

13th Annual
"Seek The Old Paths"
Lectureship

The Home

THIRTEENTH ANNUAL
"SEEK THE OLD PATHS"
LECTURESHIP

JULY 26 — 39, 1998

THEME:

The HOME

Editor:
Garland M. Robinson

Held at the
East Corinth Church of Christ
1801 Cruise St.
Corinth, MS 38834-5108

FORWARD

The Annual **Seek The Old Paths** Lectureship is held each year at the East Corinth Church of Christ in Corinth, Mississippi, the week of the fourth Sunday in July.

The theme of the 1998 lectureship was **THE HOME**. The Word of God is timeless and its precepts are always applicable to every generation regardless of the subject. Whatever was true concerning the home in Bible days is true today. What the Word of God says about the home, the family, marriage, divorce, remarriage, husbands and wives, parents and children, brothers and sisters, aunts and uncles, grandparents and grandchildren, etc. etc. is true. It is the world's absolute, inspired, infallible, manual for the home and family. When men turn to human wisdom to cope with today's problems, they are in serious trouble. Let the day be hastened that men and women, boys and girls, everywhere would commit their very lives to a diligent and serious study of God's most wonderful Word concerning the home. Having learned the truth, let each practice the same every day of our lives.

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Garland M. Robinson
July, 1998

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The Origin of Marriage and the Home (A Divine Institution)

Windell R. Fikes

1. A loving faithful man and a loving faithful woman, joined together in marriage according to the plan of God, can enjoy happiness, pleasure, and love that is not known in any other arrangement among human-kind. Marriage is a divine institution. Marriage originated from the Creator, Planner, and Designer of ALL things, the Supreme, Holy, and Loving God. Marriage and the home can be "a little of heaven on earth."
2. This discussion is divided into five parts:
 - a. The Origin of Marriage
 - b. The Origin of the Home
 - c. Marriage which forms the Home (Family) is a Divine institution.
 - d. Summary
 - e. Conclusion
3. Proposition: The Institution of Marriage and the Home Originated with God.
4. Definitions:
 - a. WEBSTER

Marriage – "n. the state of being married; relation between husband and wife; married life, wedlock; matrimony"

Married – "adj. 1. living together as husband and wife; joined in wedlock, 2. having a husband or wife"

Marry – "v. 1 a) to join as husband and wife; unite in wedlock. b) to join [a man] to a woman as her husband, or [a woman] to a man as his wife. 2. to take as husband or wife; take in marriage"
 - b. THAYER

Home – "belonging to a house or family, domestic, intimate: belonging to one's household, related by blood, kindred, 1 Tim. 5:8." "The place where one has fixed his residence, one's settled abode, domicile." "The inmates of a house, all the persons forming one family, a household: Luke 10:5; 11:17; Acts 7:10; 10:2; 1 Tim. 3:4; 5:4"

House – “by metonymy, of the members of a household or family, e.g., Luke 10:5; Acts 7:10; 11:14; 1 Tim. 3:4, 5, 12; 2 Tim. 1:16; 4:19 [KJV, “household”]; Titus 1:11”

Household – “‘of persons, one’s household, or kindred’ as in I Tim. 5:8, RV, ‘household’”

c. WEBSTER

Family – “a) a social unit consisting of parents and the children they rear” “b) the children of the same parents” “c) one’s husband (or wife) and children”

Family Man – “1 a man who has a wife and children, 2 a man devoted to his family and home”

d. VINES

Divine – “divine [from *theos*, ‘God’], is used of the power of God, 2 Peter 1:3, and of His nature, v.4, ...that which proceeds from Himself. In Acts 17:29 it is used as a noun with the definite article, to denote ‘the Godhead,’ the Deity [i.e., the one true God].”

Divinity – “divinity, the RV rendering in Rom. 1:20 [KJV, ‘Godhead’] ... in Col. 2:9, ‘Godhead’”

e. WEBSTER

Institute – “to set up, erect, construct ... to cause to stand, set up, place, 1 to set up; establish; found; introduce, 2 to start; initiate”

DISCUSSION:

I. MARRIAGE WAS CONCEIVED, ORIGINATED, DESIGNED, AND INSTITUTED BY GOD [Gen. 1:26-27; 2:7,15, 20-25; Matt. 19:3-12].

A. God conceived marriage, i.e. made man [male] and woman [female] unique [different] from everything else He created [Gen. 1:26]. Neither plants, fowls, fish, nor animals were suited for man [Gen. 2:18,20].

B. God originated marriage – “...God...made...woman... and brought her unto the man” [Gen. 1:22].

C. God designed marriage, to be between a man [male] and a woman [female].

1. God “formed” man [male] [Gen. 2:7].

2. God “made...woman” [Gen. 2:22 from one of his ribs ... woman was taken out of man] [Gen. 2:21,23; 1 Cor. 11:8-12].

3. By Divine design woman (female) was created or made "a help meet for him" (Gen. 2:20).
4. Marriage is the joining together of a man and woman according to God's marriage law (Gen. 2:24-25; Matt. 1:19-25; 19:4-6; Rom. 7:2-3)
5. God designed the marriage bed for sexual satisfaction for man and woman (husband and wife) (Gen. 2:24-25; Prov. 18:22; Song of Solomon 1-8; 1 Cor. 7:1-5, 8-9, 36; 9:5; Eph. 5:28-31; 1 Tim. 5:14; Heb. 13:4).
6. All sexual activity outside of marriage is sinful. Lev. chapters 18, 20; Num. 25:1-9; Matt. 5:32; 19:3-9; 1 Cor. 6:9; 10:8; Gal. 5:19; Col. 3:5; Rev. 21:8
 - a. A man had taken his father's wife and was sinning (1 Cor. 5:1-13).
 - b. A woman was caught in the "act" of sexual intercourse outside of the bounds of marriage and was sinning (John 8:3-11).
 - c. Men having sex with men (homosexuality) is sinful (Gen. 19:4-7, 11; Lev. 18:22; 20:13; Rom. 1:27; Jude 7; 1 Cor. 6:9).
 - d. Women having sex with women (lesbianism) is sinful (Rom. 1:26).
 - e. Men or women having sex with animals (bestiality) is sinful (Lev. 18:23; 20:15-16).

II. THE HOME [FAMILY/CHILDREN].

- A. The home was conceived, originated, designed, and instituted by God as the place for the fruit of the marriage union to dwell.
 1. Husband and wife must leave father and mother and dwell together (Gen. 2:24; Matt. 19:4-6; Eph. 5:22-23; 28:31)!
 2. The home was designed to be the place for the fruit of the marriage (children) (Psa. 127:3-5; 128:3) to dwell and be brought to maturity by training in the way of the Lord.
 3. Note Samuel's home (1 Samuel chap 1-3).
 4. The home was a place of parental responsibility (Luke 2:41-52; Eph. 6:1-4; 1 Tim. 5:1-16).
 5. Jesus lived in a home (Matt. 1:18-2:23).

6. Children obligate parents to provide a home [1 Tim. 5:1-14; Eph. 6:1-4]

III. MARRIAGE AND THE HOME ARE DIVINE INSTITUTIONS BECAUSE:

- A. God is divine [Rom. 1:20; Acts 17:24-29; Col. 2:9].
- B. God instituted marriage and the home in his divine love and wisdom for the man, his wife, and the children that may be born to the marriage union [Gen. 1:31; 2:18,20; Psa. 128:1-6; Eph. 5:22-31; 6:1-4]

IV. SUMMARY:

- A. Marriage provides suitable companionship [Gen. 2:18-25; 1 Cor. 7:3-5].
- B. Marriage provides the place for the fulfillment of God's law of procreation for the human race [Gen. 1:28; 3:16; 4:1,2; 5:4; 9:1,7; Psa. 127:3-5; 128:3,6].
- C. Marriage provides a pure and honorable place for sexual satisfaction [Gen. 2:24-25; 1 Cor. 7:3-5; Titus 2:4-5].
- D. Marriage was established to provide means of avoiding fornication [1 Cor. 7:2; Rom. 7:2-3].
- E. Marriage provides the place for the fulfillment of God's plan for families – husband, wife, and children [Psa. 128:3,6; Prov. 13:24; Luke 2:41-52; Eph. 6:1-2; 1 Tim. 5:1-16; Prov. 22:6,15; 23:13,14].

CONCLUSION:

1. All humanity will rise or fall, prosper or fail, be happy and content or miserably fragmented, in proportion to their respect for, obedience to, and application of God's divine laws and instructions concerning the origin, design, and institution of marriage and the home. God's way is not only the right way, but is also the best way.

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God's Purpose Of Marriage And The Home

Garland M. Robinson

1. Many now suppose that marriage and the home is old fashioned.
 - a. Some say it was conceived by man himself in the ancient past.
 - b. That it is rooted in superstition and culture.
 - c. Many believe the "traditional family" with husband [father] and wife [mother] and children has absolutely no basis for its continuance.
 - d. All such thoughts, beliefs and concepts are absolutely false and unfounded.
2. The institution of marriage and the home is as old as time itself.
 - a. It began in the garden of Eden when Adam was formed from the dust of the ground on the sixth day of creation [Gen. 1:26-2:25; cf. Matt. 19:3-12].
 - b. It was the plan of God in the very beginning and nothing in the whole Bible says it has changed nor that it will change as long as this world stands. In heaven, there will be neither husband and wife or marriage and the home [Matt. 22:30; Mark 12:25; Luke 20:35]. But until that time comes, marriage and the home continues as God instituted it.

3. There are distinct purposes for marriage and the home that are revealed throughout the Scriptures (cf. Eccl. 3:1,17).
 - a. It is the design of this lesson to study the Will of heaven on this subject.
 - b. What God's Will is must be honored and obeyed.
4. What does the Bible say are the purposes for marriage, the home, and family?

DISCUSSION:

I. MARRIAGE AND THE HOME IS FOR COMPANIONSHIP.

- A. Outside of man's relationship with God, marriage is the most solemn, serious, intimate, tender relationship into which two human hearts can enter.
 - 1) It is a closer relationship than exists between parents and children, brothers and sisters, or best friends.
 2. It is a relationship that is only severed honorably by death.
 3. It involves a relationship that may very well determine the eternal destiny of not only one individual, but one's mate, their children and perhaps multitudes more also.
- B. On the sixth day of "time," God made a man, a male, from the dust of the earth and called his name Adam [Gen. 2:19].
 1. Man is unique, different, from all the creatures God made.
 2. Neither plants, fowls, animals, nor fish are anything like man.
- C. Gen. 2:18-24, "*And the LORD God said, **It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him.** ¹⁹And out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof. ²⁰And Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field; **but for Adam there was not found an help meet for him.** ²¹And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam,*

and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; ²²And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. ²³And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. ²⁴Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh."

1. God said it was not good that man should be alone.
 - a. God knows best.
 - b. In spite of what some men may say, they need the companionship of a good wife, a partner, a helper suitable and tailor-made just for him.
2. Man is not complete without woman, just as woman is not complete without man.
 - a. Each supply that which is lacking in the other.
 - 1) It takes a woman to temper (mellow, moderate, season) man's insensitivity.
 - 2) It takes a man to supply strength, security and definiteness (clear, distinct, decisiveness) for woman's sensitivity.
 - b. Both a husband and wife needs to be loved by the other.
- D. In companionship, there is security, comfort, peace, sharing, fellowship, togetherness.
 1. The word "companion" means: "comrade, one of a pair of matching things, accompany."
 2. At home we have a loving mate who is likeminded with us.
 - a. We have a companion, a friend, a comrade, a partner.
 - b. Here is one with whom we can share our joys and sorrows, anxieties and fears, rest and peace at the end of the day.
 3. The home serves as an "anchor" to each of its family members.
 - a. Of all the places on earth, here is a place where we have understanding, acceptance, security. (This obviously does not mean sin and wrong doing is condoned.)

- b. Here is a place we can always "come home" to. The prodigal son knew he could repent and go home [Luke 15:18].
- c. At the end of the day, we can go home and get away from the "rat race" of the world.
 - 1) We can get away from the vulgar speech of working associates.
 - 2) We can get away from immoral behavior around us.
 - 3) We can get away from lying, stealing, ungodliness.
- 4. What a tragedy that in some families what one goes home to is bickering, quarreling, complaining, griping, fussing.
 - a. No wonder some spend little time there.
 - b. No wonder interests are pursued in other areas.
- E. There are many basic and fundamental needs that ought to be found in every home. Companionship provides them.
 - 1. One needs to feel self-worth and a sense of belonging.
 - 2. One needs to feel needed and loved.
 - 3. One needs to feel understood and accepted.

II. MARRIAGE AND THE HOME IS FOR THE PURPOSE OF AVOIDING IMMORALITY.

- A. God created sex as a beautiful and wholesome thing that can only be rightfully engaged in by two people who are lawfully and Biblically married in God's sight.
 - 1. Heb. 13:4, "*Marriage is honourable in all, and **the bed undefiled**: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge.*"
 - 2. 1 Cor. 7:1-5, "*...It is good for a man not to touch a woman. ²Nevertheless, **to avoid fornication**, let every man have **his own wife**, and let every woman have **her own husband**. ³Let the husband render unto the wife due benevolence: and likewise also the wife unto the husband. ⁴The wife hath not power of her own body, but the husband: and likewise also the husband hath not power of his own body, but the wife. ⁵Defraud ye not one the*

other, except it be with consent for a time, that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again, that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency."

B. The sexual union of two people outside of God-ordained marriage is SINFUL.

1. 1 Cor. 6:18, "**Flee fornication.** Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but **he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body.**"

2. Eph. 5:3, "**But fornication**, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints;"

3. 1 Cor. 6:9-10, "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither **fornicators**, nor idolaters, nor **adulterers**, nor effeminate, nor **abusers of themselves with mankind**, ¹⁰...shall inherit the kingdom of God."

4. 1 Thess. 4:3-4, "For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that **ye should abstain from fornication**: ⁴That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour."

5. Numerous other passages condemn immoral conduct that results from activity outside of marriage: Acts 15:20, 2 Cor. 12:21, Gal. 5:19-21, Col. 3:5-7.

C. Scores of young people, as well as adults, live as a "pack of dogs in heat" who see and use their bodies as a means of gratifying the lusts of the flesh.

1. The topic of discussion in the hall-ways of schools is "who had who" and "who will be next." cf. Rom. 13:14, Gal. 5:24, Eph. 2:3, 1 Peter 4:2, 2 Peter 2:18

2. Can't we join together to herald the message of God from the house-tops that all may know and fear? cf. Titus 2:11-12, Acts 17:30, 24:25, Rom. 6:6,12,19, 8:13, 12:2, 13:12, 2 Cor. 7:1, Gal. 5:24

III. MARRIAGE AND THE HOME IS FOR PRO-CREATION — TO POPULATE THE WORLD.

- A. God created the first pair and ordained that humankind continue through the process of bearing offspring.
 - 1. Gen. 1:28, "*And God blessed them, and God said unto them, **Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth**, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.*"
 - 2. Adam lived 930 years and begat [fathered] many sons and daughters (Gen. 5:4).
 - 3. His children and his children's children, etc., etc., had many sons and daughters so that the earth grew in population (Gen. 5:7,10,13,16,19,22,26,30; 6:1-2).
- B. When every living thing was destroyed by the flood in Genesis 6-9, God's will was that the earth be repopulated.
 - 1. Gen. 9:1, "*And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, **Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth.***"
 - 2. Gen. 9:7, "*And you, be ye fruitful, and multiply; bring forth abundantly in the earth, and multiply therein.*"
- C. When the southern kingdom of Judah was taken captive to Babylon, God gave them instruction to bear children.
 - 1. Jer. 29:6, "*Take ye wives, and beget sons and daughters; and take wives for your sons, and give your daughters to husbands, that they may bear sons and daughters; that ye may be increased there, and not diminished.*"
 - 2. God wanted the race to continue.
- D. The New Testament also speaks of God's will for human-kind to bear children. 1 Tim. 5:14, "*I will therefore that the younger women marry, **bear children**, guide the house, give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully.*"

E. A Scriptural marriage and home is the only proper and God-approved place for bringing children into the world.

1. Unscriptural divorce and remarriage has diminished the rightful place of bearing children.

a. In society today, it's almost embarrassing to ask a child who their mother is or who their father is. Many brothers and sisters have different fathers and different mothers.

b. You have his, hers, theirs and sometimes even others!

1) A billboard on the interstate in Memphis, Tennessee reads: "Who's the father? Call 1-800... for DNA testing and conformation." What has the world come to? What a shame!

2) Oh, how urgent the message of the Inspired, Infallible, Word of God must be preached. A vital part of this instruction is concerning marriage and the home.

2. Sodomites [homosexuals] are seeking acceptance and approval in society and regretfully, are receiving it in many places.

a. Men living with men and women living with women is condemned from cover to cover in God's operation manual, the Bible.

b. Since homosexuals obviously cannot have children themselves (God made it that way), they want to adopt children and thereby teach them their deviant, degenerate, perverted behavior.

c. Children learn by example. Without a proper father and a proper mother, they will not receive the needed instruction God desires and demands they receive.

3. Genetic engineering and cloning pose a great threat to marriage, the home and family.

IV. MARRIAGE AND THE HOME IS FOR THE REARING AND TRAINING OF CHILDREN.

A. The home is the earliest place a baby, a child, learns the social, economic, political, emotional, mental and spiritual skills that last a lifetime. When such great

principles of life are not instilled early in one's mind, trouble is in store down the road of life.

- B. Eph. 6:4, *"And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."*

1. Parents are to bring their children up in the "nurture of the Lord."

a. Children are placed under such discipline and instruction that they become acquainted with the Lord and His Way.

b. Parents are to provide those things necessary for their physical, social, emotional and educational growth that is both spiritual and academic.

c. This process not only involves teaching (instruction, education) and discipline, it also involves training.

1) Training directs the growth of.

2) It involves "hands on" experience which involves drills and practice.

3) It involves showing by example.

2. Parents are to bring their children up in the "admonition of the Lord."

a. Admonition literally means "a putting in mind, warning, instruction."

b. Children must be "put in mind" of God's eternal existence, His perfection, Law and claim on our lives.

- C. A Scripturally arranged home is the proper place to rear children.

1. Children are able to experience and see first hand the role of husband and wife, father and mother, parents and children.

a. They will begin their own homes someday and they need the proper teaching and example while they are young.

b. God's creation in the animal kingdom makes it clear that offspring learn through observing their parents.

2. Broken homes (single parent families) are less than the ideal arrangement designed by God. Children need the stability of both a mother and a father.

3. Immoral homes are not the proper setting or example.

V. MARRIAGE AND THE HOME (HUSBANDS AND WIVES) SHOWS THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CHRIST AND THE CHURCH.

- A. Surely, this can be seen as a purpose of marriage.
 1. The husband and wife relationship helps prepare our minds to see and understand the heavenly relationship between Christ and His church.
 2. As there is love and devotion between Christ and the church, there is to be love and devotion between husband and wife.
- B. Ephesians 5:22-33. These verses show the beautiful relationship between Christ and the church to the husband and wife.
 1. v.22, A wife is to submit herself to her husband as unto the Lord.
 2. v.23, A husband is the head of his wife as Christ is the head of the church.
 3. v.24, As a wife is subject to her own husband, even so the church is subject to Christ.
 4. v.25, A husband loves his wife as Christ loves the church and gave Himself for it.
 5. vs.28-29,33, A husband is to love his wife as his own body. He that loveth his wife, loveth himself. No man hates his own flesh [body] — he nourishes and cherishes it. As the Lord loves, nourishes and cherishes the church, a husband loves, nourishes and cherishes his wife.
 6. vs.30-33, A husband and wife are members of one another [one flesh, Gen. 2:24; Matt. 19:5-6] as we are members of the Lord's body, of his flesh and his bones [his church].
 7. Eph. 5:32, *"This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church."*

VI. MARRIAGE AND THE HOME IS THE IDEAL PLACE TO TEACH BIBLE PRINCIPLES ONE ON ONE.

- A. Rom. 13:1-7, One's relationship to civil authority is to be taught in the home.

- B. Rom. 12:1-21; 13:8-14, One's relationship to brethren as well as other human beings is to be taught in the home.
- C. The home is the very foundation of society. When it falls, society falls.

CONCLUSION:

1. Marriage places responsibilities upon the husband.
 - a. He must provide for his family (1 Tim. 5:8).
 - b. He must love and cherish his wife (Eph. 5:25,28,33).
 - c. He must seek to understand his wife (1 Peter 3:7).
 - d. He is to honor his wife (1 Peter 3:7).
 - e. He must train his children (Eph. 6:4).
2. Marriage places responsibilities upon the wife.
 - a. She is to be the queen of the house (1 Tim. 5:14; Titus 2:5).
 - b. She is to love her children (Titus 2:4).
 - c. She is to be submissive to her husband (Eph. 5:22), subject to her husband (Eph. 5:24; 1 Peter 3:1,5), reverence her husband (Eph. 5:33), obey her husband (1 Peter 3:6).

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Preparing For Marriage And The Home (What To Look For In A Mate)

Melvin Sapp

1. We often wait until our children are marrying age before talking to them about some of the perils of selecting a spouse.
2. The high incidence of separation and divorce is motivation enough to get the attention of adults and youths alike concerning "What To Look For In A Mate!"

3. We will not find a perfect mate with no flaws, but some traits ought to be required before selecting a life-time companion.

DISCUSSION:

I. PREPARING FOR MARRIAGE IS ONE OF LIFE'S MOST IMPORTANT ENDEAVORS.

- A. Marriage is a permanent bond that is life-long (Matt. 19:3-9).
- B. Selecting the right companion should result in a life of happiness and bliss (Eccl. 9:9; Prov. 5:15-20).
- C. An unwise choice can make life miserable and painful (Neh. 13:23-26).
- D. Knowing what to look for must be instilled before dating begins (Eccl. 12:1).

II. WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN A MATE — A CHRISTIAN.

A. C-OMMITTED

1. To God and to His word (Psa. 119:9-11; 1 Tim. 4:12).
2. To the church of the Lord (Matt. 16:18; 6:33; Eph. 5:25-27).
3. To imitating Jesus as one's perfect example (1 Peter 2:21-24).
4. To the Biblical teachings on the permanence of marriage (Rom. 7:1-4; Heb. 13:4).

B. H-ONESTY

1. Little lies in dating will become unbearable character traits in marriage (Prov. 6:16-19).
[Addictions — drugs, gambling, diseases, credit cards].
2. The truth must be told even when it opens one to shame and punishment (Col 3:9).
3. Trust is established when one is confident that the truth will be told (Prov. 14:5).
4. Does this person put forth every effort to keep his word [to you, parents, friends, God].

C. R-ESPONSIBILITY

1. Timeliness in meeting financial obligations [car, lay-aways, installments] (Rom. 12:11; 13:8).

2. Possesses the maturity to be relied upon [2 Cor. 8:16-24].
3. Do not blame others for his or her short-comings [Gen. 3:12-13].

D. I-NDEPENDANCE

1. Does not anticipate others to provide for his necessities [parents, heirs or government]. [1 Tim. 5:8; 2 Thess. 3:6-12].
2. Is prepared to leave father and mother and establish a separate home [Gen. 2:24, 25].
3. Possesses the work ethics to invest for a life-time in the family.
4. Leaving home to do our own thing is a wrong reason for marriage and shows a lack of maturity.

E. S-ENSE OF HUMOR

1. Knows how to have fun and how to laugh [Psa. 126:1-6].
2. Uses appropriate humor that is neither 'biting' nor insensitive [Eph. 5:3-7].

F. T-EMPERANCE

1. Exercises control over the tongue and is not vulgar in speech [James 3:7-11].
2. Does not possess an uncontrollable temper that ends in a rage [James 1:19; Eph. 4:26-27].
3. Short temper usually shows up toward other people [friends, peers, other races].
4. Fleshly appetites should be under control [1 Cor. 9:27].

G. I-MPRESSIONABLE

1. One should not be dogmatic in judgments so as to consider all others as fools [Prov. 26:16; Rom. 14:1-6].
2. Being open-minded to constructive criticism shows team-work in contrast to dictatorship [Isa. 1:18; Prov. 16:18; 29:23].
3. Marriage is a relationship that grows and changes constantly as preconceived notions are tempered with reality [1 Peter 3:7].

H. A-CTIVE

1. Not lazy and slothful [Prov. 19:24; 22:13; 26:13-15].
2. Is involved in the work of the Lord [1 Cor. 15:58].

3. Is active in community events and organizations that develop compassion and character. [Scouts; sports; 4-H; arts; etc.]

I. N-URTURING

1. Takes joy in seeing others prospering (Eph. 5:28-29).
2. A good mate will seek to meet the needs of the spouse (Col. 3:18-21)
3. Patient with children or weaker people (Rom. 15:1-3).
4. Willingness to do the small things for the other person.

CONCLUSION:

1. Choosing a mate for life is a serious endeavor that must be cultivated as a part of child-rearing.
2. Selecting a faithful Christian will level the table and give the basis for a good foundation.
3. The development of a mate continues throughout life as two people blend their lives together.

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God's Word On Divorce And Remarriage

Terry Joe Kee

Matthew 19:3-9; Mark 10:2-12

1. This is a very volatile subject in almost every place it is preached.
2. Many differing positions are taken on divorce and remarriage. Such as:
 - a. Death is the only cause allowing remarriage.
 - b. Divorce and remarriage are allowed for every cause.

