





# The Bible and Marriage

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## Foreword

*Foundations for Living* is a ten-unit elective for high school students, providing the biblical basis and historical development of the Christian worldview. Fundamental truths and principles from the Bible are used to apply the Christian worldview to a range of contemporary issues from family life to art, music, and politics.

Gathering all of a student's education into a unified whole, this course assists contemporary teenagers in recognizing the value of Christian truth. As teenagers discern the differences between Christian and non-Christian worldviews, they will be better equipped for their new adventures in life beyond high school.

*Foundations for Living* contains the following units. The specific unit you will be studying next is highlighted below.

Unit 1 – What Is a Biblical Worldview?

Unit 2 – Presuppositions

Unit 3 – The Doctrines of the Bible

Unit 4 – God's Creation

Unit 5 – The Family

**Unit 6 – The Bible and Marriage**

Unit 7 – Dating to Matrimony

Unit 8 – Christian Education

Unit 9 – Art, Music, and Politics

Unit 10 – Putting It All Together

**NOTE:** All vocabulary words appear in **boldface** print the first time they are used in the text. If you are unsure of the meaning when you are reading, study the definitions given in the Glossary.

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# The Bible and Marriage

*Your previous unit began our study of the Christian family. We have examined the characteristics of a godly husband/father, with God our Father as the perfect example of good fatherhood. We now continue to study the Christian family; however, our approach will be somewhat different from the last unit. Although we will learn about the roles of the mother/wife and the children, this will not be our entire focus. Instead, we will examine the whole concept of the Christian family. We will begin by examining the elements that make a Christian family successful. We will then address the roles of those members within the Christian family.*

## The Worldviews Presented in this Unit



## Objectives

**Read these objectives.** The objectives tell you what you should be able to do when you have successfully completed this LIFEPAAC®.

When you have completed this LIFEPAAC, you should be able to:

- Gain an understanding of the essentials of a successful Christian family.
- Learn the importance of the roles of family members.
- Determine the relationship between children and their parents.
- Acquire an understanding of role conflicts in our culture.
- Discover how family behavior patterns are cultivated.

# The Worldview Tree

**B**efore you read your first section, we would like to introduce you to the “Worldview Tree,” a recurring visual metaphor that will unify and explain the entire curriculum. It teaches that our actions do not occur randomly; rather, they are the natural results of our beliefs and presuppositions. Therefore, what we believe and think truly does make a difference! This is how it works (see the opposite page for the chart).

The Worldview Tree illustrates how a **culture** develops within a particular **civilization**. This process begins in the soil with **presuppositions**, which move up a root system into the trunk of the tree. Once above ground, the **worldview** affects one’s perspectives on life and directs one’s choices. These choices manifest themselves in a variety of activities, which are repeated over time as an ongoing **heritage**, passed from one generation to the next.

There are four successive steps that lead to a developed culture. The first step is **believing**, followed by **thinking** (or, in the case of Postmodernism, **feeling**). The process moves to **seeing**, and this leads through choices to **doing**. These steps of human progress illustrate how internal ideas lead to external actions.

Each time a Worldview Tree is displayed, its structure remains essentially the same, while its content follows the information in each unit and is represented by the **roots** (boxes in the lower portion of the ground) and the **fruit** (which are located on or near the tree). This content demonstrates how a variety of topics all follow a similar path of development from foundational beliefs (roots) to behavior (fruit).

There are two basic worldviews, God’s and Man’s. **God’s Worldview** is depicted with bright green leaves and healthy red fruit. **Man’s Worldview** is depicted with dull brown leaves and decaying purple fruit. Within **Man’s Worldview**, there are two variations: a single tree represents a single worldview and multiple trees represent a plurality of sub-worldviews (as with Postmodernism, which will begin in Unit 4). Each Worldview Tree asks a thought-provoking question and provides space for your answer.

