

Maxims for Merry Marriage

February 6, 2019

COURTSHIP

Spending time with the right person...

Then went Samson to Gaza, and saw there an harlot, and went in unto her. And it was told the Gazites, saying, Samson is come hither. And they compassed him in, and laid wait for him all night in the gate of the city, and were quiet all the night, saying, In the morning, when it is day, we shall kill him. And Samson lay till midnight, and arose at midnight, and took the doors of the gate of the city, and the two posts, and went away with them, bar and all, and put them upon his shoulders, and carried them up to the top of an hill that is before Hebron. And it came to pass afterward, that he loved a woman in the valley of Sorek, whose name was Delilah. And the lords of the Philistines came up unto her, and said unto her, Entice him, and see wherein his great strength lieth, and by what means we may prevail against him, that we may bind him to afflict him: and we will give thee every one of us eleven hundred pieces of silver. And Delilah said to Samson, Tell me, I pray thee, wherein thy great strength lieth, and wherewith thou mightest be bound to afflict thee. {Judges 16:1-6}

Samson: A Bad Example

All throughout the Bible, we read of men like David, Solomon and Ananias making very bad decisions. Samson is no exception. The common denominator between these men are the women with whom they associated with. David slept with a married woman that was not his wife. Solomon chose pagan wives that drew his heart away from the Lord. Ananias united his life with a woman that, instead of rebuking his covetousness, chose to take part with him in sin. Samson loved women who were enemies of God. Samson chose to associate with unholy and unrighteous women that were not of the same household of faith. Today, men are associating with women that they should have nothing to do with. Both men and women need to choose their companions wisely.

Great care should be taken by Christian youth in the formation of friendships and in the choice of companions. Take heed, lest what you now think to be pure gold turns out to be base metal. Worldly associations tend to place obstructions in the way of your service to God, and many souls are ruined by unhappy unions, either business or matrimonial, with those who can never elevate or ennoble. Weigh every sentiment, and watch every development of character in the one with whom you think to link your life destiny. The step you are about to take is one of the most important in your life, and should not be taken hastily. While you may love, do not love blindly.

{Adventist Home 44.3-45.1} –Ellen White



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LESSONS

- ♥ Men of God have been lured away from righteousness and holiness because of uniting their lives with wicked women
- ♥ David slept with a married woman and suffered as a result of sin
- ♥ Solomon married pagan wives and suffered as a result of sin
- ♥ Ananias was married to Sapphira
- ♥ She did not rebuke covetousness
- ♥ Samson loved women who were enemies of God
- ♥ Samson associated with women who were not good for him
- ♥ God fearing men and women should carefully consider who they choose as their spouse
- ♥ Worldly associations place obstructions in the way of our service to God

Lust of the Eyes

And Samson went down to Timnath, and saw a woman in Timnath of the daughters of the Philistines. And he came up, and told his father and his mother, and said, I have seen a woman in Timnath of the daughters of the Philistines: now therefore get her for me to wife. Then his father and his mother said unto him, Is there never a woman among the daughters of thy brethren, or among all my people, that thou goest to take a wife of the uncircumcised Philistines? And Samson said unto his father, Get her for me; for she pleaseth me well. {Judges 14:1-3}

For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. {1 John 2:16}

When we study the life of Samson, we see that he was often guided by his eyes and lead by impulse. He did a lot of superficial looking and not a whole lot of character searching. Samson even slept with a prostitute. Typically, prostitutes dress provocatively and their characters leave a lot to be desired. Samson demonstrated that he desired superficial beauty more than the inner adorning of the heart. This got him into a lot of trouble.

A prominent author, named Ellen White, wrote “true love is not a strong, fiery, impetuous passion. On the contrary, it is calm and deep in its nature. It looks beyond mere externals, and is attracted by qualities alone. It is wise and discriminating, and its devotion is real and abiding.” {Adventist Home 51.2}. Samson didn’t understand what true love is. He was always attracted by externals rather than righteous character. Samson didn’t have love that was devoted. As soon as one woman was gone out of his life, he quickly found another.

Pagans, Prostitutes and Outward Adorning

The pagan women who stole away Samson’s affections and lead Solomon’s heart away from the Lord were women who did not worship God. All throughout ancient history and even today, prostitutes and pagan women rely on outward beauty and adorning to gain the affections of men. God fearing women (men too) are to throw away costly array and ornaments and adorn themselves with pure and holy traits of character. Study 1 Timothy 2:9-10 and 1 Peter 3:3-5.

