

# **Less about Weddings and more about Marriage**



**St John's Church, Wimborne**





## Introduction

Our priority: 'We want you to have a wonderful marriage and not just a wonderful wedding.'

But a reality check: 'Everything is not always happy-ever-after.'

Today: Welcome and getting to know each other

## The Wedding Day Issues:

Flowers, Music



## More about Marriage:

- How well do you know your partner?

## The Listening Quiz

1 When my partner wants to talk, I take time to find out how s/he wants me to listen

- a) Always
- b) Often
- c) Sometimes
- d) Rarely
- e) Not applicable

2 When my partner shares something important, I strive to find out what is really being said

- a) Always
- b) Often
- c) Sometimes
- d) Rarely
- e) Not applicable

3 When listening is inconvenient or impossible for me, I say so clearly and suggest another time for us to talk

- a) Always
- b) Often
- c) Sometimes
- d) Rarely
- e) Not applicable

4 When I have agreed to listen, I drop whatever else I'm doing and give my partner full attention

- a) Always
- b) Often
- c) Sometimes
- d) Rarely
- e) Not applicable

5 When I'm the listener, I don't respond with advice unless I'm clearly asked to

- a) Always
- b) Often
- c) Sometimes
- d) Rarely
- e) Not applicable

6 When I'm listening, I refrain from disparaging anything that my partner considers serious or important

- a) Always
- b) Often
- c) Sometimes
- d) Rarely
- e) Not applicable

7 In a dispute, when I'm listening I try to be receptive to my partner's point of view. I'm not just preparing my rebuttal

- a) Always
- b) Often
- c) Sometimes
- d) Rarely
- e) Not applicable

8 I am friendly and responsive when I listen, because I understand that positive connection with the speaker is an important part of good listening

- a) Always
- b) Often
- c) Sometimes
- d) Rarely
- e) Not applicable

9 When my partner's negative behaviour makes listening difficult for me, I say so, because I want us to communicate well

- a) Always
- b) Often
- c) Sometimes
- d) Rarely
- e) Not applicable

10 Because I want to understand my partner, when I'm listening I pay attention to feelings as well as words

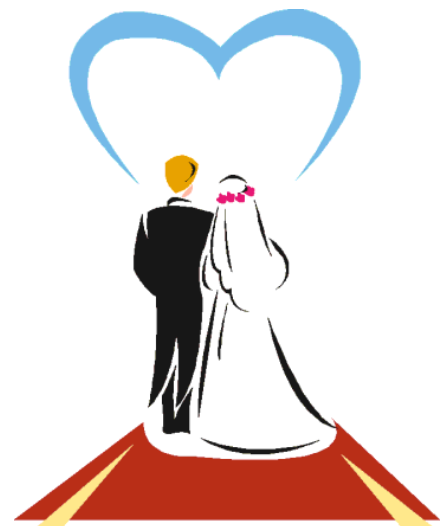
- a) Always
- b) Often
- c) Sometimes
- d) Rarely
- e) Not applicable
- How did you do?

Our task is to prepare couples not just for their wedding but also for their marriage

**There are three types of marriage:**

Up            Down            Up & Down

The Christian wedding service expects marriage to be for life, not just as long as we get something from it, or don't feel in love anymore.



**More About Marriage**

Marriage is a basic building block of society that has been around for as far back as we have historical records—either in secular sources or in the Bible—although it has taken different forms at different times and in different cultures.

The Bible says that God performed the very first marriage on the sixth day of Creation week. “God created man in His own image...male and female He created them. Then God blessed them, and God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth’ ” (Genesis 1:27, 28,)

### **Two Become One Flesh**

The Bible goes on to say that after God created Eve “He brought her to the man. And Adam said, ‘This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh.’ . . . Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh” (Genesis 2:22-24).



This account of the very first marriage highlights the fundamental characteristic of a godly marriage—a husband and wife become “one flesh.” Obviously, they remain two individuals, but in God’s ideal for marriage the two become one—in purpose. They share the same values, the same goals, the same outlook. They work together to build a strong, godly family and raise their children to be good, godly people.



## **God Created Marriage in the Beginning**

It's important to note that God initiated this very first marriage in Eden. Marriage comes from God. And His union of Adam and Eve illustrates God's ideal for marriage—one man and one woman joined together in a life-long commitment to each other, working together to form strong, godly families. Obviously, human beings haven't always followed that ideal, but God's way is still the best way.

The Bible has a lot to say about marriage, so let's make a "Top Ten List" of the most important Bible texts about marriage—and then look at each one more closely.

