



commitment, or if their faiths are different they may plan an interfaith marriage ceremony to blend their spirituality together. Modern society also puts pressure on couples to marry. While cohabitation and open commitments are more acceptable and more common than ever before, the solid commitment of a marriage ceremony is still sought after as a firm indication of a couple's bond. Many couples feel intense peer pressure to marry from their parents, relatives, or other married friends, particularly if they already have children or plan to start a family. Single individuals may also be pressured to "settle down" and get married, and for some people, the appeal of a party to celebrate their union is incentive enough to get married.

With so many reasons to get married, it is important for couples to truly examine their relationship and decide why they want to make this commitment to one another. Some reasons are good, some reasons are bad, and some reasons are irrelevant to the way a couple may feel about a long term relationship. Every couple who is planning their wedding should carefully consider just why do they want to get married, and they should consider those reasons with realistic expectations. For example, a couple who is deeply in love needs to realize that the fresh romance of a new relationship will not feel the same after a lengthy marriage, and a couple who marries purely for tax benefits needs to realize that the financial reasons for marriage should not be the only reason for tying the knot. We should not forget a certain verse about love which has an important role in marriage. It says "love is patient and kind; love is not jealous or boastful; it is not arrogant or rude. Love does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrong, but rejoices in the right. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, and endures all things". Whatever reasons do people have in mind to get married; happiness is the sweetest fruit they could ever have. On the contrary, unhappy married life brings sadness. The feelings are hurt and need much time before it heals the damage.

Questions for discussion:

1. What springs to mind when you read / hear the word "marriage"?
2. Why do people get married? Give an example.
3. Why do some people remain single?
4. Describe a happy marriage.
5. Do you want to get married in the future? Why and why not?