Historically, these two worldviews (God’s and Man’s) developed over four periods of time as depicted in the pullout chart and provide a picture of the ongoing differences between the Christian and non-Christian perspectives on the origin, history and destiny of humanity.

## WORLDVIEW TREE LOCATIONS

|                                     |    |
|-------------------------------------|----|
| Contemporary Christianity . . . . . | 34 |
| Postmodernism . . . . .             | 35 |

Believing



THINKING  
OR  
FEELING

**Civilization:** Locations that display worldviews

**Fruit:** Resulting behavior



**Culture:** Activities that express a worldview

**Roots:** Foundational beliefs

**Worldview:** A comprehensive view of life

**Presuppositions:** Beliefs that develop a worldview

▶ **Seeing = Doing**

# I. THE SUCCESSFUL CHRISTIAN FAMILY

## Necessary Ingredients

Ministers frequently perform weddings for people outside their church. When asked why these people want a minister to perform their ceremony, they may respond by saying that they want a Christian wedding. Although a Christian wedding ceremony is certainly appropriate for Christians and can be a very beautiful ceremony, what is even more important is that the marriage is Christian. A Christian ceremony does not guarantee a Christian marriage. Several ingredients are necessary for a successful Christian marriage.

**Contentment** is a satisfaction or peace of mind in spite of circumstances. Also included in contentment is joy. This means a Christian couple is glad to be married to one another. Contentment and joy are not to be confused with a selfish concept of happiness.

There are difficult times in all marriages, times in which a couple may not be happy. However, contentment is a quality that can be present even in difficult times. While a worldly form of happiness is an emotion that changes according to circumstances, contentment is not based upon circumstances, but rather upon an awareness (in difficult times as well as in good times) that God has given the right marriage partner.

The apostle Paul describes his contentment in Philippians 4:11–12: *“Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need.”*

Paul aptly demonstrates the difference between a purely subjective form of happiness and contentment. He tells his readers that his contentment did not depend upon his circumstances (they changed constantly) but rather upon his relationship with Jesus Christ (v. 13). True contentment in a marriage relationship is not based upon circumstances, but rather upon the security of the knowledge that one’s partner is chosen by God. Happiness too often depends upon whether or not a person is getting his or her way. Too often, married people are only happy if their spouses live up to their expectations or act in ways that meet

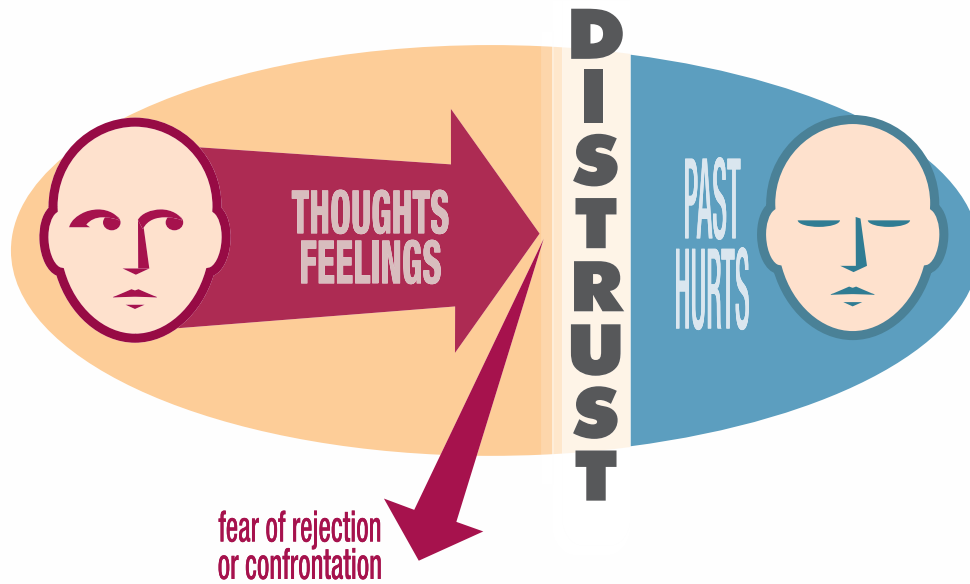
their approval. When a husband or wife does not meet the spouse’s expectations, the happiness is gone. On the other hand, contentment does not depend upon situations or emotions that can change in an instant. It is solidly based upon the union itself, not upon what that union may encounter.

