

## Premarital Counseling Personal & Relationship Inventory

There is no decision, other than your salvation, that is more permanent and lasting than choosing whom you will marry. Therefore, it is wise to invite others into this process and seek godly counsel as you consider this weighty, yet wonderful decision. Our counseling sessions are designed to enable you to make this decision with confidence and to follow through on this commitment with excellence.

The following questions will require time, thought, and careful reflection. Each person should spend time thoughtfully and prayerfully answering these questions on their own. Most of these questions do not have a “right” answer; the important thing is for you to be honest. The goal is not to dig up past or present issues; rather, the goal is to openly and honestly set the best foundation for making a wise decision regarding marriage.

After you have answered these questions individually, send a copy to the person(s) conducting the counseling (at least two days before your first session) and be sure to talk through your answers with each other before coming to your first meeting. The person/couple providing your counseling are the only ones who will read your responses.

**NOTE:** Completed worksheets should be submitted to the pastor conducting your premarital counseling at least 48 hours prior to the meeting.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Wedding Details**

1. Have you already planned the date, time, and location of your wedding? If so, please provide those details.
  - Date:
  - Time:
  - Location:
2. Have you decided on the officiating pastor for your wedding ceremony? (NOTE: *Remember to check with the appropriate state government regarding marriage license & officiant requirements.*)
  - Officiant's Name:
  - Officiant's Church:
  - Officiant's Contact Information (phone & email):

## **Spiritual Background**

1. Briefly describe the spiritual environment in which you were raised (e.g. father's faith, mother's faith, if you grew up going to church, faith of siblings, etc.).
2. Briefly describe how you came to faith in Jesus Christ, including what you believe about who Jesus is and what he has done for you.
3. How would you describe your relationship with God? Circle one of the following and briefly explain your answer:

**Growing in Christ    New Believer    Searching    Curious    Indifferent    Hostile**

4. Are you currently a member of a church? If so, where? If not, do you regularly attend church services? If so, where?

## **Family Life / Background**

5. Were your parents ever married, divorced, separated, widowed?
6. Have you been married before? If so, for how long and what caused the end of the marriage? Or, have you been in any other relationship that you thought would lead to marriage? If so, what happened?

## **Your Present Relationship**

7. How long have you known each other? How long have you been dating? How long have you been engaged?
8. Have you ever called off your relationship and/or plans to marry? If so, what would you say was the cause and how did you resolve the situation?
9. Have any of your family members or friends suggested that you should not move forward with marriage? If so, do you know why?

10. How physical is your relationship at the present time?

- a. How often do you see each other?
  - i. Every day
  - ii. Several times per week
  - iii. Once per week
  - iv. Once per month
  - v. Other
- b. We spend the night with each other:
  - i. We live together
  - ii. Several times per week
  - iii. Once per week
  - iv. Once per month
  - v. Never
- c. We sexually touch ("pet") each other:
  - i. Often when we are together
  - ii. Rarely
  - iii. Never
- d. We have sexual intercourse:
  - i. Weekly
  - ii. Once per month
  - iii. Rarely
  - iv. In the past, but not anymore
  - v. Never

11. Together as a couple, how have you handled relationship struggles (e.g. communication issues, disagreements, etc.) in the past? What lessons have you learned about each other during these times?

12. Have you disclosed and discussed your current financial situation (e.g. debts, savings, loans, etc.) with each other?

13. At least three characteristics mark a healthy relationship:

- **Mutuality:** mutual caring, mutual honesty, mutual respect, mutual repentance
- **Reciprocity:** both partners give and receive; there is a safe and open exchange of thoughts and ideas.
- **Freedom:** there is freedom to respectfully challenge and disagree with one another without the fear of danger or retaliation; disagreement does not always bring disunity.

Do these characteristics, at least to some degree, mark your relationship?

## **Your Future Relationship**

14. Briefly describe what you believe the Bible teaches about marriage.
15. Why do you want to get married?
16. Why do you want to marry this person? List some of your fiancé(e)'s characteristics which are most attractive to you.
17. What are you looking for in your marriage (e.g. to make you happy or complete; to give you identity or purpose; something else)?
18. Are the two of you headed in the same direction in life? Are you ready to leave the single life and independent decision-making (having your career, finances, and friends influenced by your spouse)? What is your shared vision of lifestyle, number of children, church involvement, and how you will handle time with and influence of extended family?
19. Describe a marriage you have observed that you most want yours to resemble. As you see it, how does a Christian marriage differ from any other?
20. *"Worshipping God as creator in your marriage means that when you look at your husband or wife, when you consider your spouse's personality and gifts, and when you think about how differently he or she is hardwired from you, you will celebrate the glory of God as creator, expressed in who he designed your spouse to be."*<sup>1</sup>

Are you ready to be a life-long learner of your spouse celebrating non-moral differences to the glory of God?

## **Working through Past**

We all come into marriage with a past. Some events of our past affect us more than others. Some events affect us positively and others negatively. Likewise, some of our current behaviors will affect our marriage more than others, and in various ways. That said, by God's grace, we want to do all we can to ensure your marriage is built on the strongest foundation possible. In order to do that, we need you to honestly consider some sensitive questions.

These do not require written answers and will not even be directly address in this session, but if you answer "Yes" to some of these questions, please talk to the counselor(s) (or another trusted counselor) privately should you feel that necessary.

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<sup>1</sup> Paul Trip, *What Did You Expect*, 279.

In your current relationship:

1. Have you ever been threatened or physically hurt?
2. Have you ever felt fearful of or in physical danger because of your partner's anger?
3. Have you ever been an unwilling participant in any sexual acts in this relationship?

In your past:

1. Have you ever struggled with pornography? Do you currently struggle with pornography? If you currently struggle (or have struggled in the recent past), do you have weekly accountability with another Christian brother/sister?
2. Were you ever physically or sexually abused? If so, have you sought counsel to help you work through the past trauma? Are you fearful about how this might affect your sexual relationship with your fiancé(e)?

Read the article "*I Messed Up: Confessing Sin to Your Boyfriend or Girlfriend Before You Get Engaged.*"

- Consider the implications of this article on your engagement.
- Talk to the counselor(s), pastor, or trusted friend if you're not sure how best to move forward.

### **A Note for Women**

The Lord, in infinite wisdom, created the body with creativity and intricacy. In his sovereign goodness, the Lord gave sex as a good gift to married couples. Given the beautiful complexity of the female's body, it's wise for a woman to have a pelvic examination *no less than 6 weeks before the wedding day*. A thoughtful, caring physician can give specific instructions that will ensure the time of your first intercourse is enjoyable.

Session IV will address theological and practical areas of physical intimacy in more detail. However, if you have specific questions now, please let the counselor(s) know.