



Hey Kids, this month we're going to look at two texts that deal with "giving," one in the Old Testament and one in the New Testament. They are Malachi 3:10 and 2 Corinthians 9:7. Read them now.

See the 12 words listed below? These words are from those two texts* and they are hidden in the word puzzle below — see if you can find them all. The words can go across, up or down, diagonal, and can be backwards.

*King James version



1. open
2. windows
3. blessing
4. pour
5. tithes
6. storehouse
7. heart
8. give
9. cheerful
10. giver
11. God
12. loveth

L	X	M	H	T	I	T	H	E	S
S	U	Q	R	E	F	T	V	T	C
L	J	F	L	D	A	Q	O	N	B
O	W	V	R	R	X	R	G	E	L
V	P	I	U	E	E	F	T	P	E
E	N	O	N	H	E	R	B	O	S
T	P	G	O	D	H	H	X	S	S
H	M	U	I	L	O	C	C	Y	I
W	S	K	P	V	G	W	Q	T	N
E	V	G	I	V	E	R	S	C	G

How to Know if You Have Found the "Right" Person

by Edward W. Fergusson





Having been a pastor for a number of years I have heard all kinds of stories of how people met their spouses. Some are bizarre and some are very romantic, while others are just ordinary. Here are some memorable examples:


- One man rescued his future wife off a sinking sailboat.
 - Two probation officers kept sending a parolee to each other's jurisdiction. When they met to discuss the case, they fell in love.
 - One woman found a lost dog. When she saw a sign on a telephone pole with the picture of the dog, she called the phone number. Upon returning the dog to the widowed dog owner, she asked him for a date.
 - One man, leaving for overseas duty in the military, asked his best friend to take care of his girlfriend. The friend is still taking care of her!
 - I met my wife in study hall at High School.
- However you met the person you are dating, you might still want to know if this is the "right" person for you to marry. There are principles that help make for a more successful and long lasting relationship. Dr. James Dobson in his book, *Complete Marriage and Family Home Reference Guide*, gives some ideas that I would like to expand upon, using my own experiences as well as my observations of other happy couples.




This Valentine issue of the "Stewpot" deals with the stewardship area of "relationship."

 Dr. Dobson gives this advice, which he heard from one of his Sunday School teachers: “Don’t marry the person you think you can live with — marry the one you can’t live without.” Marriage requires an extremely high level of commitment. Life is hard and married life requires the ability to work with someone through the hard times. Passion alone is not enough, but if you are not passionately in love with the person you are mated with, you won’t get through the difficulties life will send your way.

 If something bugs you about this person now, it will bug you even more after you marry. Don’t count on changing a person. People do change, but not in predictable ways. I once knew a couple that divorced over the answering machine. The real issue was control, but the answering machine was the focus since they both wanted to retrieve the messages themselves. They both had a desire to be “in charge” and could not overcome it.

 Take your time. You plan to be married for a long time, so don’t rush the courtship. Some people become desperate


to get married and try to shortcut the bonding process. Just accept that you can’t do that. Some hasty marriages make it, but this is in spite of rushing it, not because of it.


 Don’t become “unequally yoked.” This is a Biblical concept referring to having two animals joined together to pull a plow. If the animals are significantly different in strength, they cannot pull together effectively. This is usually applied to people having the same religion, but it is broader than that.


- First, two people who are of the same religion still may not be “equally yoked.” Spirituality is deeper than what church you attend.
- Second, what are your life goals? I once dated a very wonderful person, but her goals were not at all compatible with mine. She was not a bad person or unspiritual, but we would not have been happy together.
- Also, dating is not an evangelistic effort. I have seen some people come to the Lord while dating, but that is not a good reason to date someone. Once again, the relationship *might* work out in spite of, not

“Don’t marry the person you think you can live with — marry the one you can’t live without.” — James Dobson


because of, the evangelistic concern.

 Trial marriages don’t work. Anything less than full commitment is just that, not full commitment. Moving in with someone is not the same as marriage and does not at all predict how a marriage will work. I once heard a marriage counselor put it this way, “Dating is play and marriage is work. Some people who play together well don’t work together well. Living together is ‘playing’ at marriage.”

 Don’t get married too young. People are still forming who they are into their early twenties. And in our culture, many delay that further by going to school even longer. Give yourself time to become who you are before you find a mate.

 Have a commitment to make your marriage work. Once you have decided that this is the person for you, have an unwavering commitment that, no matter what, you will get

through it. The Bible is clear that God does not favor divorce. If you don’t think you can make that commitment, don’t marry that person.

 My last point is the most important: Trust God. Pray and follow Him. Many times we struggle with this one. It is easy to rush into a relationship when we are impatient. We may be tempted to think that we will never find the right person and this thinking can lead us to settle for someone who is not right for us. This can lead to a disastrous union. Better to remain single than to be in such a marriage.

These principles might not guarantee success, but I believe they will increase your chances. May you find a truly wonderful and lasting relationship!



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References: Dobson, James C., PhD. Complete Marriage and Family Home Reference Guide. James Dobson, Inc., 2000.