- c. Divorce and remarriage are allowed for any legal (civil) cause.
 - d. The guilty party is free to remarry whenever a divorce takes place.
 - e. One who is forsaken has the right to remarry.
 - f. God's law of marriage, divorce and remarriage only applies to Christians.
 - g. Baptism washes away all past sins including divorce for every cause and allows couples to remain married to the one to whom they are then married.
 - h. Divorce for any cause is allowed, but remarriage is only allowed when one party weakens and commits fornication or remarries, freeing the other to then remarry with God's approval.
 - i. Fornication dissolves every marriage and divorce is demanded allowing the innocent party to remarry.
 - j. Only on the grounds of fornication can the innocent party divorce with the right of remarriage.
3. Many standards are used to determine what is right when a discussion of this subject arises:
- a. The Pharisees wanted to use Moses as the standard. Matt. 19:7
 - b. Some today want to beg the question by using family situations — sometimes even hypothetical situations.
 - c. Some want to judge on the basis of their emotions.
 - 1) "This just does not seem fair."
 - 2) "This just does not make sense to me."
 - 3) "I don't see how a loving God would want someone to be left alone."
 - d. Some want to leave man to decide for himself and become his own standard.
 - e. Some want some brother, preacher, or eldership somewhere to be the standard.
 - 1) **But**, the only standard is what God has said. His Word alone is the standard.
4. Jesus said the standard was what God decreed from the beginning. Matt. 19:4-6
- a. Marriage is for one man and one woman. Gen. 1:27
 - b. It is not good that a man should be alone. Gen. 2:18
 - c. One must leave father and mother. Gen. 2:24
 - d. One must cleave to his wife. Gen. 2:24

- e. Man and woman must become one. Gen. 2:24
- f. This is God's law for marriage.

DISCUSSION:

I. WHAT IS DIVORCE?

- A. Sometimes in a discussion of this sort, preachers assume that everyone knows the meaning of terms used and thereby some who misunderstand do so because they do not understand what is under consideration.
- B. In the Old Testament there are about four words used for divorce – *shillach*, *yatsa'*, *garash*, and *kerithuth*.
 - 1. The meaning of these words is the breaking of a bond or dismissing of an obligation. Therefore the divorced person is released, separated or freed.
 - 2. The putting away or the writing of a bill of divorce-ment allowed for remarriage, but not to remarry her first husband. Deut. 24:1-4
- C. Under the law of Moses, two schools of thought arose in interpreting Deut. 24.
 - 1. Hillel taught that a man could divorce his wife for any reason, the slightest offense, even disliking her manners based on Deut. 24:1 which says, "It come to pass that she find no favor in his eyes."
 - 2. Shammai allowed divorce only for the cause of adultery based on the same scripture, but the latter part of the verse which says, "because he hath found some uncleanness in her."
 - 3. Hillel said that whatever it was that caused him to not be pleased [*find favor*] was cause for divorce and remarriage.
 - 4. Shammai said his disfavor was caused by her *uncleanness* which he interpreted as being adultery.
- D. In the New Testament, three words are translated divorce – *apoluo*, *aphiemi*, and *apostasion*.
 - 1. *Apoluo* is found 69 times in the New Testament and translated "release, put away, send away, let go, set at liberty, let depart, dismiss."
 - a. W. E. Vine defines it as "to loose from, let go free and is translated 'is divorced' in the A.V. of Matt.

- 5:32...it is used of divorce in Matt. 1:19; 19:3, 7-9; Mark 10:2,4,11; Luke 16:18."
- b. Joseph H. Thayer and others define this word as to "loose, sever, undo, set free, to let go, dismiss divorce, liberate, discharge, to send away."
2. *Apostasion* is found three times in the New Testament [Matt. 19:7; Mark 10:4; Matt. 5:31] and translated "divorcement" and "writing of divorcement."
- a. Vine says this is a "withdrawing...a writing or bill of divorcement."
 - b. Thayer says it is "a divorce, repudiation, a bill of divorce."
 - c. This is the act of putting away a wife, departing from her, separating one's self from her with a legal, or civil document of divorce.
3. *Aphiemí* is used 146 times in the New Testament, but only some 15 times referring to our study. It means "to leave, forgive, suffer, forsake, let alone."
- a. Vine, Thayer and others say this word means to "send forth, let go, to let and to leave, leave alone."
 - b. In reference to divorce it means "depart, draw away, fall away, refrain, withdraw self and depart from."
4. Divorce is the legal ending or severing of a marriage [Deut. 24:1; Isa. 50:1; Jer. 3:8].
- a. Call it *divorce*, *putting away*, or *annulment* the ending of a marriage is divorce.
 - b. Whether God approves or disapproves it is still divorce.
 - c. Even if one is put away unscripturally it is divorce; Jesus said she was put away [Matt. 5:32; 19:9].
 - d. Just because a divorce is legal (in harmony with civil law) does not mean it is scriptural.
 - e. Just because one is divorced does not mean he has the right to remarry.
- E. What is adultery?
- 1. The word translated *adultery* in Matt. 19:9 means "to have unlawful intercourse with another man's wife" [Thayer].

2. Vines says the *adulterer* "denotes one who has unlawful intercourse with the spouse of another."
 3. Generally this term refers to a married man and a woman who is not his wife or a married woman with a man who is not her husband.
- F. What is fornication?
1. This is a broader term than adultery and includes every kind of sexual immorality and unlawful sexual intercourse.
 2. Thayer says this is illicit sexual intercourse in general.
 3. This definition includes adultery, homosexuality, lesbianism, incest, bestiality, and every other kind or act of illicit sexual intercourse.
 4. Some try to distinguish between adultery and fornication by saying the fornication refers to unlawful sexual intercourse of the unmarried and adultery refers to the married.
 - a. However this is not always the case as sometimes the term fornication refers to married persons as the one who took his father's wife (1 Cor. 5:1) or the servants of the Lord in Thyatira who were seduced by Jezebel (Rev. 2:20).
 - b. Sometimes these words are used interchangeably (Rev. 2:20-22).
- G. Separation also must be considered in this discussion as it involves the husband and wife not living together even though they are still married.
1. This is not divorce.
 2. The only passage where God authorizes such is to the Corinthians (1 Cor. 7:5). Its intention is to give time to fasting and prayer and must not be prolonged lest Satan get an advantage of us.

II. WHO MAY DIVORCE?

- A. First we need to know who has the right to marry with God's approval.
1. One who has never been married is eligible to marry one who has the right to marry (1 Cor. 7:28; Heb. 13:4).

2. One who has been previously married, but whose marriage partner has died, provided he marry someone who is eligible to marry (Rom. 7:2,3).
 3. One who has been previously married, but whose marriage partner has committed fornication and has been put away for that cause, provided he marries one who is eligible to marry (Matt. 19:9).
- B. Some have no right to be married.
1. Those who have a former companion who has not been put away for fornication (Matt. 5:32; Matt. 19:9).
 2. Those who marry someone who does not have the right to be married, such as one guilty of fornication, one not put away for fornication, one who has put another away but not because of fornication (Matt. 5:32; 19:9).
 3. Those who have been put away because of fornication (Matt. 5:32).
 4. Those who have put away a spouse for fornication, but have contributed to and are guilty of causing them to do so (Matt. 5:32). These are not *innocent parties*.
- C. The marriage bond is only severed in two ways:
1. *Honorably* by death (Rom. 7:2).
 2. *Dishonorably* by sin (either the sin of fornication or the sin of divorcing without the cause of fornication) Matt. 19:9.
- D. **Please** understand that even when fornication is committed, it is *best* if a husband and wife can overcome this sin, forgive, put it behind them and live together.
1. Fornication does not demand divorce.
 2. Fornication *allows* for divorce, but it does not command it.
 3. It has always been best if a couple could work through their problems, no matter how serious they may be, and continue to live together in a home established and secured upon the Word of God.
 4. Divorce commonly means the loss of at least one soul, the fornicator, but also may result in the loss of the innocent spouse who faces difficulties living

alone or in remarrying the right person. It also can result in great harm to the souls of their children.

- E. God **hates** putting away (Mal. 2:14-16) because it always involves sin on the part of one or both parties.

III. WHO MAY REMARRY?

- A. This has already been touched upon, but for clarity we must plainly give God's determination as to who may remarry without sin.
- B. The only one with the right to remarry is one whose spouse has died and one who has put away his spouse for fornication, being innocent himself.
- C. Anyone having been married, whose spouse is still living but has been put away for fornication, is in an innocent condition and is as free to marry as those who have never been married.
 1. These must marry one who has never been married and is eligible to marry.
 2. Those who have been married, but whose spouse has died.
 3. Or, those who like themselves have put away a spouse for fornication, being innocent themselves.
- D. Remarriage is not necessary for one to please God.

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After The Honeymoon (Dealing With Troubled Marriages)

Jim Blankenship

1. Gen. 2:18-25, ¹⁸"And the LORD God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him. ¹⁹And out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought

them unto Adam to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof. ²⁰And Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field; but for Adam there was not found an help meet for him. ²¹And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; ²²And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. ²³And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. ²⁴Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh. ²⁵And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.”

2. 1 Cor 13:1-13, ¹“If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am become sounding brass, or a clanging cymbal. ²And if I have [the gift of] prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. ³And if I bestow all my goods to feed [the poor], and if I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profiteth me nothing. ⁴Love suffereth long, [and] is kind; love envieth not; love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, ⁵doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not its own, is not provoked, taketh not account of evil; ⁶rejoiceth not in unrighteousness, but rejoiceth with the truth; ⁷beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. ⁸Love never faileth: but whether [there be] prophecies, they shall be done away; whether [there be] tongues, they shall cease; whether [there be] knowledge, it shall be done away. ⁹For we know in part, and we prophesy in part; ¹⁰but when that which is perfect is come, that which is in part shall be done away. ¹¹When I was a child, I spake as a child, I felt as a child, I thought as a child: now that I am become a man, I have put away childish things. ¹²For now we see in a mirror, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know fully even as also I was fully known. ¹³But now abideth faith, hope, love, these three; and the greatest of these is love.” [ASV]

3. If love exists anywhere, it should exist in our homes. Next to salvation and a right relationship with God, there is not a greater need in the world today than the need for homes in which love dwells. It is a "dog eat dog" world. If we have a haven to which we can come at the end of the day, where there is concern and sympathy and love, we can make it. But if we go home to more hassle than happiness, it gets rough to go on day after day. "A house without love is not a home." "It takes a heap of lovin' to make a house a home."
4. In the Bible, the word "house" appears ten times as often as the word "home." Is there any significance in that? Were there ten times as many houses than homes? I don't know, but I do know that some houses today are just boarding houses with carpet and TV. And I know that we need homes desperately today – homes in which biblical love abounds.
5. Let us suppose your marriage is in trouble. You come to me and say, "Jim, we need to talk." You and your spouse tell me your problems. Then after so long a time "My counsel is:"

WE NEED TO LOVE EACH OTHER IN THE HOME

Prov 15:17, "Better is a dinner of herbs where love is, than a stalled ox and hatred therewith." This is top-quality beef from steers fattened in the feedlot, not the tough stringy stuff from animals that have been butchered off the range. It is thick, rich, red meat with little streaks of white fat running through it. It gives cholesterol the doctors are always warning us about. In short, Solomon says, If you have to be in the company of people who cannot stand you to get it, you are better off with a bowl of beans and cornbread if you eat those beans and cornbread with people who love you.

Money and possessions and the best cuts of meat don't make a home. It is a place to be together and love, no matter what happens to be in the cupboard. Hosea 11:4, "I drew them with cords of a man, with bands of love: and I was to them as they that take off the yoke on their jaws, and I laid meat unto them." A real home has many "bands of love." When a man and woman love each other enough to commit themselves "till

death" they say a mouth full when they say, "I do." Not only should the husband and wife love each other, but each one in the home should love the others. "When Mama loves Daddy and Daddy loves Mama, the children will come out OK." Let's go to God's marriage manual to show this point.

DAD IS TO LOVE MOM

The most important thing any man can do for his children is to love their mother. Let's look at some Biblical examples of this. Gen. 24:67, "*And Isaac brought her into his mother Sarah's tent, and took Rebekah, and she became his wife; and **he loved her**: and Isaac was comforted after his mother's death.*" Gen. 29:18, "*And **Jacob loved Rachel**; and said, I will serve thee seven years for Rachel thy younger daughter.*" Gen. 29:20, "*And Jacob served seven years for Rachel; and they seemed unto him but a few days, **for the love he had to her.***"

1 Sam. 1:5, "*But unto Hannah he gave a worthy portion; **for he loved Hannah**: but the LORD had shut up her womb.*" Esther 2:17, "*And **the king loved Esther above all the women**, and she obtained grace and favour in his sight more than all the virgins; so that he set the royal crown upon her head, and made her queen instead of Vashti.*" Prov. 5:18-19, "*Let thy fountain be blessed: and rejoice with the wife of thy youth. ¹⁹Let her be as the loving hind and pleasant roe; let her breasts satisfy thee at all times; and **be thou ravished always with her love.***" Eccl. 9:9, "*Live joyfully with the wife **whom thou lovest all the days of the life** of thy vanity, which he hath given thee under the sun, all the days of thy vanity: for that is thy portion in this life, and in thy labour which thou takest under the sun.*" Song of Solomon 2:4, "*He brought me to the banquetting house, and his banner over me was love.*"

The greatest challenge of all is found in the New Testament in Eph. 5:25,28,33. ²⁵"Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it... ²⁸So ought **men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself.** ³³Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so **love his wife even as himself**; and the wife see that she reverence her husband."

Men are to love their wives as Christ loved the church! Think of all Christ did for the church. His thoughts were not for Himself, but for the church. He gave up heaven and came to earth to establish the church. In His love, He was totally unselfish, totally giving, and totally serving. Finally He died for the church.

MOM IS ALSO TO LOVE DAD

1 Sam 18:20, "*And Michal Saul's daughter loved David: and they told Saul, and the thing pleased him.*" Titus 2:3-5, "*The aged women likewise, that they be in behaviour as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things; ⁴That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, ⁵To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed.*"

BOTH MOM AND DAD ARE TO LOVE THE KIDS

Young women are encouraged to "love their children" as noted above. Psalm 127:3, "*Lo, children are an heritage of the LORD: and the fruit of the womb is his reward.*" Gen. 22:2, "*Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of.*" Gen. 25:28, "*And Isaac loved Esau, because he did eat of his venison: but Rebekah loved Jacob.*" Gen. 37:3, "*Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his children, because he was the son of his old age: and he made him a coat of many colors.*" Exod. 21:5, "*And if the servant shall plainly say, I love my master, my wife, and my children; I will not go out free.*" Matt. 10:37, "*He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.*" Jesus says that our first priority must be to love Him, but note the assumption. The assumption is that we will love our sons and daughters also.

THE KIDS ARE TO LOVE MOM AND DAD

Notice Matthew 10:37 above. It assumes we will love Mom and Dad. When Paul listed the terrible sins of his day, notice Romans 1:31, *"Without understanding, covenantbreakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful."* 2 Tim. 3:3, *"Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good..."* The Greek word translated "without natural affection" is translated from the negative form of the word "storge" -- family love. This would include the natural affection one should have for those of his own family. Jesus gave an example of this in Matthew 15 when He spoke of some using a man-made tradition to absolve themselves from taking care of their fathers and mothers. This also means kid number one in the family should love kid number two and kid number three and so on. Luke 14:26, *"If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple."* The bottom line is that everybody in the family should love everybody else in the family. Oh, how we need homes like that!

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO LOVE EACH OTHER IN THE HOME?

Dr. Ed Wheat suggests four things for husbands and wives to practice to keep love in your marriage by using the acronym, B-E-S-T, **BLESSING, EDIFYING, SHARING, TOUCHING.**

In the marriage relationship we are seeking "agape" love. That is, *one seeking the best for the one we love.* When was the last time you bought your wife flowers for some special occasion as Valentines day, her birthday, your anniversary? When was the last time you told her you enjoyed the meal? When was the last time you told her you loved her? When was the last time you cooked a special meal for your husband? When was the last time you prettied yourself up just for your husband? When was the last time you told him how much you appreciated how hard he worked to make a living for you and the kids?

COMMUNICATION IS THE KEY TO SUCCESSFUL MARRIAGES!

Love supplies needs. W. Oscar Thompson, Jr. makes this point again and again:

Love is

NOT a word of emotion,

NOT a word of feeling

Rather, love is

A word of reason,

A word of volition or will,

A word of action,

Love is doing!

Love builds relationships

Love maintains relationships

Love fulfills relationships

Love initiates relationships

Love is meeting needs!

THE FOUR MOST IMPORTANT MINUTES OF EVERY DAY are:

1. The first minute each of you are awake in the morning;
2. The last minute you are both together before leaving for work;
3. The first minute you are together when you both get home from work, and
4. The last minute you are both awake before you go to sleep at night. *We all need that constant assurance of love.*

LOVE SUPPLIES NEEDS, God-approved needs, not necessarily all wants. Love's primary purpose is not to change others, but to meet their needs. When a change is needed, love works indirectly, showing concern and reinforcing what is good. "Agape" love is unselfish, not concerned with self but concerned with the other person. Gal. 5:13, "*For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but **by love, serve one another.***" When I say love supplies needs, I mean any need. For instance, love is concerned with physical needs.

Eph. 5:28, "So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself." 1 Tim. 5:8, "*But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel.*" Our bodies have physical needs, and we try to supply those needs. Even so, *one who loves will provide for his own.* The father who works hard to make a living is expressing love. The mother who keeps the house clean and prepares good meals – often in addition to another job – is expressing love.

DO WE APPRECIATE THESE EXPRESSIONS OF LOVE? Often we take such for granted, not really considering these as expressions of love, when others, who don't have someone to take care of them, would give anything to be loved in that fashion.

LOVE IS CONCERNED WITH EMOTIONAL NEEDS. All of us need to know we are loved, accepted and secure. We need reassurance of these things from time to time.

So, *learn to express your love.* Express it in words. Husbands and wives, the Song of Solomon is our manual for expressing love to each other. Read it together. If you feel like it, laugh together over some of the ways of expressing love in the past – but don't miss the point. *They said they loved each other.* The phrase "my love" [i.e. my loved one] is found a dozen times in the book. They also complimented each other. Husbands, take note of how chapter four begins, "Behold, thou art fair, my love; behold thou art fair...."

Also, *express your love in actions.* Remember 1 John 3:18, "**Let us not love with word or tongue, but in deed and truth.**" Wives and husbands, there is **kissing** in our Manual: "Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth: for thy love is better than wine...His mouth is most sweet: yea, he is altogether lovely..." (Song of Solomon 1:2; 5:16). Probably all of us have seen the plaque which says, "Kissin' don't last, but good cookin' do." It doesn't need to. Here's where many couples miss the mark. There is **hugging** in our Manual also. "*His left hand should be under my head, and his right hand should embrace me*" (Song of Solomon 8:3). One doctor suggests we all need at least four hugs a day, and he even

writes prescriptions for it. But he doesn't prohibit an overdose. No one ever died from an overdose of hugs.

Parents need to learn to express their love to each other! Most marriages don't die from a blowout, but from a slow leak-like neglecting to say, "I love you." We knew a couple in Columbus, GA when they were married about 70 years, he said of her, "She get's prettier ever day." We need not let that beauty ever, ever fade. This should not be limited to Mom and Dad expressing love to each other. The children need to know their parents love them, and the parents need to know their children love them.

As we are talking about love supplying needs, *let's not forget our spiritual needs.* If love really seeks the best, it cannot neglect the spiritual, for this is the most important need of all. If I love members of my family, as the head of my home, I will see they are taught God's Word. We are told, "*For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the Savior of the body...Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right*" (Eph. 5:23; 6:1). I will make sure they are always in Bible class and worship services. Jesus taught, "*They all shall be taught of God. Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father, comes to me*" (John 6:45).

Every family has special needs. Dad has his own special needs. He needs a wife whose one desire in life is to please him and to make him a successful husband and father. He needs a wife who reverences him as God's authority in the home. "*Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the Savior of the body*" (Eph. 5:22-23). He needs a wife who will train their children to be loyal and loving to God and their father. He needs the physical love of his wife. A number of years ago an avid hunter came home to be told by his wife, "Sometimes I think you love them hound dogs more than you love me." To which the husband replied, "You know I don't do no such thang, I think jest as much of you as I do of them hound dogs."

Mom has some special needs. She needs a husband who accepts his responsibilities as spiritual leader of the home, a husband who loves her with a sacrificial devotion. She needs

to know that her husband is a one-woman man. The Bible still says, "*Thou shalt not commit adultery*" (Rom. 13:9). The difference between "loyalty" and "disloyalty" is not D-I-S but L-O-V-E. Mom also needs genuine praise. She needs to feel appreciated. As the description of the worthy woman draws near the close in Proverbs 31, it is noted that "*her husband praises her*" (v.28). Peter tells husbands to give "*honor unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered*" (1 Peter 3:7). Part of a wife's feeling appreciated is to know that her opinions are valued.

The kids have special needs. They need two parents who love each other. They need two parents who love them and who let them know they are loved. Not because they are beautiful or talented, or popular, or even good, but just because they are part of the family. Can you imagine the father of the Prodigal son sending out his wife to meet his younger son with the message, "You broke your father's heart when you left, and he never intends to talk to you again?" They need parents who are good examples, who will show them what Christianity is. They need parents who care enough about them to take the time to both teach them and train them for if you, "*Train up a child in the way that he should go, when he is old he will not depart from it*" (Prov. 22:6). Paul gave this parental challenge in Eph. 6:4, "*And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath, but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.*" Children need parents who will teach and encourage them in what is right, who will correct them when they do wrong, even punish them if necessary. Heb. 12:6, "*For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every one whom he receiveth.*" "*The rod and reproof give wisdom: but a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame*" (Prov. 29:15). If I am really seeking the best for my child, I will want him to grow to be what he should be. That will involve some corrective discipline. If I don't do this, the Bible says I really don't love my child.

Not only does each family member have special needs, but we should also note that *each one in the family has individual needs, those are uniquely his or hers.* This brings us to these final words about filling needs.

1. *I must become sensitive to the needs of those in my family.*

Let's return to the illustration used by Paul. I am to love my wife, "as my own body" (Eph. 5:28). Did you ever go barefoot as a child? I can remember as a child we had plenty of white clover in our yard and every time I attempted to go barefoot in the Summer or Spring I'd step on a bee, first thing. That's why I soon learned if you wear shoes the bees won't sting you. When a bee stung we took care of that need immediately. Paul says our wives are to be as close to us as our own bodies. If she is hurting, we need to be sensitive enough to know it. Then we need to try to help the hurting. Some business men work hard on being sensitive to the needs of the public so they can make a dollar. But they may have a household of people who are hurting and be totally unaware of their needs. We need to be sensitive.

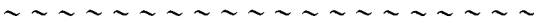
2. *I must realize that needs change.* I cannot work out this matter of taking care of needs and think that I have done what I should, so I can forget about it and get on with something else. *Love must always be filed under unfinished business.* It must be worked on from now on. The needs of Mom and Dad change. The needs we had when we are first married differ from the needs when we have children and trying to survive financially. These needs differ from the needs when the children leave home and we start getting older. The needs of children change. They must be taught to be more encouraged to go out on their own as Jesus taught, "*For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh*" (Matt. 19:5)? In Deuteronomy 32:11, Moses uses the illustration of a mother eagle forcing her eaglets to leave the nest and to learn to fly. He compares this with God's guidance of His people, "*Like an eagle that stirs up its nest, that hovers over its young, he spreads his wings and caught them, he carried them on his pinions.*" The time comes when children need to leave the nest. When that time comes, we need to help them do this in the least painful way. The willing parent is willing to cut the apron strings.

3. *I must illustrate that all this takes time.* It was not quite so difficult some years ago. As families, we spent more time together accidentally than most families today spend together on purpose. We ate three meals together, on the farm or in a family business. Most play-time and fun-time, what little there was, was together. But that was before the days of TV and compartmentalized lives. It will do no good, however, to yearn for the "good old days." We must do the best we can in these days, under today's conditions. Quite simply, this means we must make time to be together. We can turn off the TV and eat together. We can set aside special times for the family – maybe one night a week – and do our best to keep other things from interfering. We can let others in our family know they are more important to us than our newspaper or Monday night football. We can let our children know that, as long as their requests are reasonable, they can interrupt us to get help or to tell us about their day. No, we are not talking about something that is easy. We are not talking about something that will change overnight. We are talking about something worth working on and praying about. *Because we are talking about love in the home which always begins with husbands and wives.*

Do you John, take this woman whose right hand you now hold, to be your lawfully wedded wife? Do you promise before God and these witnesses to love, honor, cherish and protect her in sickness and in health, in prosperity and in adversity, for as long as you both shall live?

Do you Jane, take this man whose right hand you now hold, to be your lawfully wedded husband? Do you promise before God and these witnesses to love, honor, cherish, and obey him in sickness and in health, in prosperity and adversity, for as long as you both shall live?

Are our homes still as pure and loving as they were when we first repeated these vows? If not why not?



The Home Under Attack, #1 TV, Abortion, Immodesty, Homosexuality, Drugs

Mark Lindley

Thesis: to show that the home is under attack and to call on my audience to safeguard against this attack.

1. Joshua said, "...as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord" (Josh. 24:15).
2. Would to God that all parents had this same kind of commitment to serve the Lord.
3. Generally, parents want their families to be saved.
4. But there is an ongoing battle in the home.
5. The home is "under attack."
6. If your family is ever saved in heaven, it will not be by accident (Luke 13:24).
7. The theme for this lesson, The Home Under Attack, is very timely.
8. We will develop this theme as follows:
 - a. The home "is" under attack
 - b. Ways in which the home is under attack
 - c. How to safeguard our homes against this attack.

DISCUSSION:

1. **THE HOME "IS" UNDER ATTACK. [The title assumes the home is under attack]**
 - A. Attack – "implies taking the initiative in a struggle; to set upon or work against forcefully" (Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, Tenth Edition, p. 74).
 1. There "is" a struggle.
 - a. Joshua understood this struggle [cf. Joshua 24:15].
 - b. There is a struggle between good and evil.
 - c. This struggle has been going on since the garden of Eden [Gen. 3].
 2. Someone is taking the initiative in this struggle.
 - a. He is the same one who took the initiative in the garden of Eden [Gen. 3:1].

