

## Getting to Really Know Your Future Spouse

(By Bobb & Cheryl Biehl)

With the life mate decision, you are not only marrying a person of the opposite sex, you are determining:

- your future mother-in-law;
- your future father-in-law;
- your children's grandparents;
- your children's other parent;
- your future nieces and nephews, and all of the rest of your in-laws;
- where you, and your children, will likely spend Thanksgiving, Christmas, and birthdays for the next fifty years.

The success or failure of your marriage impacts a lot of people. Communicate honestly and clearly on these issues. Your extended family for generations to come will be influenced by your discussions and your decisions.

... It is our hope and prayer that you will have wisdom, patience, and understanding as you ask [each other] and answer these fun, profoundly simple, relationship-defining questions:

1. How often do you feel it is important to go out to dinner rather than cook at home?
2. Describe your idea of an ideal week of evenings. What would you like to do Monday night? Tuesday, ect.?
3. How do you want to celebrate our wedding anniversary each year (in general)?
4. Is there something fun or special you've always wanted us to do, but we haven't yet had the money or taken the time?
5. What do you picture us doing on our first vacation?
6. Ideally, how many children would you want to have? Do you have any preferences about how many boys? Girls? How many years between them?
7. How do you think you would respond if we had a severely disabled child?
8. What are your thoughts and feelings about abortion?
9. What would you do if one of our children wanted to marry someone of another race or ethnic group?
10. How do you feel about birth control? If you think we should use something, what method do you see as the best one for us?
11. How do you think you would feel if we were not able to have children? In that case, how do you feel about adoption?
12. What three things do you expect to be most rewarding about parenting? The three most frustrating?
13. What are the five things you definitely want me to do for and with our children?
14. What do you see as your role as a parent with our children? My role?
15. What would be the five most strictly enforced rules of our house for child discipline?
16. What foundational biblical truths do you think should be stressed in the raising of children?
17. How often should we as parents get away from babies in their first year? How often when the children are older?
18. How do you feel about nursery schools? About day-care centers? What are the advantages? Disadvantages?
19. If it's a holiday and you want a new outfit, and the baby also needs new clothing, and you can only afford one, who would get the new outfit and why?

20. How much would you guess it costs to care for a baby per month in the first year? (You may want to double-check with a couple who has a new baby, to see if your guesses are in the "ball park.")
21. What style of discipline would you use with a toddler? Elementary-age child? Junior higher? High schooler? College-age?
22. How do you feel about spanking a child? Under what conditions? With what instrument?
23. What do you think about having our elementary-age children in Sunday School or church? Junior highers? High schoolers?
24. Do you think elementary-age children should be in a public or private school? What about home schooling? What about older children? Why?
25. At what age should a son begin to date? When should a daughter begin to date? What should be our house rules for curfew?
26. How much of a child's college education should be paid by the parents? Under what conditions?
27. How much freedom and responsibility should children be given at age five? Ten? Fifteen?
28. How do you feel about male or female surgery to avoid having more children? At what number of children, or under what circumstances, would you consider it necessary to take precautions not to have more children?
29. Are there areas in which we may be a bad example to our children? What can we do about this?
30. What does the phrase "Till death do us part" mean to you?
31. Do you see divorce as an option in any circumstances?
32. If there has been divorce in your immediate family, what preventative steps can we take to avoid similar disruptive patterns in our relationship?
33. What would you do if I became totally incapacitated and could never have sex or children?
34. What would be your response if I developed cancer or broke my back and was partially paralyzed?
35. What if our marriage doesn't turn out to be quite as much fun as you expected it to be?
36. What if my job required me to be away from home a week or two at a time? Do you feel you could handle being alone that much without being tempted to "run around"? Do you feel I could handle being alone?
37. When we disagree with one another, how should we settle it?
38. What do you think about marital counseling? Why?
39. What are your five most positive expectations about our married life together?
40. What are your five greatest concerns or lingering questions about our married life together?
41. How much television do you watch each day? Mostly what kind of programs do you watch? How do you feel about having the television turned on for most of the day?
42. What's involved in "romance" for you? How important to you are those elements in our marriage?
43. How often do you think a person should take a shower/bath? Brush teeth? Change the bathroom towels? Vacuum and dust? Wash out the tub?
44. What kind of music do you like? Dislike?
45. What are three of your happiest memories of our life together so far? Why?
46. What couple, whom you know personally, has the most ideal marriage? Why do think it is so ideal? Who could we talk to who would help us understand and deal with our concerns before we actually marry?

47. Deep down, how does your mother feel about our relationship Your father? Brothers and sisters?
48. What words would you use to describe your parents/ marriage and relationship? Why? Your grandparent's marriage?
49. What are the three things you admire most about each of your parents as a marriage partner?
50. What are three things you admire most about each of your parents as people?
51. What changes would you want to make from your childhood in relation to raising our own family?
52. If one of our parents became widowed or seriously ill, what would you think should be our responsibility to him/her?
53. Do you foresee any of our relatives interfering in our marriage? Who? How? What would we do if that happened?
54. How do you feel about an unmade bed in the middle of the day?
55. Who do you think is responsible to do the following work around the home? Car repairs ...  
Cooking ... Fixing things ... House cleaning ... Ironing clothes ... Washing clothes ...  
Christmas tree ... Dishes ... Grocery shopping ... Insurance ... Making the bed ... Yard work ...  
Other \_\_\_\_\_?
56. What are your three favorite thoughts about making love after we're married?
57. What are five assumptions you have about how I will make love?
58. What are your taboos or things you do not want to do at all in lovemaking?
59. From your perspective, what are the most important things to be aware of when making love?
60. Are there any "skeletons" of any kind in your past? Bankruptcy, abortion, divorce, arrest, prison time, etc.? (Avoid surprises after saying "I do." Talk about these things before the final commitment, not on your honeymoon!)
61. Are you a night person or a morning person? How would you suggest we adjust?
62. What would be the advantages of waiting one more year before getting married? What would be the disadvantages?
63. How long do you think we should be married before having children?