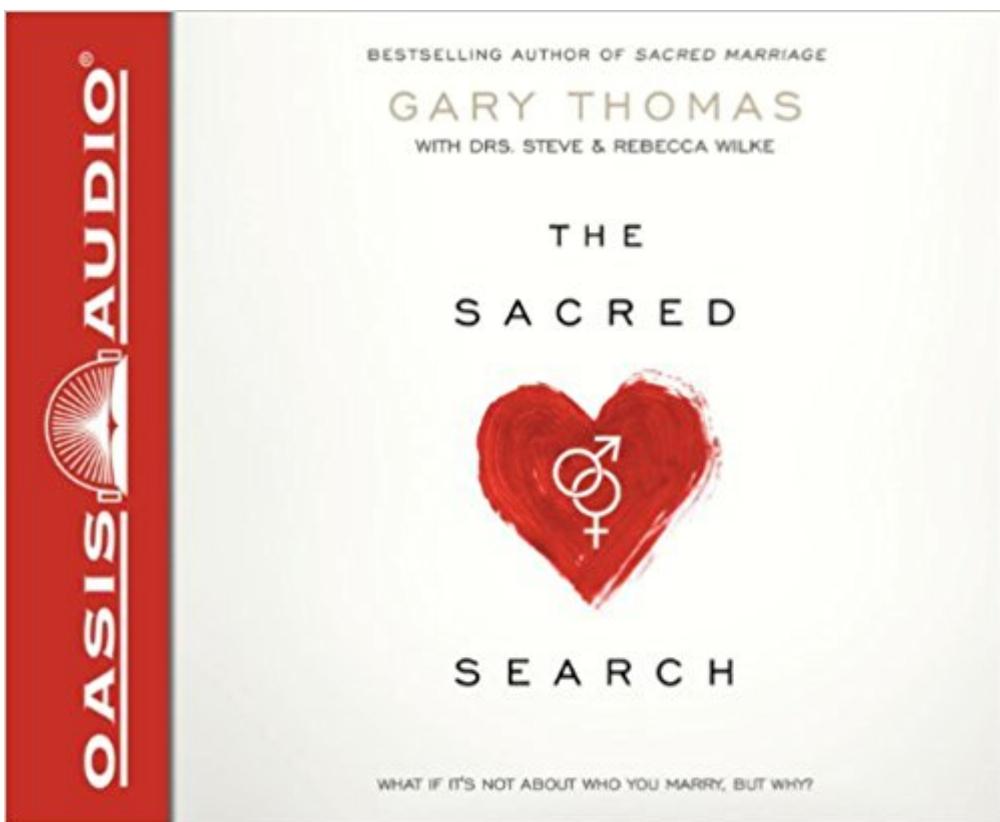


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# The Sacred Search: What If It's Not About Who You Marry, But Why?



## Synopsis

What if being in love isn't a good enough reason to get married? What if dating isn't about finding "the one," but about serving the one who loves you most? Don't get married until you listen to this audiobook. In *The Sacred Search*, Gary Thomas challenges you to think beyond finding a "soul mate" and to look for a "sole mate" - someone who will walk with you on your spiritual journey. After all, if you don't know why to marry, you won't know who to marry. *The Sacred Search* casts a vision for building a relationship around a shared spiritual mission - and making a marriage with eternity at its heart.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Gary Thomas looks at the heart of a subject that many consider him an expert on—successful marriage. Anyone who is dating, engaged, or hopes to be one day needs to read this book!" (Ed Young)"Singles, pay attention. Gary knows marriage, and is eager to help those of us desiring marriage get there with confidence and grace." (Lisa Anderson)"Gary Thomas debunks the mythical search for a soul mate to help you choose a 'sole-mate'—someone who will lay down their life in faithful love. This biblically based book is for anyone who wants to be wise in their pursuit of a spouse." (Drs. Les and Leslie Parrott)"Gary creates a compelling argument that shifts the believer's view of relationships, dating, and marriage to focus on something greater. I'm thankful Gary has created this resource." (Joy Eggerichs)"The Sacred Search will help those who desire marriage to pursue it in a manner that deepens their faith, honors God, and blesses their future spouse." (Jim Daly)"Marriages are falling apart all around us and I believe Gary Thomas has

just gone straight to the root. Gary just built a map to help you see through the emotion and infatuation to God's heart for dating and marriage." (Jennie Allen)"Our culture is obsessed with compatibility and chemistry. However, in relationship formation character always trumps chemistry. The Sacred Search is a gut check for anyone considering, delaying, or even pursuing marriage." (Ted Cunningham)"Why should I get married? could be the most important questions Millennials are asking. Gary Thomas helps this generation navigate the why in a Christ-honoring way." (Esther Fleece)"Filled with questions to make you think and teaching that will bring 'aha' moments, this book is a must read for everyone considering marriage. I highly recommend it to you— I wish I'd had it when I was single!" (Linda Dillow)"Gary Thomas dismantles contemporary philosophies on love, sexuality, and marital union by offering strong arguments for why they have not been successful. His appeal to a kingdom-first perspective gives both hope and healing for a generation in desperate need of a fresh and Christ-centered understanding of God's plan for marriage. This book is a must-read before anyone says 'I do.'" (Michelle Anthony) --This text refers to an alternate Audio CD edition.

