

## **As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord**

### Getting ready

**Buy the Bible.** Select one assuming it will be given away. Look for an easy-to-understand translation. *Good News Bible*, Today's English Version, is very good for casual reading. You can order copies from American Bible Society (1865 Broadway, New York, NY 10023).

**Decide on date, time, place.** Make sure you select a date that is convenient for the bride. She may be extremely busy with her pre-wedding plans.

**Decide if you will ask the groom-to-be to be present.** If so, make sure he knows he's invited.

**Arrange for any special touches.** A Bible presentation ceremony need not be complicated or elaborate. It would be quite meaningful to simply present the Bible using the suggested remarks in this article. However, if you would like music, refreshments, special room arrangements, etc., decide on that in advance.

**Make assignments.** Read over the suggested remarks. Decide who will participate and how. Encourage them to speak from their heart, not simply read parts from the program. If you have more or fewer people than suggested, adjust the comments accordingly. Designate someone as "leader".

### Presenting the Bible

**Leader:** We are so glad that you, (bride and groom), will unite your lives together soon. As Christian friends, we wanted to express our support and happiness, as well as challenge you as you begin your Christian home. Marriage involves many choices. You've already begun that process as you have chosen each other as life partners. As you marry, you are choosing to forsake all others; to live with each other in sickness and health, in poverty and wealth; to live together in love until death parts you. But as good as those choices are, the most important choice you will make as a couple involves the place of Christ in your home.

**Speaker 1:** Are you willing to say at the very beginning of your marriage, "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord"? That's a

choice. The words were first spoken by Joshua. He had led the children of Israel into the promised land. Just before his death, he gathered everyone together and gave them as message from the Lord. The essence of it was that throughout the years, the children of Israel had been unfaithful, but God has been faithful. With all that in mind, who would they serve-God who had brought them to that place or the many gods who had proved useless? "Choose you this day whom ye will serve" was the mandate. The children of Israel would have to declare who their God was. Joshua had already decided when he stated, "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." Are you ready to say that about the new home you will be establishing?

**Speaker 2:** Joshua and the children of Israel are not the only ones who must choose who their God is. We all make those choices daily. Decide now, "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." Know that you must make that choice when you are tempted to serve other gods in your marriage. Work on your relationship; give it high priority; but don't allow your love for each other get in the way of your love for God. Too many people try to make a god out of their marriage partners or marriage itself. And they are eventually disappointed. Choose together to serve the Lord, trusting Him to provide what is needed to deepen your relationship with each other.

**Speaker 3:** Choose to serve the Lord and not the god of things. You should be able to measure your life together in other terms than what you have acquired. Be prepared to thank God for material blessings when they come. But don't count on them. Don't look for happiness in houses, cars, clothes, furniture, hobbies. Look to the Lord.

**Speaker 4:** Choose to serve the Lord and not the god of your job(s). A job can get in the way of your relationship with each other and your relationship with the Lord. Plan now to get your job(s) in proper perspective.

**Speaker 1:** Choose to serve the Lord and not the god of society's relaxed view of marriage. A Christian marriage should be different from what you see on TV or in the movies. Marriage was ordained by God, and the terms are not to be revised by any of us.

**Speaker 2:** Choose to serve the Lord, and not the god of selfishness. Selfishness is not a desirable quality for the Christian and is destructive in marriage. You are serving the Lord when you look out for the needs, desires, and other interests of your partner. Get in the habit of living unselfishly.

**Speaker 3:** Choose to serve the Lord and not the god of position. Decide together that servanthood is a worthy aim. Find out how you can serve others in your life together.

**Speaker 4:** Choose to serve the Lord and not the god of church activities. Be active in your church. Serve the Lord through your church. But don't allow busyness at church to take the place of a dynamic relationship with the Lord. Don't get so over-committed at church that your relationship with each other suffers.

**Leader:** We want you to have this Bible. Plan to serve the Lord by absorbing His Word. Keep this Bible in your home. Plan to serve the Lord together by sharing the message in this book. Put this Bible in a visible spot in your home, and plan to give it to a non-Christian who visits you. Make it evident to that person that you have chosen as a couple whom you will serve.

**Everyone:** As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.

**Leader and others:** *(Participate in a time of prayer for the couple and their witness in the new life they are establishing.)*