

# A Young Couple's Perspective

## Scripture References

Understand this, my dear brothers and sisters: You must all be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to get angry.

**James 1:19 NLT**

And “don’t sin by letting anger control you.” Don’t let the sun go down while you are still angry.

**Ephesians 4:26 NLT**

Don’t sin by letting anger control you. Think about it overnight and remain silent.

**Psalms 4:4a NLT**

Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness?

**2 Corinthians 6:14 NKJV**

## Notes and Highlights

### “Marry your best friend”

- Some relationships build up slow. There are many benefits to getting to know each other well before progressing into a romantic attachment.
- When couples start out as friends, it is easier to see and determine common ground.
- Friendship facilitates being truly open and honest with each other, which, in turn allows both persons to discuss all the important issues that need to be addressed before going further into a committed relationship.

### Set clear parameters

- Relationships benefit from clearly defining what the expectations are.
- The relationship will sail more smoothly if both are on the same page.

### Some tools for knowing each other better

- Friendship: provides a more comfortable environment for getting to know each other. There is less angst involved in revealing oneself to a friend.
- Assessments: these tools can help each one understand both themselves as well as their prospective partner better.
  - Enneagram<sup>1</sup>, StrengthsFinder / CliftonStrengths<sup>2</sup>
  - FREE Love Language quiz<sup>3</sup>, Apology Language quiz<sup>4</sup>, NERIS Type Explorer<sup>5</sup>
- Open, honest, detailed conversations: taking the time to talk through everything as well as hashing out how you would approach various situations in the future will provide a stable foundation for a committed relationship.

### Like-minded vs Personality

- God puts like-minded people together. This does not necessarily mean they have the same personality, but they do share a lot of common ground and pursue similar goals.
- Couples with a similar background and/or upbringing will have an easier time adjusting to each other.
- Finances: being like-minded in this area reduces conflict in the relationship.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.enneagraminstitute.com/type-descriptions>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.gallup.com/cliftonstrengths/en/253715/34-cliftonstrengths-themes.aspx>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.5lovelanguages.com/quizzes/love-language> and <https://www.5lovelanguages.com/learn>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.5lovelanguages.com/quizzes/apology-language> and <https://www.5lovelanguages.com/learn>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.16personalities.com/free-personality-test> and <https://www.16personalities.com/personality-types>

## Actions that show Respect

- Although considered by many as old-fashioned, seeking permission from the father/parents before entering into a covenant relationship shows respect for your loved one's family.
- It also shows respect for your prospective bride.

## Challenges in the Early Years

- Two flawed, imperfect people coming together and living with each other in a covenant relationship will present some challenges as they get to know each other even more deeply.
- It takes a mindset of 100% commitment to ride out the difficulties of the first few years. If both persons in the relationship work on figuring things out and don't quit, the relationship will proceed more smoothly eventually.

## Learning to Fight Right

- When the couple learns to fight fair, conflict can actually strengthen the relationship<sup>6</sup>.
- Be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to anger<sup>7</sup> (James 1:19).
- 7 Tips for fighting fair<sup>8</sup>:  
1) Stick to your point; 2) Be respectful; 3) Don't say things you will regret later; 4) Don't be defensive; 5) Don't personalize the argument; 6) Know when to back down; 7) Know when to make up.

## Don't hold on to anger

- In general, it is good to resolve conflicts quickly and not let anger fester for days. It usually makes for better sleep to not go to bed mad.
- However, in certain cases, when couples "sleep on it," they may have a more positive outlook on the issue after a refreshing night, making it easier to resolve the conflict. Shaunti Feldhahn's research showed that "highly happy couples find that when they can't resolve conflict and anger before bedtime, they choose to sleep on it. If anger remains in the morning, they don't let it go unresolved; they deal with it."<sup>9</sup>

## Time Out

- Some people just need some time to process emotions to bring the level of tension down to a manageable level.
- As long as conflicts are resolved within a reasonable time frame, it is okay to walk away from a fight for a while.

## Decide, Don't Slide<sup>10</sup> on Roles and Functions

- Although both partners in a couple unit should help each other out, it makes sense to figure out who will be the primary income earner and who will be the primary homemaker. As with all key decisions, assigning these roles should come only after talking things through and reaching a mutual agreement.
- Recognize that your partner may be in a work situation which may result in them coming home late or later than expected. It is important to avoid resentment building up.

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<sup>6</sup> <https://www.focusonthefamily.com/episodes/broadcast/how-to-fight-fair-part-1-of-2-2/> and <https://www.focusonthefamily.com/episodes/broadcast/how-to-fight-fair-part-2-of-2-2/>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.familylife.com/articles/topics/marriage/staying-married/resolving-conflict/fighting-fair/>

<sup>8</sup> <https://thehealthymarriage.org/how-to-fight-fair-in-marriage/>

<sup>9</sup> From the book *The Surprising Secrets of Highly Happy Marriages* by Shaunti Feldhahn, Chapter 4 Highly Happy Couples Go to Bed Mad, p. 70

<sup>10</sup> From the book *Fighting for Your Marriage* by Markman, Stanley & Blumberg, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed, Chapter 1 Five Keys for a great Relationship, pp 21-22

- It is also important for both parties to discuss and agree on the kind of work or business one or both of them will enter into or engage in, weighing both the benefits but also counting the cost of potential impact on their relationship.
- Both partners may assume leadership roles in different areas and functions. As long as there is mutual agreement, there will not be any conflict.

### Mutual Buy-In

- Good open communication is essential for all aspects of a committed relationship, even the “little things” like how the laundry is done, etc.
- Both parties should agree on key decisions made and act as a team, supporting each other.

### Children in the Mix

- The decision to have children, as with all other decisions, needs to be prayed over, talked through and mutually agreed upon.
- Decide on your parenting strategy, including how to discipline the children, ahead of time.
- Pray that God help you parent your children God’s way.
- Prioritize and plan to have time together as a couple.

### Commitment to God in the face of Life’s Challenges

- Keep God at the center of everything.
- “Know God, Show God” – spend time with God first of all, as this will have a beneficial impact on you personally, on the relationship and on your family.
- Prioritize your relationship by spending time together and by praying for your partner.

### God May Lead You in a Direction Outside Your Comfort Zone

- Sometimes God will walk you through a situation, role or function that may be outside your comfort zone or what you are used to experiencing or doing.
- Generally, when God takes you in an unexpected direction, He will speak with both spouses.

### Criteria for a New Relationship

- Communicate and be open and honest. Be sure you are on the same page.
- The foundation for your relationship must be God and God’s Word as your life reference manual. So, first and foremost, your partner must believe in God as you do.

## Resources

### Primary resource

the Holy Bible – as the ultimate source of 100% God’s Truth.

### Other resources

- ***Fighting for Your Marriage*** by Howard Markman, Scott Stanley and Susan Blumberg.
- ***StrengthsFinder 2.0*** by Tom Rath
- ***The Five Love Languages*** by Gary Chapman
- ***The Surprising Secrets of Highly Happy Marriages*** by Shaunti Feldhahn