

# What God Says to Look for in a Man

## Ephesians 4:14

Mature saints offering true spiritual worship is God's strong desire for each of us.

As we open to Ephesians 4, through His servant Paul, our Lord Jesus Christ explains the purpose and plan for His Church, and where each of us should seek to be today.

First, Jesus explains His plan for the church is giving God's Word through Apostles and Prophets (Ephesians 4:11a); and for that Word to be used to plant churches throughout all generations by church planters (evangelists); and to mature and grow believers by pastor teachers (Ephesians 4:11b).

Then the Lord tells us that saints in Christ's churches are to be mended (equipped) so that they can strengthen and encourage spiritual growth (edify) others around them (Ephesians 4:12-13). The result is that:

### God Asks for Spiritual Maturity

But all of this is for what purpose? Look at Ephesians 4:14. The church exists to bring believers to Christ glorifying spiritual maturity, so that we no longer what? "Be children" (NKJV) or as the NIV renders it no longer act like "infants".

The goal of our ministry in Christ's church is to glorify God in maturity. We do not want to perpetuate youthful behavior in all of its struggles. Our goal is that spiritual children be always moving towards spiritual maturity in their perspectives, choices, desires, and direction. Please stand with me and in Ephesians 4:11-16, listen to God's desire that all of us depart from immaturity and pursue spiritual maturity:

*And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, 12 for the **equipping of the saints** for the work of ministry, for the **edifying of the body** of Christ, 13 till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; 14 **that we should no longer be children**, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, 15 but, speaking the truth in love, **may grow up in all things into Him** who is the head—Christ— 16 from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, **causes growth of the body** for the edifying of itself in love.*

The greatest service we can offer our young people is to show them how they ought to be when they grow and mature in Christ; and reminding them that they will never be the godly person in the future what they are not becoming today. Spiritual life is all about Biblically prompted choices. Where are your choices pointing you today?

## Learning to Live Wisely

God's Word often uses the method of pointing at a person's actions and then describing how they will become if their present direction continues. That is the Biblical method we will use first for Men, and then later for Women. So what does God's Word say that unspiritual, immature, or "childish" men and women look like? What behavior is displeasing to God that we are to avoid, not pursuer as our personal behavior, and most importantly in the long run—never perpetuate by marrying someone who acts that way?

That takes us to Proverbs, and a look at what God says to look for in a man. This is what God says that a man who pleases Him acts and looks like, and similarly what a man who displeases Him looks and acts like. This is actually the next quality on our prayer card on how to pray for those we love.

Note the way God communicates the maturity of wise choices. The whole book of Proverbs is presented as a father (Solomon) explaining to his son (Rehoboam) what he learned from his father (David, see Prov. 4:3).

Note the father/son structure of the entire book, as the wisdom from God is to be shown, taught, illustrated, and lived out by the father:

- Proverbs 1:1, 8, 15 the proverbs of Solomon **the son of David**, king of Israel: 8 **my son**, hear the instruction of your father, and do not forsake the law of your mother; 15 **my son**, do not walk in the way with them, keep your foot from their path;
- Proverbs 2:1 **my son**, if you receive my words, and treasure my commands within you,
- Proverbs 3:1, 21 **my son**, do not forget my law, but let your heart keep my commands; 21 my son, let them not depart from your eyes—keep sound wisdom and discretion;
- Proverbs 4:1, 10, 20 Hear, my children, the instruction of a father, and give attention to know understanding; 10 Hear, my son, and receive my sayings, and the years of your life will be many. 20 My son, give attention to my words; incline your ear to my sayings.
- And on we could go in 5:1; 6:1, 20; 7:1; 10:1; 13:1; etc.

When children are small and in our homes, in our Sunday School classes, in our youth groups: this is what we prayerfully need to teach them. When they get older and go

away to work and school, this is what we prayerfully remind them about, and ask God to do in their lives.

So as we look again at our **"How to Pray for those you Love"** pocket guide we see the final element in the third section:

### **3. Pray that they Reflect Christ's love in their relationships:**

- By Waiting for God's Chosen Partner**

The second biggest choice in life, and the one that impacts everything else after salvation is your marriage.

How you feel, how you serve, how you live most moments of your life—all are tied to the person you decide to share your life with in marriage.

And, when that marriage is not working, even if you break the covenant and divorce, that marriage partner will impact the rest of your life: either as a hurtful memory, a painful reminder, or as a costly investment of your life that is now irretrievably gone.

The outlook for a joy filled lifelong marriage is bleak without the Lord! To help us, God has left a colorful guide to marriage; it is a timeless list of personalities to avoid at all costs, and personalities to be attracted toward.