- b. He is still taking the initiative today.
- 3. He is subtle and deceitful (Gen. 3:1; Rev. 12:9; 2 Cor. 11:3).
 - a. *beguiled* (ἐξαπατᾶω) – means to deceive; but is to thoroughly deceive; “more adequate rendering would be ‘as the serpent thoroughly beguiled Eve’” [Vine’s Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words, Vol. 1, p.112].
 - b. *subtily* (πανουργία) – This word is primarily composed of two parts: [1] *pan* means “all” [2] *ergon* means “work;” thus, the meaning is “all working.”
 - c. Satan is ready to do anything to deceive; he is crafty and cunning (Vine’s Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words, Vol. 1, p.254; Arndt and Gingrich Greek Lexicon, p.608).
 - d. Satan is always ready! He is all work and no play (cf. 1 Peter 5:8).
- B. Why is Satan so interested in destroying the home?
 - 1. The home is where values are taught, beliefs are formed, and lives are shaped.
 - 2. Satan knows that if he is successful in destroying the home, the battle is won.
 - 3. There are some exceptions to this general rule.
 - a. Some from bad homes do good.
 - b. Some from good homes do bad.
 - c. But generally one becomes what he is taught in his home.
 - 4. The home is the life of a nation.
 - a. When homes are influenced by Satan, the nation is influenced by Satan (Psalm 9:17; Prov. 14:34).
 - b. Consider the situation in America.
 - 5. The home is the life of the church.
 - a. Get the home right and the church will be right.
 - b. What the church becomes depends on the home.
- C. How does Satan attack the home?
 - 1. He is not going to come personally as in the day of Christ (Matt. 4:1-11).
 - 2. He will come in subtle, deceitful ways.
 - 3. Satan uses means to accomplish his work (Job 1:6-19; 2 Cor. 11:13-15; Eph. 6:12).

II. NOTE SOME WAYS IN WHICH THE HOME IS UNDER ATTACK.

A. **Television** is a tool Satan uses to destroy homes.

1. There are still good, wholesome programs to watch, but they are so few they hardly justify having a television in the house.
2. Television exerts an evil influence on us.
 - a. Some say, "It doesn't affect me."
 - b. But the Bible teaches otherwise [Prov. 4:23; 23:7; Phil. 4:8].
3. Some use television as a baby sitter. Their children are reared by Hollywood!
4. Many who say they believe using profanity is wrong will compromise their convictions for entertainment. How much is permissible?
5. Television teaches:
 - a. Adultery is acceptable behavior [1 Cor. 6:9].
 - b. Divorce for every cause is permissible [Matt. 19:9].
 - c. Homosexual behavior is to be accepted [Lev. 18:22].
 - d. Profanity is to be overlooked [Col. 3:8].
6. All of these war against the home.

B. **Homosexuality** is an attack on the home.

1. Homosexuals are becoming more vocal in our society.
2. If one speaks out against homosexual behavior, he is labeled as a bigot.
3. Same-sex marriages may be accepted by some, but it will always be perversion to God!
4. God never intended for men to marry men or for women to marry women [Matt. 19:3,4; Gen. 1:27; Rom. 1:26,27].

C. **Abortion** is an attack on the home.

1. God intended that children be born to parents who are married to one another.
2. But many pregnancies (1 out of every 3) end in abortion because the pregnancy was an accident.
3. Social or "birth control" reasons account for more than 93% of abortions. The following are the reasons why many choose to have abortions:

- a. Mother is not ready for responsibility [21%].
 - b. Mother can't afford the baby [21%].
 - c. Concern about how the baby would change the mother's life [16%].
 - d. Relationship problem [12%].
 - e. Not mature enough [11%].
 - f. Mother has all the children she wants [8%].
 - g. Other reasons [4-5%].
(Planned Parenthood Statistics)
- 4. Many who promote abortion rights argue for abortion in the following ways:
 - a. Mother's life endangered.
 - b. Rape or incest.
 - c. Deformed child.
 - d. Child abuse would sky-rocket.
 - e. World population needs to be reduced.
 - 5. But this is only a smoke-screen to hide the truth—93% of abortions are performed for birth control purposes!
 - 6. An abortion is performed every 20 seconds! [Prov. 6:17; Luke 1:40-41; Matt. 1:18].
- D. Drug abuse** is an attack on the home.
- 1. The home is to be a place of love, happiness, and security.
 - 2. Many marriages are ruined because one or both parties involved abuse drugs and/or alcohol.
 - 3. Note the devastating effects of drug and alcohol abuse on the home:
 - a. It weakens trust.
 - b. It may lead to adultery [Prov. 23:33].
 - c. It leads to abuse and neglect in the home.
 - d. It leads to poverty [Prov. 23:21].
 - 4. Drinking and drugs destroy homes [Prov. 20:1].
- E. Immodesty** is an attack on the home.
- 1. The home is to be a place of instruction [Eph. 6:4; Deut. 6:6,7].
 - 2. There will be trouble when parents fail to teach their children to dress modestly.
 - 3. Some parents set a bad example before their children.

4. Some young people are allowed to participate in activities which require them to dress immodestly in the presence of the opposite sex.
5. When a daughter gets pregnant out of wedlock or a son gets a girlfriend pregnant out of wedlock it may be due to being immodestly dressed.
6. God commands us to dress modestly (1 Tim. 2:9; Gen. 3:7,21).

III. HOW TO SAFEGUARD OUR HOMES AGAINST SATAN'S ATTACK.

- A. The solution is simple — have a Christian home!
- B. What is a Christian home?
 1. The home is not the wood, brick, and mortar.
 2. The home is the people.
 3. When all the people of the home are truly Christians, the home will be able to withstand Satan's attack.
 4. A Christian is a "follower of Jesus."
- C. When a home is Savior-centered:
 1. There will be no toleration of filthy movies and television.
 2. Parents will not allow their children to dress immodestly.
 3. Parents will not abuse drugs or alcohol and will discourage their children from associating with those who do.
 4. Parents will teach their children the Bible.
 5. There will be time for prayer and Bible study.
 6. The Lord and His church will come first.

CONCLUSION:

1. Your home "is" under attack.
2. It is being attacked in very subtle ways.
3. We must be on guard against Satan.
4. Safeguard your home by maintaining a Christian home!
5. Resolve, *"...as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."*

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Definition Of Terms:

**Fornication; Adultery; Separation;
Divorce; Put Away; Effeminate;
Natural Affection;
Abusers Of Themselves With Mankind;
Love; Forgiveness**

Virgil Hale

1. Modern definitions of words and how the Bible uses them are often miles apart.
2. We must accept words as used in the Bible and not as used by modern man today.
3. It shall be our purpose in this study to examine words in the light of God's Word.

DISCUSSION:

I. FORNICATION

- A. Greek "*porneia*" — illicit sexual intercourse in general.
 1. This includes homosexuality, lesbianism, bestiality.
- B. This sin, when committed, allows the innocent party to divorce the guilty party and to remarry if they so desire [Matt. 5:32; 19:9].
- C. It was a sin prevalent among the Gentiles. [Rom. 1:28-32]
 1. The cause: they did not "retain God in their knowledge."
- D. Those guilty of this sin will be lost unless forgiven [1 Cor. 6:9-10; Gal. 5:19-21].

II. ADULTERY

- A. To have sexual intercourse with another's wife.
- B. Some argue that adultery is not a sexual act.
 1. Some contend it is merely "breaking a contract."
- C. Note these passages: Matt. 5:32; 19:9; Rom. 7:1-3
 1. It can even be committed in the mind [Matt. 5:27-28].

III. SEPARATION

- A. This carries with it the idea of leaving or departing.
- B. 1 Cor. 7:10, "...*Let not the wife depart from her husband.*"
- C. If she does depart, she is to remain unmarried or be reconciled to her husband (1 Cor. 7:11).

IV. DIVORCE

- A. Means to relieve, release, dismiss, let go, send away, set at liberty.
- B. In our day, divorce can be obtained for any and every cause (or excuse).
- C. The Bible: Matt. 5:32; Matt. 19:3-9; Mark 10: 2-12
- D. Deut. 24

V. PUT AWAY

- A. God hates putting away (Malachi 2:14-17).
- B. Note Matt. 19:6 and Mark 10:9
- C. 1 Cor. 7:11, "...*and let not the husband put away his wife.*"

VI. EFFEMINATE

- A. Greek "*malokos*" –Thayer: "a male who submits his body to unnatural lewdness."
- B. 1 Cor. 6:9

VII. NATURAL AFFECTION

- A. This is the affection that one naturally has (or should have) for kindred (family).
- B. Some so-called mothers and fathers do not care for their young today.
 - 1. Even brute beasts care for their young.
 - 2. Note: Rom. 1:31; 2 Tim. 3:3
- C. There is much more involved in the words "Father" and "Mother" than the mere ability to produce children.

VIII. ABUSERS OF THEMSELVES WITH MANKIND

- A. Thayer: "one who lies with a male as with a female."
 - 1. A sodomite

IX. LOVE

- A. A number of Greek words are translated love.
- B. *Agapao* and *agape* are the most frequently used in the Bible.
 - 1. When a command is given – these are the words used.
 - a. This is a decision we make.
- C. *Phileo* – fond of, have affection for, a feeling for.
- D. *Philadelphia* – a brotherly love.
- E. *Philanthropla* – love for mankind in general.
- F. We do not have to "like" everyone – but we must "love" everyone.
 - 1. We must "love" our enemies (Matt. 5:44-48).
 - 2. This does not mean we have the same feeling for them that we do for our family and friends.
 - a. It does mean that we wish for them good and not evil.

X. FORGIVENESS

- A. Someone has said that forgiveness "is the scent that a flower gives off when it is stepped on."
- B. We must forgive as God forgives (Eph. 4:32).
- C. But forgiveness is not automatic.
 - 1. We must be willing to forgive, but there are conditions (Luke 17:3-5).
 - 2. We must forgive if we are to be forgiven (Matt. 6:12; 14-15).

CONCLUSION:

- 1. Let us be sure we understand and use words as God uses them in His Word.
- 2. Changing the meaning of words to suit us does not mean God will accept our definition.

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Why Marriages Fail Things That Cause Problems In A Marriage, Why One Becomes Unfaithful

Wayne Cox

1. Thanks to the East Corinth congregation:
 - a. For her lectureship and its timely, relevant theme.
 - b. For her extending and defending the faith.
 - c. For her many good works.
2. The importance of this study:
 - a. As goes the home, so goes the nation. "The morality and freedom of any nation will rise and fall in proportion to the standards and successes of her home life."
 - b. As goes the home, so goes the church.
 - c. As goes the home, so goes one's destiny.
 - 1) The home life very often shapes and determines one's destiny, even his eternal destiny.
 - 2) Rom. 14:7, Nowhere is influence more powerfully felt than in the home.
3. Our assignment is to discuss:
 - a. Why marriages fail.
 - b. Things which cause problems in a marriage.
 - c. Why one becomes unfaithful.
4. Our objectives in covering this assignment:
 - a. To review briefly God's ideal for marriage.
 - b. To give a synopsis of a few reasons for marriage failure.

DISCUSSION:

I. GOD'S IDEAL FOR MARRIAGE.

- A. Monogamous — one man for one woman.
 1. Such was the design of the original marriage (Gen. 2); such is the design for all scriptural marriages today (Matt. 19:4-6).
 2. God's ideal for marriage prohibits:
 - a. Polygamy.
 - b. Homosexual marriages.
 - c. Living together minus marriage.
- B. Permanent — one man for one woman for life.

C. Inevitably, problems arise in the very best of marriages.

1. Where there are people, there are problems!
2. The best book on marriage counseling is the Bible.
 - a. Follow it, you won't go wrong.
 - b. Ignore it, you can't be right.
3. God never intended for any scriptural marriage to fail, yet some are doomed from the start. Let's note a few reasons why:

II. WHY MARRIAGES FAIL.

- A. A lack of respect for God's law concerning marriage.
 1. Marriage is a divine institution; it originated in the mind of God.
 2. Marriage is permanent in its duration.
 - a. A life-long commitment:
 - 1) "As long as we both shall live"
 - 2) *"Till death do us part"*
 - 3) Marriage is *"for better or for worse"*
 - b. Romans 7:2-3
 - c. When one says *"I do"*, he just did for life!
 - d. Any marriage broken by divorce involves sin on the part of at least one, if not both mates.
- B. Unfaithfulness [Heb. 13:4].
 1. Illicit sexual relationships have destroyed many marriages, lives, and souls.
 - a. Causes.
 - 1) Improper attitudes developed long before marriage.
 - 2) Sexual promiscuity before marriage often causes severe problems after marriage.
 - 3) The increase of pornography, the "playboy philosophy," the lax attitude had in these areas all are contributing factors.
 - b. For those who cheat on their mates, not only has adultery been committed, but lying is also involved.
 2. The need for all to have the resolve of Job [Job 31:1].

- C. A lack of love.
 - 1. The difference between liking someone and loving someone.
 - 2. The need for an unquenchable, undying love to bind a marriage together through "thick and thin."
 - a. Eph. 5:25, "One can give without loving, but one cannot love without giving."
 - b. Col. 3:19
- D. Husbands not fulfilling their God-given role as head of the home.
 - 1. Eph. 5:23
 - a. Abraham assumed the headship of his home [Gen. 22:18].
 - b. Joshua did likewise [Joshua 24:15].
 - 2. As the head, the husband is commanded to:
 - a. Make a living [1 Tim. 5:8].
 - b. Love his wife [Col. 3:19].
 - 3. As the head, the husband is not dictator, tyrant, or brute!
- E. Wives not fulfilling their God-given role as help meet to her husband.
 - 1. The principle of subjection [Col. 3:18]. Not a door-mat!
 - 2. The need of being a good keeper of the home [Titus 2:5].
- F. A lack of maturity.
 - 1. Many marriages fail because those who enter into it are not mature, and are not prepared for marriage.
 - a. Marriage is not for children! Difficult decisions have to be made which call for maturity.
 - b. God brought a mature Adam and Eve together.
 - c. Isaac was mature when he married Rebekah.
 - d. Jacob worked for several years for Rachel.
 - 2. The problem of "forced" marriages. It is not a sin not to get married.
- G. Not leaving home. Interference from outsiders has destroyed many marriages.
 - 1. Marriage involves leaving.
 - 2. Marriage involves cleaving.
 - 3. Marriage involves weaving.

H. Financial problems.

1. Marriage counselors would place this near the top of the list of marital problems.
2. Piling up debts has a way of breaking down a marriage.

I. Infatuation with externals to the neglect of internals.

1. Looks are not everything; character is important! After all, beauty is only "skin deep."
2. Saul was "tall, dark, and handsome" (1 Samuel 9:2), but failed miserably when it came to character.

J. Because of a lack of concern for one's appearance.

1. The "ABC's" of dating [Ruth 3:1-3].
2. If it is important to be concerned in these areas before marriage, it is important to be concerned in these areas after marriage.
3. "A thing of beauty is a joy forever."

K. Workaholism.

1. Spending too much time at work and not enough time at home.
2. The need for a healthy balance between both.

L. Differences of religion.

1. While we cannot make laws where God has made none, we do stress the importance of a Christian marrying a Christian.
2. Some difficulties involved when a believer marries a non-believer.
3. The wisdom of marrying someone to help get you to heaven instead of pulling you in the wrong direction.

M. Failure to recognize and appreciate individual differences.

N. Lack of sensitivity.

1. The different makeup of men and women.
2. Wives have a need for sensitivity; husbands often overlook that need.

O. Refusing to make adjustments and compromises.

P. Faulty communication; lack of communication.

1. Though at the bottom of this list, professionals would place it at or near the top of the reasons why marriages fail.

2. A breakdown in communication leads to a buildup in tension.

CONCLUSION:

1. No marriage has to fail.
2. No problem is insurmountable with God's help and a willingness to work together with Him to find a solution.
3. May God help us to be committed always to our mates that our home life might be happier and our married life healthier!

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## **Questions #1**

**Does Paul contradict Jesus?**

**Can the guilty party remarry?**

**Can one forgive their spouse of fornication  
and still put them away?**

**What does it mean to marry "only in the Lord?"**

**What does it mean to be "bound to a wife"  
and "loosed from a wife?"**

*Chuck Northrop*

1. Because the home is on the forefront of Satan's assault against humanity, we need God's teaching on the home.
2. Notice what is happening to marriages in the United States:  
In 1870, 1 out of 33 marriages ended in divorce.
  - a. In 1900, 1 out of 12 marriages ended in divorce.
  - b. In 1928, 1 out of 6 marriages ended in divorce.
  - c. In 1970, 1 out of 3 marriages ended in divorce.
  - d. In 1986, 1 out of 2 marriages ended in divorce.

3. Certainly, Satan is making a frontal assault on God's institution — the home.
4. In doing such, he has raised questions and doubts about every aspect of the home imaginable, and this is especially true concerning the divine institution of marriage.
5. Thus, our purpose is to answer some specific questions that have been raised concerning God-ordained marriages.

## **DISCUSSION:**

### **1. QUESTION #1: DOES PAUL CONTRADICT JESUS?**

- A. Since truth cannot contradict itself, then Paul could not have contradicted Jesus.
- B. Furthermore, since Paul is an apostle of Jesus Christ, and since Jesus promised the apostles that the Holy Spirit would bring to their remembrance all that Jesus said (John 14:26), then it is the case that what the apostles spoke and wrote are in reality the words of Jesus. (So, the question now becomes does Jesus contradict Himself?)
- C. To give some foundation to this alleged contradiction, some have referred to 1 Cor. 7:10,12,25.
  1. Here Paul made a distinction between "...I command, yet not I, but the Lord" (v.10) and "...speak I, not the Lord" (v.12).
  2. They believe that Paul makes a distinction between what is an inspired statement and a personal opinion.
- D. However, what Paul taught in the first instance is what Jesus personally taught while on earth as in Matt. 19:3-9, and what Paul taught in the second instance is what he taught by inspiration, and thus both instances are from God, and neither are personal opinions.
- E. Realizing that these things cannot contradict and still wanting to justify people in their sinful marital relationships, some have taught that the words of Jesus only applies to Christians.
  1. Brother Ken Burleson will be dealing with the question, "Do Christ's words apply today and to all men?" [See page 108 in this book]
  2. For now, suffice it to say that Jesus in Matt. 19 appealed to "the beginning" when God created man

and instituted marriage which surpassed the Mosaic covenant and made it applicable to all mankind.

F. Still wanting to somehow justify themselves and others, there are some who teach that Jesus' teaching on marriage, divorce, and remarriage is Old Testament law and in this way they think they get around this contradiction.

1. Admittedly, the teachings of Jesus recorded in the Gospel records were under an Old Testament setting, but are they Old Testament law?
2. Consider 2 Peter 1:16-21 where Peter made New Testament application to an incident that happened in the life of Jesus — the transfiguration.
  - a. The transfiguration and the declaration of God, *"This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased"* affirmed the deity of Jesus, the relationship of Jesus to the Father, and God's pleasure of Jesus.
  - b. Then Peter said "We have also a more sure word of prophecy."
  - c. Why is it more sure? Because Peter, James, and John were eyewitnesses of Jesus (also consider 1 John 1:1-3 in this light).
  - d. The Old Testament prophets knew, heard, and prophesied of His coming, but the apostles were eye witnesses of His coming.
  - e. Thus, Peter made New Testament application to an incident in the gospel records under an Old Testament setting.
3. Also, consider the question: When does a person prepare his or her will?
  - a. Do people prepare their wills while they are living or after they are dead?
  - b. Obviously, it must be done while they are living.
  - c. So, it is with Jesus. Heb. 9:16, *"For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator."*

## II. QUESTION #2: CAN THE GUILTY PARTY REMARRY?

- A. Three passages clearly reveals the answer to this question.

1. Matt. 5:32, “But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery.”
  2. Matt. 19:9, “And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except [it be] for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery.”
  3. Mark 10:11-12, “And he saith unto them, Whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery against her. And if a woman shall put away her husband, and be married to another, she committeth adultery.”
- B. Though some want to make this more difficult than it is, I am reminded of bro. Guy N. Woods who on one occasion was speaking about Matt. 19:9. After quoting the passage, he asked, “Do you understand? You don’t? Let me explain it to you.” And preceded to quote it again. Then he asked if they understood it then, and again he said, “You don’t? Let me explain it to you again.” And preceded to quote it a third time.
1. Brethren, it really is just that simple!
  2. We make it difficult by trying to twist it around to justify some sinful relationship.
  3. We can muddy the water with parties “A” and “B” even to the extent of confusing ourselves, but one thing is for sure, God can figure it out, and no matter how we judge it, Jesus still taught, “and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery.”
- C. What do we learn from these passages and their contexts about who is and who is not qualified to marry with God’s approval?
1. Those who have never been married before may marry.
  2. One who has been previously married but whose spouse committed fornication may marry again.
    - a. We are speaking of the truly innocent party [Luke 17:1-2].

- b. One cannot withhold themselves from their spouse with the intent to see how long their spouse will last before committing fornication.
- c. Nor can one arrange an adulterous situation for their spouse (either with the good intention of procreating because one party of the marriage is unable or with a greedy motive of making money).
- 3. Though not specifically mentioned in the passages presently under consideration, a person can marry after that person's spouse has died [Rom. 7:2-3].
- 4. The person who has been put away because of fornication may not marry.
- 5. The person who is eligible to marry may not marry one who has been put away because of fornication.

### III. **QUESTION #3: CAN ONE FORGIVE THEIR SPOUSE OF FORNICATION AND STILL PUT THEM AWAY?**

- A. Brethren, we must keep in mind that forgiveness and the consequences of one's sin are not equal terms, and often do not go together.
- B. For example, consider the sin of David and Bathsheba [2 Sam. 11].
  - 1. First notice how the sin grew from adultery to lying to drunkenness and ultimately to murder.
  - 2. Four consequences came as a result of his sin which was prophesied by Nathan [2 Sam. 12:1-14].
    - a. The sword would never depart from David's house.
    - b. Evil would be raised up against David out of his own house.
    - c. David's wives would lie with neighbors in public places.
    - d. The child born to David and Bathsheba would die.
  - 3. As a result of Nathan's prophecy, David confessed, "I have sinned against the Lord" [2 Sam. 12:13].
  - 4. "And Nathan said unto David, The Lord also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die."
  - 5. Though David was unquestionably forgiven, he still had to suffer the consequence of his sin. All these

prophecies came to pass including the death of the child.

- C. So, it is with marriage — sometimes one can be forgiven, and still they must bare the consequences of his or her actions.
  - 1. Keep this in mind, the Lord did not command us to put away a spouse guilty of fornication — putting away the fornicator is an option.
  - 2. However, when sin is repented of, extending forgiveness is really not an option to the child of God (Matt. 7:2), it must be extended.
  - 3. Nonetheless, for various reasons, the guilty party may have to bear the consequences of their actions.
- D. Wise Solomon spoke of such consequence in Proverbs 6:32, *“But whoso committeth adultery with a woman lacketh understanding: he that doeth it destroyeth his own soul.”*

#### IV. QUESTION #4: WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO MARRY “ONLY IN THE LORD?”

- A. There is one condition for marriage that Paul gives for a person who has lost their spouse in death — they are to “marry to whom she will; only in the Lord” (1 Cor. 7:39).
- B. There are two possible interpretations:
  - 1. The widow (or widower) may remarry “only a Christian.”
  - 2. The widow (or widower) may remarry “only in harmony with the Lord’s will.”
- C. Evidence for the widow (or widower) may remarry “only a Christian.”
  - 1. What does the phrase “in the Lord” usually mean?
    - a. The expression “in the Lord” is equal to “in Christ” or “in Christ Jesus” which means to be in his spiritual body, the church, or, in other words, to be a Christian.
    - b. Think of it as a sphere — those persons or actions that are in this sphere are “in the Lord” or “in Christ” which includes all Christians and such things as “all spiritual blessings” (Eph. 1:3),

- salvation (2 Tim. 2:10), and sanctification (1 Cor. 1:2).
- c. Furthermore, when one becomes a Christian by baptism, he is "in Christ" (Gal. 3:27).
  - d. Even further, the rewards of being a Christian is the same for those who are "in the Lord" (Rev. 14:13).
  - e. Thus, we see that the terms are equal.
2. The weight of scholarship.
- a. Arndt and Gingrich (as quoted in "Questions and Answers" by Guy N. Woods, page 92) says, "esp. In Paul or John usage, to designate a close personal relation...be or abide in Christ... *gameetheenai en kurioo* marry in the Lord — marry a Christian, 1 Cor. 7:39."
  - b. Concerning the phrases "in Christ," "in Christ Jesus," "in the Lord" as frequently used by Paul, Thayer says, "the expression is equivalent in meaning to by virtue of spiritual fellowship or union with Christ..." Among other passages, he lists "1 Co. vii. 39." Continuing, he wrote, "Finally, it serves as a periphrasis for Christian..." (def. 6 b, page 211, col. 2).
  - c. M. J. Harris in "The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology" (Vol. 3, page 1191) says, "the Christian widow is free to remarry, says Paul (1 Cor. 7:39), but only 'in the [sphere of the] Lord', that is, she may marry only a fellow-Christian."
  - d. In the same volume (page 173), H. Vorlander and C. Brown wrote, "Remarriage with a believer is a possibility that can certainly be contemplated after the death of the former partner [cf. v. 39]."
  - e. Bro. Guy N. Woods writes, "The consensus, of scholarly opinion, to this end, is little short of overwhelming" Then he proceeded to list "the greatest scholars from the first century until now" beginning with Tertullian of the second century to Barnes of the current century ("Questions and Answers," page 94).