What if being in love isn't a good enough reason to get married? What if dating isn't about finding "the one" but about serving the One who loves you most? Don't Get Married Until You Read This Book. In *The Sacred Search*, Gary Thomas challenges you to think beyond finding a "soul mate" and to look for a "sole mate" — someone who will walk with you on your spiritual journey. After all, if you don't know why to marry, you won't know who to marry. *The Sacred Search* casts a vision for building a relationship around a shared spiritual mission—and making a marriage with eternity at its heart. --This text refers to an alternate Audio CD edition.

**WHAT READERS CAN LEARN FROM THIS BOOK**

1. Being "in love" is not a reliable criterion for marrying someone. Women are more likely to experience romantic love with dominant men, even though dominant men typically demonstrate less ability to express the kind of companionship, relational skills, and emotional attachment that women ultimately desire in a lifelong mate.
2. The average life span of infatuation is two years. The author recommends a couple not get engaged less than one year before meeting because infatuation has to run its course in order to really get to know a person, including his or her weaknesses, before getting married. Discerning a person's true character, values, and suitability for marriage is hard work that takes time, counsel, and a healthy

dose of skepticism.3. Our culture embraces the mistaken notion that there is only one specific person who can complete us, and we will know who that person is by the intense feelings we have. Conversely, the Bible does not teach that there is only one right person for you. Instead, it teaches that there are wise and unwise choices, and that a man should search for a woman of godly character (Proverbs 31:10)4. A single person should become involved in social situations where they are more likely to meet a qualified marriage partner, such as church, work, or introductions through family and friends.5. Relationships are unstable when they are based upon romantic idealism, physical attraction, or domination of one by the other. Some single people will terrorize their dating partners for reasons related to past wounds. These couples fight, argue, make each other miserable and afraid. These couples need to heal before they get married.6. A complementarian marriage is one in which the husband leads by serving.7. Compatibility is about having the most important things in common. Prior to marriage, dating couples should respect and appreciate their partner's personality and character. Morally, the Bible prohibits sex outside marriage. Neurochemically, sex before marriage bonds two people through the outpouring of oxytocin before they can properly test and evaluate each other's character. They should design dates specifically to reveal each other's character.8. Pornography is destructive because it teaches wrong information about women, that they like to do certain things and act in certain ways that they really do not. Porn trains men to bond with women's bodies in general, but not to bond with one woman in particular.9. Never marry someone just because you have been having sex with him or her, or because you feel sorry for that person, or because you want your search for a marriage partner to be over.

No marriage is easy, but some marriages build each partner up, while others tear each partner down; every marriage takes time and effort, but some marriages sap the spouses' strength, while others generate joy and enthusiasm and intimacy, according to Gary Thomas in this book. You are more likely to make a wise marriage choice if you settle the "why" question before considering the "who". The author's advice includes:<sup>\*</sup> No matter who you marry, the feelings of romantic attraction are likely to wear off within 12 to 18 months<sup>\*</sup> If you seek first God's kingdom and His righteousness, you will set yourself up for a more fulfilling, spiritually enriching and more satisfying marriage<sup>\*</sup> Infatuation leads far more people astray than into satisfying marriages<sup>\*</sup> While it can seem like a tremendous ego boost to have someone seem like they are desperate for you, ask yourself if you're willing to play the role of God in their life<sup>\*</sup> The Bible encourages us to use wisdom, not destiny, as our guide when choosing a marital partner<sup>\*</sup> Important factors to consider include scriptural

mandates, wisdom, parental and pastoral advice, and prayer\* If you marry for money, health or looks, keep in mind that none of these are certain to remain\* You're not just choosing a life partner; you're choosing your kids' future parent\* The man or woman you're thinking of marrying should be someone whose character can survive major life challenges\* A relationship requires two people getting to know each other, and then every day they have to choose to keep relating to each other or risk drifting apart\* It takes from 9 to 14 years for two individuals to stop thinking of themselves as individuals and to start thinking of themselves as a couple\* It's hard to accept that we are going to hurt someone we love so much, but if we marry them, we willThe book certainly provides plenty to think about for anyone contemplating marriage. When the requirements of a suitable marriage partner are all added together, the field of potential candidates is seriously narrowed. Most people experience severe struggles in their marriages, and most people are far from being perfect marriage partners, for many of the reasons the author has outlined. It is an eye-opening and sobering, but very helpful, book.

Gary Thomas has a gifted way of putting relationships in perspective. I wish that he would write a book geared at teenage relationships to help people like me, both parent and youth volunteer, to bring these concepts into an age appropriate message. Both the concept of understand the "why" of dating as primary to the "who" (Sacred Search) and the idea that God gave us marriage to develop "holiness" primary to "happiness" are so important. But when I have tried to share these concepts to teenagers, and parents of teenagers, everyone gets overwhelmed by the focus on marriage. They fear that looking at teenage relationships through this lense puts too much pressure and weight on such immature relationships. I argue that the patterns we establish in early dating relationships can set us up for hurt and disillusionment because we fail to acknowledge the long term impact of those experiences. Anyway, I appreciate this book and it's sister, Sacred Marriage, for what they call us to see as the ultimate outcome of relationships and the opportunity they provide for us to learn about ourselves.

If you know you want to be married, and are Christian... this is an EXCELLENT book to prepare you for 'the search'. As a middle aged woman who has been divorced for 7-8 years... I have found the dating world to be distastefully difficult. I have been online dating for about 18 months and I WISH that more of the Christian men out there had read this book or present themselves in a way that someone who has thought out what they really value in another person would be able to recognize them. Too often dating is about the sizzle and not the steak, and we wonder why so many

relationships fail. It doesn't have to be that way.

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