marriage?

#### Be willing to be single for life.

Black

##### It has many benefits!

##### Don’t be deceived into thinking that marriage will make you happy.

##### The ideal is: happily single, then happily married.

#### Be selfless.

##### Learn what it really means to consider others more important than you.

##### That’s the kind of person others want to marry anyway!

#### Be an instrument for righteousness in all your relationships. Ask, “Will this person become more like Christ by knowing me?”

##### If he does want you to marry, you’ll have a more fulfilling marriage! The marriage where both partners are most like Christ is the best!

##### But if God doesn’t will for you two marry, then you will be helping some other potential marriage partner for that person!

### Questions and Answers

### Discussion Group Questions

#### Have you come to the point in your life where you are willing to live the rest of your days single—if this is God’s will for you?

#### How have you tried to help God find a mate for you? Was it successful?

#### What character quality does God want to develop in you before marriage? For starters, look at the nine character fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22-23).

Emmaus Seminar/SBC Evening Chapel Dr. Rick Griffith

8 June 2004/29 October 1998 Single Message

NIV 30 Minutes

**Finding Your Mate**

***Topical Message***

**Topic:** Marriage

**Subject:** How can you find the right marriage partner?

**Complement:** Be the right person as you trust God for a compatible mate.

**Purpose:** The listeners will concentrate more on personal character than on finding a mate.

# Introduction

### [Arouse Interest:]

‘Twas the night before my wedding, and all through the house,

Not a creature was stirring—’cept this future spouse!

My good friend named Albert came near to show care—

in hopes to gain wisdom from this bachelare!

### That night before I got married, Albert and I stayed up really late talking. The whole wedding party was sleeping soundly—but Albert seized upon his last opportunity to ask me questions while I was a bachelor. Long after midnight, in the course of our conversation, he hit me with one of the most intriguing questions I’d ever been asked: “Rick, are you 100% sure that it is God’s will for you to marry Susan?”

### Interestingly, no one had asked me that question—at least in such a direct way. I had told people that I believed that we were doing God’s will. She was a Christian, I was a Christian, we had met on the mission field and seemed to have like passions ministry-wise, our parents approved of our marriage, there wasn’t anything that seemed to stand in the way. Why did Albert have to be so direct, asking if I was 100% sure?

### Part of the problem was that a very controversial book had just come out three years earlier (in 1980). It was called *Decision Making and the Will of God* and it addressed this question: Does God have a specific, individual will for your life?

#### Garry Friesen’s book caused a stir in this dimension. He sums up his thesis on page 83: “It is our contention that… the idea of an *individual will* of God for every detail of a person’s life is *not found in Scripture.”*

#### Instead, he argues for what he calls “the wisdom view.” You just follow God’s Word and then you are doing the will of God.

#### We don’t have the time to discuss this book in detail, but I’ll just tell you up front that I was unconvinced with his thesis. I do think that God has a specific will for each believer—especially concerning marriage. Why?

##### The biblical pattern is for God to provide not just *any person* as a mate, but a specific person of his calling:

###### God gave Eve to Adam as his wife, God desired Isaac to marry Rebecca, God even told Hosea to marry Gomer!

###### Friesen calls each of these instances an exception to the general pattern!

##### But Psalm 139:16 says, “All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be.” Now how can that be true, if thousands of those days relate to one’s most intimate relationship?

##### God is concerned about lesser decisions—so why not the big ones?

(But if God does have a specific will regarding marriage, then…)

### Subject: How can you find the right marriage partner?

#### Is it through designing your long list of qualities?

#### I once did this and got a 4-page list! It even included abilities like knowing how to snow ski! Since He called me to Singapore I now see how ridiculous that list was!

### The best thing to do is to answer this question biblically. So here goes…

THE TOP 15 BIBLICAL WAYS TO ACQUIRE A WIFE

 1) Find an attractive prisoner of war, bring her home, shave her head,

trim her nails, and give her new clothes. Then she's yours.

(Deuteronomy 21:11-13) (Cassandra?)

 2) Find a prostitute and marry her. (Hosea 1:1-3)

 3) Find a man with seven daughters, and impress him by watering his

flock. (Moses ˜ Exodus 2:16-21)

 4) Purchase a piece of property, and get a woman as part of the deal.

