

Thank you for the question sent to our Gospel Lessons website: "Can you ask for things like a wife or a soul mate in terms of using the Bible? If so, where can I find it in the Bible?"

In general, the answer to your question is that we can take any scriptural or personal concern to our heavenly Father in prayer. Since marriage is an institution ordained by God, it is fitting to pray for finding a wife and for a good Christian marriage.

Jesus used a parable of the unrighteous judge to illustrate the connection of our prayer to the strength of our faith in Luke 16. James tells us in James 1:17: "Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows." Since all good things come from God, it is acceptable to pray for these things, including marriage. To help you see what these things might be, Paul gave us the characteristics of these things in Phil 4:8: "Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable – if anything is excellent or praiseworthy – think about such things." You should be looking for a relationship in marriage that is, among the other things, true, pure, and lovely.

These words by Paul describe a good wife and a good marriage. A bad wife and a bad marriage are worse than no wife and no marriage at all. In fact, the apostle Paul encouraged Christians who could do so to remain single in 1 Cor 7:1-3: "It is good for a man not to marry. 2 But since there is so much immorality, each man should have his own wife, and each woman her own husband. 3 The husband should fulfill his marital duty to his wife, and likewise the wife to her husband."

Jesus explained that marriage is a relationship or joining together made by God from the beginning. Mark 10:5-9 says, "Jesus replied. 6 'But at the beginning of creation God "made them male and female." 7'For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, 8 and the two will become one flesh. So they are no longer two, but one. 9 Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate.'" Any marriage that you might enter, should be entered for life. Therefore, it is important to get it right the first time.

In Eph 5:22-33, Paul explained the proper relationship between husbands and wives:

22 Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord. 23 For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior. 24 Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything.

25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her 26 to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, 27 and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. 28 In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. 29 After all, no one ever hated his own body, but he feeds and cares for it, just as Christ does the church— 30 for we are members of his body. 31 "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh." 32 This is a profound mystery – but I am talking about Christ and the church. 33 However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband.

These scriptures will help you see what kind of relationship you should seek. Can you pray for a good wife? Prov 18:22 tells us: "He who finds a wife finds what is good and receives favor from the LORD." The wise man adds in Prov 19:14: "Houses and wealth are inherited from parents, but a prudent wife is from the LORD." Solomon even describes a noble wife in Prov 31:10-31:

10 A wife of noble character who can find? She is worth far more than rubies. 11 Her husband has full confidence in her and lacks nothing of value. 12 She brings him good, not harm, all the days of her life. 13 She selects wool and flax and works with eager hands. 14 She is like the merchant ships, bringing her food from afar. 15 She gets up while it is still dark; she provides food for her family and portions for her servant girls. 16 She considers a field and buys it; out

of her earnings she plants a vineyard. 17 She sets about her work vigorously; her arms are strong for her tasks. 18 She sees that her trading is profitable, and her lamp does not go out at night. 19 In her hand she holds the distaff and grasps the spindle with her fingers. 20 She opens her arms to the poor and extends her hands to the needy. 21 When it snows, she has no fear for her household; for all of them are clothed in scarlet. 22 She makes coverings for her bed; she is clothed in fine linen and purple. 23 Her husband is respected at the city gate, where he takes his seat among the elders of the land. 24 She makes linen garments and sells them, and supplies the merchants with sashes. 25 She is clothed with strength and dignity; she can laugh at the days to come. 26 She speaks with wisdom, and faithful instruction is on her tongue. 27 She watches over the affairs of her household and does not eat the bread of idleness. 28 Her children arise and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praises her: 29 "Many women do noble things, but you surpass them all." 30 Charm is deceptive, and beauty is fleeting; but a woman who fears the LORD is to be praised. 31 Give her the reward she has earned, and let her works bring her praise at the city gate.

When you pray for a wife, pray for one who meets the description found in these passages. Will the Lord answer your prayer? Sometimes not, and as in the case of Paul in 1 Cor 7 above, it may be better and the will of God for you to remain single.

In the meantime, you can do things to help. Go to places where Christian people gather. The foremost of these will be to the church. Participate in the activities of Christian people enough so that they will get to know you and you them. Your life will improve and you may meet eligible Christians through the church or through these associations. One thing is for sure. You will not meet eligible Christians in bars and nightclubs. Paul told us in 1 Cor 15:33, "33 Do not be misled: Bad company corrupts good character."

Whether you marry or remain single, be content with the state that God gives you and find your happiness there. Paul concluded his discussion of Christians marrying with this statement in 1 Cor 7:17-24:

17 Nevertheless, each one should retain the place in life that the Lord assigned to him and to which God has called him. This is the rule I lay down in all the churches. 18 Was a man already circumcised when he was called? He should not become uncircumcised. Was a man uncircumcised when he was called? He should not be circumcised. 19 Circumcision is nothing and uncircumcision is nothing. Keeping God's commands is what counts. 20 Each one should remain in the situation which he was in when God called him. . . . 23 You were bought at a price; do not become slaves of men. 24 Brothers, each man, as responsible to God, should remain in the situation God called him to.

Thank you for writing. If you have not obeyed the gospel, it is important that you attend to this immediately, if you want to be saved and if you expect God to hear and answer your prayers for a wife or any other thing. Jesus taught this in John 9:31: "31 We know that God does not listen to sinners. He listens to the godly man who does his will." If you need help in understanding what to do, go back to [www.gospellesons.info](http://www.gospellesons.info) where you will find articles on the home page conspicuously blocked entitled, *What Must I Do to Be Saved?* and *What Is the Church of Christ?* Please contact the church of Christ in your community where you can explore with them these important issues in your life.

In Christ,

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