

The Sacred Search: What if It's Not About Who You Marry, but Why? by Gary Thomas (Colorado Springs: David C. Cook, 2013) The author urges Christians to base their choice of a marriage partner on Matthew 6:33, "Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness...." Pointing out the foolishness of marriage based solely on physical attraction and emotional attachment, he advises seeking someone who shares a common sense of purpose, similar values, and a desire to grow in the knowledge and love of God. He offers guidelines for getting to really know the person you are dating and notes that premature sexual involvement may "cement" your relationship to someone who is not a desirable marriage partner. He points out that you cannot really know a person's character until you have seen him or her in a variety of situations and discussed numerous topics in depth. Even then you want to be sure current behavior reflects who the person really is, not just the strength of the attraction. Does this person possess character qualities that lead to a successful marriage – including integrity, kindness, compassion, and discipline? Would this person be the kind of parent you want for your children? Churches would do well to promote such in-depth thinking about choosing who to marry – or whether to marry at all. Each of the nineteen chapters ends with discussion questions, making this an excellent study resource for youth and young adults.