**Communication.** It is essential that married couples maintain an open line of communication. Everyone seems to agree on the importance of this, yet so many do not actually practice it. The reasons for this vary, but the basis for many of the reasons is the same—a lack of trust. Married couples often do not communicate with one another because they fear that open and honest communication may cause more harm than good. Perhaps they feel they may be rejected, or they may feel that open communication will cause some sort of confrontation. Whatever the surface reason, the root of such reasons is often distrust.

Distrust and a failure to communicate openly and honestly build upon one another. Distrust keeps people from communicating with each other, and a lack of communication causes distrust. This is a frustrating cycle that can intensify in a marriage relationship and is one that must be broken before it causes great damage to the relationship.

**Obedience to God.** The foundation of a good marriage lies in the willingness of both partners to be obedient to God. When both partners in the marriage are committed in their relationship to God, they will be content. They will trust one another so that open communication is commonplace in their marriage. The husband and the wife are to be constantly aware that God is the ultimate Head of the family. As both love Him wholeheartedly and **submit** to His will, continued love for one another will be a natural result.

While it is to be expected that both the husband and the wife desire to be happy, the problem often arises when the ultimate goal of either individual is self-gratification. In such cases, each partner may make demands upon the other, believing that once their spouse acts a certain way, they will be satisfied; however,



this does not produce the desired effect. Although married couples are said to be “one” in their relationship, they maintain their individual traits. Attempts to force a person to be someone other than whom God has made him or her, causes tension rather than contentment. However, when both have the common goal of pleasing God and growing in their relationship with Him, they become less selfish. Rather than concentrating on themselves and fulfilling their own desires, they concentrate on God and His will. As we know, a major aspect of God’s will is to love and serve one another. Such love and service toward one another creates the joy and contentment both parties desire.

Jesus emphasized this principle by His life as well as His teaching. A well-known example of this teaching is found in Matthew 6:33, “*But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.*” Certainly God may allow us to have many “things,” but He does not want them to be our

ultimate goal. Among the things we want are happiness and contentment; however, we should not spend our time striving after them. Instead, God wants us to seek Him. The more we find of Him, the more we have the things we desire. Does this mean that if we seek God we will get anything we want? Yes and no. It does mean this, but it does not mean that we will get anything we want *before* we seek Him. In other words, as we seek God’s will, our own will changes. Referring again to the apostle Paul’s statement in Philippians 4:11–12, he was not content because he always possessed many things; he was content whether he had them or not. His contentment was in his relationship with God and his awareness that he was in God’s will.

The same principle holds true in a marriage relationship. As both partners make their relationship with God their ultimate goal, more of the things they want come their way—things such as trust, open communication, joy, and contentment.



**Answer the following questions.**

1.1 Why does a Christian wedding ceremony not necessarily guarantee a Christian marriage?

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1.2 Why is true contentment not based upon one’s circumstances?

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1.3 What do you think made Paul content, no matter what his circumstances?

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1.4 What are some things that have kept you from openly and honestly communicating with someone? \_\_\_\_\_

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1.5 How can distrust keep someone from open and honest communication? \_\_\_\_\_

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1.6 What should be the ultimate goal of both marriage partners? \_\_\_\_\_

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1.7 How does striving toward this goal help married couples get along with one another?

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1.8 How does striving toward this goal make a person more content? \_\_\_\_\_

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## An Essential Foundation

Although the above elements are certainly necessary in a successful Christian marriage, they are built upon an essential foundation. That foundation is regeneration, or what is also referred to as the new birth.

