



**Sunday Sep 01, 2013**  
**Answers To Common Questions (Part 1)**

In June we invited people to send in their questions, with the intent that we will answer them during our Sunday services.

We have broadly categorized the questions we will be covering into five main areas: Christian walk, Marriage, Lifestyle, Theology, Church. We will cover Christian walk, Marriage, this Sunday (Sep 01), and cover Lifestyle, Theology, Church on Sun Sep 08.

We will attempt to be brief but clear, direct and Scriptural.

On topics where the Scriptures are silent, our approach is to address the matter (A)in the light of what the Scriptures speak on related or similar issues, (B)in the light of the nature of God and (C)with practical wisdom.

In cases where we are sharing our personal opinion, we will indicate that we are doing so, and you are free to hold to your own personal opinion on the matter.

### **Christian Walk**

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***1, What is an idol? How do i know whether there are idols in my life? How do i get rid of them?***

Anything that takes God's place in my life is an "idol". An "idol" could therefore be a person, a material object, or an emotion, e.g. a passion, dream or desire. Covetousness (uncontrolled desire) is idolatry as stated in Ephesians 5:5.

There are two important keys to ensuring that there are no idols in our lives (A)honest self-examination. We need to be honest with ourselves and keep a check on ourselves., as it says in 2 Corinthians 13:5 (B)Ask the Lord to examine our hearts and expose anything that is wicked (Psalm 139:23,24)

Essentially the process of getting rid of an idol is to simply re-establish God's rightful place in our lives. Giving God the right to rule and reign in us. We do this (A)by worshipping Him with all our heart, mind, soul and strength and (B)obedience in all areas, especially in the areas where something else dictates our decisions instead of the Lord.

e.g. The love of money could be an idol.

***2, When God says He will give you wisdom and knowledge do you go out and look for it say read books or through any other means or is it done in a supernatural way through situations or experiences that God takes us through.***



Wisdom is the ability to use knowledge (information) to solve problems, improve conditions, etc. Both wisdom and knowledge come from God (Proverbs 2:6).

We gain wisdom through several sources

- 1, from the Lord by His Word and the work of His Holy Spirit (Isaiah 11:2)
- 2, by our experiences over time
- 3, by observing/reading/learning from other people's experiences
- 4, through the counsel of wise people who can speak into our lives (Proverbs 10:13)

All of these are useful and God will use all of these ways to bring wisdom into our lives. Hence we must remain open to acquire wisdom through all these channels.

***3, Overcoming fear - I am basically a shy person and at times have fear of man this keeps me from interacting with people. Does the bible speak about this how can i get rid of these fears?***

Yes.

**Proverbs 29:25** The fear of man brings a snare, But whoever trusts in the LORD shall be safe.

Fear is not normal. Fear is the opposite of faith. Fear attracts the wrong things in our lives. Fear cripples us. For some fear totally incapacitates them.

Fear is caused sometimes by our wrong thinking - misconceptions, poor self-image, due to trauma, bad experiences, etc. In some cases, fear is a spirit, it is demonic and has to be resisted as such.

Depending on the nature of the fear a person has, these are ways in which we can overcome fear:

1, Receive inner emotional healing from God for any trauma, bad experience of the past. This healing is brought into our lives by His Word, by His Spirit as we are in His presence. Sometimes, we need to actively resist any demonic powers causing this crippling fear.

2, Renew our mind, create a new self-image based on who we are in Christ

3, Have faith - replace fear with faith in God

**2 Timothy 1:7** For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.

**Psalm 27:1-3**

**1** A Psalm of David. The LORD is my light and my salvation; Whom shall I fear? The LORD is the strength of my life; Of whom shall I be afraid?

**2** When the wicked came against me To eat up my flesh, My enemies and foes, They stumbled and fell.



3 Though an army may encamp against me, My heart shall not fear; Though war may rise against me, In this I will be confident.