- D. Evidence for the widow [or widower] may remarry "only in harmony with the Lord's will."
1. The phrase "only in the Lord" is adverbial and modifies "to be married." However, the *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament* (as quoted by Workman in "The Restorer," October 1992) says, "the neuter *monon* often functions as an adverb and...is used to modify verbs, nouns/pronouns, adverbs, prepositional phrases, clauses, and negatives, limiting their action, scope, or condition.' This authority then gives examples of each category, coming finally to this one: 'with advs., prep. phrases, or clauses: *monon en kurio*, 'only in the Lord' [1 Cor. 7:39], i.e., marry a Christian [referring to a widow who was permitted to remarry after the death of her husband].'"
  2. The phrase "only in the Lord" appears frequently in the scriptures and is used for persons who labored, spoke, died, etc. being in the faith of the Lord as, for example, wives who are told to act "as it is fit [i.e. befitting or as is one's duty – CN] in the Lord" (Col. 3:18), and children whose obedience is "well pleasing" in the Lord (Col. 3:20; Eph. 6:1).
    - a. In Col. 3:18, it is fitting for wives to submit to their husbands for it is the wives' responsibility "in the Lord" (i.e. as Christians). (v. "New Bible Commentary: Revised," page 1151; "Gospel Advocate Commentary on Ephesians, Philippians and Colossians" by Lipscomb and Shepherd, page 301; "Commentary on the Epistles to the Ephesians and the Colossians" by Simpson and Bruce, page 289). Thus, "in the Lord" does not modify the action, but the wives.
    - b. In Eph. 6:1, the prepositional phrase does not modify the children's obedience, but the parents. Putting Col. 3:20 together with Eph. 6:1 reveals that the reason children are told to obey their parents "in all things" is because those parents are "in the Lord" (Christians). Children of parents who are not "in the Lord" (Christians) should not

- obey their parents "in all things" for such obedience may conflict with one's duty to God.
3. If a Christian sins by marrying one who is not a Christian, then how can one repent in such situations?
    - a. It is a mistake and poor exegesis to base one's interpretation of any passage upon the difficulties of repentance.
    - b. The text means what it says no matter how difficult it is to correct the situation.
    - c. The fact is that with such reasoning, others have tried to justify adulterous unions.
  - E. Based upon the preceding evidence, a widow (or widower) should marry a Christian. (Please keep in mind that even if one is not thoroughly convinced of this position, it would most certainly be the safe course of action.)

#### V. **QUESTION #5: WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE "BOUND TO A WIFE" AND "LOOSED FROM A WIFE?"**

- A. The context from which our question is taken begins in 1 Cor. 7:25 and goes to the end of the chapter.
  1. In the previous section, Paul had established the principle "Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called" [1 Cor. 7:20] which applies only to the social circumstances at the time of conversion. [This principle does not apply to any sinful situation nor circumstance.]
  2. This principle sets a transition between the previous and present sections by offsetting any tendency on the part of the Corinthian Christians to put away their unbelieving spouses [verses 12-16] and by its application to virgins and widows because of "the present distress" [vs. 25-40].
- B. Concerning the question on virgins, Paul says, "I have no commandment of the Lord: yet I give my judgment..."
  1. In verse 10, Paul repeated a command personally taught by the Lord, and in verse 12, he gave his own inspired command, but now in verse 25, he gives his "divinely inspired judgment."

2. The language used is in no way a disclaimer of inspiration — in fact, Paul asserts that he has “the Spirit of God” (v.40).
  3. Again, Paul is not distinguishing between truth and opinion but between what has previously been revealed and what is currently being revealed.
  4. 1 Cor. 14:37, *“If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord.”*
- C. Because of “the present distress,” Paul’s advise is not to change one’s current marital status which has been reiterated several times throughout the chapter, and this is the basic meaning of verse 27 from which our question has been taken, *“Art thou bound unto a wife? seek not to be loosed. Art thou loosed from a wife? seek not a wife.”*
- D. Specifically, what does it mean to be “bound unto a wife?”
1. This is the marriage bond of Rom. 7:2, *“For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband.”*
  2. This is not the “bondage” of verse 15.
    - a. In verse 27, the word used comes from *deo* which means to bind and in this case refers to a moral or legal tie or obligation.
    - b. In verse 15, the word used comes from *doulos* which in verb form means to enslave and is never used of marriage — in fact, it goes far beyond the marriage bond.
    - c. Though marriage has a moral and legal obligation, marriage is not slavery.
- E. Specifically, what does it mean to be “loosed from a wife?”
1. Though there are two different words translated “loosed” in this verse, they stem from *luo* which basically means to loosen, unbind, disengage.
  2. Some have assessed that since the word translated divorce (*apoluo*) in the gospel records come from the

same root, then it must have the same meaning here.

3. However, notice the following Greek authorities concerning *lelusai* which is the second word translated "loosed" found in the second question of our text:
  - a. The *"Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament"* [as quoted by Gary Workman in *"The Restorer,"* October 1992] says "*lelusai* [from the word *luo*] in this verse 'appears with the meaning be free [of the marital bond to a wife] without an indication of the previous marital bond.'"
  - b. Thayer says that *lelusai* is "spoken of a single man, whether he has already had a wife or has not yet married, 1 Co. vii. 27" [page 384].
  - c. A. T. Robertson in his *"Word Pictures in the New Testament"* says, "Bachelors as well as widowers are included in *lelusai*" [Vol. IV, page 132].
4. The word *lelusai* is never used in scripture for divorce, and if Paul had used it here in the second question ("Art thou loosed from a wife?") as such, he would have contradicted himself and the Lord.
  - a. In the next verse [28], Paul writes, "But and if thou marry, thou hast not sinned."
  - b. Yet in verses 10 and 11, he wrote, "And unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord, Let not the wife depart from her husband: But and if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband: and let not the husband put away his wife."
  - c. And Jesus said, "Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery" [Matt. 19:9].
  - d. One cannot be married when told to remain unmarried, without sinning.
  - e. And, one cannot commit adultery without sinning.
5. Some have applied the phrase "seek not to be loosed" to justify the continuation of an adulterous union.

- a. Such an application is to ignore one's responsibility to repent (Acts 17:30).
- b. Continuous cleansing is based upon continuous walking in the light (1 John 1:7) — one cannot walk in the light while living in adultery.
- c. Furthermore, from our text of 1 Cor. 7, we learn that one abides with God (1 Cor. 7:17-24) by "the keeping of the commandments of God" (1 Cor. 7:19).

### **CONCLUSION:**

1. There should be no doubt in our minds that Satan is making a frontal assault against the home through homosexuality, the women's lib movement, and error being taught in the Lord's church on marriage, divorce, and remarriage.
2. Hopefully, these things will arm you and fortify you for the fight against the Satanic forces.
3. God's Word gives us the needed answers to fight the good fight of faith, and the proper working of God's institutions of the church and the home will give us the needed support to maintain the fight.

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The Responsibility Of Children To Their Parents

Nat Evans

1. Eph. 6:1-3
2. It shall be my purpose to briefly examine this text.
3. To look at some other Bible passages.
4. To draw some practical lessons from our study.

DISCUSSION:**I. READING THE TEXT.**

Eph. 6:1-3, *"Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. ²Honor thy father and mother (which is the first commandment with promise), ³that it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth."*

II. REFLECTING ON THE TEXT.

- A. **"Children"** — This term is evidently used to refer to those children who were still under the care, supervision, and government of their parents – in other words, those children who are still at home, who are not as yet out on their own.
- B. **"Obey"** — This is the first great duty which God has given to children. This has been a requirement of God in every age. In obeying parents, the child is actually obeying God.
- C. In Col. 3:20 we have a parallel passage. It says, *"Children, obey your parents in all things, for this is well-pleasing in the Lord."* From the very start, children are to be taught implicit obedience. Obedience is a test of one's love for God as well as one's love for his parents [John 14:21-24; 14:15; 1 John 5:3].
- D. Albert Barnes in his commentary on Ephesians gives some reasons why children ought to obey their parents.
 - 1. "Because the good order of a family, and hence of a community depends on it. No family can succeed where there is no subordination."
 - 2. "Because the welfare of the child depends upon it. — No child can prosper in life without having learned this important lesson."
 - 3. "Because a small child is not as yet competent, or qualified to direct himself, he must learn to be subject to someone older and wiser while he grows and matures himself."
 - 4. "Because the parent, by his age and experience is presumed to be qualified to guide a child. The natural love of parents for a child should insure that the parents will provide what is best for the child. A parent should not abuse this authority."

5. "It is important, because the family government is designed to imitate the government of God. No child that is disobedient to a parent will be obedient to God; and that child that is most likely to become a Christian is the obedient child ... A disobedient child is forecasting his own ruin ... Most of the cases of crime that lead to the penitentiary, or the gallows, commence by disobedience to parents."
- E. **"In the Lord"** — The child is to obey the parents as long as these commandments are in harmony with the will of the Lord. If ever there is a disagreement between what a parent requires and what God's Word requires then God must be obeyed, His will must come first [Acts 5:29].
- F. **"For this is right."** It is right...
 1. Because God determines what is right and this is appointed by God as a duty of children.
 2. Because we must respect and obey God, and in so doing the child will be doing what is best for him, for the happiness and harmony of the home, and for the well-being of society. Doing right never results in ruin [Prov. 20:11]. Follow the Lord's rules and you will be righteous. Run the Christian race faithfully and receive the reward of the crown of life. Rest awaits the righteous. [Rev. 14:13]
- G. **"Honor thy father and mother"** [Exodus 20:12].
 1. This is a serious matter. Look into the Old Testament and note God's law of punishment for children who did not respect their parents, and who refused to obey them and give them due honor. Under the Old Law a rebellious child could receive the death penalty. The Law required, "*Whosoever strikes his father or mother shall be put to death ... Whosoever curses his father or mother shall be put to death*" [Exodus 21:15-17]. A stubborn child who would not obey his parents, and who would not listen to reason could be stoned to death by the elders of a city. [Deut. 21:18-21]
 2. No child, young or old, should ever dishonor his parents. The responsibility to honor one's parents continues throughout life.

3. We must always remember that "honor" is a moral choice. Honor has to do with one person recognizing the value or worth of another.
- H. **"Which is the first commandment with promise."**
 1. Here we have a special promise from God to bless those who honor their parents and obey them.
- I. **"That it may be well with thee"** (See Deut. 5:16).
 1. The meaning here is that things will go better for them in life if they do this, than if they don't.
 2. What is the other side of the coin? If you don't respect, honor, and obey your parents, then things are not going to be well with you.
- J. **"And thou mayest live long on the earth."** See also Exodus 20:12.
 1. The meaning is that there would be a special providence watching over their lives. This sets forth a general rule.
 2. Barnes gave some reasons why long life can be a blessing.
 - a. "It affords a longer period of time to prepare for eternity." It gives more time to accomplish good on earth.
 - b. "It is still true that obedience to parents is conducive to long life." Those who are obedient early in life have a greater chance to avoid danger.
 - c. "Obedient children are spared from the harm of vices and crimes which shorten life. No parent will command his child to be a drunkard, a gambler, or a murderer. Such things lead to an early grave. Those known to be disobedient to their parents fall prey more easily to such dangers."
 - d. "Many a life is lost early by disobeying a parent." How many times have parents told their children not to play in the street, or not to go near a body of water without an adult with them, only to have a child disobey, and we know how often there have been times of tragedy in such situations.

- e. "We may still believe that God in his providence; will watch over and bless a child that respects and obeys his parents."

III. REVERENCE AND RESPECT.

- A. Those who reverence God will show proper respect to their parents by honoring them and obeying them. It has always been right to obey one's parents provided of course that the thing required is in harmony with the Bible.
- B. It is now, and has always been wrong for a child to disobey his parents.
- C. Jesus is our perfect example to imitate. He obeyed his parents. Luke 2:51, "*And he went down with them, and came to Nazareth and was subject unto them*" [cf. 1 Peter 2:21].

IV. RECEIVE AND RETAIN PARENTAL INSTRUCTION AND GUIDANCE.

- A. Prov. 1:8-9, "*My son, hear the instruction of thy father, And forsake not the law of thy mother: ⁹For they shall be a chaplet of grace unto thy head, And chains about thy neck.*"
- B. This involves RECEPTIVITY:
 - 1. To instruction (Prov. 13:1; 29:3; 2 Tim. 3:15).
 - 2. To discipline (Prov. 15:5; 19:18; 22:15; 23:13-14; 29:15).
 - 3. To sound advice (Prov. 23:22; 27:11; 3:5-6).
 - 4. Learning from a good example (Prov. 17:8; 22:6; 31:10-31).

V. RECIPROCATATION AND REQUITING.

- A. We all owe our parents a debt we cannot possibly ever repay. But we can and should seek to show our appreciation for the time and the various sacrifices our parents have made by seeking to return in active love things of like kind. Call it reciprocation of love, care and affection.
 - 1. Illustration — The little boy polishing his mother's shoes — "I did it for love, mom."

- B. We owe loving parents so much. They brought us into this world. They cared for us when we were helpless as infants. They have provided food, shelter, and medical needs. They helped us obtain an education. Many of us were reared in Christian homes where we received spiritual training and guidance. We had wonderful examples set before us by our parents. Surely, we would want to provide for and take care of them as they grow older and perhaps even become helpless and infirm. It seems to me there is something terribly wrong with a child who feels no obligation at all toward their parents who have done so much, and who have sacrificed so much for them in earlier years.
- C. The Bible requires that sons and daughters be willing to provide financial help to their parents as they get older if they need it. Jesus taught that those who fail to do so make the word of God of none effect (Mark 7:9-13). In 1 Tim. 5:4 Paul says, *"But if any widow hath children or grandchildren, let them learn first to show piety towards their own family, and to requite their parents: for this is acceptable in the sight of God."* And then in verse 8 he says, *"But if any provideth not for his own, and specially his own household, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an unbeliever."*
- D. Providing the necessary help is kindness in action. It is our feeble attempt at requiting our parents for all they have done for us. But isn't un-requited love so sad? It speaks volumes about how ungrateful some children are.

VI. REPERCUSSIONS FOR RENEGING.

- A. Children must never forget that there will be repercussions both here and now and in eternity for mistreating parents, for failing to appreciate them, and in failing to provide necessary care for them. (Matt. 25:31-46; 1 Tim. 5:16; 5:4)
- B. This is a serious matter. It is not optional. We need to see that for a family member to fail in their obligation here is considered to be a denial of the faith (1 Tim. 5:8; Mark 7:9-13).

VII. RATIONALIZATION, REMORSE AND REGRET.

A. This unique obligation of each child to respect, love, and care for his parents does not end when the child grows up and leaves home. This is a lifetime responsibility. Some children never call, write or visit their aging parents. They feel they are just too busy. No doubt there will be tears of regret at the funeral, but will this make up for the many years of neglect? Robert R. Taylor, Jr. writes,

"If your parents yet live, call them, or better still go visit them. Invite them to your home. Disregard the overly worked excuses of being too busy or having so many pressing commitments. ... One of these days you will not have to make such excuses to your lonely parents for they will then be occupying their spots in the silent city of the sleeping dead. ... Brighten their hearts while their ears can still hear your voice, or their fading eyesight can still see you or read your letters. Expressions of love, care, and concern will be too late when expressed by the open casket or the flower covered grave. The opportunity to express love and concern will have then passed forever in this life."

B. My friend don't live in such a way now, Don't treat your parents in such a way now that you someday will be filled with remorse and regret when they are gone. Many have discovered that guilt is a hard row to hoe. *"Hearken unto thy father that beget thee, And despise not thy mother when she is old"* (Prov. 23:22).

VIII. REFLECTING, REMEMBERING, REMINISCING.

A. James W. Boyd well said,

"Holding parents in honor in precious memory is to continue to honor father and mother. How sweet and reassuring, comforting and strengthening it is to recall the days of youth when the hands of father and mother were tending to our needs and guiding our hearts, showing us by word and deed the way we should go. When parents have crossed Jordan, those who have been so blessed to have had godly

parents will come to appreciate more and more what benefits they received from their parents."

B. J. E. Williams wrote:

"O HOW THE YEARS have come and gone in swiftest flight!

Erasing all but memories of a pleasant sight,
No Papa, Mama resting in the porch or hall

A picture only hangs on failing memories wall; ...
Now marble slabs mark well sad little mounds of clay.
TOMORROW comes to end each generation's day."

IX. REJOICING OR REPROACH.

A. Proverbs 23:24-25, *"The father of the righteous shall greatly rejoice; and he that begetteth a wise child shall have joy of him. Thy father and thy mother shall be glad, and she that bare thee shall rejoice."*

B. Children can be a source of joy and gladness to their parents or they can bring reproach and sorrow. Why would a child want to live in such a way as to bring distress and grief to a loving parent?

C. Children should obey the Gospel as soon as they reach the age of accountability, and then strive to so live that their parents can say of them what Third John 4 says. *"Greater joy have I none than this, to hear of my children walking in the truth."*

D. Additional passages.

1. *"A wise son maketh a glad father; But a foolish son is the heaviness of his mother"* (Prov. 10:1).

2. *"A wise son maketh a glad father; But a foolish man despiseth his mother"* (Prov. 15:20).

3. *"A foolish son is a grief to his father, and bitterness to her that bare him"* (Prov. 17:24).

X. REMEDY.

A. Some parents are dying of a broken heart and there is only one remedy, and that involves repentance and restoration. Brother Taylor writes,

"children who are not reared to respect God and honor their parents can be a source of untold sufferings and heavy heartache. A father once spoke from bitter experience, 'when children are little they

are upon your feet; when older thy are upon your heart.' Some of the saddest people I have counseled have been parents whose children forsook the Lord and His church. Wayward children can put weary parents into a premature grave. ... Real parental love will never cease caring for a wayward child. ... The heart can be broken so easily when the child deserts the family and turns his wayward feet in the direction of the far-off country of sin, dissipation, and waste." [Luke 15:11-32]

- B. B. C. Goodpasture in his sermon on the prodigal son, told the story of Sam Jones. Sam Jones came to visit an old mother who had two sons. The mother was a widow. The old mother was dying of a broken heart. Jones knew that she was dying because her sons were living as they were. He used a rather novel means of bringing the boys to a realization of what they were doing. He asked them if they had two guns, and they said they had. "Well," he said, "you boys get your guns, load them and bring them into your mother's bedroom, aim at your mother's heart and at the count of three, fire!" They said, "Brother Jones, have you lost your mind?" He said, "No, I haven't lost my mind." They said, "Don't you know that is the last thing in the world that we would think of doing, taking our own old mother's life?" "Yes," he said, "but that is exactly what you boys are doing. You boys are taking your mother's life and you are doing it the long, torturous, cruel way. You are killing your mother by degrees. If you shot your mother, that would be more merciful than the method you are using; and remember, if you kill your mother by your conduct, her blood will be on your hands just the same." Those boys had left the Lord to live in sin. It was literally breaking their dear old mother's heart. Now I wonder if there are any of you young men and young women who may even now be breaking your father's and mother's hearts? Will you repent before it is too late? Will the family circle be unbroken over there, or will there be a missing spoke in the family wheel because you died away from God?

XI. REPAIRING BROKEN TIES IN THE FAMILY WILL INVOLVE REPENTANCE, RECONCILIATION, AND THEN THE RENEWING AND REVIVING OF FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS.

- A. Remove obstacles that hinder or prevent effective communication.
- B. Keep the doors of communication open.
- C. Repentance and Restoration can lead to a joyous Reunion. Just think of the number of homes and friendships that could have been saved if people would have been willing to swallow their pride and say those magic words, "I am sorry, Please forgive me." (Eph. 4:32)
- D. There was a song a few years ago by Earl Thomas Conley and Anita Pointer which spoke of wasted opportunities, a part of the lyrics went as follows:
 - 1. "Rivalries between a son and father, caused me to hurt that dad of mine, I would like to go back and start all over, But the world has turned too many times."
 - 2. My friend, don't wait till it is too late to reconcile family differences. At least be willing to do all you can to solve the problem. One thing is for sure, If we don't even try to get along with one another down here, God is not going to give us the chance later to try to get along up there!
- E. Illustration: The man who had not seen or spoken to his parents 20 years.
- F. Illustration: "Tie a yellow ribbon around the old oak tree."

XII. ROLE REVERSAL.

- A. Young people if roles were reversed — I and you became the parent, how would you want your children to react toward you? How would you want to be treated? Do you remember the golden rule in Matthew 7:12?
- B. A mother told her strong-willed rebellious child, "Son, perhaps one of these days you will have a child who is just like you, and maybe then you will understand the heartache you have caused me."

XIII. RESOLVE TO IMPROVE YOURSELF AND YOUR FAMILY.

- A. Be reasonable. Seek to establish a better rapport with your family. The word rapport means "relation marked by harmony, conformity, accord, or affinity."
- B. Realize that a better life, a better family, and a better world begins with "ME."
- C. The pop star Michael Jackson had a song, a part of which said, "I'm starting with the man in the mirror, I'm asking him to change his ways." In essence the song was teaching that if we want a better world then let each of us begin with ourselves to start to make things better. So you want a happier home life, I KNOW WHERE YOU CAN START!!!

XIV. REPROVE AND REBUKE.

- A. There may come the time when a mature child must take a stand religiously against their parents. The parents may have been deluded by religious error. Only the Gospel can save [Rom. 1:16]. Only the Truth can make one free [John 8:31-32]. When a mature child learns the truth, he must follow the saviour and obey the saving Gospel of Christ even at the cost of parental disapproval. Hopefully in the future he will be able to lead them to salvation in Christ.
- B. We must be willing to take a stand for Jesus and His Truth even if this means we will be opposed, and perhaps even rejected, by loved ones. We must love the Lord even more than we love family and friends [Matt. 12:46-50; 10:34-39]. In Matt. 10:37 Jesus said, *"He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me."*
In Matt. 12:30 our Lord said, *"He that is not with me is against me, and he that gathereth not with me scattereth."*
- C. Which do you put first, following the Lord or loyalty to family? [Matt. 6:33]

XV. RESIST TEMPTATION AND THUS REFRAIN FROM SIN.

- A. *"My son if sinners entice thee, consent thou not"* (Prov. 1:10).
- B. *"Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to God and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners, and purify your hearts, ye double-minded"* (James 4:7-8).
- C. *"Keep thyself pure"* (1 Tim. 5:22).
- D. *"But flee youthful lusts, and follow after righteousness, faith, love, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart"* (2 Tim. 2:22).
- E. *"Abstain from all appearance of evil"* (1 Thess. 5:22).
- F. *"Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers in word, in conversation (manner of life), in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity"* (1 Tim. 4:12).
- G. Store up God's Word in your heart (Psalm 119:11; 2 Tim. 3:15).
- H. *"Remember also thy Creator in the days of thy youth"* (Eccl. 12:1).
- I. *"Refrain from walking with evil men"* (Prov. 4:14).
- J. *"He that refraineth his lips doeth wisely"* (Prov. 10:19).

XVI. REPROOF, CHILDREN YOUR PARENTS DO NOT DESERVE YOUR:

- A. RAGE. Rage denotes haughtiness and insolence, temper tantrums, blowing your stack, etc. (Eph. 4:31-32).
- B. RAILING. Railing is to speak evil of. Some speak to and about their parents as if they were dogs (Prov. 20:20; Eph. 4:29; Col. 4:6).
- C. RUDENESS. What has happened to politeness and common courtesy?
- D. REPROACH.
 - 1. Don't live in such a way that your parents will be ashamed of you (Prov. 28:7; 10:5; 29:15).
 - 2. Don't become a reprobate who is known for revelling, and riotous living (Prov. 23:17-22; 28:7).

3. Don't become a rough rabble-rouser who is known to be a rascal. A rascal is:
 - a. a mean, unprincipled, dishonest person.
 - b. a mischievous person, this is a person who takes the low road instead of the high and lofty one. He is always looking for some mischief to get into.
 - c. Are you such a person? Are you a person who resists parental authority? Are you a rebel? [Prov. 16:27; 23:17-22; 28:7]

XVII. REGARD AND RELISH THESE RESOLVES.

- A. *"Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life"* (Prov. 4:23).
- B. *"Trust in Jehovah with all thy heart; and lean not upon thine own understanding: ⁶In all thy ways acknowledge him, And he will direct thy paths. ⁷Be not wise in thine own eyes; Fear Jehovah, and depart from evil"* (Prov. 3:5-7).

XVIII. REAPING WHAT WE SOW:

- A. What we sow, we will reap [Gal. 6:7-8]. One writer has said that we as parents need to show our children how to treat parents by the way we treat their grandparents. If we treat them properly, and the time comes, and it eventually will, when we must stand by the casket and the grave, our children can know that we loved them and tried to reciprocate their love. All the while our own children will be looking on.
- B. Parents, will we want our own children to treat us in old age like we have treated our own parents??? [Matt. 7:12; Prov. 23:22]

XIX. REVIEW:

- A. James Boyd so ably wrote what I have chosen as a summary of our study. He said, "What is the true way to honor parents? To live a godly and decent life before all men as God's child is a crown of everlasting glory to fathers and mothers. The greatest honor a child can bestow upon his parents is to live a consecrated and faithful Christian life. This builds for the parents a

monument that shall endure after the passing away of stone."

"True honor begins with genuine love for parents. It is manifested even in 'little things,' like keeping in contact with them, showing interest in their lives, as well as doing those things for them that need to be done. Letters, calls, gifts, remembrance, words of encouragement, visits, honor of their views and respect for their advice, are such things that parents may lawfully claim and expect from their children. Speaking respectfully of them, refraining from abusing them, being conscious of their feelings, try to make their days bright as possible, all are ways and means of showing the honor to parents which they deserve."

- B. Once more I remind us all that, honoring our fathers and mothers is a God-given lifetime requirement. No child whether young or old should dishonor their parents.

XX. REFUGE. (Psalm 46)

- A. A safe refuge for our lives, our homes, our nation, and the church is found in Eccl. 12:13, *"This is the end of the matter; all hath been heard; fear God, and keep his commandments for this is the whole duty of man."*
- B. Build your home and your life on 1 Cor. 13:4-7 and Eph. 4:32.