In John 3:5–7, we read, “Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.” Jesus explained to Nicodemus that everyone is born of the flesh. This means that all people have human parents and have been physically born. However, in order to enter the Kingdom of God, another kind of birth is necessary—birth by the Holy Spirit. In this way, one has to be “born again.”

The new birth is a work of the Holy Spirit. Religious activities such as church attendance are beneficial, but

they are not to be equated with and do not provide a new birth. Regeneration is brought about by the Holy Spirit and is the foundational element of a true Christian marriage. A couple considering marriage must be certain of their relationship with Jesus Christ. Their relationship with Christ will enable the couple to remain content, to openly communicate, and to continue in their desire to please God.

Without the new birth, people attempt to maintain these important components solely in their human strength. Without a true relationship with Christ, we all eventually become discontented. We also become distrustful in our communications, and the desire to please God will become tedious. Instead of maintaining an attitude such as the apostle Paul who said, “For I delight in the law of God according to the inward man,” we say, “I work at keeping God’s law, but I wish I wouldn’t have to.”

In Hebrews 9:14 we read, “How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from **dead works** to serve the living God?” (emphasis added). The term “dead works” refers to actions which may be outwardly religious but are not prompted by the Spirit of God. For a time, a married couple that is not born again may perform certain acts that seem pleasing to God, but they are not prompted by God and will eventually falter.

Consider the possible basis for doing “good deeds.” There are only two possibilities: such acts are prompted by ourselves, or they are prompted by God. We do things either because we want to or because God wants us to. The first reason is a selfish one. Although the deeds themselves may be good, the motivation for them is self-satisfaction. We do them because we want to, and we want to because we expect some sort of reward. Doing good deeds may make us feel good, they may cause others to look up to us, or they may earn financial rewards. The point is that we do good works for ourselves. However, if the Holy Spirit prompts the good works, the motivation is not selfish. We do them, not in and of ourselves, but by the leading of the Holy Spirit. When we are born again, our motivation for everything we do is changed. Instead of saying, “My will be done,” we say, “Thy will be done.” God’s will becomes our will. We are performing godly deeds rather than human ones.

This attitude is essential in a marriage. When marriage partners are born again, they are both doing the will of God. Their own desires become secondary, thereby reducing their selfishness. This is one thing that is meant when Scripture says “the two shall become one” (Genesis 2:24; Matthew 19:5–6; Mark 10:6–9). When the husband and the wife are both surrendered to God and desire to do His will, each has a common goal and selfishness is diminished. Therein lies contentment and trust.

Too often couples do not make sure that their relationship with Christ is established before getting married. Both persons may have been raised in church, and both may profess a belief in Christ; however, their true relationship with Him may not become evident until after they are married. In cases where one is truly born again and the other is not, the marriage begins to drift apart. The one who is truly born again continues to grow in his or her relationship with Christ: “*Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ*” (Philippians 1:6). This partner is more inclined toward spiritual things and has a true desire to follow God. The other begins to drift, obedience to God becomes lax, and a multitude of problems begins to creep into the marriage. It is essential that couples are certain of their relationship with God before becoming married. This is one reason it is extremely important that couples participate in Christian pre-marital counseling before taking their vows.



**Answer true or false for the following statements.**

- I.9            \_\_\_\_\_    Regeneration is also known as the new birth.
- I.10        \_\_\_\_\_    All people are born of the flesh, but not all are born again.
- I.11        \_\_\_\_\_    Religious activities, such as church attendance, cause one to be born again.
- I.12        \_\_\_\_\_    Whenever anyone does a good deed, we know it is prompted by the Holy Spirit.
- I.13        \_\_\_\_\_    Dead works refer to actions not prompted by the Spirit of God.
- I.14        \_\_\_\_\_    When marriage partners are truly born again, they both desire to do the will of God.
- I.15        \_\_\_\_\_    When marriage partners are truly born again, their selfishness is diminished.
- I.16        \_\_\_\_\_    When only one of the partners in a marriage is born again, the couple will continue to grow closer in their years of marriage.

