

Angie's Marriage Column ~ December 9, 2009

Should a Christian Marry an Unbeliever?

Ask Angie: "I plan to get married soon but the person I am in love with is not a believer in the Lord. It sure is true that love makes us blind because I don't know what I'm going to do, I don't think I can live without this person. Am I wrong to marry an unbeliever? Please give advice.

First, before we begin this marriage column I want to make known the foundation of what we perceive "a believer" to be so we can all be on the same page. For this marriage column and all of the Heaven Ministries literature "being a believer" is trust, belief and faith in Jesus Christ, the son of God our Father.

Marriage Guidance: You are right about one thing "Love does make us blind—literally"! The most important aspect of our Christian walk is putting our trust in the Lord. Everything else for a believer is secondary, which doesn't mean it is not important but the Christian (believer) needs to have a sure footing for his or her life and that is only found in our trust and faith in Jesus.

As believers we have to trust in what God says is truth for our lives—by trusting in and applying His principles/instructions (will) into our lives is what make us His children and Him our Father. If believers do not follow the guidelines already established for them essentially they will end up walking in err, which later have consequences. With that said, lets move on with the marriage column.

Believers Must Marry in the Lord

But if her husband dies she is free to marry anyone she wishes, but he must belong to the Lord. (1 Corinthians 7:39)

This scripture is essentially forbidding believers from marrying unbelievers and even dating/courting them. God doesn't give us this command to be difficult, but to make *life and marriage better for His children*. In fact all of

God's commands bring peace, abundance and prosperity when followed dutifully.

What Happens When a Christian Marries Outside of the Faith?

When a Christian marries someone who does not cherish the same values and principles many issues and problems can happen and do. Here are just a few of those issues that can make marriage and family life miserable if we marry outside of the Lord.

- * The believer's faith/commitment in Jesus Christ weakens
- * Disagreements on how to discipline the children
- * Disagreements on how to manage finances
- * Personality and character clash
- * Disharmony amongst one another on values and principles
- * Distance between one another or lack of intimacy
- * Confusion of roles and positions of husband and wife
- * Unhappy marriage with divorce looming

Being an encourager for couples in marriage for the last seven years I have seen over and over again the complete breakup of the family unit because one spouse or both are unbelievers. The most important component to a strong marriage is the foundation the marriage rests on.

Doers of the Word Find Solutions to their Marriage Problems

When both couples believe in Jesus Christ and are “doers of the word” they take their problems to God and the values taught them from God’s Word and amicably find a solution. Their actions produce a solution, whether it is compromising, sacrificing, forgiving, or being respectful. The list of appropriate actions that believers apply into their life come from having a personal and growing relationship with God—they trust in Him!

“Doers of the word” have good marriages. Well in most instances we hope so anyway. Applying Christ-like principles into the marriage is what Christian couples are supposed to do—they are supposed to love one

another in the ways of the Lord, which is submission, compassion, forgiveness, and respect of one another. This is parts of what love is!

The other kind of love, the kind that blinds us is not love but feelings. Feelings can and will literally blind us to seeing the truth for our lives. For a Christian truth is in Jesus Christ and [His principles for right and good Christian living.](#)

But what if your [spouse is an unbeliever?](#)

Well, if your spouse is not a believer their foundation for themselves and for their marriage will rest on humanism. Humanism is relying on things not of God but of the world. And oh, what a shaky foundation the marriage will be on.

Love Can Be Blind

How blind can love be? Love that does not come from God is so blind that what you perceive to be love is not real love at all but more of what is called [desire and lust mixed with the newness of a relationship](#) and the praise you receive from someone—feelings! That's all they are.

But feelings cannot sustain a life-long commitment to marriage. Unfortunately feelings change and go away until what you thought was love shows itself up in what you only thought love to be.

Real love takes action! Saying the words “I love you” is cheap and virtually anyone can say these words, but not everyone can love with the [Love that has been given to us through our own forgiveness and salvation in Jesus Christ](#)—this is where loves comes from. So then how can a non-believer truly love someone unconditionally unless they themselves have experienced it (love/forgiveness) from Jesus Christ?

Real love teaches us to have respect for our marriage vows and shows us how to honor the person we married and to keep the marriage bed pure. (Hebrews 13:4)

Jesus said that all of God's commandments were given to us for two simple reasons...to help us to love God and to love other's as we should. Practical, peaceful, abundant and fruitful Christian living is all about love and loving others. How will your service to God affect that of your unbelieving spouse? Won't there be disharmony and contention between the two of you in marriage. Will the believer undermine his or her own service, faith and stewardship in the Lord to appease the one who is not a believer?

God considers marriage a lifetime commitment. This means that once you are married there is no turning back. Below are real words of pain and some of the difficulties associated with a Christian (doer of the word) marrying an unbeliever. These are real words of emotional suffering and grief from people who married outside the Lord or became believers later in the marriage.

I have been married for 10 years this Saturday. I was not a Christian when I got married, and neither was he. I am a Christian now, however my husband is not. I am not sure what I am asking or if there is a question. I just am not sure how to be married to someone who is not a Christian. It seems like we are constantly fighting and are not able to work things out. I want my marriage to work and I love my husband very much but it seems to be getting harder and harder every day.

I am saved and married to an unsaved husband who isn't even trying to walk with the Lord...it's very frustrating...he makes horrible decisions that affect me and our children...decisions that he could get into legal trouble...I'm trying to stay positive about being married to him but honestly feeling that it's not going to get any better...only worse...what can I do? How can I still love God and deal with an unsaved husband who just won't do right? Should I divorce him? I know that God hates divorce but how do I stay married to a man who's lifestyle contradicts mine...he curses, gambles, and so many other things that are not godly but he's also loving, caring and unselfish.

I am a woman striving to live a pleasing life for the Lord, I am also trying to teach my sons to do the same. My Husband is backslidden and it is very

difficult and probably confusing to my kids because they are being influenced by good and evil. How do I deal with this?

I'm married to an unbeliever of the Lord, he accepted Jesus in his heart when he was small but has come to me to church 3 years ago but the pastor in that church said a comment to him that disappointed him. I'm still praying and having faith in the Lord that he will bring him back, there's a retreat for couples in my church next week and his going with me but it seems like I'm going thru trials at this point. There's a women that calls him when I'm at work and has even left him messages and he swears he has nothing to do with that women, I want to believe him but its just to obvious. This has brought me depression, sadness, fear, anxiety just thinking of him having an affair. There's no physical evidence, I don't know what to do at this point. The Lord has spoken to me and has told me to forget about the divorce because that's not what he wants for me, also that he has chosen him for me, that thru me he was going to bring to his path. I'm not sure exactly where I stand.

There are many more marriages where believers are deeply hurting while their loved ones are living in sin. Most of these people realize that God hates divorce. And He does. [Marriage is a lifetime commitment.](#)

If you or someone you know is considering marrying an unbeliever truly consider the consequences, pray about it, and wait on the Lord. The answers that God enlightens you with won't always be something you are prepared to hear but it may just be what you are needing to hear. May God bless you and give you hope, encouragement and wisdom in your journey in life.

Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness? What harmony is there between Christ and Belial? What does a believer have in common with an unbeliever? 2 Corinthians 6:14-15)

God bless!
In Christ,
Angie and Frank

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