

Premarital Preparation

by The Board of Elders

Deciding on a life partner is a serious matter, and the Elders and pastors at CPC feel responsible to help couples prepare on every level for the commitments before them. Due to the increase in divorce in our society (no less, the church!) and the breakdown of the family structure, we feel it is imperative to maintain a strong commitment to premarital counseling. Because of our commitment at CPC to nurture healthy, Christ-centered, biblically-based marriages, we have developed some premarital guidelines that are essential to those desiring to be married by one of our pastors. These guidelines, written to you as a couple, are as follows:

1. We strongly suggest that you meet with the pastor at least once for pre-engagement counseling. This will allow the pastor to get to know you and be part of the process right from the start of your deciding to marry.
2. You should begin premarital counseling at least six months prior to the date of your wedding. Our desire is to give you time to focus on your marriage without the stress and pressure of a wedding just around the corner.
3. In some cases, before the first premarital session, you will be asked to complete the Prepare Inventory (\$35). When the results from the inventory come back to us, we will call you to set up the first appointment.
4. You should plan on a minimum of six counseling

appointments, with two to three weeks between appointments to allow for completion of assignments.

5. We will not marry couples who are living together or couples who are “unequally yoked” (Christian and non-Christian). If you are living together and desire to get married by a CPC pastor, you should understand that you will be asked to change your living situation.
6. You should understand that the Scripture teaches that sexual relations are to be enjoyed within the context of marriage only. We understand that it is a difficult thing to abstain prior to your wedding, but we ask you to remain committed to this standard.

We understand that these guidelines may prove to be inconvenient or downright difficult for some. But given the forces at work in our society against strong marriages and families, we feel these guidelines are needed. Our desire is that you are as equipped as possible for your life together. Our experience has been that those couples who finish this process feel it has been fun, stretching, and extremely worthwhile. We hope you will, too! If your circumstances do not allow you to follow these guidelines, we would be glad to talk with you and try to find some alternatives.

Thank you for your consideration and understanding of these guidelines.