## Additional Factors to Consider



**Don't forget to include the most important elements in a marriage**

As we have learned, before getting married it is absolutely necessary that couples are certain they are both born again. Several other factors may also play an important **role** in the success of the Christian marriage. Following are some matters worth consideration.

**Worship Styles and Doctrinal Convictions.** Although couples may be truly born again, they may hold to a wide variety of religious views. These would include forms and styles of worship, as well as doctrinal convictions. In today's culture, there exists great variety in worship styles and forms. Changing from what one is accustomed to or prefers may be extremely difficult and could cause stress in a marriage. If a couple considering marriage is accustomed to different traditions, it is important that they visit one another's church and make a decision concerning their preferences before entering into the marriage. This does not imply that one style is acceptable to God while another is not; however, couples should agree on where they will attend church together. Attending separate churches, or

attending a church where one is not fulfilled, will be detrimental to the relationship.

Doctrinal matters may include things such as an acceptable age for and/or mode of baptism, church government, **eschatology** (theology dealing with last things or end times), spiritual gifts, and other topics. Marriages may certainly be successful despite such differences; however, couples should be aware of their differences and will need to work harder to make their marriage successful.

It is also important that we understand there is much to learn within Christianity. Many of us are not aware of what lies outside our own tradition. The differences among Christians give us the opportunity to learn things we may not know. We often perceive something as being truthful, or even essential, because we have never examined the alternatives. The point, however, is that these matters must be decided upon before taking the marriage vows.

**Compatibility and Personality Traits.** Although the new birth makes all Christians brothers and sisters, we nevertheless possess many personal traits. **Compatibility** means the capability to exist together. This does not mean that different personalities are unable to maintain a successful marriage. Often couples whose appearances and personalities differ greatly are able to have a wonderful marriage. Although people are able to change some of their personality traits, this can prove to be very difficult and is only possible if each person is willing to do so. We must also be aware that, for the most part, one's personality is defined by the time he or she is old enough to get married. It is a dangerous and a regretfully common mistake for people to think they will be able to substantially change their partner after the wedding.

Cultural and educational compatibility must also be considered. One's culture and/or education greatly determine one's worldview, priorities, communication skills, interests, and preferences. To a great degree, culture and education mold our individual personalities. Although people from different cultures and with different educational backgrounds may have a satisfactory marriage, their compatibility needs to be determined before taking their marriage vows.

People can often be happily married despite great differences in their personalities; however, they need to make sure their differences are acceptable before getting married. This is why a reasonable **courtship** period is important. Courtship is a word not as common today as it was years ago. Courtship is a time of getting to know one another, with the possibility of marriage in view. This is not to be confused with the modern practice of dating. What could justifiably be called recreational dating may not necessarily take into consideration a future goal of finding a marriage partner. Courtship may include some of the same activities as dating, but it is for the deliberate purpose of preparing for the possibility of marriage. During this time, couples can learn much about their compatibility.

During the courtship period, if one discovers that the other is mean, selfish, vain, lazy, or dishonest, he or she needs to be aware that these traits will continue into the marriage. Other personality traits which may not be necessarily sinful will also continue into the marriage. Such traits may include loudness, shyness, slowness, as well as numerous other habits or mannerisms. The latter traits do not necessarily have to prevent the marriage

from taking place, but both parties must determine whether these traits bother them.

We must also realize our own personality traits and the fact that God accepts us despite them. At times, it is not the trait itself that needs to be altered but our willingness to be tolerant of one another's differences. Again, the crucial point is that we do not enter the marriage with intentions of changing our partner's personality to suit us.