This list is in the Bible. Nestled among the 66 books of God's Word are the 31 chapters, 915 verses and over 15,000 words of the Book of Proverbs. In Proverbs there are over 200 verses that actually declare what good men and women, boys and girls look and act like, and what the immature, unspiritual, and ungodly opposites look and act like.

Have you refreshed your understanding of what the Lord in His infinite wisdom has said about this very practical and relevant area?

So for us this list would express what we should be and what we should avoid.

***For most of us, most of our life will be spent in marriage<sup>1</sup>.***

What do you want most of your years of life to be like? Do you want them to be hard times of tension, agony, frustration or pain? Or do you want them to be joyous and satisfying and the best years of your life?

God's Word goes so far as to even identify what type of person we should avoid, stay away from, and especially never consider as a viable marriage partner. The list is timeless, and can be your guide to a joyous Biblical marriage. How about taking a look at some of those 200 verses with me today? Let's open to Proverbs chapter 2.

## **BAD BOYS AND MEN**

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<sup>1</sup> 020908AM GDGW-30

## LOOK AND ACT LIKE THIS

What type of man would God say to stay away from, avoid imitating and setting any attention or affection upon? Here is the list:

1. **Immature and ungodly men are: Perverse Talkers** (2.12)

Proverbs 2:12 to deliver you from the way of evil, from ***the man who speaks perverse things***.

This is one whose mouth is familiar with words that are off color, smutty, innuendo, vulgar, and crass. Remember that Jesus said that what comes from our mouth has already filled our hearts and is just flowing straight from our hearts! God says avoid this type of man.

2. **Immature and ungodly men are: Wicked** (5.22)

Proverbs 5:22 His own iniquities entrap ***the wicked man***, and he is caught in the cords of his sin.

To this man God, God's Word, God's worship, holiness, purity – are all repulsive and a cause for mockery. A wicked person easily mocks discipline, they mock humility, they mock respect and they mock authority. God says avoid this type of man.

3. **Immature and ungodly men are: Worthless** (6.12)

Proverbs 6:12 a ***worthless*** person, a wicked man, walks with a perverse mouth.

This type of man has no direction, no purpose, no goals, no plans, they are just wanderers through life looking for and finding bad stuff. God says avoid this type of man.

4. **Immature and ungodly men are: Lustful** (6.26-27)

Proverbs 6:26-27 for by means of a harlot a man is reduced to a crust of bread; and an adulteress will prey upon his precious life. 27 Can a man take fire to his bosom, and his clothes not be burned?

Watch their eyes. What turns their head? If a man can't resist looking at a woman, married or not, he won't stop those wandering eyes, wandering hands, unsatisfied longings. A lustful man chases anyone for merely external appeal, looks for cheap and quick thrills; and will only grow more lustful, more unsatisfied, and more ungodly. God says avoid this type of man.

5. **Immature and ungodly men are: Empty** (7.7)

Proverbs 7:7 and saw among the simple, I perceived among the youths, a **young man devoid** of understanding,

This is a person with no substance, no depth, no long term visible growth, no discipline, they work to get money only to buy shoes, to prowling the malls, to play video games, to watch music, and to party; and so they waste their lives doing nothing of substance or worth. God says avoid this type of man.

6. **Immature and ungodly men are: Foolish** (10.23)

Proverbs 10:23 to do evil is like sport to **a fool**, But a man of understanding has wisdom.

You can spot this type of fellow because he always clown around, always wants attention, always seeks to dominate conversations, always seeks to catch the spot light, shows off, brags, takes needless risks, always daring others, never respects authority.

In fact, God says a foolish child is a child who cannot control themselves when outside the reach of their parents. Your child should sit with you until they are mature enough to sit alone without disturbing others by talking, writing notes, giggling, poking, and drawing others attention away from the teacher, the pastor, the leader, or the ministry. God says avoid this type of man.

7. **Immature and ungodly men are: Lazy** (10.26)

Proverbs 10:26 as vinegar to the teeth and smoke to the eyes, so is the **lazy man** to those who send him.

This is the fellow who lays around, avoids work, loafers, sleeps in, over eats, over sleeps, always late, always behind—and can always justify and excuse his behavior, or blame it on someone or something else. God says avoid this type of man.

8. **Immature and ungodly men are: Cruel** (11.17)

Proverbs 11:17 the merciful man does good for his own soul, but **he who is cruel** troubles his own flesh.

This type is mean to animals, mean to people, hurts with words, often angry. God says avoid this type of man.