XXI. REPRAISALS:

- A. Judgment day is coming to us all. (Eccl. 12:14; 2 Cor. 5:10; Heb. 9:27)
- B. We will give an accounting to God for our various roles in the home. There will be some who will be lost because they did not honor their father and their mother. Surely, none of us want to be among that number.

XXII. RESPONDING TO THE GOSPEL INVITATION.

- A. Plan of salvation:
 - 1. Hear (Rom. 10:17).
 - 2. Believe (Heb. 11:6; John 8:21,24).

3. Repent [Luke 13:3,5; Acts 17:30,31].
4. Confess Christ before men [Rom. 10:9,10; Matt. 10:32,33].
5. Be baptized into Christ [Rom. 6:3-6; Gal. 3:27; Acts 2:38].

B. Illustrations:

1. Jimmy is safe, home at last.
2. Run, Tammy, Run.

XXIII. REFERENCES:

I am including several Bible references from the book of Proverbs that relate to my assigned subject. I hope both parents and children will take time to read them.

Acknowledgement: I gratefully acknowledge extensive use of the writings and ideas of Robert R. Taylor, Jr. and James W. Boyd in the preparation and writing of this material.

REFERENCES FROM PROVERBS

1. *"A wise son maketh a glad father; But a foolish son is the heaviness of his mother."* [Prov. 10:1]
2. *"He that gathereth in summer is a wise son; But he that sleepeth in harvest is a son that causeth shame."* [Prov. 10:5]
3. *"A wise son heareth his father's instruction; But a scoffer heareth not rebuke."* [Prov. 13:1]
4. *"A fool despiseth his father's correction; But he that regardeth reproof getteth prudence."* [Prov. 15:5]
5. *"A wise son maketh a glad father; But a foolish man despiseth his mother."* [Prov. 15:20]
6. *"Children's children's children are the crown of old men; And the glory of children are their fathers."* [Prov. 17:8]
7. *"A foolish son is a grief to his father, and bitterness to her that bare him."* [Prov. 17:24]
8. *"A foolish son is the calamity of his father."* [Prov. 19:13]
9. *"Chasten thy son, seeing there is hope; And set not thy heart on his destruction."* [Prov. 19:18]

10. *"Even a child maketh himself known by his doings, whether his works be pure, and whether it be right."* [Prov. 20:11]
11. *"Whoso curseth his father or his mother, His lamp shall be put out in blackness of darkness."* [Prov. 20:20]
12. *"A good name is chosen rather than great riches, And loving favor rather than silver and gold."* [Prov. 22:1]
13. *"Train up a child in the way he should go, And even when he is old he will not depart from it."* [Prov. 22:6]
14. *"Foolishness is bound up in the heart of the child; But the rod of correction shall drive it far from him."* [Prov. 22:15]
15. *"Withhold not correction from the child; For if thou beat him with the rod, he will not die."* [Prov. 23:13]
16. *"Thou shalt beat him with the rod, And shalt deliver his soul from Sheol."* [Prov. 23:14]
17. *"My son, if thy heart be wise, My heart will be glad, even mine, ¹⁶Yea, my heart will rejoice when thy lips speak right things."* [Prov. 23:15,16]
18. *¹⁷"Let not thy heart envy sinners; But be thou in the fear of Jehovah all the day long; ¹⁸For surely, there is a reward; And thy hope shall not be cut off. ¹⁹Hear thou my son, and be wise, And guide thy heart in the right way. ²⁰Be not among winebibbers, Among gluttonous eaters of flesh; ²¹For the drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty; And drowsiness will clothe a man with rags."* [Prov. 23:17-21]
19. *"Hearken unto thy father that beget thee, And despise not thy mother when she is old."* [Prov. 23:22]
20. *"Buy the Truth and sell it not, yea, wisdom, and instruction, and understanding."* [Prov. 23:23]
21. *"The father of the righteous will greatly rejoice; And he that begetteth a wise child will have joy of him."* [Prov. 23:24]
22. *"Let thy father and thy mother be glad, And let her that bare thee rejoice."* [Prov. 23:25]
23. *"My son, give me thy heart; And let thine eyes delight in my ways."* [Prov. 23:26]
24. *"My son, fear thou Jehovah."* [Prov. 24:27]
25. *"My son, be wise, and make my heart glad."* [Prov. 27:11]
26. *"Whoso keepeth the law is a wise son; But he that is a companion of gluttons shameth his father."* [Prov. 28:7]

27. "Whoso robbeth his father or his mother, and saith, It is no transgression, The same is the companion of a destroyer." [Prov. 28:24]
28. "Whoso loveth wisdom rejoiceth his father." [Prov. 29:3]
29. "The rod and reproof give wisdom; But a child left to himself causeth shame to his mother." [Prov. 29:15]
30. "There is a generation that curse their father, And bless not their mother." [Prov. 29:11]
31. "Her children rise up, and call her blessed; Her husband also, and he praiseth her saying, ²⁹Many daughters have done worthily, But thou excellest them all, ³⁰Grace is deceitful, and beauty is vain: **But a woman that feareth Jehovah, she shall be praised.**" [Prov. 31:28-30]

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The Responsibility Of Parents To Their Children

Ed Casteel

1. Genesis 1:26-28. In this passage, God the Almighty, the Creator of the universe planned for:
 - a. Marriage — he created male and female.
 - 1) He did not created two males or two females, but one male and one female.
 - 2) "For this cause [that God has made them male and female] shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh" [Matt. 19:5 quoting from Gen. 2:24].
 - b. The family — "God said unto them, *Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth*" [Gen. 1:28].

2. Our study for this hour will focus on the responsibility given by God to those who are the parents in the home. We are living in a sad state today when many, many parents will not accept their God-given responsibilities and as a result the children are both running and ruining the homes. To get things back in order:

DISCUSSION:

I. PARENTS MUST LOVE THEIR CHILDREN. **"Above all put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness" [Col. 3:14].**

A. Love is the first emotional response that an infant comes in contact with and to which he learns to respond.

1. He hears that soft voice of his mother.
2. He feels the gentle touch of his father.
3. He knows they are loving him for they are providing for his every need both physically and emotionally.

B. Few parents have to be told to love their children because when things are right and as they should be, their children are the result of their love one for another, and is then considered as a gift from God.

1. Eve saw her first born and declared, "I have gotten a man from the Lord" [Gen. 4:1].
2. Jacob introduced his sons and daughters with these words, "the children which God hath graciously given thy servants" [Gen. 33:5]. One of these sons, Joseph, later presented his sons to Jacob by saying, "the sons, whom God hath given me in this place" [Gen. 48:9].

3. The Psalmist wrote "Lo, children are a heritage of the Lord" [Psa. 127:3].

4. These people, and many, many more viewed their roles as parents as great privileges from the Lord, not just an incidental responsibility.

C. It is a true sad condition when there are parents who are "without natural affection" [Rom. 1:31]. This is the reason we have so much child neglect, child abuse and even child murder (abortion) in the world today.

1. Consider the teenage couple who gave birth to their child in the motel and then threw the baby in the

garbage can behind the motel. Where is the "natural affection?"

2. Consider the teenage girl who gave birth in the bathroom during her school prom and went right back to dancing. Where is the "natural affection?"
 3. Today, 40-60% of all runaways cite child abuse or incest as one of the main factors that led them to leave their home. Where is the "natural affection?"
 4. Many parents today resent their own children.
 - a. They feel trapped and tied down by them.
 - b. They feel that life would be happier without them.
 - 1) In a poll of 10,000 mothers the question was asked, if you could make the choice again would you have your children. 70% said NO.
 - 2) If parents cannot love their own flesh and blood, what can they love?
- D. When parents need an example as to how to properly love their children, let them consider the Father of us all, God the almighty. He assured his children, "my loving kindness will I not utterly take from him" (Psa. 28:33).
1. We should always let our children know we love them and that we are going to seek their best interest, even when they may disappoint us by some of their actions.
 2. Even when children disappoint their parents we should never threaten to withhold our love from them. But with love we should correct them and teach them how to live right and do right.

II. PARENTS MUST DISCIPLINE THEIR CHILDREN.

- A. Discipline must provide the child with a basic knowledge and understanding of God's will. (Eph. 6:4, *"And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."*) Without this teaching we have failed our children.
- B. Ken Yearwood in the book, *Your Marriage Can be Great*, says that discipline sometimes will include punishment. "The result of discipline is to develop and

refine standards of social behavior and a moral value system, so that the child will be able to accept the restraint that he will be living under as an adult; and, of course, as a christian, to prepare for life eternal" (p. 622).

C. Discipline is right for it is of God.

1. Prov. 3:12, *"For whom the LORD loveth he correcteth; even as a father the son in whom he delighteth."*
2. The purpose of discipline is four-fold.
 - a. To give wisdom. [Prov. 29:15, *"The rod and reproof give wisdom..."*]
 - b. To avoid shaming his parents. [Prov. 29:15, *"a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame."*]
 - c. Avoid ruining the child's life [Prov. 19:18, *"Chasten thy son while there is hope, and let not thy soul spare for his crying."*]
 - d. Keep him from hell. [Prov. 23:13-14, *"Withhold not correction from the child: for if thou beatest him with the rod, he shall not die. Thou shalt beat him with the rod, and shalt deliver his soul from hell."*]
 - 1) The writer is not condoning child abuse, but rather showing that discipline is a necessity at times, not because of hate for the child but because of love for the child's soul.
 - 2) If parents will not correct and discipline a child, then they have no real love for that child.

III. PARENTS MUST DEMONSTRATE RECOGNITION AND ACCEPTANCE FOR THEIR CHILDREN.

- A. Children must receive praise from their parents for all their accomplishments. It may be the 3rd place ribbon for the school science fair or the 1st place ribbon in the county spelling bee. They need to know that we, their parents, are proud of them.
- B. As elders, deacons and preachers we must be extremely careful not to spend so much time with

others, even doing the Lord's work, that we neglect our own children.

1. Samuel was a good man. He was a prophet as well as a judge over Israel. He went from "year to year in circuit" judging Israel (1 Sam. 7:16), but his sons "walked not in his ways" (1 Sam. 8:1-3).
 2. Eli's sons were rebellious because he failed to restrain them (1 Sam. 2,3). He was so busy doing the Lord's work in other areas that he neglected his own sons.
- C. As parents we need to learn to spend quality time with our children. I remember a family who decided to have one evening a week for family time. They chose Sunday night. Instead of attending worship they would go other places as a family or just stay home together. Our children need our time, but Sunday night worship hour is not the right time for family time unless it is to worship as a family with the other saints of the Lord.

IV. PARENTS MUST PROVIDE FOR THEIR CHILDREN PHYSICALLY.

- A. As parents we have the responsibility to provide for our children the necessities of life. We provide for them food, shelter and clothing. But, the necessities of life do not demand Nintendo, stereos and a private phone line.
- B. Paul said, *"But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel"* (1 Tim. 5:8).
- C. What we are seeing in our world today are too many "dead beat dads" who have fathered children but are unwilling to assume any responsibility as far as the physical or spiritual development of that child.

V. PARENTS MUST TRAIN THEIR CHILDREN SPIRITUALLY.

- A. Paul spoke of Timothy and his strong faith. The real credit went back to his mother and grandmother. *"When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and I am persuaded that in thee also"* (2 Tim. 1:5).

1. Why was Timothy's faith so strong? Because, *"that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus"* [2 Tim. 3:15].
2. The word child literally means "infant, a newborn child, an embryo, fetus" [Thayer].
3. We can wait too late to start teaching our children, but we can't start too early.
 - a. We need to start taking our children to worship and Bible study only days after they are born, not years after they are born.
 - b. They will never learn how to behave in worship until they are taken to worship and trained properly. They will never be trained properly while playing in a nursery, while mom is visiting with other moms.
- B. God spoke of Abraham, *"For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgment..."* [Gen. 18:19].
- C. Moses challenged the children of Israel to teach their children.
 1. Lev. 10:11, *"And that ye may teach the children of Israel all the statutes which the LORD hath spoken unto them by the hand of Moses."*
 2. Deut. 6:7, *"And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up."*
- D. If we send our children to the public school to learn English, Math, Science and History, but fail to take them to Bible Study to learn of Jesus, Peter, Paul, the church and salvation, then we have failed our children. Rebuen said, *"Do not sin against the child..."* [Gen. 42:22].
 1. There are so many other areas we could discuss as we consider the responsibility to our children, but time just will not permit.

2. Any one can raise a child to be a “heathen.” But, it takes real effort to raise a child to be a faithful, dedicated Christian.
 - a. If we do not strive to raise our children right, the world will surely mold them into its image [Rom. 12;1,2], and when the world is finished with them we will not be pleased with what is produced.
 - b. If we strive to raise our children right we will find we have a lot of help to succeed. We will be assisted by preachers, elders, deacons, Bible class teachers, and other faithful Christians.
 - c. *“And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord”* [Eph. 6:4].
 - d. *“Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it”* [Prov. 22:6].

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## A Successful Marriage Takes Two It's A Partnership Ingredients Of A Successful Marriage

*Ferrell Hester*

1. A successful marriage takes two [Gen. 1:27; Matt. 19:4].
2. Male and female [Gen. 2:18].
3. A successful marriage must be regarded by both the man and woman as a partnership.
4. A marriage cannot successfully be built without the proper INGREDIENTS.

**DISCUSSION:****I. INGREDIENTS OF A SUCCESSFUL MARRIAGE.**

- A. **Chastity, decency and virtuousness** are qualities of character in the lives of those entering into marriage are necessary INGREDIENTS (1 Tim. 4:12; 5:2,22; 2 Tim. 2:22; Matt. 5:8).
- B. **Maturity** of both the male and the female.
1. Marriage is for adults, not children.
    - a. Adam and Eve were man and woman, not little boy and little girl (Gen. 2).
    - b. Some who are mature in age may not be mature in mind and judgment (1 Cor. 13:11; 14:20).
    - c. Many marriages have failed because of a lack of maturity on the part of one or both.
- C. The intention that the marriage is to be **permanent** is a necessary ingredient of a successful marriage.
1. Vow: "Until death do us part" (1 Cor. 7:39).
  2. *"What therefore God hath Joined together, let not man put assunder"* (Matt. 19:6).
    - a. Too many go into marriage with the idea that if it doesn't work we'll get a divorce.
    - b. This sort of arrangement is doomed from the beginning.
- D. Another ingredient of a successful marriage is an **unselfish spirit**.
1. Practice the "golden rule" (Matt. 7:12).
  2. Be kind and affectionate (Rom. 12:10; Eph. 4:32).
  3. Practice common courtesy (1 Peter 3:1-8).
- E. Complete **trust** and **loyalty** of and to one another is absolutely an essential ingredient of a successful marriage.
1. A good marriage cannot be built upon deception and treachery.
    - a. *"The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her"* (Prov. 31:11-12).
    - b. The husband is to love wife as Christ loved the church and gave HIMSELF for it (Eph. 5:23-25).
  2. When husbands and wives show this kind of devotion and faithfulness to each other, there is no cause nor room for jealousy.

- a. Many marriages have failed and homes torn apart because of jealousy.
  - b. In every successful marriage there is a bond of mutual trust that when it is necessary for one to be away from the other, there is no suspicion nor jealousy.
- F. **Love** must be the basis for every successful marriage.
- 1. No couple should ever consider marriage for any reason other than a deep love for one another.
  - 2. Several years ago brother Thomas B. Warren wrote a book entitled: “Marriage is for those who love God and one another.”
    - a. Love of God is the first and greatest commandment (Matt. 22:37; Mark 12:30; Luke 10:27).
    - b. The second is to love your neighbor as yourself (Matt. 12:39; Mark 12:31).
    - c. Who should be a “closer neighbor” than one’s spouse (Eph. 5:28-29)?
    - d. *“Love suffereth long, and is kind; love envieth not; love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, <sup>5</sup>Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; <sup>6</sup>Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; <sup>7</sup>Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things”* (1 Cor. 13:4-7).
    - e. PARAPHRASE: “THE HUSBAND suffereth long, and is kind; THE HUSBAND envieth not; THE HUSBAND vaunteth not HIMSELF, is not puffed up, Doth not behave HIMSELF unseemly, seeketh not his own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.”
    - f. PARAPHRASE: “THE WIFE suffereth long, and is kind; THE WIFE envieth not; THE WIFE vaunteth not HERSELF, is not puffed up, Doth not behave HERSELF unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil;

Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things."

- g. Where there is the proper love on the part of both husband and wife the marriage cannot fail. "Love never faileth" [1 Cor. 13:8].
- G. Last but not least, a **proper spiritual life** on both parties is a necessary ingredient for a successful marriage.
  1. Christians should marry Christians.
  2. *"Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness" [2 Cor. 6:14]?*
    - a. Some argue (and perhaps correctly so) that this passage is not speaking of marriage; yet it is undeniable that when a Christian marries a Christian there is a much greater likelihood of success.

#### CONCLUSION:

1. Marriage was ordained of God in the beginning for the happiness and welfare of mankind.
2. It has been our purpose in this lesson to point out God's formula for a successful marriage.
3. If this formula is faithfully followed by both parties in the marriage, success is assured.

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## Facing Tragedies And Adversities In The Home

*Joe W. Nichols*

Psalm 127:1; Prov. 12:7

1. Christians should desire and work toward the ideal home which God has designed [Psa. 127:1].
2. We must realize however that even Christian homes are not immune to tragedy and adversity – the “guardian angel” philosophy does not prove out! [1 Peter 1:6]
  - a. Tragedy (noun) is a happening or event adverse to happiness; such as, death, calamity or suffering.
  - b. Adversity (noun) is that which is unfavorable or fatal in its affect; such as, destitution or affliction.
3. It must also be remembered that “The world lieth in the evil one,” 1 John 5:19.
4. God has ordained that Christians live in the world, therefore exposed to wicked, thoughtless and lawless people. [1 Peter 4:12]
5. Homes molded after God’s design can survive tragedy and adversity. [Prov. 12:7]

### DISCUSSION:

- I. **THE BIBLE PREPARES US FOR TRAGEDY AND ADVERSITY THROUGH THE MULTITUDE OF EXAMPLES GIVEN.**
  - A. The Bible says, that “Cain rose up against his brother, and slew him” [Gen. 4:8].
    1. The pain and suffering of Adam and Eve in this matter was surely immense.
    2. Sibling rivalry can reach serious proportions even in Christian homes.
  - B. The Bible begins the list of Job’s tragedies by saying, “And it fell on a day...” [Job 1:13].
    1. On one day, Job suffered the loss of his flocks, herds, servants, sons and daughters. Sometime later, he suffered the loss of his personal health.
    2. Job is certainly a great lesson for God’s people in enduring tragedy and adversity.

- C. Namoi, in the Book of Ruth, is an illustrious example of one turning from sorrow and defeat to a solution.
  - 1. She found herself widowed, suffering the loss of both of her sons, and with two daughter-in-laws to be concerned about.
  - 2. She considered her options and chose the best solution to her problem.
  - 3. It might be said, That she answered her dilemma by choosing to be close to her God and her people.
- D. Hezekiah took his problem into the house of God and "spread it before the Lord" (2 Kings 19:14).
  - 1. Problems that are too great for us need to be "spread before the Lord."
  - 2. So often, we as God's children, find ourselves as young Davids facing the mighty Goliaths of this world.
  - 3. Much of life is spent in solving the tragedies and adversities that come upon us.
- E. Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego found themselves faced with the decision of worshiping the Babylonian idolatrous gods, or being cast into a fiery furnace. (Dan. 3)
  - 1. They knew God could deliver them, but did not know that He would.
  - 2. Regardless of the pronounced adversity, they chose not to worship the idolatrous gods.
- F. Hebrews 11:35-40 declares that people of faith often suffer because of their faith (2 Cor. 11:22-28).

**II. SOME OF THE HOME'S GREATEST TRAGEDIES ARE UNEXPECTED AND SUDDEN DEATH, SEVERE INJURY, TERMINAL ILLNESS, AND SUICIDE.**

- A. Parents expect to precede their offspring to the grave.
  - 1. Being involved in a funeral of a departed infant where the parents are young makes the task much easier. They are comforted in knowing that the child given up in death is safe with God. There is also the potential blessing of another child just as beautiful and perhaps held more precious because of their loss.

2. For those, however, who lose older children and are beyond producing offspring, the loss is even greater. David's loss of his child [1 Sam. 12:16-18] was surely not the tragedy faced by the widow of Nain [Luke 7:11- 15].
3. As preachers, we must deal with such tragedies inside our own families and within the church family.
  - a. In witnessing the death of a niece and a brother in-law, the difference in the two losses is noted.
  - b. There is a great lesson to be learned in preaching the funeral of the "town drunkard" wherein the wife with children is a member of the Lord's church.
  - c. An entirely different lesson is realized in preaching the funeral where an entire family has been "wiped-out" [killed in an automobile accident].
  - d. Sometimes we must deal with cases where the injuries incurred are severe, leaving the persons incapable of a normal life. Some are left as invalids, totally dependent upon others. In such a case the invalids can enter into self destruction, or become cruel or abusive toward those they love.
  - e. Often, we are called upon to give strength and courage to the terminally ill whose days are numbered.
  - f. One of the most trying experiences for preachers is in dealing with those who contemplate suicide. Such cases should always be taken seriously. most often, we as preachers are not equipped professionally to counsel such people. Consequently, professional counseling must be sought for them.

### III. TRAGEDIES IN MANY CASES PRODUCE ADVERSITY.

- A. Parents who suffer the loss of children often lose the desire to continue on in life.
  1. To such parents, life has lost its real meaning. There is just nothing left to live for!

2. The Bible states, "*Lo children are an heritage of the Lord*" (Psa. 127:3). When children are lost in death, the heritage is lost.
- B. Wives who lose their husbands often find themselves in the dilemma of having to seek employment and become the breadwinners.
  1. A preacher's wife who lost her husband found herself totally bewildered as to what to do about her circumstances.
  2. Wives with children can be left with no home, no funds, and no sure direction.
- C. Younger children left without a father or mother are affected greatly.
  1. So often they blame God for their loss and the hardship that the family is thrust into.
  2. Resentment can build-up in children to the point of their becoming unruly and uncaring. This can lead to a reckless life that may lead to self-destruction and even greater hardship for the family.
  3. Husbands or wives who remarry after losing a mate are often punished by their children. The new marriage and home are thereby put in jeopardy.

#### **IV. SOME PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS IN MINISTERING TO THOSE WHO SUFFER TRAGEDY AND ADVERSITY.**

- A. Pessimism must be replaced with optimism (Phil. 4:13; Rom. 8:31; Psalm 23:4; John 14:1).
  1. Optimism is a necessary attribute in dealing with tragedy and adversity.
  2. Optimism is the spark that ignites the light in the tunnel of despair. Hope is thereby generated which leads to positive action.
- B. Timely visits by those that care are essential to the healing of those who have had great losses.
  1. Knowing that others are sharing their grief and sorrow gives strength and courage to continue.
  2. Sometimes one's presence speaks greater than words.
  3. God's people are to be loving and caring people (Gal. 6:2).

- C. A large resource of published materials are available for distribution to those who have special needs.
  - 1. The Bible can be a great healer in tragedy and adversity – the book of Ruth has given courage to many! Many stories have been related of those who were lonely and in despair in hotel and motel rooms who were spared because they found the Bible to read.
  - 2. Many poems written relate to given situations.
  - 3. Books have been written which especially address personal tragedy (Leroy Brownlow books are a good example).
  - 4. Not to be forgotten is the financial support of churches and brethren – “Do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith” [Gal. 6:10b].
    - a. Good done by churches in such cases will bring great rewards in days to come.

## CONCLUSION:

- 1. In tragedy and adversity we must be strong in our belief in God and the Bible, and in our trust that God will be there to help us and see us through it all [1 Peter 5:7].
  - a. Someone has stated: “I know not the future, but I do know the God who is in it!”
- 2. Fatalism (belief in an inevitable future) is not of God and can defeat one through his rejection of Divine counsel and help [Prov. 3:5].
- 3. The Bible testifies to the fact that God can take negative situations and make positive situations out of them.
  - a. Moses, Hezekiah, Hanna, Peter, Paul, and sinners are some of the many examples of God working in regard to the negative aspects of mankind in making them positive [Psa. 11:4].
  - b. The book of Job answers the question for all men of all ages that in God’s creation and workings His ultimate concern is the well-being of His offspring. *“Then Job answered the Lord and said, I know that thou canst do all things, And that no purpose of thine can be restrained”* [Job 42:1-2].

## **Unique Situations: Elderly Parents And Grandparents, In-laws, Step-parents, Step-children, Foster children**

*John Grubb*

1. Matt. 7:12; Eph. 4:32
2. The home has undergone a number of changes since the Garden of Eden.
  - a. Adam and Eve did not have to deal with most of the unique situations discussed in our topic today.
    - 1) They did not have to deal with elderly parents and grandparents, step-parents, step-children, or foster children.
    - 2) They were father and mother-in-law to a large number (Gen. 5:4).
  - b. Of course, before the book of Genesis closes, all of these situations had to be faced by people living on the earth.
3. There are a number of scriptures dealing with these unique relationships in the home.

### **DISCUSSION:**

- I. **BIBLICAL PRINCIPLES WHICH GUIDE OUR ACTIONS IN THE HOME.**
  - A. Principles of general Christian conduct in the home that are emphasized in the Bible.
    1. Love [Titus 2:1-5].
    2. Peace [Rom. 12:18; Psalm 34:14; 2 Tim. 2:22].
    3. Respect [Col. 3:20; Mark 7:10-13].
    4. Discipline [Eph. 6:1-4].
    5. Forgiveness [Eph. 4:32; James 5:16].
  - B. When these Scriptures are followed, we are able to deal with the unique situations that can be found in homes today.
- II. **PARENTS AND GRANDPARENTS IN THE HOME.**
  - A. As people grow older, they do not want to become a burden to their children.
    1. People are living longer and decisions must be made for the care of our elderly family members.

