

Marriage

by Donnette Alfelt

(The author shares thoughts on marriage from the vantage point of an older person who is at the "top of the yardstick" of life. Excerpted from "From the Top of the Yardstick" by Donnette Alfelt.)

Just now, the time for finding the right person or planning your wedding day may seem very distant. However, if you honor and long for a marriage of trust and commitment to one partner, now is the time to begin working on it. There are things you can do now based on your beliefs and hopes about the marriage covenant:

- Get to know who you are and what you value.
- Avoid influences and actions that might degrade the ideals of marriage.
- Work on qualities in yourself that you will be looking for in a partner. The moral virtues of honesty, chastity, communication skills, loyalty, compassion, etc.
- Learn to understand and appreciate how the sexes differ and how they can complement each other.
- Learn practical skills that will help make your future home run more smoothly.
- Improve your mind through education so that you will be able to work if desired or necessary and so that you can become a more informed, interesting and useful partner.
- Work on healthy friendships with both sexes in preparation for a friendship with your married partner.
- Practice kindness and communication skills with family and friends who are in your life now.
- Learn to deal with the unexpected.
- Look for mentors.
- Trust in the Lord and follow His leading.

Of course, all of these things will lead to a more interesting and happy life even apart from marriage.

You live in a culture that for the most part doesn't seem to value marriage. It will often be very difficult to rise above the influences that bombard you with messages that dishonor and disrespect the marriage vows.