

GETTING MARRIAGE OFF TO A GOOD START

Note to the speaker:

Source material for this outline can be found in chapters 1-3 of the book *The Secret of Family Happiness*. Do not, however, read to the audience directly from the book. Keep your information fresh and up-to-date by the use of additional, more recent material. Open the Bible frequently, and read directly from it as your authority

REALIZE THE IMPORTANCE OF THE FAMILY ARRANGEMENT (4 min.)

Many human needs are satisfied in the family circle (Ec 4:9-12; highlight close relationship of parents and children)

God had a good purpose in establishing the family arrangement (Ge 1:27, 28; 2:15)

History shows the importance of the family, even to national survival

A spirit is now spreading that endangers the family (g83 5/22 14)

SELECTING YOUR MATE FOR A HAPPY MARRIAGE (9 min.)

Jehovah's counsel is the foundation for happy marriage (Mt 7:24-27)

Even those already married can benefit from review of points; can help in own marriage and better equip you to help others

So that your marriage will be a happy one, know yourself and your needs when choosing a mate (g83 9/22 16-19; g83 10/8 20-2; yp 236-41)

There are questions you should ask yourself to discover your reasons for marrying: 'What do I want out of marriage? What are my needs—physically, emotionally, spiritually? What are my values, my goals and my methods of reaching them?'

Incompatibility is a cause for unhappiness in many marriages (g85 7/22 29)

Questions to consider relative to compatibility include: What type of work will husband do? Where will you live? How much money is needed to meet practical needs? Who will handle the budget? Will the wife need to work? What are each one's feelings about sex, children, the relationship with in-laws, and so forth? (Pr 15:22)

Similar backgrounds are an aid to compatibility

Real love versus infatuation (yp 242-51)

'I can change him/her'—an attitude to avoid

COMMITMENTS THAT SHOULD BE MADE IN MARRIAGE (10 min.)

You need to appreciate the commitments involved in marriage (Ge 2:23, 24)

What the woman must think about when choosing a man to marry: 'Am I willing for him to be my head?'

What the man must consider when selecting a wife: 'Do I love her as I do myself?'

Commitment based on love and respect will be more lasting than passion

Other important factors to consider before marriage

It is not the outward appearance that counts but what he or she is in "the secret person of the heart" (1Pe 3:4; 1Sa 16:7; yp 255, 258-60)

Marrying someone "in the Lord" is vital (1Co 7:39; De 7:3, 4; w89 11/1 18-22)

Count the cost before making a commitment as serious as marriage (Lu 14:28, 29)

If serious differences persist, may be best to call off the courtship (yp 256-7)

There is value in listening to the counsel of older persons (Job 12:12; Pr 3:5, 6)

ADJUSTMENTS AFTER MARRIAGE ARE USUALLY NECESSARY (4 min.)

Good to appreciate that adjustments may be needed in order for Ecclesiastes 4:9, 10 to be fully realized

To make such, need to be flexible, willing to bend

Recognize that you are not alone in making adjustments; both of you will be doing it out of love

Taking into consideration partner's sexual needs and views will help you to adjust in that area and avoid selfishness (g82 8/8 5-6)

COPING WITH DISAGREEMENTS IN THE MARRIAGE RELATIONSHIP (12 min.)

No two persons will agree on everything

Imperfection will cause disagreements, and we must accept and cope with the weaknesses of our mate (Pr 19:11)

It is unkind and tactless to make unfavorable comparisons of our mate with others

Some modern psychologists advocate that couples quarrel to bring differences out into the open, but the Bible shows that their counsel is unwise (Pr 17:14)

Keeping communication open between marriage mates is the key to resolving difficulties (g86 1/8 3-5)

There is a right way and a wrong way to bring up problems (Pr 18:13)

At times one's partner may have tensions that must be understood and allowed for (Pr 17:17)

Jealousy poses dangers to calm communication (Pr 14:30)

Sometimes outsiders may be helpful in resolving disagreements

Pride hinders communication and the resolution of difficulties, but pride shrivels if we remember our insignificance and possess a sense of humor

A guiding principle in coping with disagreements should be, "Return evil for evil to no one" (Ro 12:17; 1Pe 2:23)

Be faithful to yourself and the principles of doing what is right

Returning good oftentimes stops "the evil" (Ro 12:21)

REVIEW THE SCRIPTURE TEXTS IN THE REVIEW BOX ON PAGE 38 OF *FAMILY HAPPINESS BOOK*
(6 min.)

By applying these principles, you should be able to get marriage off to a good start

Always be optimistic. Avoid unrealistic expectations. Keep your sense of humor. Be flexible. Really get to know your partner

With Jehovah's blessing, you can have a mature, enduring, and happy marriage

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need be read. Source material in parentheses need not be mentioned)