***4, Trust in the Lord and He will give you the desires of your heart. Pastor could you please explain this.***

We suppose you are quoting Psalm 37:4

Delight yourself also in the LORD, And He shall give you the desires of your heart.

Perhaps a parallel Scripture in the New Testament would be:

John 15:7 If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you.

God intends for us to come into a place where we so walk with Him that our hearts and desires are totally in tune with His. When we are in such a place of "delighting" in Him or "abiding in Him and He in us" He assures us that what ever we desire/ask it will be done. Obviously when we are in such a place, we would not even desire anything according to our flesh, but wholly desire according to His heart.

***5, Are children always under the verse that says obey your father and mother. When you have plans for your future and your parents have another set of plans are you disobeying them when you follow through with your plans. Is one guilty as long as the plans are not against God's will.***

There is "obedience" and there is "honor" (Ephesians 6:1,2). As long as we are young and dependent on our parents we are to "obey". There will come a time, when we transition from being dependent on our parents and have to stand on our own feet. We are now responsible for our own selves, not only on this earth but also before God. At this point we no longer "obey" our parents because they are not around (at least in most cases) telling us what to do. We make our own decisions. But we continue to "honor" (have and demonstrate respect) for our parents.

Ultimately, as adults (once you are on your own) we are answerable to God as to whether we have obeyed His directions for our lives (2 Corinthians 5:10). Hence, there may be situations when the instructions of God will necessitate that we disobey our parents (i.e. human authority) in order to obey God. [For example, the Bible teaches us to obey local civil authorities (Romans 13:1-5) and yet the apostles disobeyed man in order to obey God (Acts 4:18-20)].

***6, Is it necessary for young people to respect and obey people in authority within the church. Who are the people in authority within and outside the church.***



God has commanded us to submit and obey to authority in various spheres of life:

- ✓ Children to their parents (Ephesians 6:1,2)
- ✓ A wife to her husband (Ephesians 5:22)
- ✓ An employee to his/her boss/supervisor (Ephesians 6:5)
- ✓ A citizen to civil authority (Romans 13:1-5, 1 Peter 2:13,14)
- ✓ Believers to Church Elders - pastors and those set in different levels of authority in a local church (Hebrews 13:17)

## Marriage

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*[NOTE: In the live sermon we share several real life examples. Hence we strongly recommend that this section be reviewed while listening to the sermon recording]*

***1, Is it wrong to want a beautiful wife or handsome husband without neglecting the fact that the person has a relationship with Jesus Christ. Do we have the freedom to choose who we want to get married to or do we wait for God to bring the right person. Could you share with examples from the bible as well as scriptures on this.***

In our opinion, once we have put important priorities in place, then it is not wrong to have your personal criteria for what you would want to have in a spouse. "beauty" or "handsomeness" is subjective and a personal taste. However, we need to guard ourselves from lusting after beauty. **Proverbs 31:30 "Charm is deceitful and beauty is passing, But a woman who fears the LORD, she shall be praised."**

Finding the right person for your life is a combination of following God's leading and you making the choice. God will lead us and teach us in the way we are to go (Psalm 32:8) which includes matters concerning the choice of a life partner. God will order our steps and the steps of the one who is to be our life partner (Psalm 37:23), as He did for Abraham's servant who went looking for a bride for Isaac (Genesis 24:14). While God is orchestrating things, we must also be actively seeking, just as Abraham's servant did.

**Proverbs 18:22 He who finds a wife finds a good thing, And obtains favor from the LORD.**

Seek and you will find. If you are not seeking, it could a reason why you are not finding.

**Proverbs 19:14 Houses and riches are an inheritance from fathers, But a prudent wife is from the LORD.**

1 Corinthians 7 clearly brings out the importance of personal choice in this matter.

**1 Corinthians 7:36-38 MESSAGE BIBLE**



36 If a man has a woman friend to whom he is loyal but never intended to marry, having decided to serve God as a "single," and then changes his mind, deciding he should marry her, he should go ahead and marry. It's no sin; it's not even a "step down" from celibacy, as some say.