9. **Immature and ungodly men are: Quick Tempered** (14.17)

Proverbs 14:17 **a quick-tempered man** acts foolishly, and a man of wicked intentions is hated.

This is the red faced, hot worded, hasty and physical person who shoves, pushes and easily fights with those who get in his way. God says avoid this type of man.

10. **Immature and ungodly men are: Ungodly** (16.27)

Proverbs 16:27 ***an ungodly man*** digs up evil, and it is on his lips like a burning fire.

This fellow rarely shows hunger for God's Word, or concern for the Spirit of God, or passion for fellowship or worship of God. They have no song from the Lord on their heart; anger and self-centeredness are their habits. God says avoid this type of man.

11. **Immature and ungodly men are: Perverse** (16.28)

Proverbs 16:28 ***a perverse man*** sows strife, and a whisperer separates the best of friends.

They are drawn to the gross, the violent, the borderline; they are un-shockable, un-embarrassable, unfeeling, and uncaring. God says avoid this type of man.

12. **Immature and ungodly men are: Violent** (16.29)

Proverbs 16:29 ***a violent man*** entices his neighbor, and leads him in a way that is not good.

They are fighters, argumentative, brash, harsh and hurtful. God says avoid this type of man.

13. **Immature and ungodly men are: Unfaithful** (25.19)

Proverbs 25:19 Confidences in ***an unfaithful man*** in time of trouble is like a bad tooth and a foot out of joint.

They don't keep their word, they change their mind, and they stand you up, keep you waiting, and are basically unreliable. God says avoid this type of man.

14. **Immature and ungodly men are: Unsatisfied** (27.20)

Proverbs 27:20 Hell and Destruction are never full; so the ***eyes of man are never satisfied***.

They never ***get*** enough, never ***have*** enough, ***always*** want more, and even then—that is ***never enough***. They are listless, restless, and helplessly held by their desires. God says avoid this type of man.

In summary, the 915 verses God shares with us from His heart of wisdom in Proverbs describe the type of man not to become, the type of boy not to give your heart to, and the type of behavior to ask God for grace to repent of every time it shows up in your life.

God says avoid **immature and ungodly men who are: Perverse** (2.12); **Wicked** (5.22); **Worthless** (6.12) ; **Lustful** (6.26-27) ; **Empty** (7.7); **Foolish** (10.23); **Lazy** (10.26); **Cruel** (11.17); **Quick Tempered** (14.17); **Ungodly** (16.27); **Perverse** (16.28); **Violent** (16.29); **Isolated** (18.1); **Guilty** (21.8); **Unfaithful** (25.19); **Unsatisfied** (27.20).

What will you be? Your choices today, energized by God's grace will determine your future!

If you are interested, the Lord also lists what to pursue, or look for, or be as far what God looks for positively in a man. We could summarize the teaching God's Word gives us in the 915 verses of Proverbs and say:

## **GOOD BOYS AND MEN LOOK AND ACT LIKE THIS**

Listen to what God says we can be by His grace. This is what you should want to be, what we should want to be around, what we should be drawn toward:

### **1. Spiritually Mature men are: Wise (1.5)**

Proverbs 1:5 a wise man will hear and increase learning, and a man of understanding will attain wise counsel.

The Lord has already told us in James 3.17 that this wise man has wisdom from above. He is characterized as pure, peaceable, gentle, and easy to talk things over with, full of mercy and wanting to do good.

### **2. Spiritually Mature men are: Happy (3.13)**

Proverbs 3:13 Happy is the man who finds wisdom, and the man who gains understanding.

The Sermon on the Mount says it all. Happy are the pure in heart, Happy are the meek, Happy are the humble, Happy are the peacemakers, Happy are the righteous seekers, and Happy are those who are hungry for God.

### **3. Spiritually Mature men are: Blessed (8.34)**

Proverbs 8:34 blessed is the man who listens to me, Watching daily at my gates, Waiting at the posts of my doors.

As Psalm 1 says the Blessed Man is rooted deep in God's Word, the Blessed Man is full of God's fruit, and the Blessed Man is won't walk, or stand, or sit with those who mock God. And on that point, parents are you aware that your teen-aged children sit week after week whispering, passing notes, laughing, and doing everything but paying attention? They should sit with you until they are mature enough to act honorably and respectfully out of your presence.

4. **Spiritually Mature men are: Just (9.9)**

Proverbs 9:9 Give instruction to a wise man, and he will be still wiser; Teach a just man, and he will increase in learning.

This quality of being just is like the English word 'straight'. This man is straight – in his talk, walk, habits, and convictions. You know who he is and where he is going.

