

Your Name/s: \_\_\_\_\_

Wedding Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Wedding and Marriage



### Preparing for a Gospel-transformed Marriage

Our society has made it easier to GET MARRIED than to get a driver's license...and the effects of this apathy and complacency are very apparent in the dramatic rise in divorces, separations and unhappy lives. Many couples enter marriage with high expectations, planning more for a perfect wedding day than for their lives together.

We do not offer "perfect marriage certificates," nor are we so foolish as to think that because you hold your wedding here, it will be blessed of God. We are not in the business of marrying people, but in the business of encouraging people to focus their lives on Jesus Christ. We believe that as you obey God's Word and apply His principles to your lives, you will experience His blessing. Our ministers are not glorified "*justices of the peace*," but are men called of God to uphold His Word (the Bible).

We believe that marriage is a once in a lifelong commitment between one man and one woman. We believe that this relationship should grow better with age. We offer a loving, supportive Christian environment where you can grow and mature with many others who share your concerns.

Although marriage outside the church is recognized in society, the marriage ceremony conducted within the church is a special way for believers to give public confession of their Christian faith. A marriage ceremony conducted in our church, therefore, is not merely a ceremony to honor two people in love but is a worship service with public testimony to God's matchless love and providence at work in your lives and in your relationship.

#### ***Our Covenant and Counsel***

We are serious in our desire to do more than perform a wedding. As you prepare for the special day and the vows you will be taking to love each other until death, we want to help you focus on your relationship as it is and provide you with tools to build it.

We have established the following guidelines that are the result of our convictions. We will agree to marry you on the basis that you as a couple, agree to meet each of the following criteria.

1. The couple must be members or regular attendees at First Baptist Church of Hampton Falls.
2. We request applications be made at least four months prior to the wedding service. This is to allow sufficient time for all premarital counseling and scheduling.
3. The couple must agree to meet with the minister initially to determine the advisability of the marriage. After the initial meeting, if there is mutual agreement to plan a wedding, details of the

wedding and follow up meetings will be discussed by the officiating pastor. At these sessions, the ceremony will be planned, and Biblical principles of marriage will be discussed.

4. Between now and the date of the wedding, the couple must agree to attend church regularly.
5. If the couple is living together, and they want to have a traditional church wedding, they must agree to separate between now and the date of the wedding.
6. Since the wedding ceremony is to be viewed as a time of seriousness before God, we expect the couple to take great care in their choice of music and conduct to assure that it is suitable and worship-inducing.
7. All weddings must be under the direction of a First Baptist Church of Hampton Falls pastor.

### ***The Rehearsal***

1. The rehearsal will normally be scheduled a day before the wedding ceremony and will be under the direction of the pastor.
2. Before the rehearsal, the couple will have provided the pastor with a list of the entire wedding party and reviewed with him the ceremony itself.

### ***Photographs***

Ushers should inform friends with cameras and professional photographers that no flash pictures are to be taken in the sanctuary after the ceremony begins. This does not include the processional and recessional. The party is welcome to pose for pictures following the service. This helps to maintain a sense of reverence and respects the seriousness of the vows being shared.

### ***Fees***

1. The **minister's** suggested stipend is \$350, payable to the pastor and due at the rehearsal.
2. The **musician/s**, attained by the couple should negotiate fees with them and then the agreed upon fees for their services should be payable to the rehearsal.
3. **Any other professionals**, such as the florist, photographer, etc. should be attained by the couple and reimbursed for services as agreed upon.
4. The **custodian's** fee is \$75.00, payable to the custodian and due at rehearsal. The officiating pastor will be sure to schedule the custodian and communicate the name to the couple so proper reimbursement can be made to the right person.
5. The **church sound technician's** fee is \$75.00 (depending on demands). The officiating pastor will be sure to schedule sound technician and communicate the name to the couple so proper reimbursement can be made payable to the technician and due at rehearsal.

### ***General Information***

1. The marriage license shall be the responsibility of the couple and should be in the possession of the minister no later than the time of the rehearsal.
2. If you desire to be married in our church under the guidelines above, please call the church to set up a time for an initial meeting. Also, please fill out the enclosed questionnaires and mail to the church prior to your first interview.

## **Additional Resources to Help With Marriage**

### **A PREPARATION FOR MARRIAGE**

**Dennis Rainey, PREPARING FOR MARRIAGE**

**AN OVERVIEW OF MARRIAGE**

Tim Keller, THE MEANING OF MARRIAGE.

**UNDERSTANDING OF RELATIONSHIPS IN MARRIAGE**

Dave Harvey, WHEN SINNERS SAY "I DO."