2. Sometimes elderly family members have to live in a nursing home because of health problems.
3. However, there can be many benefits having elderly family members in our home.
- B. Some suggestions to keep these situations harmonious.
  1. Each person recognizes his role in the home.
  2. Each person must take on his own responsibility in the home.
  3. Children and grandchildren are to show proper respect to the elderly relative in the home.
  4. Everyone should practice the "golden rule" [Matt. 7:12].
- C. A Bible example – Eunice and Lois [2 Tim. 1:5].
  1. Timothy's father was a Greek [Acts 16:1-3].
  2. Timothy's knowledge of the Scriptures came through the influence of his grandmother and mother.

### III. IN-LAWS IN THE HOME.

- A. In our day, it is usually the son or daughter-in-law living in the home of the parents.
- B. The Bible has a number of examples of the relationships between in-laws.
  1. Naomi and Ruth.
    - a. Ruth showed her loyalty to Naomi.
      - 1) She chose to go with Naomi instead of returning to relatives in Moab [Ruth 1:16,17].
      - 2) She behaved herself properly while helping to provide food for the household [Ruth 2:2,3, 18-20].
    - b. Naomi showed her love and concern for Ruth.
      - 1) Naomi allowed her to accompany her back to Bethlehem [Ruth 1:18,19a].
      - 2) She helped Ruth to secure a husband [Ruth 3].
    - c. The results were:
      - 1) David [Ruth 4:22].
      - 2) Christ [Matt. 1:5,6,17].
    - d. We need more mother and daughter-in-laws to follow the good example of these women.

2. Peter and his mother-in-law [Matt. 8:14,15; Mark 1:29-31; Luke 4:38,39].
  - a. Apparently, Peter's mother-in-law lived in the same house with Peter, his wife, and his brother Andrew.
  - b. Luke tells us she had a "great fever" that Jesus healed.
  - c. Upon being healed, she immediately arose and served them.
  - d. This seems to indicate she was known for her service in the home on a regular basis.
3. Saul and David [1 Sam. 18:17-22].
  - a. David had shown himself to be faithful [1 Sam. 18:12-16].
  - b. Saul's actions toward David were not honorable [1 Sam. 18:25; 19:1,10,11].
  - c. How would you like to have a father-in-law like this?
4. Laban and Jacob.
  - a. Laban was Jacob's uncle [Rebekah's brother] [Gen. 24:29; 28:2].
  - b. Again, Jacob behaved himself honorably while with Laban [Gen. 31:38-42].
  - c. Laban deceived Jacob in the marriage of his daughters and in his dealings regarding wages and possessions.
  - d. Again, this is another example of the way a father-in-law should not act!

#### **IV. STEP-PARENTS, STEP-CHILDREN, FOSTER CHILDREN IN THE HOME.**

- A. These situations do not necessarily come about because of sin.
  1. Widows and widowers can scripturally remarry, and children could be involved.
  2. Scriptural divorce and remarriage can create these situations.
  3. Children can lose both parents, and therefore become foster children in the home.
- B. Bible examples.
  1. Abraham and Lot.

2. Peter and his mother-in-law [Matt. 8:14,15; Mark 1:29-31; Luke 4:38,39].
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- B. Bible examples.
  1. Abraham and Lot.

- a. Haran, Lot's father, died in Ur (Gen. 11:28).
- b. Lot accompanied Terah and Abraham to Haran (Gen. 11:31).
- c. Lot went with Abraham to Egypt (Gen. 13:1).
- d. They lived and worked together (Gen. 13:6-8).
- e. They worked out difficulties that arose (Gen. 13:8,9).
2. Moses.
  - a. Moses grew up in Pharaoh's house (Exodus 2:10).
  - b. He was educated in the worldly ways of Egypt (Acts 7:21,22).
  - c. He rejected that kind of life to live for God (Heb. 11:24-26).
3. Mephibosheth.
  - a. He was the son of Jonathan (2 Sam. 4:4).
  - b. David took care of him and his sons (2 Sam. 9:6-13).
  - c. David showed kindness to other members of Saul's family as well (2 Sam. 21:7,8).

## CONCLUSION:

1. Some observations.
  - a. There is a very good possibility we will be faced with one or more of these unique situations in our family.
  - b. God's Word has provided solutions for dealing with these situations (2 Tim. 3:16,17).
  - c. Selfishness has had a terrible effect upon our society.
    - 1) People have adopted the attitude of the foolish rich man (Luke 12:16-21).
    - 2) People have followed the example of the world (Rom. 1:29-31; 2 Tim. 3:1-5).
  - d. We need to practice the golden rule in all of these situations (Matt. 7:12).
2. May God help us to turn to Him and His Word when we find ourselves in these unique situations, and determine to be part of the solution, not part of the problem!

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## The Home And The Church Helping Each Other

*Lenard Hogan*

1. The home has the responsibility of training the children.
  - a. Especially in the case of Christian parents.
  - b. Christian parents will make sure the children are disciplined.
2. The church has the responsibility of selecting teachers that are sound in the faith and are interested in their pupils.
  - a. Good teachers will prepare their lesson.
  - b. Good teachers will present their lesson truthfully and forcefully.

### **DISCUSSION:**

#### **I. THE HOME AND ITS RESPONSIBILITIES:**

- A. I heard that a college professor said that parents send their children to college with the idea that the teachers could do in two or four years what they had failed to do in eighteen years.
- B. The responsibility is a great one.
  1. Fathers are commanded to nurture their children in God's Word.
    - a. *"And Ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord"* [Eph. 6:4].
    - 1) Parents are to teach their children to be respectful to their teachers.
      - a) For them to cooperate for the best interest of all in the class.
      - b) To be ready to participate in the discussion of the lesson.
    - b. When children are taught to behave as they should, they will most likely be able to contribute some good to the lesson.
    - c. There are some parents that believe their children cannot do any wrong, but they cause more confusion and disrupt the class constantly.

- d. Make sure the family is ready to leave home in order to arrive at the building well before class is to begin.
- C. When husbands and wives love each other according to God's commands, this will be an asset to the church.
  - a. Husbands and wives are to put Christ first, being the right example to their children to do the same. See Matt. 6:33.
    - 1) The love the husband has for his wife and the love the wife has for her husband is set forth in the following scriptures. Eph. 5:22-31, Col. 3:18-21, 1 Peter 3:1-12
    - 2) Husbands are to love their wives as Christ loved the church and wives are to be submissive to their husbands.
- D. We are to teach our children to be the right kind of example in the presence of their peers, their elders and all others (1 Tim. 4:12).
  - 1. Children are to obey their parents in the Lord (Eph. 6:1).
- E. When speaking of the activities of the church, do not use "they," but use "we."
  - 1. When the local congregation is what it should be, we should be happy to praise the church to others.
  - 2. If the time comes when we cannot be proud or happy to invite others to the services of the church, it is time to find a sound congregation of God's people.
- F. We should make it our business to be at every service of the church.
  - 1. If we are sick, the Lord does not expect us to jeopardize our life. When we say *sick*, we are talking about being too sick to go to work if it were a work day.
  - 2. If some member of the family is too sick to attend and cannot be left alone, one family member should stay with the sick and the other members attend the services of the church.
  - 3. Sometimes a person invites another to the services of the church and then he or she does not attend. We should never be guilty of doing this.

- G. We should be helpful to the church in giving ourselves.
  - 1. The Macedonians gave themselves first and all else followed (2 Cor. 8:1-7). These brethren, even though in deep poverty, gave liberally.
  - 2. We are admonished to abound in the grace of giving.
    - a. Some are faithful in attendance, in studying the Bible, in helping those who need help, but do not like to part with their increase. Some who give \$10.00 could give a lot more and still not be liberal in their giving.
- H. When we are regular in attending the services to worship God, our neighbors know where we are going when we leave home.
  - 1. We have stated that we should be the right example before our fellowman.
    - a. In reading the qualifications of an elder in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1, it is my belief that every Christian should try to fulfil as many of these qualifications as humanly, possible.
      - 1) Men should be the husband of one wife and women should be the wife of one husband.
      - 2) Think about the impact it would make on the public if each Christian were watchful, sober, of good behavior, given to hospitality, able to teach others, abhorring alcoholic beverages, a peacemaker rather than stirring up strife, not putting the making of money and keeping it a priority, but being sacrificial and being patient.
      - 3) We cannot be covetous as covetousness is idolatry (Col. 3:5).
    - b. Every Christian must live in such a way that others cannot speak evil of him/her.
- I. We will be helpful to the church by adding to our faith as set forth in 2 Peter 1:5-11.
  - 1. By adding to our faith, we will be giving diligence to make our calling and election sure.
  - 2. By making up our mind that we really do want to be in heaven in eternity, we will put forth the effort to

obey the commands of God, therefore being an asset to the church. We are to be commandment keepers.

- a. *“Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates of the city”* (Rev. 22:14).
- b. We are to continue in the doctrine or teaching of Christ. (Read 2 John 9:11.)
- c. By doing the will of God (Matt. 7:21).

## II. THE CHURCH’S RESPONSIBILITY:

- A. The leaders have the responsibility to watch for the flock (Eph. 20:28).
- B. Make sure that the word of God is taught from the pulpit and the classroom.
  1. I knew an elder who stated the church has all of the responsibility and the home does not have any except to see that the children are in class and at preaching services. Of course, he was not right in his assumption.
- C. If the church fails in the responsibility to teach the Word of God, the local congregation has failed God and man.
- D. When the home and the church teach God’s Word about marriage, young people will know that marriage is a lifetime contract.
  1. They will also know the things God requires in all other activities of life.

## CONCLUSION:

1. When we as Christian parents teach our children God’s truths and the church does the same, then our children will be better prepared to face the things they encounter in the world.

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Editor’s note: We wish to thank brother Lenard Hogan for stepping in at such short notice and providing us the lesson which appears above and

delivering it at the lectureship. Brother Wayne Coats was originally scheduled to appear and deliver the following lesson but was unable to do so due to health reasons. We have included his lesson in the book for everyone's benefit. We pray his health will recover and that he will have many more years in the Lord's service.

The Home And The Congregation Help Each Other

Wayne Coats

1. It is not the intent or plan of this lesson to state or imply that the Home is an adjunct of the church or the church is an adjunct of the Home. Some brethren have callously declared that such adjuncts actually exist.
2. An adjunct is an addition, affix, appendage, annex, increment, accessory, addendum, offshoot, enlargement, concomitant, and other terms could be listed.
3. It will be wonderfully and scripturally discussed during the Lectureship those things which pertain to the establishment of the Home. God, who does all things well, made the Home perfect and entire according to His will. No man can improve upon the perfect work of God.
4. What we have declared regarding the Home is also true of the church in its local, autonomous, congregational aspect. The Home is not the church and the church is not the Home. There should be mutual help and assistance.

DISCUSSION:

1. **FOR SOME FEW THOUSAND YEARS THERE WAS NO CHURCH FOR THE HOME TO HELP.**
 - A. Homes help and also hinder the church.
 1. From the first home onward, many homes have hindered the purposes of God.

- a. One might spend time studying the sordid homes of some of the judges.
- b. Another worthwhile study could be done in looking at the sorry home life of some of the kings.
- c. Both sacred and profane history will shock us as we study the dissolute home life of the Herods.
2. The poor, sinful, disgraceful homes are discussed in the Bible in order that we might profit and improve.
 - a. Rom. 15:4
 - b. 1 Cor. 10:1-11
- B. Let us study some home failures of church members.
 1. Such homes were hindrances rather than helps.
 - a. Acts 5:1-10 Ananias and Sapphira.
 - b. Acts 6:1 The Grecians murmuring against Hebrews.
 - c. Acts 8:13; 18-24 Simon the sorcerer.
 2. No specific names are mentioned nonetheless, there were troublers of congregations.
 - a. 1 Cor. 1:11-12; 3:3-5
 - b. 1 Cor. 5:1-5
 - c. 1 Cor. 6:1-8
 - d. 1 Cor. 11:18-22
 - e. Gal. 3:1-3
 - f. Gal. 5:4
 - g. Gal. 6:12-13

II. SOME SITUATIONS WHERE FAITHFUL CHRISTIANS AT HOME HELPED THE CHURCH.

- A. Home help is seen in more than one way.
 1. The benevolence of Christians in Jerusalem [Acts 2:45-46].
 2. Acts 4:32; 34-37, More benevolence was shown later.
 3. Acts 9:11, Judas was helpful to Saul. His house was opened to Saul.
 4. Acts 9:36-42, Dorcas helped many.
 5. Acts 9:43, Simon the tanner showed hospitality to Peter.
 6. Acts 10:23, Cornelius' servants were lodged by Simon.

- B. The above instances are not all of the occasions where Christians exemplified good examples which helped the church.

III. SOME CASES WHERE THE CHURCH HELPED HOMES.

- A. Acts 2:45-46, The widows were fed as a result of the Apostles giving a plan.
- B. When Peter and John were released from prison, a company [Acts 4:23], which had assembled together [Acts 4:32], prayed with one accord to God. Obviously this assembly consisted of church members praying for two members.
- C. When Peter was in prison, "*...prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him*" [Acts 12:5].
- D. Paul and Silas went to Philippi, directed by the Spirit [Acts 16:9].
 - 1. Lydia was converted.
 - 2. Paul and Silas stayed with her for awhile [Acts 16:15; 40].
 - 3. The Philippian jailor was converted and his household [Acts 16:31-34].

IV. HOW MAY OUR HOMES HELP THE CONGREGATION?

- A. There are only two areas wherein we can help.
 - 1. One area is worship.
 - a. Each responsible member of the home can become a Christian and assemble with the saints.
 - b. Each act of worship is for our benefit and we can help in those areas where needed.
 - c. Singing, Giving, Praying, Teaching and Observing the Lord's supper with fellow Christians will be of help to the local church.
 - 2. Another area is work.
 - a. A congregation of two or more is large enough to do everything God wants, expects and demands the church to do.
 - b. There is work to do [1 Cor. 15:58].
 - c. 1 Cor. 12:14-27, Each member can work.

V. HOW MAY THE LOCAL CONGREGATION HELP THE HOMES?

- A. The best way is to preach and teach the inspired Word of God, touching every phase of the home.
- B. The congregation should reject all of the false doctrines being proliferated by false teachers regarding marriage, divorce and remarriage.
- C. The congregation should mark false teachers, repudiate, and reject them. Let the members know who the troublers are.
- D. Brethren in the local congregation should know what is being taught in the different classes.
- E. Each individual should be able to see the need of working in a field that is "white unto harvest" but for those who cannot seem to find a good work, some help should be given.
- F. Various efforts should be used to help each Christian to grow in grace and knowledge.

CONCLUSION:

1. A brief look at the seven churches of Asia should convince us of the folly of not staying faithful to the Lord.

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## Questions #2

**Can one live in adultery?**

**Do Christ's words apply today and to all men?**

**Does God call for the separation of those in adultery?**

**Does baptism wash away adultery?**

**What does it mean to abide in the same**

**calling wherein you were called?**

*Kenneth Burleson*

1. This lesson will deal with age old questions.
2. It will be necessary to continually deal with these questions because generations come and go.
3. Another reason we must continue to answer these questions is because false teachers continue to come on the scene and some people just do not want to follow God's will.
4. Some preachers have stated they do not teach on these problems because they do not have these problems in the congregation where they preach. Others say they have so many in unscriptural marriages they cannot do anything about them.
5. If one fails to teach on these matters the congregation where they preach will have problems.
6. As a matter of fact, some I have known to make the statement mentioned above, already had the problem where they preached. They did not deal with it for fear of losing their job.
7. We must understand that God requires preventive discipline just like He requires corrective discipline.
8. If we applied preventive discipline as we should there would not be the need for as much corrective discipline.
9. God hates putting away. Malachi 2:16; Matt. 19:6.
10. The rule concerning divorce is stated in Luke 16:18.
  - a. Compare Mark 10:12-14.
  - b. If there were no other verses in the Bible regarding the subject of marriage and divorce, there could not be any divorce and remarriage.

11. There is an exception to the rule set forth in Luke 16:18.
  - a. Jesus said, "Except it be for fornication," Matt. 19:9.
  - b. Therefore, one may divorce a partner that is guilty of fornication and the innocent one may remarry.
  - c. This does not command the innocent spouse to put away the guilty spouse. The innocent spouse has the choice of putting the guilty spouse away or keeping the marriage together. My recommendation is to remain in the marriage if you can.
12. Men and women will not abide by God's law on marriage, that it is to be permanent, therefore it is necessary for us to continually answer questions on this subject.
13. This lesson is a study of the following questions on marriage.
  - a. Can one live in adultery?
  - b. Do Christ's words apply today and to all men? (Billingsley and Bales doctrine)
  - c. Does God call for the separation of those in adultery?
  - d. Does baptism wash away adultery?
  - e. What does it mean to abide in the same calling wherein ye were called? [1 Cor. 7:20]

## **DISCUSSION:**

### **I. CAN ONE LIVE IN ADULTERY?**

- A. There are those who teach that one cannot live in adultery.
  1. They argue that it is not a state to be lived in but it is a single act of unjustly putting away.
  2. Those who teach this doctrine say that the words "committeth adultery" are "point action," not "continuing action."
  3. False teachers say that adultery can be "committed" but not "lived in."
  4. Some argue that only the first unlawful intercourse is adultery, but after that, the persons are married in God's sight. The Bible does not teach that fornication constitutes marriage. Yet, that is what they affirm.
- B. The Bible teaches that one can live in sin. Rom. 6:1,2
  1. Col. 3:5-7, Some at Colosse had "lived" in fornication.

2. Yes, one can "live in adultery" as long as he/she remains in an unscriptural relationship (that the world calls marriage).
  - C. In Matthew 19:9, when Jesus used the phrase "committeth adultery," had he wanted to stress "point action" He would have used the aorist tense. If He had wanted to stress "continuous action" He would have used present tense. The Lord used the present tense, therefore, continuous action. Therefore, living in adultery.
  - D. Explanation: aorist tense { . }, present tense { — }.
  - E. The persons who put away their spouses and marry another spouse, except it be for fornication upon the part of the put away spouse, keep on committing adultery as long as they live with their new spouse.
- II. DO CHRIST'S WORDS APPLY TODAY AND TO ALL MEN?**
- A. The words of Christ apply today.
  - B. Those who teach that the non-Christian is not subject to the laws of God concerning marriage, divorce and remarriage evidently do not fully comprehend the impact of such a doctrine.
  - C. They teach that the sinner, or non-Christian, is only bound by civil law – that he is not amenable to the laws of Christ.
    1. If this is true, then one cannot become a Christian. He is not subject to the Lord's plan of salvation. Therefore, Mark 16:16 and other passages mean nothing to him.
    2. Civil law does not say repent or perish. It does not say obey the Gospel or be lost.
  - D. John the Baptist believed the law of marriage, divorce and remarriage applied to the non-Christian. Matt. 14:1-12.
  - E. The Corinthians were breakers of God's law on fornication and other sins before they became Christians. 1 Cor. 6:9-11
    1. They were adulterers before conversion, therefore, they must have been subject to God's law.

2. They were adulterers. One cannot be cleansed of that which he is not guilty. The Bible says they were cleansed. Verse 11, "And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God."
3. One is not an adulterer if he has not broken law and one cannot break a law to which he is not subject. cf. Rom. 4:15; 5:13; 1 John 3:4
4. Therefore, men and women, whether a Christian or a non-Christian, are subject to the law of God regarding marriage, divorce and remarriage.

### III. DOES GOD CALL FOR THE SEPARATION OF THOSE IN ADULTERY?

- A. What is repentance?
  1. Repentance is not:
    - a. Just being sorry. Judas regretted his sin but did not truly repent. Matt. 27:3
    - b. Godly sorrow. 2 Cor. 7:10. Godly sorrow works repentance. Godly sorrow precedes repentance.
  2. Repentance is:
    - a. As the people of Ninevah did. Jonah 3:10
    - b. As the one son did. Matt. 21:28,29
    - c. As the Colossians were told to do. Col. 3:5-8
    - d. As the Corinthians did. 1 Cor. 6:9-11
- B. True repentance would demand separation.
- C. This change of mind brings about reformation of life.
- D. Paul taught that those who live in adultery cannot go to heaven. Gal. 5:19-21
- E. God told the children of Israel, do not marry the women of Babylon.
  1. Some did any way. Stubbornness and rebellion.
  2. They were required to leave them behind, even the children born to them if they returned to the land. [Ezra 10:11,12]
- F. Yes, God calls for the separation of those in adultery today and throughout this dispensation of time.

### IV. DOES BAPTISM WASH AWAY ADULTERY?

- A. Only if the adulterer repents.

- B. Baptism will not wash away any sin of which one will not repent.
- C. "...Repent and be baptized everyone of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins..." [Acts 2:38]. Repent and be baptized are joined together with a coordinating conjunction. Coordinating conjunctions join together words or groups of words of equal rank. Repentance has just as great a bearing or remission of sins as does baptism. Repentance is a prerequisite to baptism. Therefore, baptism has no strength without repentance.
- D. Baptism does not sanctify unscriptural relationships.
- E. Plain Bible teaching stresses that in being baptized into Christ, one must first repent.
- F. One must cease all sinful practices and remove himself out of all unscriptural relationships.
- G. One can no more be saved without repentance than one can be saved without faith or confession.

#### **V. WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO ABIDE IN THE SAME CALLING WHEREIN YE ARE CALLED?**

- A. Some argue this verse teaches one must remain in an adulterous union after conversion.
  - 1. If this is true, then, a polygamist with ten wives must remain with all of them after conversion.
  - 2. If this is true, then, one is to remain with his present wife regardless of how many marriages may have preceded and been severed by divorce, though it be an unscriptural marriage.
  - 3. If this is true, then, baptism sanctifies adulterous relationships.
- B. Polygamy is sinful and cannot be tolerated.
- C. Adultery is sinful and cannot be tolerated.
- D. Baptism does not sanctify any sinful act.
- E. What ever the sin may be, repentance must take place before baptism. Repentance must take place before baptism will wash away an individuals sins. Acts 2:38; Luke 13:5; Acts 3:19; 17:30
- F. The Corinthians did not remain in their sins. 1 Cor. 6:9-11
- G. The Ephesians did not remain in their sins. Eph. 2:1ff

- H. The passage teaches that one may continue in his pre-conversion state as long as it does not violate God's law.
- I. Couples are considered married according to the civil law though it be unscriptural, but God calls it adultery. They are not married in the sight of God.

### CONCLUSION:

- 1. The Bible teaches that marriage is permanent.
- 2. We should do much teaching on the permanency of marriage in our respective congregations today.
- 3. As long as men defy the law of God pertaining to marriage, divorce and remarriage we must continue dealing with the questions in this lesson, as well, as many other questions regarding this subject.

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The Home Under Attack, #2 Atheism, Evolution, Humanism, Secular Education, Denominationalism

Gilbert Gough

- 1. From a booklet dedicated to his children, a humanist writes, "Many people say they believe in a god. Do you know what a god is? Do you know what it means to believe in a god? A god is a mythical character. Mythical characters are imaginary, they're not real. People make them up." [Chris Brockman. *What about gods?* Prometheus Books. Buffalo, NY 14215. 1978. pp. 1-2.]
- 2. This booklet exists to destroy children's confidence in God and in their parents.

DISCUSSION:

I. LET US BEGIN WITH HUMANISM.

A. Humanism is "a philosophical, religious, and moral point of view as old as human civilization itself."
(Preface of *Manifestos I & II*. Edited by Paul Kurtz. Prometheus Books. 1973).

B. Humanism defined:

1. *Encyclopedia Americana*: "Humanism in its broad sense is a concept as old as classical Greece and as modern as the 20th century. Subject to a wide diversity of expression, it is basically a philosophical outlook centered on the autonomy of man as a dignified rational being, possessing within himself the source of truth and right."
2. *Collier's Encyclopedia*: "Always in some sense 'Man is the measure.' Humanism's final court of appeal is human reason rather than any external authority, and its goal is man's greatest good in this finite existence. Humanism may or may not be linked with religion, science, or any political system. Its spirit is secular, liberal, and tolerant; its method education, free enquiry, and enlightenment."
3. Corliss Lamont in his book *The Philosophy Humanism* (a predominate humanist) says there are three characteristics of humanism.
 - a. "Rejecting the supernatural and all religious authority."
 - b. "Setting up the welfare of mankind in this life as the supreme goal."
 - c. "Relying on science and its technique."
4. Humanism suggests "that man must look to human experience for moral and spiritual guidance, without believing that there is a supernatural God or divine power to support him" (Edward Ericson. *Religions of America*. Simon & Schuster. 1975. p. 257).
5. Humanism is a philosophy where "man" rather than "God" is the center of reference. It is doing what man thinks is best for man.
6. Humanism is an organized philosophy that is the religion of atheists. Humanists believe in their religion so strongly that they strive for new converts

- either by free choice or by coercion [e.g. ACLU]. All that matters to these people is what they want. It is a dangerous philosophy that has infiltrated our lives by means of education, television, radio (music), mass media, and even by means of our law-makers.
- C. This system of belief originated about 500 B.C. among a school of Greek philosophers called Sophists.
1. The first historical wave of this movement was with the Sophists.
 - a. Sophists were active in N.T. times and were present when Paul preached at the Areopagus.
 - b. Their most famous leader, Protagoras (@485-415 B.C.) promulgated two positions:
 - 1) "Man is the measure of all things, of things that are, that they are, and of things that are not, that they are not."
 - 2) "Contradictory assertions are equally true." (No objective truth; all is relative.)
 2. The second wave occurred in the 14th century with a broad philosophical movement which arose in Italy and spread over Europe.
 - a. It was called the Renaissance and this movement was opposed to the Medieval emphasis on future things in eternity.
 - b. It was a movement opposed to the abuses of the Catholic Church. Because of these abuses man rebelled.
 - c. A rebirth of learning in the Greek classics came at this time.
 3. The third wave of humanism swept through the last half of the 19th century and has flooded the 20th century.
 - a. Darwin's *Origin of the Species* advocated organic evolution. It started the ball rolling again.
 - b. Marxist Communism, militarily backed, gave further impetus to the modern humanistic movement.
 - c. Now, we are smack-dab in a turmoil of this godless philosophy being crammed down our throats. It has attacked every facet of our lives.