(Boaz ˜ Ruth 4:5-10)

 5) Go to a party and hide. When the women come out to dance, grab one

and carry her off to be your wife. (Benjamites ˜ Judges 21:19-25)

 6) Have God create a wife for you while you sleep. [Note: this will

cost you.] (Adam ˜ Genesis 2:19-24)

 7) Agree to work seven years in exchange for a woman's hand in

marriage. Get tricked into marrying the wrong woman. Then work another

seven years for the woman you wanted to marry in the first place.

That's right. Fourteen years of toil for a wife. (Jacob ˜ Genesis

29:15-30)

 8) Cut 200 foreskins off of your future father-in-law's enemies and

get his daughter for a wife. (David ˜ 1 Samuel 18:27)

 9) Even if no one is out there, just wander around a bit and you'll

definitely find someone. (It's all relative, of course.) (Cain ˜

Genesis 4:16-17)

10) Become the emperor of a huge nation and hold a beauty contest.

(Xerxes or Ahasuerus ˜ Esther 2:3-4)

11) When you see someone you like, go home and tell your parents, "I

have seen a . . . woman; now get her for me." If your parents question

your decision, simply say, "Get her for me. She's the one for me."

(Samson ˜ Judges 14:1-3)

12) Kill any husband & take HIS wife (Prepare to lose four sons,

though). (David˜2 Samuel 11)

13) Wait for your brother to die. Take his widow. (It's not just a good

idea; it's the law.) (Onana and Boaz ˜ Deuteronomy or Leviticus,

example in Ruth)

14) Don't be so picky. Make up for quality with quantity. (Solomon ˜ 1

Kings 11:1-3)

15) A wife? . . . NOT? (St Paul ˜ 1 Corinthians 7:32-35)

### Preview: OK, time to get serious. Tonight we’ll look at three principles in finding the right partner. There’s many more, so as an issue comes to mind, write it down and we can talk about it in the Q & A session to follow. Here’s the first principle in finding the right partner…

# I. *Finding* the right person begins with *being* the right person.

[Be more concerned with the kind of person *your future spouse* will marry than the kind of person *you* will marry!]

How do you do this?

## Seek God, not a mate—this is the scriptural emphasis.

### But doesn’t the Bible say, “He who finds a wife finds a good thing” (Prov. 18:22)? Yes, this one verse is in the Bible!

### But the rest of the book of Proverbs is about *being* the right person! The whole emphasis of Scripture is on character rather than decisions.

### Besides, if I read 1 Corinthians 7:27 correctly, this “finding” can happen without even looking: “Are you married? Do not seek a divorce. Are you unmarried? Do not look for a wife.”

## Seek selflessness—because this is the key quality to have a good marriage as well as to be marriageable!

### Philippians 2:3-4 is probably one of the most important texts for a solid marriage [read].

### Some people don’t ever get married because their key concern is their own welfare!

## Be willing to remain single for life, knowing that it has many advantages (1 Cor. 7:32-35).

### Decision-making is easier.

### Moving is easier—less material things are needed, no children’s schooling concerns you, etc.

### My December 1981 commitment, “I’m willing to be single for life if that’s your will!” was followed two weeks later with a change in Susan’s heart.

# II. Don’t try to help God find a mate for you—He doesn’t need your help!

## My friend Bob decided not to play drums for our Campus Crusade music team “Crossroads” back in 1981. He was 25 and felt he couldn’t postpone marriage further by making a three-year commitment to the group. Yet after three years, 4 of the 7 singles on our team had married one another (including me as I met Susan during this time)—and when we got back to America, Bob was still single!

## Leslie moved to Dallas because it had the most single adults of any city in America—but after 18 months she hadn’t even gone on a date!

## Just serve Him and He will take care of the rest.

# III. Compatibility in calling is a must.

## 2 Corinthians 6:14 says, “Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness?”

### We normally think of this in terms of contracts or especially marriages with unbelievers.

### But I wonder if the “unequal yoke” can apply to ministry calling as well as to whether one is believer or not.

## My friend Steve married a woman who had no heart for the Muslim world. This prevented him from ever becoming a missionary.