5. **Spiritually Mature men are: Merciful (11.17)**

Proverbs 11:17 the merciful man does good for his own soul, but he who is cruel troubles his own flesh.

Hitler surrounded himself with men who were evil, and cruel. Together they made the darkest blot yet seen in history. Stay away from those who delight in cruel words, attitudes, and actions.

6. **Spiritually Mature men are: Sowing righteousness (11.18)**

Proverbs 11:18 the wicked man does deceptive work, But he who sows righteousness will have a sure reward.

What we plant we reap. Sow secret sins and they come back at harvest time. Sow in godliness and life gets sweeter and sweeter.

7. **Spiritually Mature men are: Good (12.2)**

Proverbs 12:2 a good man obtains favor from the Lord, but a man of wicked intentions He will condemn.

Remember real goodness is a fruit of God present within a person's life. There is no clearer indicator of what a man will be like than his goodness level. Is he drawn toward what is good or evil? Few people turn out very far from where they are headed right now. Change your direction, turn toward the Lord who is good if you are not facing Him and headed toward Him today.

8. **Spiritually Mature men are: Rooted in righteousness (12.3)**

Proverbs 12:3 a man is not established by wickedness, But the root of the righteous cannot be moved.



As Psalm 1 and Jeremiah 17.8 both say, righteousness holds us firmly in the place where God can make us flourish fruitfully and securely.

9. **Spiritually Mature men are: Righteous in every day life** (12.10)

Proverbs 12:10 A righteous man regards the life of his animal, But the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel.

An animal might have been his transportation – so the Lord should be evident in your car. How you drive, keep up, and decorate your car declares a lot about you. Also an animal might have been his work. God says righteousness invades all of life even the barnyard (or work). A righteous man exhibits the Lord in how he treats the indefensible, the weak, and the common.

10. **Spiritually Mature men are: Prudent** (12.16)

Proverbs 12:16 a fool's wrath is known at once, but a prudent man covers shame.

Another fruit of God living within is self-control. A fool lets it all out, vents, rages, and carries on. The prudent man knows how to respond in hard, difficult or shameful times.

11. **Spiritually Mature men are: Diligent** (12.24)

Proverbs 12:24 the hand of the diligent will rule, but the lazy man will be put to forced labor.

Proverbs describes the lazy a.k.a. sluggards 14 times. That is a study in itself. How much heartache would be avoided if a lazy man was not an option. Laziness seems to only grow.

12. **Spiritually Mature men are: Good** (14.14)

Proverbs 14:14 the backslider in heart will be filled with his own ways, but a good man will be satisfied from above.

The surest sign of danger in a man is when you detect that he is full of himself. He talks about himself, shows himself off, promotes himself, and on and on he goes. This is a life that is sliding backward towards an abyss, don't attach yourself to such a person or you will be pulled down and into his abyss.

13. **Spiritually Mature men are: Wisely Cautious** (14.16; also 12.8)

Proverbs 14:16 a wise man fears and departs from evil, but a fool rages and is self-confident.

Brashness, overconfidence, and foolhardiness are not noble virtues.

14. **Spiritually Mature men are: Follow the way of the upright** (15.19)

Proverbs 15:19 the way of the lazy man is like a hedge of thorns, but the way of the upright is a highway. Here is another one of the 14 verses containing 'lazy man' warnings.

The way of the righteous is a path that God designs, and the wise follow. It is an exhilarating life of adventure, excitement, and wonders – walking on the high places of the earth as Isaiah describes it. But the wicked in all their seeming gaiety are actually walking through a hedge of thorns. Like cut, scrapes, scratches, and tears them up with every step. Which path do you want to take?

15. **Spiritually Mature men are: Wise sons** (15.20)

Proverbs 15:20 a wise son makes a father glad, but a foolish man despises his mother.

Watch carefully how a boy relates to his parents. What he was at home will touch his life with blessing or lacking all the days of his life.

16. **Seek to become a man who is Humble** (18.12)

Proverbs 18:12 before destruction the heart of a man is haughty, And before honor is humility.

The key to God's blessing is a humble life. Haughtiness invites disaster.

17. **Spiritually Mature men are: Excellent** (22.29)

Proverbs 22:29 Do you see a man who excels in his work? He will stand before kings; He will not stand before unknown men.

The mark of an excellent man, who will excel in whatever he does, is that he practices, and perfects a skill in his life. There is no limit God says to what I can do with one who works hard at what he does.

18. **Spiritually Mature men are: Upright** (29.27)

Proverbs 29:27 an unjust man is an abomination to the righteous, and he who is upright in the way is an abomination to the wicked.