37 On the other hand, if a man is comfortable in his decision for a single life in service to God and it's entirely his own conviction and not imposed on him by others, he ought to stick with it.

38 Marriage is spiritually and morally right and not inferior to singleness in any way, although as I indicated earlier, because of the times we live in, I do have pastoral reasons for encouraging singleness.

***2, Do I as a believer only have to marry a believer? (What if my parents don't understand?)***

Yes.

We know that this is God's instruction (2 Corinthians 6:14, Amos 3:3) not only concerning marriage but in every form of being "yoked together".

Pastoral Observations of 3 categories:

Category 1 : Where young people (believers from both traditional Christian backgrounds and non-Christian backgrounds) take a stand for marrying a believer only

Category 2 : Where young people (believers from non-Christian backgrounds) are ready to take a stand, but the church is unable to assist them

Category 3: Where young people (especially young ladies from non-Christian backgrounds) are under the complete control of their families choices.

Category 3 - There are situations where a young person may have no choice, being still dependent on their parents, to yield to the compulsions of their family and enter into marriage to an person of their choice, who is an unbeliever. In such situations, our opinion is that God does not stop loving or being faithful to His own. That person can still do whatever is possible to grow in their faith, and through their life try to win their unbelieving spouse to the Lord. In some instances, the unbelieving spouse has been brought to the Lord!

**1 Peter 3:1-2**

**1 Wives, likewise, be submissive to your own husbands, that even if some do not obey the word, they, without a word, may be won by the conduct of their wives,**

**2 when they observe your chaste conduct accompanied by fear.**

***3, If a believer is in relationship with non believer is it fine to continue that relationship? As per my understating everyone is a son and daughter of God and its unfortunate that one of the person is born in an unbelieving family. But what If there is hope of that person will come to Christ going forward. Not because of us but Christ. We don't change people, God does. (1 Corinthians 7:12, 2 Corinthians 6:14)***



Before marriage, 2 Corinthians 6:14 applies. If a believer is in a "relationship" with an unbeliever, our recommendation is that this person either has to come out of this relationship, or wait till the unbeliever has made a commitment to the Lord. This may or may not happen, because although the Lord is ready to save each person, that individual still has to make their decision. Getting married to an "unbeliever" on the pretext that some day that person will get saved is not advised.

IF a person is already married and then comes to know the Lord, this is where 1 Corinthians 7:12-15 applies.

***4, My Question is Regarding marriage. If a person comes to Christ from another faith and is living in Christ faithfully in spite of many issues (like against their family, if he/she comes from non-Christian background), now it is a time for marriage. What should they do? who will help them? Kindly pray and help with practical guidance.***

This definitely is a challenging situation but God is definitely able to provide, and He will. Here are some options to consider:

- 1, Share your interest/readiness for marriage with elderly people in your church - so that they can look out for a life-partner through family and friends
- 2, Make use of Christian matrimonial sites
- 3, Register with the "marriage bureau" in your local church as well as in other local churches that have this facility.
- 4, Be open -you never know how God will bring this to pass!

***5, Is divorce an option? My husband is a womanizer, flirts with other women, etc. and I have confronted him, and he has accepted this but is unwilling to change.***

God does not approve of divorce (Malachi 2:16) . Marriage is for a lifetime, until death do us part and we must strive towards this. Almost all marriages go through their share of storms in different seasons of life, and with God's help and each other's support we need to make it through these storms.

Even if there happens to be a failure - moral, financial, etc. - on the part of a spouse, we need to seek God's strength to extend forgiveness and bring healing.

There are some situations where divorce is permitted and the marriage dissolved:

- ✓ Unfaithfulness (Matthew 5:32)
- ✓ Willful desertion of an unbelieving spouse (1 Corinthians 7:15)

God hates the event (divorce) but He still loves the people who have or are going through it. There are many complex real life scenarios that result in divorce. We must understand the heart of God, His mercy and the fact that He makes all things new.