I. Do everything you can to promote the sanctity of marriage in the life of the church.
   A. It is a covenant made before man and before God.
   B. It is a public witness of their covenant love.
   C. It is symbolic of Christ’s relationship to the church (Eph. 5:23-32).
   D. It is part of God’s eternal purpose for the man and the woman (Gen. 1:28).

II. Be sure a proper foundation is laid in the local church for successful marriages.
   A. Public teaching of dating and courtship principles.
   B. Pre-marital counseling of marriage candidates.
   C. Working in close association with the parents in the engagement process.
   D. Possibly training a wedding coordinator in the church to help couples through the process.

III. Settle for yourself those whom you will marry and those whom you will not marry.

   Develop a written policy so that your decisions in these matters will not seem personal or arbitrary with a particular couple (See: Wedding Guidelines under its own title).

   As a pastor, you must be able to answer the following questions:
   A. Would you marry people who were previously married, but are now divorced? If so, under what circumstances?
   B. Would you marry an unsaved couple? Why have you come to this decision?
   C. Would you marry anyone who came to you? Does a pastor have any responsibility before God for his or her function in the ceremony?
   D. Would you marry mixed situations?
      1. Protestant/Catholic
      2. Racial Differences
      3. Believers/Unbelievers
      4. Charismatic/Non-Charismatic
IV. Be familiar with the laws in your area so you can guide the couple on the proper time line.

A. Physical exam?
B. Marriage license?
C. Waiting period?

V. Be a resource to the couple as they make wedding plans.

A. Help them remain balanced in their perspectives.
   1. In finances
   2. In extravagances
   3. In length of ceremony
   4. In wedding participants
   5. In venue options

B. Help them to have realistic expectations as the date approaches.
   1. In their budget
   2. In their relationship

C. Help them make decisions concerning the ceremony itself.
   1. Attendants
   2. Involvement of Parents
   3. Singers/Songs
   4. Musicians
   5. Vows
   6. Officiant (s)
   7. Reception
   8. Date/Time
   9. Other elements in the service
   10. Congregational concerns
   11. Pictures
   12. Taping (audio or video)

D. Help them develop an order of service to their liking (Note: When disagreements occur, encourage the groom to let the bride have her preference.).

VI. Schedule a rehearsal a day or two before the wedding.

A. Be punctual in all of your duties.
B. Make sure all audio-visual personnel are present.
C. Meet and be prepared to minister to relatives and other participants.

D. Double check that all of the legal documents are in order.

E. Keep the rehearsal flowing smoothly and efficiently.

VII. Make the ceremony as meaningful as possible.

A. Spend time getting your part down well.

B. Be punctual in everything that you do.

C. Be prepared for the unusual.

D. Do your best to keep everyone relaxed.

E. Make your exhortations meaningful, but brief.

F. Be sure to say their names properly.

G. Make sure all legal documents are properly signed and registered.

VIII. A Traditional Model

- Musicians playing as people are seated
- Parents and grandparents seated
- Candles are lit by acolytes
- Groom and groomsmen enter at front (pastor enters with them)
- Bridesmaids process
- Bride enters with father (congregation stands)
- Father and mother give the bride to the groom
- Couple join pastor at the altar
- Song is sung
- Exhortation by the pastor
- Vows exchanged
- Candle ceremony while song is sung
- Wedding prayer (couple kneeling)
- Pronouncement of “Husband and Wife”
- Kiss
- Recession
- Musicians play while people ushered out
- Reception