

Preface

Charles Haddon Spurgeon was England's best-known preacher for most of the second half of the 19th century. In 1854, just four years after his conversion, Spurgeon, then only 20, became pastor of London's famed New Park Street Church. Soon this Baptist preacher had earned his nickname, "Prince of Preachers," which he still carries to this day. Spurgeon frequently preached to audiences numbering more than 10,000, all in the days before electronic amplification.

Thoughts on Marriage

Charles Haddon Spurgeon (1834-1892)

Be slow in choosing, especially with regard to wife or husband.

Before your youth with marriage is oppressed,
Make choice of one who suits your humor best.
Such choicest damsel drops not from the sky,
She must be sought for with a studious eye.

An unwise marriage will prove to be a calamity.

Before you marry, have a house wherein to tarry.
One would think this advice unnecessary, but people are reckless nowadays.
We hope our readers will not begin housekeeping with furniture on credit.
It is not creditable.

Pride with pride will not abide.

Marriage is either kill or cure.
It is either "mar age" or "merry age," as the case may be.
O matrimony! You are like to Jeremiah's figs.
The good are very good indeed,
The bad too sour for pigs!

Marry in a hurry, and live in a worry.

Take time to do that which time cannot undo.

Marry in haste, and repent at leisure.

Marriage is a desperate thing.
The frogs in Aesop's fable were extremely wise.
They greatly needed some water, but they would not leap into the well because they could not get out again.
Blessed is the man who can say after twenty years,
"I did commit no act of folly
When I married my sweet Molly."

Right mixture makes good mortar.
Due proportion and thorough blending of various graces make up good character.
Also in forming a marriage partnership a wise arrangement and a good heart will secure lasting unity.

In marriage a fit blend is almost everything.

Once married, it is for better or worse, forever.

Don't be in a hurry to tie what you cannot untie.

Marriage is one of these things. Be careful!

In choice of a friend

One may often amend

When he finds his affection misspent.

But in choosing a wife,

A close partner for life,

There is left us no room to repent.

He who "courts in sport" may be caught in earnest.

Many are caught in a marriage which he never intended,

Which turns out a life-long bondage.

He who marries a fool is a fool.

He did not use sufficient discretion and discernment.

However, fool or no fool, he is in for it for life,

And must bear the consequences.

A good husband makes a good wife.

A gracious disposition in the one influences the other, and little faults are almost insensibly cured.

The proverb is equally true in reference to the wife,

But she has harder material to work upon,

And sometimes she fails to make her husband what he should be.

A rich man may make a poor husband.

Better to have a treasure in the man than with the man.

Alas! Alas!

Wise men pass a dressy lass.

The "alas" is for the dressy lass who hoped to catch a husband by her fine array,

And saw all the men worth having turning away from her.

An obedient wife commands her husband.

By her love the good man is conquered,

So that he delights to give her pleasure.

The house is the woman's dominion,

And her husband should let her reign, saying,

"Only in the throne will I be greater than you."

He will be wise seldom to sit on that throne.

Buttons all right are husbands' delight.

What vexation may be caused by neglect of such a little thing as a button!

Let wives think nothing trivial which tends to peace.

Dirty wives make drunken husbands.

Doubtless if the house or the room were kept more clean and comfortable,

The man would have less temptation to spend his evenings in drinking company.

Expensive wife makes pensive husband.

When the draper's bill drains his pocket,

The poor man thinks more than he dares to say.

The arithmetic of a good wife is very different.

She adds to his happiness, subtracts from his cares,

Multiplies his joys, divides his sorrows,

And practices reduction in the expenditure of his household.

Harry Heartless will make a bad husband.
Better let him remain a bachelor.

Have the potatoes and bacon done,
And nice white cloth as the clock strikes one.
**The meals nicely cooked keep the husband in humor,
And prevent his seeking the pub and its temptations.**

If Jack were better, Jill would not be so bad.
Often the husband creates the wife's faults, and vice versa.

**If love finds fault, it is that fault may not be found by others.
This is the best reason for criticizing.**

If your husband is a dog, do not be a cat.
If you are, you will lead a cat-and-dog life.

If you do not like crabapples, do not plant crab-trees.
If you prefer peace and quietness, be peaceful and quiet.
Married people should not create causes for contention,
Lest contention should spoil their union.

**Don't be fooled by pretty face.
Look for character and grace.**
Mere bodily beauty is like an almanac.
If it lasts a year, it is well.
Beauty and money are too fleeting a reason for marriage.

Strong is the vinegar of sweet wine.
When good-tempered men grow angry, it is auger.
When mercy kindles into wrath, it is terrible indeed.
When persons, who were very loving, disagree, the quarrel is often very sharp.
Spoons before marriage may become knives and forks afterwards.

**Think well before you tie what you cannot untie.
Enter upon marriage with courage but with caution.**

Tarry, tarry, tarry, tarry,
Think again before you marry.
One might push this tarrying too far, but we seldom meet with such a case.
Most rush at matrimony like a dog at a piece of meat.

Taste and try before you buy.

Today married, tomorrow harried.

Wedlock is either kill or cure.

To catch a Tartar.
This is a bad thing in matrimony.
You look for a Celestial to make your tea,
And find a Tartar to make you a pickle.
Better be a lonely martyr
Than be married to a Tartar.

Wedlock is a padlock.

A padlock is a very useful thing to preserve treasure.
But it is hurtful to be locked into a marriage much disliked.

A fair face may be a foul bargain.

Young men should not be carried away with mere beauty, but **look to character and disposition.**
One who marries a woman for her beauty alone is as foolish as the man who ate a bird because it sang so sweetly.

As married people grow old, the tendency to correct each other in every trifling mistake is often developed,
And it is so trying that they will be wise to watch against it with the utmost care.

Needles and pins, needles and pins.

When a man marries, his trouble begins.

A Quaker who married a couple said, "Now you are at the end of your troubles."
Some time after, the afflicted husband reminded him of the saying, and charged him with misleading him.
"Nay," said the Quaker. "I said you were at the end of your troubles, but I did not say at which end."

Obedient wives lead their husbands.
Sensible men know when they have good wives,
And they are glad to let them manage the house,
And lead them on to prosperity.

The plow goes badly when one ox pulls one way and the other another.
When husband and wife are not of one mind, family arrangements are disarranged.

The wife that loves the looking-glass hates the saucepan.

This is not always true, yet the fear is that the folly which shows itself in dress and self-admiration
Should lead to neglect of household duties.

**Blessed is the wife that can cook well,
For she shall have her husband home to dinner.**

For husbands:

Instead of trying to reform your wife,
You will find it much more profitable to reform your wife's husband.

For wives:

Instead of trying to reform your husband,
You will find it much more profitable to reform your husband's wife.

Summary wisdom for husbands:

"Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives,
and treat them with respect as the weaker partner and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life,
so that nothing will hinder your prayers" (1 Pet 3:7).

Summary wisdom for wives:

"Wives, submit to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord" (Col 3:18).

Summary wisdom for all relationships:

"Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved,
clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience" (Col 3:12).