**Family Size.** Another subject to be considered is the size of the family. Although couples do not often consider this before marriage, disagreement on the desired number of children can cause great difficulties during a marriage. During courtship and the initial marriage period, couples are primarily focused on spending time with one another. Eventually the topic of children will arise. At that time, couples often discover that they have varying views on this. One of the partners may not desire children as soon as the other or may not want children at all, while the other has completely different views on this subject. Even if they agree to have a child at the same time, they may not agree upon the size of the family they eventually want. There are fewer things in a marriage sadder than one partner longing for a child and the other not sharing that desire. A yearning for a child is one that will not simply go away; it will not be satisfied until it is fulfilled.

Married couples may change their minds about how many children they desire after having their first child. Often couples do not comprehend the joy children bring until they have their first. After that, they may decide to enlarge their families. What is necessary before marriage is to determine if both parties desire to be biblical parents. If not, it cannot be overemphasized that this must be considered an area of extreme incompatibility. Couples should not proceed with marriage plans with hopes of changing one another's minds after marriage.

**Age.** A man's and a woman's age is also to be taken into consideration. Age certainly does not guarantee the success or failure of a marriage, but it may affect the spouses' compatibility. It is also important to remember that the age difference at the time of marriage will remain throughout the marriage. In other words, the difference between a mature twenty-year-old woman and a youthful thirty-five-year-old man may not seem significant at the time of marriage but may be more notable when the woman is fifty. Again, such

differences do not necessarily determine the success or failure of a marriage but are certainly worth consideration.

**Maturity.** Other than age differences, the maturity of either person at the time of marriage is something to address. Following are some recent statistics:

## Marriage Statistics

- Fifty percent of women are married by age twenty-four.
- Fifty percent of men are married by age twenty-three.
- Teenage marriages are at an all-time high, since the 1940s.
- 33–50% of teenage marriages involve premarital pregnancy.
- Marriages between teenagers have a much higher divorce rate than among older couples.
- Marriages due to unplanned pregnancies have a divorce rate much higher than those of couples who begin their families after marriage.
- There is no evidence of a correlation between the age at the time of marriage and its success, except among teenage marriages.

Marriages that are well planned, discussed, and not hastily entered into have proven to be the most successful. In fact, there is a certain level of maturity required before entering into marriage. Although age does not necessarily guarantee maturity, it is nevertheless true that people require years of living in order to reach certain maturity levels. People who have not reached a proper maturity level often marry for other than appropriate reasons. Immature people may not be certain of their relationship with God and often confuse passion for the sort of love taught in the Bible. It is also difficult for such persons to accept that they have not reached a proper level of maturity.



**Circle the correct word(s) in the following statements.**

- 1.17 Although both persons in a relationship may be born again, they may hold to a wide variety of (**philosophical, religious, artistic**) views.
- 1.18 Differences may exist in the areas of worship styles and (**doctrine, culture, experience**).
- 1.19 (**Compatibility, Consistency, Religion**) is the capability to exist together.
- 1.20 Culture and (**appearance, age, education**) greatly determine one's way of communicating.
- 1.21 A time of getting to know one another with the possibility of marriage in view is called (**dating, courtship, engagement**).

**Physical Attraction.** Another area of compatibility is the matter of physical attraction. Although it is not the only thing to consider, it is nevertheless an important element. Most often, physical attraction is the first thing that draws a young couple together. Until we get to know someone, it is the only basis of our attraction. This is not wrong, unless it is the only thing considered. Interestingly, even God's Word includes this element when considering marriage. One example is found in Genesis 24:16, in reference to Isaac's bride-to-be, Rebekah: "And the damsel was very fair to look upon, a virgin, neither had any man known her: and she went down to the well, and filled her pitcher, and came up." Also, notice how verses 16–17 describe Leah and Rachel: "And Laban had two daughters: the name of the elder was Leah, and the name of the younger was Rachel. Leah was tender eyed; but Rachel was beautiful and well favoured."

Obviously, some men and women are attracted to one another. Mutual attraction is a part of the compatibility necessary within a marriage. The problem arises when one does not consider what lies beneath the surface. The fact that we consider someone outwardly attractive does not guarantee that we will find other things about them attractive. An outwardly attractive person may turn out to be someone whom we later find to be completely incompatible. The inner traits of a person are often what eventually determine how attractive we find him or her. A strong physical attraction tends to make people forget about other factors that make couples compatible. They confuse physical attraction with true love and compatibility, and they rush into marriage, only to later discover their mistake.