**SEX IN MARRIAGE**

John Piper, SEX AND THE SUPREMACY OF CHRIST

Kevin Leman, Sheet Music

Names of Couple: \_\_\_\_\_

Anticipated Wedding Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### **A MARRIAGE PREPARATORY INVENTORY**

This questionnaire is designed to help identify strengths and potential trouble-spots in your relationship. Most of the questions have no "right" answers; the important thing is for you to state clearly your perceptions in each case. Obviously, this exercise will be more helpful if you do not discuss your answers with each other until after you have finished the questionnaire. These forms will be returned to you when the counseling is completed.

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Birth date: \_\_\_\_\_

Local Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_ Schooling Completed: \_\_\_\_\_

#### **A. YOUR BACKGROUND**

1. How long have you known your fiancé(e)? When did you become convinced that you wanted to be married? (approximate date)?
2. Indicate your parents' attitude toward your fiancé(e):  
total acceptance \_\_\_\_\_; acceptance with reservations \_\_\_\_\_; disapproval \_\_\_\_\_.
3. How do you perceive your prospective in-laws' attitude toward you:  
total acceptance \_\_\_\_\_; acceptance with reservations \_\_\_\_\_; disapproval \_\_\_\_\_.
4. Comment on the familiar statement, "You don't just marry the individual; you marry the whole family," in terms of how you see it applying in your case
5. Compare your family backgrounds:

	Yours	Fiancé(e)
Parents living? (If not, date of death)	_____	_____
Parents living together? (if not, date of sep)	_____	_____
Number and gender of siblings	_____	_____

Hometown \_\_\_\_\_

Father's Occupation \_\_\_\_\_

Mother's Occupation \_\_\_\_\_

Family's socio-economic level \_\_\_\_\_

Family's church affiliation \_\_\_\_\_

Degree of their church involvement \_\_\_\_\_

Their political party affiliation \_\_\_\_\_

Hereditary health problems \_\_\_\_\_

6. Have you ever been married before? \_\_\_\_  
\* If yes, provide on a separate sheet of paper an explanation for efforts to reconcile, reasons for divorce, and marital status of your ex-spouse.
7. Have you been in any other relationship which you thought would lead to marriage?  
If so, what happened?
8. Describe the marriage you have observed which you most want yours to resemble:
9. List the strengths of your parents' marriage which you most want to experience in your own.

10. What weaknesses in your parents' marriage do you wish to avoid?

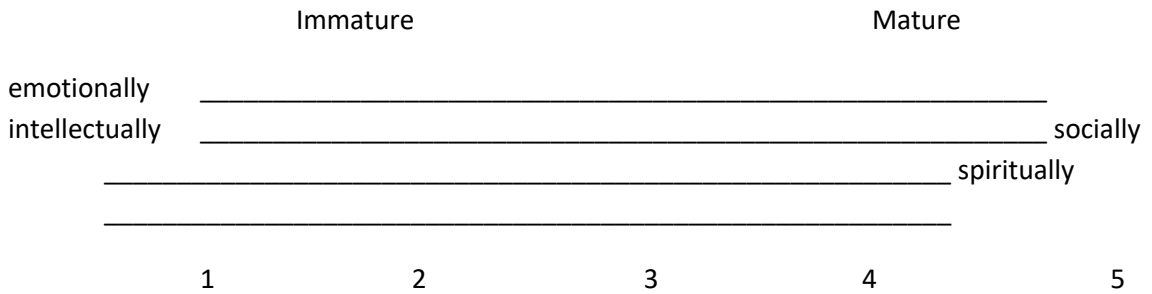
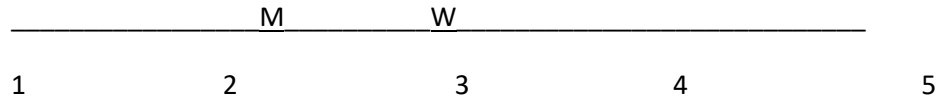
## B. YOUR PERSONALITIES AND TEMPERAMENTS

1. Indicate which of you tends more (in relation to the other) to be: (mark "M" for the man "W" for the woman; be prepared to cite examples)

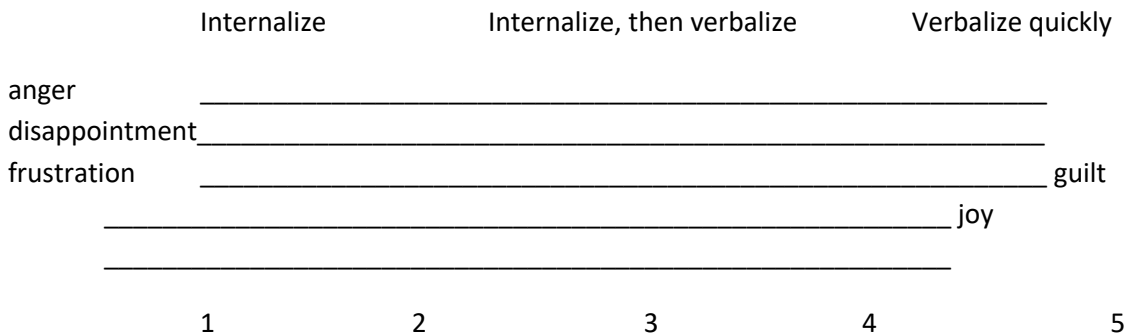
the extrovert	___	the shouter	___
the home body	___	more quick-tempered	___
the introvert	___	the optimist	___
the party-person	___	more impulsive	___
the talker	___	the pessimist	___
Neater	___	the night person	___
the listener	___	more spontaneous	___
messier	___	more organized	___
the thinker	___	the morning person	___
more ambitious	___	more manipulative	___
the doer	___	the spender	___
more complacent	___	more compliant	___
the planner	___		
more punctual	___		
the procrastinator	___		
more tardy	___		
the pouter	___		
more easy-going	___		

