

Session 6

Title: Foundational principles of choosing Mr. & Ms. Right



Marriage is one of the most vital decisions of one's life, apart from the decision of our salvation. This decision taken has a great bearing and impact not only on the quality of their family and married life, but also whether or not it fulfills its God given purpose. Isn't it wonderful to know that God is extremely interested in this most vital decision of His children? He has not left us on our own to make this decision but has given us pertinent directions in the Scriptures on this vital matter. Let us look at what God wants to teach us through His words, so that we can all build godly families that would glorify God and will help us accomplish His purpose in our lives.

Summary of the Video:

Genesis 24 gives us an insight into the principles Abraham applied to look for a bride for his son Isaac. In this chapter, the biggest chapter of the book of Genesis, it is intriguing to note that a narrative of 67 verses is given emphasizing how a life partner should be chosen. Many times, people leave this important decision of choosing their life partners to their parents. Some are even very negligent or casual about it. The choice a person makes is very vital, as it can either be a reason for a blessed marriage or result in doomed marriage.

Here are some principles, from this chapter, about how to choose a life partner. Let us use the acronym G.U.I.D.E. to help us in choosing the right partner. The reason for using this word "Guide" as an acronym is firstly, Abraham's trusted senior servant (as a guide) was sent to go and choose a bride for his son. Secondly, the fact that we have the guidance of the Holy Spirit who helps us in choosing our life partner. God is very much engaged in helping us in this particularly important decision of our lives.

G – Go to God to direct your paths (Genesis 24: 7, 12). Abraham told his servant that he must choose a girl for his son Isaac from among his relatives and not from the Canaanites. Genesis 24: 7 states that Abraham assures his servant that God will send his angel to go before him and help him in this task. This shows the deep faith and assurance that Abraham had on God Almighty. Abraham also acted on his trust and assurance of God and sent his servant to look for a life partner for his son. In verse 26 and 27 we see that the servant of Abraham bowing down, worshipping the Lord, and acknowledging God's help for the success in finding the right girl he was looking for his master's son. All these clearly shows that both Abraham and his servant were dependent on the Lord and had soaked this important task in much prayer. We need to pray a lot for our life partner. If we are parents, we need to pray with and for our children

for their life partners. When we honour God in this matter, He will guide our children in choosing their right life partner. So, firstly go to God and God's word to guide and direct you.

U – Uncompromising in what is Non- Negotiable (Genesis 24:2): In Genesis 24:3, Abraham makes his servant promise that he will not take a bride for Isaac from the people who do not believe in the living God they served. This was absolutely non-negotiable. You would notice that Abraham did not set any outward aspects like appearance of the person as a non-negotiable criteria. Choosing someone who is outside your faith will eventually lead to a troubled marriage. This is because marriage is not only the union of two people to make a happy home, but it is also a merging of faith and beliefs. Living under one roof and being divided in faith and beliefs will cause a constant rift between life partners, making married life difficult. So, when choosing a life partner, it is very important that one understands these non-negotiables very clearly and would abide by it. Do not major on minor aspects, and minor on major aspects.

I – Individual choices have a role to play (Genesis 24: 2, 37). God does not want us to choose anybody indiscriminately. We all have our individual choices, and they should not be played down on. We need to take them seriously. When one's choices are downplayed, sometimes they may cause us unnecessary disappointments later on. Everyone has our individual preferences and God honours those choices.

D – Deciding through discernment and prayer (Genesis 24: 14,15, 66,67). The servant of Abraham kept praying that God should lead him to the right person who would be the bride for his master's son. The Bible tells us that while he was still praying, Rebekah came, and all that the servant had asked as a sign was fulfilled (Genesis 24: 14-27). The servant very keenly discerned the signs that were prayerfully put forth before the Lord by him. We see that discernment was not just on the part of the servant, but also Rebekah and Isaac. The Bible says that Rebekah was asked by her mother and uncle if she was willing to immediately leave to which she consented. Her consent shows that she had discerned God's working in this entire sequence of events. Isaac, after listening to the entire account of the selection process led by God, accepted Rebekah (Genesis 24:66). So, we see that discernment along with much prayer, is pivotal when choosing the right person as one's spouse.