- 1.22 Whether or not to have (**children, cars, pets**) is something that must be agreed upon before marriage.
- 1.23 Marriages between (**the elderly, teenagers, unattractive people**) have a much higher divorce rate.
- 1.24 A certain level of (**maturity, selfishness, education**) must be reached before marrying.
- 1.25 The Bible describes both Rebekah and Rachel as (**wealthy, well-educated, beautiful**).
- 1.26 The (**appearance, inner traits, personality**) of a person often determine(s) how compatible he or she is with another person.

**Love.** Last, but certainly not least, is love. All couples who are considering marriage say they love each other. When asked why they want to get married, the couple's answer is typically, "Because we love each other." That should certainly be the right answer; however, it may not necessarily be true. This depends on one's definition of love.

Consider the many ways the word *love* is used today. We may say, "I love a good steak," "I love motorcycles," "I love that song," "I love my cat and dog," "I love my wife," or "I love God." Obviously, the context helps determine what one means when using this word. But even when love is used in such a variety of contexts, we may still be uncertain as to its meaning. The word may still be used incorrectly.

Usually love is used as an affectionate term, with its context expressing varying degrees of the same affection. In other words, a man may have somewhat of an affectionate feeling for a particular motorcycle, a somewhat stronger affectionate feeling for his wife, and an even stronger affectionate feeling for God. In this case, his priorities are right, but his understanding of the word *love* is still incorrect.

Part of the reason for this is due to the limitations of the English language. We have only one word to describe our affections toward everything, from steak dinners to God. In order to better understand this problem, we must examine how love is used in Scripture.

There are several Greek words translated "love" in our English versions. The two most common are **phileo** and

**agape**. Although our English versions translate both words as "love," there are significant differences in their literal meaning. *Phileo* literally means "brotherly love." The city of Philadelphia derives its name from this word. Philadelphia means "the city of brotherly love." This word primarily expresses feelings of affection, endearment, or fondness. This Greek word is most closely related to how we commonly use the word *love* in our culture. When we say we love a friend, we usually mean that we have warm feelings of affection or fondness for our friend.

Although affectionate feelings toward one another is a good quality, the word *agape* goes much deeper. *Agape* means benevolence or **charity**. This word includes acts that express affection. A good illustration is found in the King James Version of 1 Corinthians 13:1–7:

*Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity [love], I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing. Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up. Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.*

Most new translations of the Bible replace the word *charity* with love, but charity is truer to the intended meaning. Charity may be defined as selfless gifts for another's benefit. Not all gifts are selfless. Notice in verse 3 that one may give to the poor and still not be charitable in the biblical sense of the word. In order to express this *agape* love, it must be selfless. *Agape* extends much further than emotions.

When couples claim to love one another, they must ask themselves what they mean by that word. Do they only have affection toward one another, or are they willing to selflessly give of themselves for the benefit of their spouse? Mere emotions can change in an instant or over a period of time. *Agape* love—ongoing, selfless action for one another's benefit—can continue throughout the marriage.



**Answer true or false.**

- I.27 \_\_\_\_\_ Usually couples say they want to get married because they are compatible.
- I.28 \_\_\_\_\_ The English word *love* is used in many different ways.
- I.29 \_\_\_\_\_ There is only one Greek word translated as “love” in the Bible.
- I.30 \_\_\_\_\_ *Agape* means brotherly love.
- I.31 \_\_\_\_\_ The King James Version translates *agape* as charity.
- I.32 \_\_\_\_\_ *Phileo* expresses feelings of affection or fondness.
- I.33 \_\_\_\_\_ *Agape* means benevolence or charity and includes acts that express affection.
- I.34 \_\_\_\_\_ People who plan to get married should be willing to selflessly give of themselves for the benefit of their spouse.



