

If you believe you've married the wrong person

I have been honored to counsel couples for twenty years now. With some of those couples, the question arises "did I marry the wrong person?"

This question is a perplexing question for most couples with severe marital strife. Moreover, it is gender mutual - both males and females ask the same question. It becomes more perplexing when unanswered questions about God's Will are thrown into the mix.

So, I want to ask you this question directly. "Do you believe you've married the wrong person or someone God did not intend for you to marry?" If yes, it is almost certain there is major marital strife in your life. However, one point gets overlooked in dealing with this question. The question is a deflection question. In other words, it assumes one person is a perfect mate while the other is not. Therefore, the problem is all or mainly with my spouse and not me.

In all honesty, as a counselor, I have counseled very few couples in which one person was the mate God fully intended. The other couples are characterized by woundedness, fears, insecurities, doubts, jealousy, worry, addictions, etc. These issues come out in the marital relationship contributing to its dysfunction. Usually one person is more dysfunctional or unhealthy than the other. The healthiest spouse begins to think and believe "I married the wrong person or I married outside of God's Will."

Judson Swihart, in writing on this topic states "Perhaps those in this situation need to go back and look again at the purpose of the marriage and family life. Perhaps they have an unrealistic idea of what it means to be the 'right person.'"

Selecting a marriage partner should not be a process of finding the right person. Your focus is all on your spouse and whether [he] she is behaving according to your standards. That perspective is self-centered not love-centered."

Instead of focusing upon the selection process, it is scriptural to focus upon God and His Kingdom. Matthew 6:33 states "But seek ye first the Kingdom of God, and His righteousness, and all these things will be added unto you."

The focus is first upon God and becoming, in Christ, His free servant to love and give in all relationships, especially mate selection and marriage. Marriage is a journey in which two people enter together to live out God's will, plan, and purpose. The key to that relationship is putting God first and not my spouse, children, work, ministry, etc.

When marital conflict and strife come, it is a time for each person to examine his or her heart to determine if God is first or not. If God is not first, then make every effort to put Him first and He promises "...all these things will be added unto you."