4. The history of humanism can be traced further back than Protagorus: It can be traced back to the ole serpent himself, the Devil.
 - a. Satan taught this philosophy when he said, "*Ye shall not surely die: For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and **ye shall be as gods**, knowing good and evil*" (Gen. 3:4, 5; emp. mine, GG).
 - b. Satan is still deceiving the masses. He still is telling the ungodly of this world that they are "gods," and man is foolish enough to believe it.
- D. The philosophy of humanism is found in their creed books entitled: *HUMANIST MANIFESTOS, I & II*.
 1. These manifestos contain the essence and objectives of humanism.
 - a. *Humanist Manifesto I* first appeared in 1933. It contains an introduction and 15 affirmations. It was signed by 34 liberals (One of which is R. Lester Mondale, the brother of Walter Mondale).
 - b. *Humanist Manifesto II* appeared on the scene in 1973. It is fairly contemporary. It contains an introduction with six sections. It was brought about because of the "advancing knowledge" of the world. It was originally signed by 114 people and later signed by 148 more. Countless others have endorsed this manifesto. It has a wide reaching effect in the educational and business systems.
 2. These manifestos teach the following:
 - a. It affirms the universe is self-existent and denies that it was created. Thus, it affirms the eternality of matter and denies the existence of God and His work of creation.
 - b. It affirms man has evolved by purely natural means. This means God had nothing to do with bringing man into existence.
 - c. It affirms man is totally physical, thus denying that man has a spirit or soul.
 - d. It affirms all religion is the result of social evolution.

- e. It denies God is the ultimate good, thus denying men do either that which is really (objectively) right or that which is (objectively) wrong.
 - f. It affirms the ultimate end of man's life is to be found in the here and now. Humanism rejects heaven, and denies there is a hell.
 - g. "Worship" of and prayer to God is rejected. Man should use his time promoting social well-being.
 - h. It affirms man must learn to depend upon science and must discourage hopes of heaven (which involves wishful thinking).
 - i. It affirms all religious institutions (including the church) must be reconstituted or changed.
 - j. It holds man alone is responsible for the realization of the world of his dreams, thus holding God has nothing whatever to do with it.
***These 10 points are the essence of the 1st manifesto. The next 4 relate to the second.
 - k. Traditional theism (with faith in the prayer-hearing God) is an outmoded faith.
 - l. Traditional (including biblical) views of salvation (from sin) are actually harmful because they divert people, with false hopes of heaven hereafter, away from what the naturalistic scientific method would indicate. Thus, they reaffirm: no God, no salvation, no heaven.
 - m. Traditional religions (including the N.T. church) actually do a disservice to mankind. While we not only admit but insist that all humanly originated religions do a disservice to mankind, we emphatically affirm true Christianity is the most valuable "thing" in which any person can be involved.
 - n. The Humanists make a special point of declaring that promises of immortal salvation and fear of eternal damnation are both illusory and harmful. Thus, no heaven or hell; this life is all there is to man. Science, they claim, proves the human species is an emergence from organic evolution.
3. Humanism is a bad apple. It spreads its evil influence everywhere.

II. THE INFLUENCE OF HUMANISM: ATHEISM.

- A. Humanism denies the existence of God and His creation, and would affirm the proposition "I know that God does not exist."
1. They affirm that which they cannot know for they would have had to explored every region of the universe and all of the metaphysical realm to make such a claim. They would have to be omniscient and omnipresent.
 2. Their chief argument is that since evil exists, and God is supposed to be all good and all powerful, then why does God allow it to exist?
 - a. The atheist only can define evil subjectively for they have no standard except themselves.
 - b. Christians know what evil is; it is the transgression of God's law [1 John 3:4].
 - c. Actually, since evil exists, it proves God exists; not that God is evil, but He is wholly good and all apart from Him is evil.
 3. The Bible takes for granted God's existence, and why not? The Bible is great evidence for God's existence.
 - a. Read about God in the beginning (Gen. 1:1, 26, 27).
 - b. Jesus was a creationist and knew God existed for He declared, *"Have ye not read that he who made them at the beginning made them male and female"* (Matt. 19:4); and *"But from the beginning of the creation God made them male and female"* (Mark 10:6).
- B. Atheistic humanism has developed because man has deceived himself into thinking he can direct his own affairs. Contrast that idea with Jeremiah 10:23; Proverbs 14:12; 16:25.
- C. Humanists think that since God does not exist, then they are the complete, supreme measure of all things.
1. But God says, *"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. ⁹For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts"* (Isa. 55:8, 9).

2. Man has no right to claim he is above or greater than God.
- D. If God does not exist, then there is no absolute standard of right and wrong.
 1. Jean Paul Sartre said: "Everything is indeed permitted if God does not exist" (*French Philosophers from Descartes to Sartre*. Leonard Marsak, ed. Meridian Books. 1961. p. 485.)
 2. Mankind cannot live with the consequences of this doctrine for it implies chaos and disorder.

III. THE INFLUENCE OF HUMANISM: EVOLUTION.

- A. Humanists believe the universe is self-explainable by either one of two theories.
 1. The Universe has existed forever.
 - a. The Second Law of Thermodynamics demonstrates that the Universe is not eternal for everything is running down.
 - b. Scientists, even the humanist scientists, acknowledge this fact. "Modern science denies an eternal existence to the Universe, either in the past or in the future" (Robert Jastrow. *Until the Sun Dies*. Warner Books. 1980. p. 15.)
 2. The Universe has created itself.
 - a. But matter cannot create itself and the First Law of Thermodynamics establishes this fact.
 - b. If there was a time when nothing existed, then nothing would exist today! If something does exist, obviously something has always existed. Since that something is not matter, one is forced to conclude that it is Mind (identified as God in the Bible).
- B. Humanists believe life came from non-life (spontaneous generation).
 1. This contradicts the Law of Biogenesis, which points out that all life comes from preexistent life, i.e. life cannot start itself.
 2. God, the eternal Being, is the source of life on Earth [Acts 17:25; 1 Tim. 6:13].
- C. Humanists believe man came into being as a result of a long, continuous process of organic evolution.

1. If a man is convinced that he came into existence by means of a process of evolution through lower life forms, he will not have any reason to believe in God or His word and morality and worship are non-important.
2. Thus, if a man feels a closer relationship with animals than with God he will live more like animals than God.
3. The alleged proofs for evolution are many: natural selection (survival of the fittest), genetic mutations, comparative anatomy, comparative embryology, vestigial structures, the fossil record, and "prehistoric" cave man — None of these support evolution.
4. All of creation came into existence by the power of the spoken word of God (Gen. 1; Heb. 11:3).
5. The created world continues to exist by the power of God's Word — *"But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store..."* (2 Peter 3:7; cf. Col. 1:16, 17).

IV. THE INFLUENCE OF HUMANISM: SECULAR EDUCATION.

- A. Humanists are influencing our society by getting to our youth through the educational system of America.
- B. *Values Clarification* is their ploy; it is their vice; it is their battle plan.
 1. Values Clarification is the technique to convince our young people and children that they have the right to develop THEIR OWN PERSONAL VALUES, free from parental influence and authority.
 2. It teaches the philosophy of relativism. Everything is relative; nothing is objectively right or wrong.
- C. It is influencing many by means of *Role Playing*.
 1. This technique is where the person acts out emotional situations such as conflicts with parents, also magic circles, public interviews, survival games and "open ended situations" of "What would you do if...?"
 2. This is *Situation Ethics* gone to seed. The criteria is "What is the loving thing to do?"

D. The above techniques influences other areas of life, doing great damage in the following many areas (and more):

1. Premarital sex
2. Extra-marital sex
3. Homosexuality
4. Lesbianism
5. Incest
6. Women's Lib
7. Abortion
8. Contraceptives
9. Poverty
10. Police Brutality
11. Racial Equality
12. Drugs
13. Euthanasia
14. Music
15. Communism
16. Pornography
17. Divorce
18. Evolution
19. Family Conflicts
20. Atheism

V. THE INFLUENCE OF HUMANISM: DENOMINATION-ALISM.

- A. For sake of emphasis, humanism is influencing our nation away from:
1. God (to whom man is accountable),
 2. Fear of damnation and love of heaven,
 3. The reality of sin,
 4. That man has an eternal soul,
 5. No absolute morals of life.
- B. False religion has fallen into the humanist trap, so much so that denominational preachers are teaching humanism as if it were from God (e.g. social gospel, felt-needs religion).
- C. Denominationalism exists because of ignorance (the blind leading the blind), because of dishonesty (a disregard for Christ's authority), and because of perversion (a corruption of God's plan of teaching,

work, and worship). It is subject to the basic fallacy of humanism — subjectivism.

1. Even though the Bible condemns denominationalism, many feel it is right for them. No matter how people feel, denominationalism is wrong...
 - a. Because Jesus built only one church (Matt. 16:18) and bled and died to save His one church (Acts 20:28; Eph. 5:23).
 - b. Because the Bible teaches religious divisions are sinful (1 Cor. 1:10-13; 3:3).
 - c. Because it is in direct contrast to our Lord's prayer for unity, oneness (John 17:20, 21).
 - d. Because it impedes and retards the salvation of souls as Jesus indicated in John 17:21.
2. Thus, denominationalism becomes a breeding ground for humanistic thinking. If one thinks not, then examine the false religions that are accepting or considering accepting those who are homosexuals.

CONCLUSION:

1. Our society is progressing worse. In the times of the judges, it was described in this manner: *"In those days there was no king in Israel, but every man did that which was right in his own eyes"* (Judges 17:6).
2. *"But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived"* (2 Tim. 3:13).

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How To Keep Your Children Faithful

James W. Boyd

1. *"I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth"* [3 John 4].
2. John was thankful that those he converted were remaining faithful.
3. None dearer to our hearts than our own children.
4. Not a "how to" lesson with checklist of one, two, three, etc.
 - a. Combination; all things done together.
 - b. In balance; proper mix; blending all points.
 - c. Long term process – We have them but a few years.
5. Must first bring them to the Lord, Eccl. 12:1.
 - a. Lesson assumes parents, children already "in Christ."
 - b. How to keep them faithful, Eph. 6:4.

DISCUSSION:

- I. **KEEPING THEM FAITHFUL BEGINS BEFORE THEY DO.**
 - A. Parents should marry Christians.
 - B. God intends for children to have parents married to each other, Gen. 1:28.
 - C. Give the child a Christian home in which to enter life.
 - D. To the unmarried: Marry a Christian.
 - E. To those in a divided home: Seek unity "in Christ."
- II. **THEY MUST KEEP THEMSELVES FAITHFUL.**
 - A. Cannot do for them what they must for themselves.
 - B. Cannot obey the gospel for them.
 - C. Cannot keep them faithful without their cooperation.
 1. Even God cannot do that for His children.
 2. The whole responsibility is not on parents.
 - a. Parents can help.
 - b. Parents can hinder.
 - D. Some are faithful in spite of parents.
 - E. Some unfaithful in spite of parents.

III. A MISUNDERSTOOD PASSAGE: Prov. 22:6.

- A. Does not teach impossibility of apostasy if parents do their part correctly.
- B. Three stages: two explicitly stated; one implied.
 - 1. Youth – period of training; parents duty.
 - 2. Old – not depart; have remained faithful.
 - 3. Middle time – walked the way they were trained; this is the responsibility of the child.
- C. Must teach each child personal responsibility – accountability.
 - 1. 2 Cor. 5:10; Rom. 14:12
 - 2. They must answer for their words, deeds, etc.
 - 3. They must, and will, make their own decisions.
 - 4. They cannot have "borrowed faith."
 - a. Even though children may believe exactly like their parents (having the same is faith), it is not a "borrowed" faith. It is still their own faith.
 - b. It must be their own convictions.
 - c. Requires training in youth.
- D. Child's duty does not dismiss nor minimize parent's duty.
 - 1. This will be the focus of the rest of the lesson.
 - 2. Our task to launch them on the sea of life as fully. prepared as we can make them.
 - 3. Like releasing a coiled spring; slowly; will stand.

IV. MUST TEACH THEM THE EVIDENCE OF AND TRUE NATURE OF GOD.

- A. Creator, Provider, Sustainer, Judge, Authority.
- B. His power, love, grace, justice, wrath, holiness.
- C. Goodness and severity of God, Rom. 11:22.
- D. "All seeing eye watching you," Psa. 33:18.
 - 1. From love; taking note of the good; provision.
 - 2. Not just to find fault and punish.
- E. How can they worship, be faithful, obey, if they know not the nature of the One they serve?
- F. His "footprints" in nature; can know He is, Rom. 1:20.
- G. His revelation, Bible, tells us who He is and His nature.

V. MUST BE TAUGHT THE LAW OF THE LORD.

- A. Jews taught their children, Deut. 6:6-9.

- B. How else can they learn right from wrong – what God approves and disapproves?
- C. Teach them the inspiration of the Bible; evidences of it.
- D. Concerned about their education: education in what?
 - 1. Christ; plan of salvation; church; way to worship.
 - 2. Godly living; do's and don'ts.
- E. Bible stories learned at home seldom forgotten, Rom. 15:4.

VI. MUST GIVE THEM A SENSE OF SELF-WORTH; THEY COUNT.

- A. They matter to you; more importantly, to God.
- B. Not "hype," just pep talks, but real source of worth.
 - 1. Created in the spiritual image of God, Gen. 1:26.
 - 2. Soul worth more than all the world, Mark 8:36.
 - 3. "I'm worth it," tell why.
 - 4. No other creature similar in nature to human being.
 - 5. Teach them the dignity, nobility of human life, basis for the sacredness of human life.
- C. Teach them this life is not all of their existence.

VII. EASE UP! YOU WILL NOT BE A PERFECT PARENT! DON'T PRETEND TO BE!

- A. Will not have perfect children.
- B. That doesn't come until grandchildren.
- C. Will make mistakes; but love, provide, care, apologize, treat with respect; Golden rule, Matt. 7:12 (consider their feelings).
 - 1. Children are not small adults.
 - 2. Cannot expect them to act with maturity.
 - 3. Hard for them to go from the ideal to the real.
- D. They will learn soon enough you are not perfect.
 - 1. To pretend you are will destroy your credibility.
 - 2. Will erode your authority; cause loss of respect
- E. Parents are not just friends, but parents, they have authority, Eph. 6:1.

VIII. PARENTS MUST PRESENT THE RIGHT EXAMPLE IN WORD AND DEED.

- A. Deeds speak louder than words, James 2:18.

- B. Cannot lead where you will not go; cannot teach what you do not know.
- C. Children remember more what their parents were than what they said.
- D. We must earn their confidence; we can destroy it.
- E. Greatest memory, source of guidance, "Parents were faithful to God and each other;" for the family.
- F. Creates confusion to do one thing, say another.

IX. PARENTS MUST PUT FIRST THINGS FIRST, Matt. 6:33.

- A. Lord before self; others before self.
- B. Church before the world, pleasure, sports, friends.
- C. Bible lessons before school work.
- D. Worship before trips, visits, vacations, etc.
- E. Conviction before convenience.
- F. Family and parents before peers; morality before desire.
- G. Honesty before gain; Heaven before this life.
- H. Some never get their priorities in order; they must be shown.

X. TEACH THE VALUE, DUTY AND PRIVILEGE OF FAITHFUL WORSHIP.

- A. They know the times of assembly.
- B. Should not have to decide each time; already decided.
 - 1. Not, "Shall we go?" We go!
 - 2. Not "have to," but "get to."
- C. Teach worship is not a pep rally; "holy wow," etc.
- D. Teach what worship is, what it involves, how to worship.
 - 1. They learn from others; watching.
 - 2. Learn reverence, faithfulness, participation.
 - 3. Becomes godly habit.
 - 4. We tend to become like what we worship.
- E. Fortunate is that child who has never known anything else but to be faithful at times of worship.

XI. THE GREAT VALUE OF PARENTAL PARTICIPATION AS WORKERS IN THE CHURCH.

- A. As teachers; value of Bible knowledge; need to study.

- B. As elders, deacons, learn what parents consider important.
- C. Visitation, soul winning; mission minded.
- D. Helps child establish his own priorities.
- E. Once you have done that, you have done your job.

XII. GRAVE AREA OF CONCERN; OFTEN CONFLICT IN A FAMILY; KNOWLEDGE OF THEIR FRIENDS, ASSOCIATES, ACTIVITIES.

- A. Power of influence, 1 Cor. 15:33 (ASV); Rom. 14:7.
- B. "Make friends of God's people."
- C. "Do you know where your child is?"
- D. What your child does is my business; vice versa.
- E. Teach them what maturity is: To conduct oneself properly. even when nobody is watching.
- F. Dealing with peer pressure.
- G. Provide opportunities for good associations.
 - 1. In home; with church people; camps.
 - 2. Watch school activities; subjects studied.
 - 3. What they see, where they go.
 - 4. Don't look to church, others to do your work.
 - 5. Spend personal time; worth the effort.
- H. Teach them to marry in the Lord; many lost otherwise.

XIII. PARENTS MUST BE CAREFUL OF THEIR CRITICISM OF THE CHURCH.

- A. The church is not composed of perfect people, but still God's people, 2 Cor. 6:18; Eph. 1:22,23.
 - 1. Tragic when home undercuts church; vice versa.
 - 2. Undercut truth because of difficulties.
 - 3. Complain, grumble, find fault with everything.
- B. Fashionable to berate church; "change agents" at work.
 - 1. Call worship dull, make it an entertainment.
 - 2. Elders, preachers, old fogies, tradition bound.
 - 3. Some speak, act as if they hate the church.
 - 4. Attack the truth the church must uphold.
- C. Children think badly of the church.
- D. How do you expect a child to love the church who is constantly subjected to "church bashing?"

XIV. PARENTS MUST BE UNCOMPROMISING REGARDING THE TRUTH.

- A. Must stand for truth before friends, family, pressures, etc.
- B. Must resist error, stand with those who defend the faith.
 - 1. Truth not negotiable.
 - 2. Truth more important than unity.
 - 3. Truth before bigness, popularity.
- C. Divided loyalty creates confusion, disrespect for truth.
- D. Must insist on sound doctrine, Titus 2:1,8; 1 Peter 4:11.

XV. WHEN THEY ASK QUESTIONS, EITHER ANSWER, OR FIND THE ANSWER.

- A. They have a right to ask.
- B. Parents have duty to answer, 1 Peter 3:15.
 - 1. Don't belittle or assume they already know.
 - 2. Don't allow them to feel rejected by ignoring them.
- C. Don't want them going to wrong source for information.
- D. If you don't know, say so; find it together.
 - 1. Don't have to know everything to know something.
 - 2. Don't pretend to know when you don't.
 - 3. This is the reason parents must study; provide good material.

XVI. CANNOT OVERSTATE THE VALUE OF STRONG FAMILY HERITAGE, HOME AS A HAVEN, PLACE OF SECURITY, LOVE, ACCEPTANCE.

- A. Make them always feel safe at home regardless of school, world, church, associates, whatever.
- B. Greatest gift parents can give: Love one another; faithful to each other; show children prime goal in marriage is to help one another get to heaven; mother's time.
- C. Some children have never seen what the home should be; many families in crisis; lacking the pattern.
- D. Success is more than material provisions; Luke 12:15; Matt. 6:19-21.
- E. If you do not have the right kind of home, will you provide one for your children?

XVII. WE SHALL NOT SUCCEED WITHOUT THE HELP OF GOD; PRAYER.

- A. Never a day passes that I do not mention the name of each of my children, etc. before God on their behalf.
- B. We are not always successful; but this is the way.
- C. One of the greatest blessings in this life; and the next
- D. Third John 4

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## **Following Christ's Example In The Home**

*G. W. Childs*

- 1. Christ is our example in every area of our lives.
- 2. He is our example in the home, the oldest institution of man.
- 3. He knows what makes man happy.

**DISCUSSION:****I. HIS BACKGROUND WAS HUMBLE.**

- A. Jesus' birth was about as humble as possible for any man.
- B. At birth, his mother placed him in a manger [feeding trough] in Bethlehem [Luke 2:7].
- C. He grew up in Nazareth, a city without a very noble reputation [John 1:46].
- D. In spite of his lowly beginning and upbringing in a city like Nazareth, Jesus is the most famous person the world has ever known. No other person has had such a far reaching influence, upon as many people, for as long a period of time.
- E. Therefore, people must not let the circumstances of their birth and upbringing be a handicap.

## **II. JESUS WAS A NORMAL CHILD — NOT A FREAK.**

- A. He grew in all the ways that people expect their children to grow and develop today — mentally, physically, spiritually, and socially (Luke 2:40,52). He did not arrive on earth fully developed.
- B. Jesus grew in wisdom (mentally; the ability to properly use acquired or inherited knowledge). He did not come into the world endowed with infinite knowledge, but gradually grew in wisdom.
- C. He grew in stature (physically). Jesus did not arrive here clothed with infinite power, but had the weaknesses of human infancy. However, he grew to become a strong man. He was not a pale, effeminate, weakling, as European artists portrayed him.
- D. Christ grew in favor with God (spiritually). Even though he was the Son of God, Jesus still developed and grew spiritually.
- E. He grew in favor with man (socially). Jesus was not a social misfit; otherwise he would never have seen crowds hover around him as they did (Matt. 13:2). He grew up to love people, and was loved by most of the people.

## **III. JESUS WAS INTERESTED IN THE TEMPLE — Luke 2:41-52.**

- A. At age 12 years old, Jewish boys were considered men.
- B. At 12, they were counted in the population for the building of synagogues.
- C. A boy of 12 was given the title "son of Torah," or son of the law, and he was expected to learn it.
- D. Therefore, it was time for Jesus to observe the passover, one of the three most important Jewish feast days.
- E. From Luke's account, it is obvious that Jesus had been taught the law, and had learned it well.
  - 1. He would have been taught by his parents as the Old Testament demanded [Deut. 6:7-8].
  - 2. He may have studied in the synagogue school.
- F. Luke did not concern himself with the details of the Passover worship, rather he zeroed in on what happened afterward.

- G. Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem after the Passover had ended (Luke 2:43).
- H. His parents thought he was somewhere in the caravan leaving Jerusalem, perhaps with the other children (Luke 2:44).
- I. At the end of a day's journey, when they would have broken up into families to camp, Jesus was not with them. So, they sought him among their relatives and could not locate him (Luke 2:44-45).
- J. They headed back to Jerusalem in frantic search of the young man (Luke 2:45).
- K. After searching for three days, they found him in the temple (Luke 2:46).
- L. Why did it take so long to find Jesus? With all the attractions of a city like Jerusalem, perhaps the temple was the last place they expected to find a 12 year old boy. Maybe they looked there last!
- M. What was he doing in the temple? He was hearing and asking questions of the doctors (Luke 2:46).
- N. The doctors [of the law] were amazed at Jesus' understanding and his answers (Luke 2:47).
- O. Mary asked Jesus: "Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing" (Luke 2:48). There seems to be the fear of rebellion in the very words of Mary.
- P. Jesus answered: "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business" (Luke 2:49)?
- Q. His parents did not understand him (Luke 2:50).
- R. Jesus returned to Nazareth with them and submitted himself to them (Luke 2:51).
- S. Mary "kept these sayings in her heart" (Luke 2:51).
- T. Jesus is the perfect example of an obedient child.

#### IV. THE SILENT YEARS INCLUDE TWO PERIODS.

- A. The first silent years in Jesus' life were during his six or seven years' stay in Egypt.
- B. The second long span was from about twelve years to about thirty.
- C. What did Jesus do during these years?
- D. He surely was busy "doing" his Father's will, and taking care of his Father's work.

- E. His custom was to worship in the synagogue on the Sabbath day (Luke 4:16).
- F. As indicated earlier, he was an obedient son, both to his parents and to God (Heb. 5:8-9).
- G. No doubt he was really studying at this time.
- H. He was a carpenter during this time (Mark 6:3).

**V. JESUS SPENT TIME IN THE HOMES OF OTHERS.**

- A. He often went to the home of Mary, Martha, and Lazarus.
  - 1. He spent time teaching there (Luke 10:39).
  - 2. He taught that spiritual matters were more important than food (Luke 10:42; John 4:32-34).
- B. He visited and ate in the home of Simon, the Pharisee (Luke 7:36-50).
  - 1. He reproved Simon for a lack of courtesy.
  - 2. Jesus had been taught proper customs and manners. Simon had been disrespectful.

**VI. JESUS LOVED CHILDREN.**

- A. Jesus was not married and did not have children, but he loved other people's children.
- B. He had time for children and wanted them to come to him (Mark 10:14-16).
- C. He took them into his arms and blessed them.
- D. Jesus expected fathers to take care of their children and give them good gifts (Matt. 7:9-11).
- E. Children were expected to be obedient to parents, as Jesus had been obedient to his (Eph. 6:1).

**VII. JESUS RESPECTED AND ELEVATED WOMEN.**

- A. He raised to life the widow of Nain's only son (Luke 7:11-15).
- B. He refused to allow a man to divorce his wife for just any trumped-up cause (Matt. 19:3-9).
  - 1. He made fornication the only grounds for divorce.
  - 2. That helped the plight of women in the home.
- C. Men were expected to love their wives as:
  - 1. Christ loved the church (Eph. 5:25).
  - 2. They love themselves (Eph. 5:28).

- D. Men are to live with their wives according to knowledge (1 Peter 3:7).