Review the material in this section to prepare for the Self Test. The Self Test will check your understanding of this section. Any items you miss on this test will show you what areas you need to restudy.

# SELF TEST 1

**Answer true or false** (each answer, 3 points).

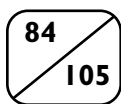
- I.01 \_\_\_\_\_ A good Christian wedding guarantees a successful Christian marriage.
- I.02 \_\_\_\_\_ Contentment is satisfaction or peace of mind.
- I.03 \_\_\_\_\_ Contentment only exists during times of happiness, health, and prosperity.
- I.04 \_\_\_\_\_ Paul was content only during easy times.
- I.05 \_\_\_\_\_ People often do not communicate because of distrust.
- I.06 \_\_\_\_\_ The foundation of a good marriage lies in the ability of both partners to keep one another happy.
- I.07 \_\_\_\_\_ A married person's ultimate goal is to keep him/herself happy.
- I.08 \_\_\_\_\_ When both partners have a common goal of pleasing God and growing in their relationship with Him, they become less selfish.
- I.09 \_\_\_\_\_ According to Matthew 6:33, if you seek the things you desire, you will eventually find the Kingdom of God.
- I.010 \_\_\_\_\_ God does not want "things" to be our ultimate goal.
- I.011 \_\_\_\_\_ Regeneration is often referred to as the new birth.
- I.012 \_\_\_\_\_ All people who do good deeds do so because they want to please God.
- I.013 \_\_\_\_\_ It is important that couples discuss their religious differences before getting married.
- I.014 \_\_\_\_\_ Anthropology is theology dealing with last things or end times.
- I.015 \_\_\_\_\_ Differences concerning the size of a family do not need to be taken into consideration before getting married.

**Underline the correct answer in each of the following statements** (each answer, 3 points).

- I.016 (**Happiness, Contentment, Freedom**) is a satisfaction or peace of mind in spite of circumstances.
- I.017 (**Contentment, Happiness, Success**) too often depends upon whether or not one is getting his or her way.
- I.018 Distrust keeps people from (**playing, working, communicating**) with one another.
- I.019 Married couples are to be constantly aware that (**God, the husband, the wife**) is the ultimate head of the family.
- I.020 "But seek ye first the Kingdom of God, and his (**joy, contentment, righteousness**); and all these things shall be added unto you."



- I.021 **(Exhortation, Regeneration, Inspiration)** is a word meaning “new birth.”
- I.022 All people experience a **(spiritual, physical, intellectual)** birth.
- I.023 “The two shall become **(united, married, one)**” is a description in the Bible of people who become husband and wife.
- I.024 Religious differences are often in the areas of worship and **(concerns, theology, salvation)**.
- I.025 **(Compatibility, Passion, Affection)** is the capability to exist together.
- I.026 A time of getting to know one another, with the possibility of marriage in view, is called **(courtship, dating, intimacy)**.
- I.027 It is important that a couple does not enter a marriage with intentions of **(accepting, acknowledging, changing)** each other’s personality.
- I.028 Fifty percent of women are married by age **(seventeen, thirty, twenty-four)**.
- I.029 Marriages between **(teenagers, elderly couples, Americans)** have a much higher divorce rate than those of other couples.
- I.030 Genesis 24:16 tells of **(Eve’s, Rebekah’s, Jezebel’s)** beauty.
- I.031 People often **(rush into, avoid, cancel)** marriage because of physical attraction.
- I.032 **(San Francisco, Philadelphia, Amsterdam)** means “city of brotherly love.”
- I.033 The King James Version uses the word **(love, affection, charity)** in I Corinthians 13:1–7.
- I.034 The word **(agape, phileo, bibleo)** includes ongoing, selfless action for another’s benefit.
- I.035 Charity may be defined as **(selfless, expensive, frequent)** gifts to benefit others.



Adult Check

Score

Initial

Date