

## Questions & Considerations Before Remarriage

### **Spiritual Issues**

Do you have the freedom to remarry according to the Scriptures? What specific biblical grounds (verses) did you base your divorce on?

What specific biblical grounds would you base your decision to remarry on? Have you discussed with your pastor or counselor whether you are free to remarry from a biblical standpoint?

Is the question of remarriage settled with God, His word, your church leadership, and with yourself? Note that obedience to God is more important than our own personal feelings. (John 14:21)

Have you asked for God's forgiveness for your part in the breakup of your marriage relationship?

### **Your Past Relationship**

Have you effectively dealt with the mistrust issues from your divorce? Have you worked through your hurt feelings, repented of any bitterness or unforgiveness and moved to release and forgive your former spouse?

How did your first marriage fail? Have you received personal counseling to address any past failings and develop redeemed life patterns? What was your responsibility for the break-up?

Have you taken a deep and honest look at yourself? Have you sincerely asked the Lord to reveal any wrong thinking and behavior from your past relationship? What did you learn from the process?

Did you begin your marriage with a commitment to stay married for life? As you look back now, what eroded that commitment?

In what ways did poor communication and conflict resolution skills contribute to the failure of your first marriage? What reasons do you have for feeling that you will not make the same mistakes in this marriage? What specific changes do you need to make as you consider remarriage?

Have you given yourself sufficient time to grieve the loss of your marriage? Have you spent sufficient time reflecting, learning, healing and adjusting? One to two years is recommended. If a new relationship begins too quickly, the children will be much more likely to reject the person seeing their mom or dad.

Have you successfully reprogrammed your old way of thinking about marriage, sex, money, roles and your needs?

Because of your previous divorce, how will you handle feelings of insecurity when going through a difficult time with your new spouse?

Will you sell your home or move to make a fresh start on a new relationship? There are memories and loyalties associated with our homes and potential problems can be reduced by relocating.

Do you now have a workable relationship with your former spouse?

Give three reasons why you are confident that you have gotten over your previous marriage and are ready to marry again.

### **Forgiveness**

Do either of you hold any grudges toward God, your former spouse, former in-laws, former friends, pastor or church leader? If you haven't granted forgiveness in all areas, you will infect your new relationship with bitterness. Forgiveness is letting go of the hurts and wounds from these relationships. The healthier you are, the healthier your new marriage will be. Forgiveness is the last stage of divorce recovery and the first stage of a new view of life and marriage.

## **Children**

How do you love a child who is not yours biologically? Will this child accept you? (Realize that to the kids, you're likely to be the "competition" - one more person trying to get their parent's attention.)

What type of relationship do you expect your new spouse to have with your children?

Whose needs will be a higher priority for you: your future spouse or your children? Are you and your partner in agreement on this?

If both of you are bringing children into the new marriage, how do they get along?

Have your children each accepted the future stepparent? What is each one's level of receptivity? How do you plan to help them adjust to a new stepparent?

Unanticipated adjustments for the children and their parent who is remarrying creates the most problems because in the child's mind:

- Remarriage ends the dream that their parents might get back together again
- It triggers fear that the new spouse will take away the love their parent has for them
- It creates anxiety about whether they will get along with the new member of the family.

Have the children entered into counseling to help them cope with the divorce and remarriage? How have the children worked through the grief/rejection that can occur from divorce?

How will discipline be handled? How will you handle disagreements with former spouses about raising your children?

How will visitation be handled?

Will you move to a new school district?

Will there be new bedroom arrangements?

Are there any implications from changes in financial resources?

How will you handle the children's needs to see your former in-laws – their grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins?

Do you plan on having additional children? When? How many?

## **Focus on the New Marriage Relationship**

How will you assure that sufficient focus is placed on establishing and adapting to the new marriage relationship? A child-centered focus will disrupt marital unity and harmony. Security for children is a by-product of Mom and Dad loving each other and living out God's principles in their marriage.

How are your fiancé's character traits different from your former spouse's character traits? Are these the character traits you have been looking for?

What areas of this marriage am I expecting to be different from my previous one?

- Marital relationship?
- Finances?
- Home life?
- Housekeeping?
- Children & Parenting?
- Social/Entertainment?
- Spiritual?
- In-laws/Relatives?

- Sex?

If your fiancé(e) needs to contact his/her former spouse, how do you want that to be handled?

What specific things will you do to fulfill your biblical role responsibilities in this marriage, which you may have failed to do in your previous marriage?

### **Goals & Vision**

Why are you considering remarriage?

Why this person?

What are the goals and vision for this marriage? What do you desire to accomplish with this new relationship?

Are you overlooking anything in your fiancé's life that you think will change after you get married?

Are you compromising on your personal standards in any way by considering this person?

Why do you sense God is calling you together? What do you sense His vision to be for you as a couple? What is it in this vision that you can only fulfill by getting married?

### **Other Considerations**

Is there anyone questioning whether you should marry this person or marry at this time? Where does your pastor stand as you consider remarriage?

You will give up your independence and set-in-your-way habits. Are you OK with that?

What will your relationship be like with your former in-laws? How will this relationship change? What about the new in-laws?

What church will you attend? How similar are your spiritual beliefs?

Have you thoroughly discussed your financial obligations and any indebtedness? Are you ready to assume shared ownership for these obligations?

Have you discussed your savings, retirement plans, life insurance, checking accounts and credit accounts? How will these be handled in the future?

In what ways will continuing financial obligations related to your first marriage affect your new marriage? How will you each handle these?

If you receive any financial support from your previous spouse, how will that income be handled in your new marriage?

Are there any material possessions from your previous marriage that might trouble your fiancé(e) that you haven't yet discussed?

Have you discussed roles? Past roles? Expectations in all areas? What previous roles did you play that you do not desire to play in a new marriage?

What do you desire to see the same as or different than your past marriage? Have you both discussed this directly and in detail? Is there significant agreement in these areas?

Have you discussed remarriage with another couple, to see what they encountered and how they dealt with things?

## Questions To Discuss

- 1) What mistakes did you make in your previous marriage relationship? What specifically have you done to work on these areas?
- 2) How can you demonstrate healing from past experiences and hurts?
- 3) What areas of independence do you feel you might struggle with most, if you remarry?
- 4) How will you handle the temptation to negatively react to something you see in your mate that existed in your former spouse?
- 5) What do you consider to be reasonable interaction for your spouse to have with their former spouse? Are you both in agreement?
- 6) What expectations did you have of your former spouse that were not fulfilled?
- 7) What mistakes do you feel your former spouse made in marriage?
- 8) What good things from your former marriage do you hope to bring into this new one?
- 9) What fears do you have as you consider remarriage?
- 10) Of the two of you, who is the more strict when it comes to parenting and discipline? Will you allow one another to correct and/or discipline any child freely? Who will be primarily responsible for discipline?
- 11) Will it be necessary for your stepchildren to follow the rules you have made for your own biological children?
- 12) Discuss methods of discipline for various specific offenses.
- 13) What are some practical ways you can guard against jealousy that your children may feel towards your new spouse?
- 14) How will you handle a stepchild rejecting you?
- 15) How do you see bonding taking place with stepchildren?
- 16) How will you take financial responsibility for your stepchildren even if their parent is receiving support?

## Scripture References on Divorce & Marriage

Is there a biblical option for this re-marriage?

Matthew 5:31-32

Matthew 19:1-12

Mark 10:1-12

Luke 16:18

1Corinthians 7:10-16

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