Samson Didn’t Listen to God Fearing Parents

Samson’s father and mother counselled him and advised that he should marry a woman of his own faith. If he heeded the counsel of his God fearing parents, he could have avoided a lot of pain and suffering in his life. Young men and women should heed the counsel in 2 Corinthians 6:14 which reads “be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?” Let’s honour our fathers and our mothers: that our days may be long upon the land which the LORD our God gives us.

Young men and women sometimes manifest great independence upon the subject of marriage, as though the Lord had nothing to do with them, or they with the Lord, in that matter, and that it was purely a matter of their own, which neither God, nor their parents should in any wise control. They seem to think that the bestowal of their affections is a matter in which self alone should be consulted. Such make a serious mistake, and a few years of marriage experience generally teaches them that it is a miserable mistake. This is the great reason of so many unhappy marriages, in which there is so little true, generous love toward each other, and so little exercise of noble forbearance toward each other. These often behave in their own homes more like pettish children, than the dignified, affectionate husband and wife.

{Spiritual Gifts Volume 3 111.2} –Ellen White

- ♥ Samson was often guided by his eyes and lead by impulse
- ♥ Samson was very superficial in his methods of choosing female companions
- ♥ He desired superficial beauty rather than beauty of character
- ♥ Samson did not know what true love is
- ♥ He did not have devoted love
- ♥ Men and women should adorn themselves with pure and holy traits of character
- ♥ We should listen to God fearing parents
- ♥ We should marry someone who is of the same religion



In courtship, what are some guiding principles we should follow?

- Words and actions should be holy and Christ-like.
- Cultivate a pure and heavenly sanctified affection.
- Do not stay up late at night because it injures your health, unfits the mind for the next day's duties and has an appearance of evil.
- Do not trifle with hearts (ex. Calling out a woman's affections and then leaving that person for another new face).
- Do not win the friendship of a lady and gain her affections without her parents knowing.
- Flee from youthful lusts. Be zealous and put forth decided efforts to check the wickedness of the human heart.
- Become acquainted with each other's habits and disposition before marriage.
- Weigh every sentiment, and watch every development of character in the one with whom you think to link your life destiny.
- Ask yourself if your married life would be happy or inharmonious.

References: Adventist Home pages 45, 56-59, 83

Man Does Not Live by Bread Alone

Neither have I gone back from the commandment of his lips; I have esteemed the words of his mouth more than my necessary food.
{Job 23:12}

Job highly esteemed the word of God. As Christians, the principles contained in the Bible are our guide. The only safe and sure rule for life is to do what God says because the statutes of the Lord are right and those that do the things written in the Bible shall never be moved. (Psalm 19:8, 15:5). The Bible says that the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked. (Jeremiah 17:9). If we take only our own preconceived ideas, thoughts and opinions as our guide, we run into danger. Consider Ecclesiastes 7:17 which reads "be not over much wicked, neither be thou foolish: why shouldst thou die before thy time?" For a pure and holy life, we need to stick to the pure Bible. In Psalm 119:140, the Bible says "thy word is very pure: therefore thy servant loveth it". Before a man ever loves a woman and before a woman ever loves a man, the individual must love the Bible first and trust the Lord. Remember that every word of God is pure: He is a shield unto them that put their trust in Him. (Proverbs 30:5).

The choice of a life companion should be such as best to secure physical, mental, and spiritual well-being for parents and for their children—such as will enable both parents and children to bless their fellow men and to honor their Creator. Let a young man seek one to stand by his side who is fitted to bear her share of life's burdens, one whose influence will ennoble and refine him, and who will make him happy in her love.

{Adventist Home 45.4-.5} –Ellen White

The young man who makes the Bible his guide need not mistake the path of duty and safety. That blessed Book will teach him to preserve his integrity of character, to be truthful, and to practice no deception...

{Manuscript Releases Volume 18 306.2} –Ellen White

- ♥ Our words and actions should be holy and Christ-like
- ♥ Cultivate a pure and heavenly sanctified affection
- ♥ Do not stay up late at night
- ♥ Do not trifle with hearts
- ♥ Do not secretly gain the friendship of a lady
- ♥ Flee from youthful lusts
- ♥ Become acquainted with each other's habits and disposition before marriage
- ♥ Weigh every sentiment, and watch every development of character in the one with whom you think to link your life destiny
- ♥ Ask yourself if your married life would be happy or inharmonious
- ♥ Job highly esteemed the word of God
- ♥ The Bible is our guide
- ♥ We should do what God says
- ♥ Our hearts are deceitful and desperately wicked
- ♥ When we follow our hearts, we get into trouble
- ♥ When we are foolish, we may shorten our lifespans
- ♥ We must love the Bible first and trust the Lord
- ♥ Every word of God is pure
- ♥ God is our shield, and He will protect us when we trust and obey Him