- 1) Mark 10:6-9** = God instituted marriage and gives it His blessing. (See also Genesis 1:27, 28; Hebrew 13:4)
- 2) Genesis 2:18** = God created humans with an innate need and desire for the close bond that marriage provides. (See also Proverbs 18:22)
- 3) Genesis 2:23, 24** = Husband and wife become "one" in the marriage bond. (See also Matthew 19:5, 6)
- 4) Ecclesiastes 9:9** = Marriage is a lifelong commitment. (See also Proverbs 5:18)
- 5) Ephesians 5:28, 33** = Husbands and wives are to love and respect each other.
- 6) II Corinthians 6:14** = Husbands and wives should be bonded together with a similarity of beliefs, goals, and objectives. (See also Deuteronomy 7:3, 4; Genesis 24:3, 4)

**7) Exodus 20:17** = Husbands and wives are to be sexually faithful to each other in the marriage relationship. (See also Leviticus 18:20)

**8) Matthew 5:32** = Adultery is the only biblically acceptable reason for divorce.

**9) Isaiah 62:5** = An ideal marriage relationship mirrors God's loving relationship with His people. (See also Isaiah 54:5; Ephesians 5:25)

**10) Proverbs 31:10** = A strong marriage relationship is a precious thing.

Finally, what does the Bible say about marriage? It says that marriage is a blessing given to us by God to make our lives richer and more fulfilling. It says that a good marriage not only draws us closer to our partner, it can draw us closer to God. "He who finds a wife [or she who finds a husband] finds a good thing, and obtains favour from the Lord" (Proverbs 18:22)

**Marriage is a journey we travel together...**



## The different stages of marriage:

- 'Arriving at the airport' Getting engaged
- 'In your seat and ready to taxi'  
Preparation time before marriage
- 'Take-off' Beginning married life
- 'Levelling off' Jolt into reality after the honeymoon
- 'Steady Climb' Setting course for your marriage
- 'Cruising Altitude' The middle years of marriage
- 'Preparing to Land' Closing days together
- 'In-flight Entertainment'  
Enjoying the routine bits of the flight

## Lessons about your Marriage Relationship

Some common reactions to 'turbulence' in marriage?

*'Find emergency exit and parachute out!'*

Based on belief that marriage 'works, or not; based on feelings of love

*'Unless you feel in love your marriage is impossible to sustain!'*

Therefore when the feelings stop you look elsewhere for love.

*'Wedding vows seen as 'fingers-crossed' expressions of hopeful intent'*

Wedding vows are solemn promises made before God to your spouse: *'Marriage is based on promise not passion'*

The key question that a spouse needs to know the answer to throughout marriage is:

NOT - do they still find me attractive; are they still in love with me?

***BUT - will they keep their promises to me?***

## Turbulence ... Potential Pitfalls

- |              |                                     |
|--------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1 Ambitions: | Write down your top three ambitions |
| 2 Family:    | Who is most important?              |
| 3 Children:  | Name the number                     |
| 4 Money:     | How do we make ends meet?           |
| 5 Conflict:  | A way through the maze              |
| 6 Sex:       | Changing attitudes                  |



The key to a happy marriage is:  
communication with each other  
Relationships do break down  
- ***the secret is forgiveness***  
What's important?

### **The foundational belief - marriage is God's big idea**

- It is God's blueprint for committed, intimate male/female relationships
- "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife and they will become one flesh"  
Genesis 2: 24
- Take God out of the heart of the marriage like a jigsaw without the overall picture on the box



*That is why a man leaves his father  
and mother and is united to his wife,  
and they become one flesh.*

*Genesis 2:24*

Your Notes



## **The Listening Quiz - Scores**

In scoring this quiz, allow three points for each "a" or "b" (My partner) response and one point for each "c" or "d" (Me) response. "Not Applicable" is assigned two points.  
Your score is: 0

### **[24 - 30] points:**

Exceptionally accomplished listening. If you talk as well as you listen, you're a dynamite communicator all around

### **[16 - 23] points:**

Listening well is demanding. You succeed often and can count on your ability. Use your score to locate any areas needing minor attention.

### **[8 - 15] points:**

Apparently you listen well sometimes, hopefully enough to give you a sense of the skills involved. Improvement is definitely possible.

### **[0 - 7] points:**

Perhaps you have never learned how to listen. Perhaps you are closed to what your partner has to say. Perhaps you two simply don't talk. In any case, consider improving your skills for a more satisfying relationship.



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