## I broke off my engagement with a Christian woman I was engaged to at age 19 after seeing that our callings were incompatible. This was one of the best choices I’ve ever made. She later went on to marry and divorce—and ended up raising two sons on her own.

(So how can you find the right marriage partner?)

# Conclusion

### The issue is not *finding* the right person but *being* the right person as you trust God for a mate (M.I.).

### So how did I answer Albert that night before my marriage when he asked, “Rick, are you 100% sure that it is God’s will for you to marry Susan?”

#### I told him, “I don’t think anyone can ever say with 100% certainty that he knows God’s will in an area that is not specifically revealed by God in His Word.

#### “I heard of a groom who was killed in an automobile accident on his way to his wedding—and then the bride married someone else.

#### “So I can’t say I’m 100% sure now. But within 24 hours I’ll be 100% sure that He wants me to make the very best of the marriage that I have!”

### How does all this specifically relate to you as you seek the Lord regarding marriage?

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##### It has many benefits!

##### Don’t be deceived into thinking that marriage will make you happy.

##### The ideal is: happily single, then happily married.

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##### Learn what it really means to consider others more important than you.

##### That’s the kind of person others want to marry anyway!

#### Be an instrument for righteousness in all your relationships. Ask, “Will this person become more like Christ by knowing me?”

##### If he does want you to marry, you’ll have a more fulfilling marriage! The marriage where both partners are most like Christ is the best!

##### But if God doesn’t will for you two marry, then you will be helping some other potential marriage partner for that person!

### Questions and Answers

### Discussion Group Questions

#### Have you come to the point in your life where you are willing to live the rest of your days single—if this is God’s will for you?

#### How have you tried to help God find a mate for you? Was it successful?

#### What character quality does God want to develop in you before marriage? For starters, look at the nine character fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22-23).

**Tentative Subject/Complement Statements**

You’ll find a mate by being the right person

**Possible Illustrations**

Singapore churches have 2 or 3 men per woman of marriageable age—so obviously many Christian women here will never marry.

**Finding Your Mate**

***Topical Message***

**Homiletical Outline** (Cyclical inductive form)

# Introduction

### Does God have a specific will for your life in terms of marriage?

#### Garry Friesen’s book caused a stir in this dimension.

#### I’m unconvinced of his thesis.

##### The biblical pattern is for God to provide not just any person as a mate, but a specific person of his calling.

##### God is concerned about lesser decisions—so why not the big ones?

#### If God does have a specific will in this area, then…

### Subject: How can you find the right marriage partner?

### Preview: Tonight we’ll look at three principles in finding the right partner. There’s many more, so as an issue comes to mind, write it down and we can talk about it in the Q & A session to follow.

# I. Finding the right person begins with being the right person.

## Seek God, not a mate—this is the scriptural emphasis.

### “He who finds a wife finds a good thing” (Prov. )

### But the rest of the book of Proverbs is about being the right person!

#### Proverbs 3:5-6

## Seek selflessness

## Be willing to remain single in life, knowing that it has many advantages (1 Cor. 7).

### Decision making is easier.

### Moving is easier (less material things needed, no children’s schooling to concern you)

### My December 1981 commitment

# II. Don’t try to help God find a mate for you—He doesn’t need help!

## Bob and Brenda (Paul and Judy, Rick and Susan)

## Leslie in Dallas moved there because Dallas has the most single persons over age 18 of any city in the world—but after 18 months she didn’t even go on a date!

## Just serve Him and He will take care of the rest.

# III. Compatibility in calling is a must.

## The “unequal yoke” can apply to calling as well as to whether one is believer or not.

## Steve Huddleston married a woman who had no heart for the Muslim world.

## I broke off my engagement with Janice after seeing that our callings were incompatible.

# Conclusion

### So how can you find the right marriage partner? The issue is not *finding* the right person but rather it’s *being* the right person as you trust God for a compatible mate (M.I.).

THE TOP 15 BIBLICAL WAYS TO ACQUIRE A WIFE

 1) Find an attractive prisoner of war, bring her home, shave her head,

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