2. On the lines below, place an "M" for the man and a "W" for the woman at the appropriate spot. 1 being the lowest and 5 being the highest, indicate the relative levels of maturity which you think you and your fiancé(e) have reached respectively as compared with your age group.

Example:  
spiritually



3. In the same fashion, indicate how each of you tends to express the following feelings:



4. List some of your fiancé(e)'s characteristics which are most attractive to you.



5. Which of your fiancé(e)'s traits, habits, or mannerisms do you at least occasionally find irritating?

6. Which traits does your fiancé(e) share:  
fiancé(e)'s father -

fiancé(e)'s mother -

your father -

your mother -

7. Which of the traits identified in Question #6 do you tend to dislike?

8. In which areas would you like your fiancé(e) to help you improve yourself?

9. In which areas would you like to help your fiancé(e) improve?

**C. YOUR RELATIONSHIP**

1. List the most significant interests you share in common.
  
2. Indicate the relative importance of the following aspects of your relationship as indicated by the time and attention devoted to each. (Mark with an "X" at the appropriate spot.)

	Little	Much
<b>practical</b> (doing things together)	_____	_____
<b>intellectual</b> (discussing thoughts, ideas)	_____	_____
<b>physical</b> (discussing, engaging in sexual activity)	_____	_____
<b>emotional</b> (dealing with feelings)	_____	_____
<b>spiritual</b> (Bible reading, prayer, discussing faith)	_____	_____

3. Is the time you spend with your other close friends usually with or without your fiancé(e) also present?

4. What are your reading preferences?

Your fiancé(e)'s reading preferences?

5. Which books on marriage have you read?

6. What are some of the relational strengths which you can bring to the marriage?



12. Do you sometimes feel guilty about the sexual involvement you have had with him/her?

#### **D. YOUR FAITH**

1. Describe your relationship with God.

2. What are the main influences that have shaped that relationship?

3. How does your expression of faith differ from that of your fiancé(e)?

4. As you see it, how does a Christian marriage differ from any other?

5. How do you expect to cultivate your faith together after you are married?

6. What does the biblical phrase, "the husband is the head of his wife" mean to you?

**E. YOUR FINANCES**

1. Indicate relative inclinations to spend money in the following areas: ("M" for man, "W" for woman at the appropriate spot)

	Least likely	Most likely
new clothes	_____	
hobbies, recreation	_____	
automobile	_____ books,	
magazines	_____	
movies, concerts	_____	
music, instruments	_____	
home furnishings	_____	
groceries	_____	
eating out	_____	
entertaining guests	_____	
gifts for spouse	_____	
gifts for others	_____	
vacations	_____	
	1	5

In which of the areas above would you say that your fiancé(e) might spend money frivolously?

In which areas do you think he/she might be too frugal?

2. For which do each of you tend to spend money more freely:  
experiences \_\_\_\_\_ and things \_\_\_\_\_? (Indicate with "M" and "W")
  
3. Which of you has had more experience in managing finances?
  
4. Who will manage your family finances?
  
5. Do you have a tentative budget?
  
6. Will the wife be employed after you are married?

## **F. YOUR FUTURE**

1. If both plan careers, whose job determines where you will live?
  
2. How soon would you like to have children?
  
3. What form of birth control do you expect to use?
  
4. If an "accidental" pregnancy occurred, would you consider an abortion?

Does your fiancé(e) share your feelings about this?

5. If you should be unable to have your own, would you adopt a child?
  
6. What methods of discipline were most effective for you as a child?
  
7. How would your discipline of your children differ from that which you received?
  
8. What do you consider to be your primary responsibility for your spouse's growth and development during the years of your marriage?
  
9. What would you like for him/her to say in answer to the previous question?
  
10. What do you intend to do to stay in love?
  
11. What circumstances, as you see it now, would lead you to seek a divorce?

12. If you specified a circumstance in #11, what will you do to prevent it?

13. If your answer to #11 was "none", on what do you base that confidence?