E – Engaging parents and Godly people is very important (Genesis 24: 1-2). It is very interesting to note that Abraham deployed his senior servant, a confidant of his, for this important task of choosing a bride for his son. There was so much prayer in this entire process of finding a suitable bride for Isaac. The servant was not just a confidant of his master, but he was a god-fearing man, who leaned on the Lord all through his journey in this task. Keep your parents involved when making such important decision. When you honour them by engaging them in your decision making, the Lord will honour you and your marriage. We know that godly people contribute greatly to our spiritual growth, so they too can help in making this vital decision.

Get Insight & Apply:

We learnt in this lesson that having God as the centre of his life, Abraham entrusted the search for a bride for his son Isaac also into God's hand. He had total trust and faith in his God that just as God had promised, he would see his descendants through Isaac, the promised child (Genesis 17: 19-21). Acting on his faith he deployed his godly servant to look for a bride for his son. Anchoring on God's word, trusting God, and taking decisions with much prayer is the key as we should embark on this journey of choosing a life partner.

As a single person looking to get married or as a parent trying to guide one's children in their decision making, let's deliberate a little deeper into the principles we learnt in this chapter.

1. Does the very thought of depending on God for choosing a life partner for yourself or for your children bring fears in your heart or does it assure you that God would help you? Write down your answer for both the possible scenarios.
2. Of the five principles learnt, which are the ones have you already factored into your journey and which ones need to be strengthened?
3. What steps will you take to strengthen those principles that are making you lag behind in your journey?
4. There can be many things that hinder us in our journey when choosing a life partner and making the right decision. One of the major hindrances is fear, and fear can be multifaceted. The pressure from the society is another hurdle that both singles and parents go through. God never despises us when we approach Him in fear, but he admonishes us not to be anxious about anything but with prayer and thanksgiving to make our requests known to God, and then His peace will guard our hearts (Philippians 4:6,7).

The Word of God also assures us in Psalms 32:8, that He will guide us and not leave us alone. The biggest antidote for fear is faith in God and love for God (1 John 4:18). We can grow in faith and also experience God's love as we spend more time with the Lord in prayer, studying his infallible Word and taking small steps in daily obedience to God. The Bible says that Isaac was meditating in the field when he saw the camels that brought Rebekah and his father's servant. This shows that Isaac daily spent his time with the Lord in a quiet place (Genesis 24: 63).

We recommend you to list all those things that bring fear and hinders your journey of finding your life partner. Bring it before the Lord in prayer and study His Word. When the Lord speaks to you through His Word (which is your anchor) write them down and pray daily. As we learnt in this chapter, prayerfully share your concerns with your parents and a godly mentor (the person led by the Lord) so that they can uphold you in their prayers and help you in this journey.

I WILL STATEMENT:

For this is God, Our God forever and ever; He will be our guide Even to death (Psalm 48:14). With this assurance as you journey with the Lord in your search for a life partner for yourself or for your children and in their decision making, we encourage you to write down as many "I Will" statements that would help you to take one step at a time, as the Holy Spirit leads you. We believe, just like Abraham witnessed God's kindness and favour in finding the God given bride for his son (Rebekah for Isaac), you too will find success in this vital decision and lay a firm foundation for your family and married life that will fulfil God's purpose.

Prayer:

Father God, we thank you so much for the beautiful guidance of your Word, that helps us see the important principles concerning such a vital decision of our lives. Lord, we ask that both the singles who are looking for a life partner and parents who are looking for a life partner for their children be strengthened by these insights. May the reading of this chapter help them reflect and lead them to you who is our heavenly match maker, the one who will provide the needed guidance and success as they seek you. We believe that as they follow these principles and guidance of the Holy Spirit, they will all establish godly families that will accomplish your eternal purpose. In Jesus's Name we pray. Amen

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