

God's Vision for Marriage

In a word, marriage is about oneness. *"For this cause a man shall leave his father and mother and cleave to his wife and the two shall become one flesh. The man and his wife were naked and not ashamed"* (Genesis 2:24-25). It is about one woman and one man uniting for life (see FBC's *Doctrinal Statement*, section "Man") to bring God glory as they live, work, love, and parent.

Were it not for sin, marriage would be easy. Couples would never separate or divorce; no one would ever be unfaithful or unkind. But because of sin, marriages everywhere feel the strain.

It is here – in the mix-up of love and sin – that Christian marriages can set themselves apart from others by seeking to be obedient and honoring to God. They can do this by the man loving his wife and the woman respecting her husband (Ephesians 5:33).

Are you getting married?

Congratulations to you both! We are delighted to hear that you are taking this step toward marriage and we look forward to helping you start your new life together in the Lord. Apart from coming to know Christ, there is no more critical, important, or crucial step in your life than the step into marriage.



What does FBC offer for engaged couples?

We offer premarital counseling at FBC for engaged couples who are being married by an FBC pastor, using our facilities, or are being married elsewhere but would still like premarital counseling. (Please read FBC's Wedding Policy for further details at www.fbcva.org.)

We want to help you get your marriage started in the right direction. Our premarital program addresses important biblical principles so that you can "hurdle the hindrances" to an effective marriage and begin your life together on a sure and solid foundation.

How do we begin premarital counseling?

Contact us in the Counseling office at sherril@fbcva.org or 540-662-7743. We will send you premarital intake forms and any additional information you may need by email or postal mail. From there, we will schedule an intake meeting with John Morrison, the Pastor of Biblical Counseling.

In time, we will match you with one of our trained premarital mentor couples who are mature Christians and members of FBC. You will meet with your mentor couple for six sessions over an approximate three month period to study relevant Bible passages on marriage and to discuss important topics concerning the marriage commitment.

For more information about the process, visit our website for the *Getting Married Through Fellowship Bible Church* document .

We do not charge for our premarital counseling but there is a cost for testing and resources used. You will need to pay \$80 (cash or check) to be registered for the online tests.

What is the timeline of premarital counseling?

Premarital counseling must be completed prior to wedding announcements being mailed. If during the counseling process the mentor couple communicates concerns about your marriage or the timing of it, the pastor may delay the wedding (or recommend so to whoever is officiating). **Though this rarely happens, please realize that wedding plans are contingent upon satisfactory completion of premarital counseling.**

What is FBC's Wedding Policy?

Fellowship Bible Church requires that:

1. At least one of the couple (or their parents) must be a member or regular attendee of FBC.
2. Both the man and woman being married (see Doctrinal Statement on "Man") must have a relationship with Christ and know Him as their Savior. The marriage must comport with FBC's Statement of Faith and Beliefs, including the Statement on Marriage and Sexuality; FBC's Wedding Policy DOES NOT permit weddings that do not adhere to these policies.
3. If you hope to have an FBC pastor or use FBC facilities, wedding requests must be made at least five months in advance so that you have adequate time to complete premarital counseling and to secure your preferred date.
4. Premarital counseling must be satisfactorily completed at least six weeks prior to the date requested and before mailing invitations.
5. Our facilities are available for use for first-time marriages and celebration of re-marriages after reconciliation to your first spouse.

What if I want to rent FBC facilities for my wedding?

Due to a busy schedule and limited staff for special events, FBC can only be used to host weddings for members and regular attendees. We are unable to offer our facilities to those outside the church family.

If you are interested in hosting your wedding or reception at FBC, please request additional information and the *Wedding Arrangements Request Form* from the Family Ministries office to begin the process of securing your event date.

Please note that the time schedule for weddings at FBC is very limited; your event must be finished and all decorations, food and wedding-related items *removed from the premises by 3:00 p.m. Saturday* due to church service preparations (no exceptions).



If you have any questions regarding the policies presented in this brochure, please call the FBC office at 540-662-7743 and ask for the office of Biblical Counseling.

What is FBC's policy on divorce and remarriage?

The elders at Fellowship Bible Church recognize that there are various views regarding remarriage after divorce. Godly biblical scholars and pastors do not always agree on these views.

After much study, prayer, and biblical deliberation, FBC elders have determined that because marriage ranks so highly in God's estimation and because we believe that the Bible teaches that marriage is for life (a covenant bond broken only at death, cf., Romans 7:2-3), we cannot support remarriage after divorce. This means we are not able to provide premarital counseling or perform weddings for people who are divorced and whose spouse is still living. We do not judge those who disagree with our policy, but we must obey what we understand God is teaching us.

If a couple wishes to speak with an elder or pastor concerning this view, please call the church office to set up an appointment. A policy paper and a study guide of the biblical passages concerning divorce and remarriage will be provided, and the various views of divorce and remarriage can be discussed.

Knowing that the families of many of FBC's elders and pastors have been painfully impacted by divorce, we do not hold this policy lightly or with a lack of love for those whom it affects. We follow it because we believe God's Word teaches it, and our policy is to obey His Word. If we did not, we would cease to be a church whose witness is of Jesus Christ and of His Word.



3217 Middle Road
Winchester, VA 22602
www.fbcva.org
(540) 662-7743

[Updated 9/20/2017]



Getting Married?