#### VIII. HOW DID JESUS' FAMILY RECEIVE HIS MINISTRY?

- A. Mary, his mother, obviously believed (John 2:3,5).
- B. He was not disrespectful to his mother (John 2:4).
- C. Jesus' brothers did not believe at first (John 7:5).
- D. However, they traveled with him some (John 2:12).
- E. Later, his brother, James, became a pillar in the church at Jerusalem (Gal. 1:19; 2:9).
- F. Jesus' friends and family were concerned about him (Mark 3:20-21,31-35).
- G. Jesus, at the end of his life, made provisions for his mother's care (John 19:26-27).

#### CONCLUSION:

- 1. Jesus is our example in every area of our lives.
- 2. Our home life and family relationships would all improve should we follow the example of Jesus in the home.

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Your Occupation Affects The Home

Bryan Hodge

- 1. The home is one of the two most sacred institutions which God created.
- 2. He created it in the very beginning.
- 3. He created it with purpose.
- 4. Brother Thomas B. Warren has said: "Marriage is not a relationship whereby the two partners stand with their backs to one another, each using marriage only for his own selfish purposes. Neither is marriage to be pictured by two persons facing one another, so that they worship one

another. They are to worship God, not one another. Instead of these two erroneous views, marriage is better considered as two people standing side by side facing toward heaven, with the resolve to help one another to be happier in this life, to help one another walk closer to God."¹

5. Marriage and the home serves the following purposes.
 - a. It provides human companionship (Gen. 2:20-25).
 - b. It provides the financial and material framework, and security beneficial for the rearing of children (2 Cor. 12:14; 1 Tim. 5:8).
 - c. It helps continue the human race (Gen. 1:28).
 - d. Above all, the home should be a place for spiritual development and nourishment (Deut. 6:6-7; Exodus 12:25-27; Prov. 22:6; Eph. 6:4; 1 Peter 3:1-7; 1 Cor. 7:16; Eph. 5:31-32).²

DISCUSSION:

I. OCCUPATIONAL RELOCATION AFFECTS THE HOME.

- A. Lot's decision of where to move was made purely upon economic considerations (Gen. 13:9-10).
- B. He did not consider the spiritual environment into which he was moving his family (Gen. 13:13; Gen. 18:32-ff; Gen. 19; Jude 7).
- C. He made his home in Sodom (Gen. 13:11; 14:12).
- D. Though the wickedness bothered him (2 Peter 2:7, 8), he still did not move.
- E. He lost most of his family (Gen. 19:14,26).
- F. Is the spiritual well being of your family your first consideration in any decision making process; or do you, like Lot, consider material matters above all else (Col. 3:2; Matt. 6:33)?

II. EXCESSIVE CONSUMPTION OF TIME BY ONE'S OCCUPATION AFFECTS THE HOME.

- A. Brethren, I do understand that we must and should be laboring for our families provisions (Eph. 4:28; 1 Tim. 5:8; 1 Tim. 5:16; 2 Thess. 3:10, 12).
- B. We should remember, however, that there are some things of far greater importance than the physical

[John 6:27;³ 1 Tim. 4:8; Mark 8:36-37; Luke 12:15-21; 1 Jonh 2:15-17].

C. We should be careful to make time to assemble with the saints.

1. Bro. Garland Robinson, in a personal letter to me dated Feb. 10, 1998, said, "I feel that far too often brethren think they can choose just any job and if it conflicts with church services that's fine, they've got an excuse saying, 'I have to work.'"

2. Brethren, in all sincerity such bothers me too.⁴

D. Here are two examples: which is more spiritual?

1. Example #1 – When I was a teenager, I knew and was reared to understand that you are to never miss the assembling of the saints. I knew this in all areas except when it came to work. If I could earn time and a half for working on Sunday, I'd do it. "After all, work is different." Now, understand that I had no family to support, just my own material desires to fill. But, "work is different...you can miss worship time for such...after all, it's important to have a good work ethic." Was I really following Matthew 6:33?

2. Example #2 – I once encountered a man by the name of Alan Meter. He was a truck driver and as such he missed nearly every service. But the more he studied, the more it bothered his conscience. Therefore, he left his job as a truck driver "cold-turkey" and lost many benefits that he had earned over time by doing so. He took a less paying job. He did all of this because he was determined to follow the plain language of the Bible [Matt. 6:33].

3. Which example is more spiritually minded? Are you so determined?

E. Our families need our time.

1. Did Uriah contribute to Bathsheba's adultery?⁵

a. I've often wondered if such was the case.

b. Uriah was in town for two days. Yet not one time did he visit, or communicate in any way with his wife [2 Sam. 11:8-13; cf. 1 Cor. 7:3,5].

c. Did he love his job too much?

2. Our mates need our time, and most of all they need our spiritual encouragement (Eph. 5:25-27;⁶ 1 Cor. 7:16; 1 Peter 3:1-7).
3. Are we taking the time we should with one another?
4. Our children need our time (Eph. 6:4).
 - a. In 18 years of life, there are approximately 157,788 hours of time.
 - b. If a child attends every assembly and Bible class, he spends 3,762 hours in such.
 - c. Approximately 20,160 hours are spent in school.
 - d. Approximately 52,668 hours are spent sleeping.
 - e. Meaning that the vast majority of time is neither spent in school, Bible class, or asleep. How are you using that time? Do you study with them? Do you spend time with them? Who is rearing your children? The television? Comic books? The radio? Their peers? The neighbors? Or you? (Eph. 6:4; Titus 2:2-5; Psalms 127-4).

III. OTHER OCCUPATIONAL CONSIDERATIONS WHICH AFFECT THE HOME.

- A. Should I be transporting, stocking, selling, or serving such things as: tobacco products; alcoholic beverages; filthy magazines, books, and movies?
 1. My responsibilities toward others (Luke 17:1-2).
 2. We're to be in the soul saving business and not the hell damning business!
 3. Think about the consistency you show before your family when, on one hand you say "X" is wrong, but all the while you manufacture, sell, or transport such.
- B. Good questions to ask before taking a job.
 1. Will this job cause me to not be able to assemble with the saints?
 2. Will this job place me in a position that will harm my influence upon others?
 3. Will I be required to participate in things that a Christian should not do (selling or serving alcohol or tobacco; lying, deceiving, gambling, immodesty)?
 4. Will this job cause me to violate my conscience?

5. Will this job help or hurt my family life? (Especially be concerned about this question from a spiritual stand point).
6. Will this job place me in an environment where much temptation to do evil exists?

ENDNOTES

¹Thomas B. Warren, *Your Marriage Can Be Great*, [National Christian Press, 1978] page 262.

²Concerning Eph. 5:31-32. This passage teaches that the marriage relationship serves as a model to help us to comprehend our relationship, as Christians, to Christ. If we, as parents, do not maintain proper love and role order in the home as God would have it, this point will not impress our children as it should.

³The "not" does not suggest that it is sinful to labor for physical needs [Gen. 3:19; Eph. 4:28; 2 Thess. 3:10; etc.]. This is simply a statement of contrast of importance.

⁴For those who use the excuse, "We're just so busy," please consider Exodus 34:21. The wording specifies that even during the busiest times of the year they were to keep the Sabbath. No, Sunday is not a "Christian Sabbath." Work itself and the "picking up of sticks" is not prohibited on Sunday. But the point is, shouldn't we be just as determined to set aside time to worship as they were to keep the Sabbath? Think about it. God didn't accept their excuse of busyness!

⁵Uriah may not have, but understand that even if he did contribute, such does not excuse Bathsheba.

⁶Was Christ primarily concerned about our physical well-beings or our spiritual well-beings? Notice the explanatory "that" (v.27). Then, watch the "even as" in verse 25. Clearly, Christ was primarily concerned with our spiritual well-being. Shouldn't we be concerned as well about the spiritual well-beings of our wives? (cf. 1 Cor. 7:16; 1 Peter 3:1-7).

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How To Strengthen The Home What Our Homes Need Now

Richard Guill

1. My subject deals with strengthening the home, which implies that homes are weak.
2. Previous speakers have established that our homes are under relentless attack and are experiencing tremendous pressure and stress. Many have already fallen and others are weakening rapidly.
3. This weakness is seen in homes of our society in general, but, alarmingly, also in homes of members of the Lord's church.
4. There is little we can do, except through teaching and example, to help homes of the world, but we CAN and MUST strengthen the homes of God's people.
5. But how do we strengthen our homes? What do our homes need NOW? And I emphasize the word NOW because it is an urgent matter demanding immediate attention of everyone who should be involved.

DISCUSSION:

- I. **WHAT IS THE STANDARD FOR DETERMINING WEAKNESS IN OUR HOMES?**
 - A. Our society is not correctly measured by the size of our cities, the strength of our military, the affluence of our economy, nor the significance of our political standing in the world community.
 - B. Likewise, our churches cannot be successfully measured by the size and grandeur of our buildings, the numbers on our attendance boards, the affluence of our members, nor our "political" standing in the brotherhood.
 - C. Nor can our homes be measured by the fineness and size of the house we occupy, all of the "things" we may "own," or by the way we may appear to others.
 - D. Our nation can only be correctly measured by the strength of our homes; our churches will be no greater

than the homes of the members who comprise them; and our homes can only be measured as successful and strong if they are really as God reveals that they should be.

- E. God ordained and established the home as the basic building block of society, and He has given instructions for its organization and operation which will make it both strong and happy.
- F. Every failure and weakness in a nation, in a church, or in a home is the direct result of not following completely the Lord's instructions.

II. TO STRENGTHEN OUR HOMES, PUT GOD BACK IN THEM AS THE HEAD.

- A. Did you men think you were the head of your home? Think again! God is really the head of every Christian home. Unfortunately, though it may not have been intentional, in too many homes God has been slowly eased out of His place and has been replaced by one or more of our modern-day idols!
- B. God must truly be the Head of our homes and His Word must be our guide book.
 - 1. To Israel of old, God gave the following admonition to homes through Moses: *⁶"And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: ⁷And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou riseth up. ⁸And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. ⁹And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates"* (Deut. 6:6-9).
 - 2. Evidently they did a good job for a while, but did not continue to follow that instruction very long. Look at Judges 2:8-15.
- C. A little boy knocked on a door in his neighborhood. When the lady opened the door, the boy asked, "Lady, does Jesus live here?" Somewhat taken back by the question, the lady stammered, "Well, uh, uh, no." Then, thinking how that sounded, she quickly

amended it by saying, "I mean yes." Then, totally flustered and not knowing how to answer him, she said, "Well, I just don't know!"

1. HOW WOULD YOU HAVE ANSWERED HIM?

- D. In many homes God is seldom, if ever, mentioned. The members of the home don't speak OF HIM nor TO HIM; and God is not allowed to speak to them because His Word is not opened, read, and studied. GOD HAS BEEN SHUT OUT OF THAT HOUSE!!! Jesus doesn't live there!
1. Who is the most loved person in your house? your mate? your child? yourself? or is it the Lord?
 2. How high on the list of things you talk about is the Lord's Word and His Cause?
 3. Do your days begin and end with thoughts about God? Does Bible reading and study have priority over newspapers, television, or a computer?
 4. What will your children remember about the emphasis upon spiritual things they saw in your home during those early formative years of their lives?
- E. You may push God outside and build your house without Him, but if you build your house on the shifting and unstable sands of worldly philosophy and pursuits, the "storms" of life will batter and lash it and great will be the fall thereof [Matt.7:24-27]. *"Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it"* [Psalm 127:1].
- F. When problems arise in such homes, they consult every "expert" except the real expert in home and family counselling—GOD. It is in and through God's Word that we are *"thoroughly furnished unto all good works"* (2 Tim. 3:17), and have been given *"all things that pertain to life and godliness"* (2 Peter 1:3).
- G. If we want to strengthen the home, WE MUST put God back as the Head and restore respect for His Word as our guide and DEMAND that every family member follow its instructions.

III. WHOSE RESPONSIBILITY IS IT TO STRENGTHEN OUR HOMES?

A. HUSBANDS AND FATHERS: (not every husband will be a father, but every father should be a husband). To them God has given the chief responsibility [Eph.5:22–6:4].

1. We need husbands and fathers like Joshua of old, who, with courage and conviction, will boldly declare, *"But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord"* (Joshua 24:15).
2. Your head is Christ (1 Cor.11:3); you are the head over your wife (Eph. 5:23); and you are charged by God with the responsibility of bringing your children up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord (Eph. 6:4).
3. We need to get fathers back IN THE HOME and functioning as God ordained:
 - a. Divorce has taken many fathers out of the home and away from their children.
 - b. Desertion has taken many others away...fathers simply walk away from their home and family and their responsibilities.
 - c. "Practical desertion" is another major factor: fathers who have not actually left the home, but who have abrogated their responsibilities to their wives. There are some who "abandon" their children by letting work, fishing, golf, and a host of other things so absorb their time and energy that they have none left for their family.
 - d. All of these are terrible tragedies with drastic immediate and long-term consequences for the family unit.
4. Families need more from fathers than monetary support!!! Studies done on the home and its problems have concluded the following: "The personality and the background of the husband, not the wife, are the most important factors in the success of a marriage." "Studies of delinquencies repeatedly indicate that the fathers are more influential than mothers in the development of delinquent behaviour in their children."

B. WIVES AND MOTHERS: You also have been assigned your role in the home and you must fulfill it if we are to have strong and healthy homes.

1. We need mothers back in the home on a full-time basis, particularly in those early formative preschool years. These years are so vital to the proper development of children that you cannot afford to shift your responsibility to someone else, particularly to strangers!
2. Too many wives and mothers have answered the siren call of the god of materialism and have laid their children as sacrifices upon the altar of this merciless deity.
3. Children need mothers more than those "things" which a few extra dollars will permit you to buy for them.
4. Remember what Paul wrote in Titus 2:1-5? IT STILL WORKS if we follow it.

C. ELDERS: You have a responsibility in strengthening our homes also! Someone may object and say that the elders are over the church, not the home. But, do not Christians in the homes comprise the church?

1. Is the church just the church when assembled together? Do elders, who are supposed to "feed the flock" (Acts 20:28), and "watch for your souls" (Heb. 13:17), only do that when the church is assembled together?
2. If a member does that which is sinful and which threatens his and others' welfare outside of the assembly, including in the home, do elders have no authority to deal with that?
3. If elders have knowledge of anything within a home of the members which will destroy that home and threaten the welfare of its members, they need to be IN THAT HOME quickly with loving concern and wise counsel.
4. Elders need to see to it that in the "feeding of the flock" there are lessons in the classrooms and from the pulpit on the home and family...AND FREQUENTLY! ALSO, anyone teaching that which

will "subvert whole houses" must have their mouths stopped and the elders are to do it (Titus 1:10-11).

IV. THREE ESSENTIALS TO STRENGTHENING THE HOME.

A. **Proper instruction** is fundamental. THE BIBLE must be the "guide book" for the home for it alone contains "all things that pertain to life and godliness" (2 Peter 1:3), and "thoroughly furnishes unto all good works" (2 Tim. 3:17).

1. There is nothing about home life that is not covered in this book, and yet it is the book least read, understood, and followed in a great number of homes.

B. **Discipline** must be restored to every family member. Parents, not the children, must set the rules of conduct for the whole household and it must be based upon the Bible's wonderful precepts and commands.

1. Discipline involves teaching first and foremost – every family member must know what is acceptable behaviour and what is not.
2. Discipline involves reward and praise for doing right as well as rebuke and punishment for doing wrong. BOTH have to be practiced if one is to be really successful.
3. The Biblical guide for discipline comes from the example of God the Father found in Hebrews 2:2
"...For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward...."
 - a. NOTE both the fairness and consistency...EVERY word was steadfast....and
 - b. EVERY transgression and disobedience received its JUST recompense of reward. You can't go wrong with that formula.
4. The Bible teaches that discipline needs to begin early. Prov. 19:18, *"Chasten thy son while there is hope, and let not thy soul spare for his crying."* Prov. 13:24, *"He that spareth his rod hateth his son: but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes."* "BETIMES" means "to be with the dawn,"

signifying to begin early with the discipline of a child... (while there is hope).

C. **Example** is also vitally important to the success of teaching and corrective discipline. "Do as I say do, not as I do" is a philosophy of failure.

1. A parent judging his children's behaviour as wrong while doing the same thing or something worse cannot effectively produce a well-behaved and obedient child. Paul stresses this principle in Romans 2:1, *"Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest; for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things."*
2. Parental influence is a major factor in the way a child may act when they are grown. This is seen in the record of the kings of Judah and Israel. Over and over these expressions are found: "And he did evil in the sight of the Lord, according to all that his father had done," or, "he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, according to all that his father had done." HOW YOUR CHILDREN TURN OUT may greatly depend upon your example before them.

CONCLUSION:

1. The very fabric out of which an orderly and law-abiding society can be built is woven in the homes built upon God's instructions and functioning according to His Will. Children will be thus molded into adults who respect God and seek to abide by His Will in their lives.
2. The tragedy of broken homes and disturbed children has produced a criminally violent nation where lawlessness and lack of respect for human life is common-place. It has produced weak congregations which are blindly following the ways of the world regarding family life.
3. It is time for Christian fathers and mothers to rise up and say, "We will not follow the ways of the world and lose our children and perhaps our own souls. We will make whatever sacrifices are necessary to make our homes what God wants them to be....AND WE WILL BEGIN NOW!!!!!!"

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## The Home Likely Determines The Destiny Of The Children

Robin W. Haley

1. One of the most foolish statements heard from parents is "I do not believe in forcing religion on children. We are going to allow them to make their own decisions about God, Jesus, and what 'church' they want to be a part of." *Sinful foolishness!*
2. Otherwise responsible parents would never dream of allowing their children to decide for themselves regarding good food, cleanliness, medical care, nor education.
3. It is faulty 'reasoning' to conclude that to 'force' a child to go to Bible class and worship will cause them to turn away when older. That no more follows than to conclude that 'forcing' them to eat, dress, and care for themselves properly will cause them to turn away from good food, good medicine, or a good education when older.
4. Let us hold fast the admonition from the wise man who said *"Train up a child in the way he should go, And even when he is old he will not depart from it"* (Prov. 22:6).

### DISCUSSION:

#### I. THE HOME: DOMESTICITY.

- A. The home is not the invention of man, Prov. 24:3; Psalm 127:1,3.
  1. There has been a shocking retreat from marriage and domestic responsibility.
  2. There are three that depend upon the family for stability: the society, the nation, and the church.
  3. Though marriage is recommended, it is not obligatory.
    - a. Gen. 2:18
    - b. 1 Cor. 7:1-6
- B. There is a model for the home, Deuteronomy 6:4-7.
  1. It is established and perpetuated [Gen. 2:21-24; 1 Cor. 7:2,10,11; Heb. 13:4].
  2. It has God-given benefits.

- a. Propagation, Genesis 1:28
- b. Partnership, Genesis 2:18
- c. Prevention, 1 Cor. 7:2
- C. There has been a primary failure within the home.
  - 1. For the most part, men have failed to take seriously the injunctions of such passages as: Gen. 2:24; 1 Cor. 11:3; 16:13; Eph. 5:23,25,28,31,33.
    - a. In the 70s, 60% of dads supported the families they started.
    - b. Today, less than 40% of dads support their women and children.
  - 2. Statistical materials accumulated since the 1980s shows the following trends.
    - a. Young people are becoming more and more likely to fall into crime, immorality, sex, drug abuse, and suicide.
    - b. More people were murdered between 1976 and 1993 than died in Europe and the Pacific during the second world war.
    - c. The FBI has estimated that in the latter 90s, more than 83% of adults will be victims of juvenile crime.
    - d. The #1 reason: **fatherless families!**
- D. Fatherless families are produced from either never having been married moms, or from divorce.
  - 1. General statistics point to a continued, growing trend.
    - a. 6% of children lived without dad just after WW II.
    - b. In the mid-90s, this figure had climbed to well over 40%, and is higher today.
    - c. In the 1970s, the divorce rate was about 50%; after a short stabilizing in the 80s, it has today climbed to over 65%, and grows still.
    - d. Between 1994 and 1995, the number of children who were growing up without dad went from 14 million to 19 million. Some estimate the number is between 20 and 30 million today.
  - 2. Violence is the fruit of many of these homes.
    - a. 95% of abused children do not live with their natural parents.

- b. Fatherless boys tend to exhibit rage against their mothers, against women in general, and will tend to beat their girl friends and/or wives. Many find acceptance from fellow males through the practice of homosexuality.
- c. Fatherless girls are far more likely to engage in premarital sex and become pregnant before marriage.
- d. Violence within public schools has been attributed to lack of parental guidance, especially from dad, within the home.

## II. THE HOME: DETERMINATION.

- A. How the home is structured *will* help to determine the outcome of our children, their behavior, and their part in society and eternity.
- B. The home teaches the necessary skills to live in a society.
  - 1. The home teaches leadership, 1 Tim. 3:4,5.
  - 2. The home teaches Christianity, Eph. 6:4.
  - 3. There is trouble when the children have not been taught.
    - a. Prov. 6:20-23
    - b. Sadly, children's education is left to the schools only, character is left to society and the media, the soul is left to the individual, Jeremiah 10:23!
- C. Parents will *harm* their children in a variety of ways.
  - 1. Parents harm their children by giving in and giving up.
  - 2. Parents harm by giving their kids all they want.
  - 3. Parents harm by laughing at their "cute" misbehavior.
  - 4. Parents harm by leaving important decisions about morals, and behavior, and the Lord to the kids.
  - 5. Parents harm by failing to make their children feel guilty and ashamed for bad behavior.
  - 6. Parents harm by doing their children's chores for them.
  - 7. Parents harm by arguing in front of the children.
  - 8. Parents harm by taking their children's side against all authority, such as the school and police.

D. Parents can *help* their children immensely.

1. They can help their kids by acting responsibly before God (Matt. 6:33; 1 Tim. 5:8).
2. Parents help by knowing who their children's friends are, 1 Cor. 15:33.
3. Parents help by knowing where their kids spend their time, Prov. 29:15.
4. Parents help by teaching their kids about morals and drugs, Prov. 7:4-7, 10, 13, 18, 19, 21, 22, 25, 27.
5. Parents help by teaching their kids they are loved, lovely, and lovable. Don't tell them they are bad when they misbehave, but tell them they did something bad, and they need to change, Prov. 23:7a; Eph. 6:4. This will teach them what true repentance is.
6. Parents help by using discipline (Prov. 3:27; 13:24; 19:18; 22:15; 23:13; 29:17).
7. Let us as parents remember this fine example: Acts 16:1,2; 2 Tim. 1:5; 3:14,15.
8. The kings listed in the books of Kings and Chronicles, whether good or bad, all had this statement made in connection with their lives: "And his mother's name was...." This ought to tell us something about the role of mother.

III. **THE HOME: DESTINY.**

A. What is seen in your house?

1. The question asked of Hezekiah, 2 Kings 20:14-16.
2. What is seen, men?
  - a. Joshua 24:15
  - b. As husbands, 1 Cor. 11:3,8,9.
  - c. Love and honor your wife, Eph. 5:23,25,28; 1 Peter 3:7.
  - d. As father, Eph. 6:4; Col. 3:21; Gen. 18:19!
  - e. Act like men, 1 Cor. 16:13!
3. What is seen, ladies?
  - a. As wife, Eph. 5:22,23,33; Titus 2:4; 1 Peter 3:1-6; Prov. 12:4.
  - b. As mother, Titus 2:4,5; Prov. 31:10-31.

- c. As a Christian, Titus 2:3; Acts 9:36; Rom. 16:1; Phil. 4:2,3.
- 4. What is seen, young people?
  - a. As reflections of what your parents have taught you, Eph. 6:1; Col. 3:20; Prov. 6:20.
  - b. As responsible before the Lord, Eccl. 12:1; 1 Tim. 4:12; 5:4.
- B. Duty must be taught.
  - 1. Dad, teach your sons to love their wives, Eph. 5:25,28,29.
  - 2. Mom, teach your daughters to love their husbands, Eph. 5:22,24; 1 Peter 3:1-6.
  - 3. Together, teach and practice love for the Lord, Eph. 5:21,33.
  - 4. Within our families, let us all say, "*Oh magnify Jehovah with me, And let us exalt his name together*" [Psalm 34:3].

**CONCLUSION:**

- 1. The devil loses, everybody wins!

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Questions #3

What about same sex marriages?

What if one is a eunuch?

May wives and daughters lead prayer at home?

**What affect do government programs have
on the home?**

What about "mental adultery?"

Toney L. Smith

Titus 2:11-12

1. We must look to God's Word to answer all questions that pertain to live and godliness. [2 Tim. 3:15-17]
2. In Titus 2 we are given a wonderful insight into God's grace.
 - a. Verse 11 shows...
 - 1) That grace is Divine in nature. [*"...grace of God..."*]
 - 2) It is saving in power. [*"...that bringeth salvation..."*]
 - 3) It is universal in scope. [*"...hath appeared unto all men..."*]
 - 4) It is instructing in its work. [*"...Teaching us..."*]
 - b. Verses 12-13 shows exactly how one is to live.
 - 1) Some things are to be denied. [*"...denying ungodliness and worldly lusts..."*]
 - 2) There is a right way to live. [*"...soberly, righteously and godly..."*]
 - 3) There is an expectation. [*"...the glorious appearing..." v.13*]
3. Many questions are asked concerning the home, marriage, divorce and remarriage.
 - a. Many answers are absolutely contrary to Bible teachings.
 - b. Our answers must be fashioned according to God's Word, the word of His grace.
 - c. Acts 20:32; 1 Peter 3:15
4. Remember that it was God who instituted the home and marriage, and not men.

5. Important to remember.
 - a. In Gen. 2:21-24 one can read of the very creation of marriage.
 - b. God made woman for the man, brought them together, and thus created the union called marriage (Matt. 19:1-6).
 - c. Emphasis must be upon not what man thought but what God hath done.
 - 1) He spoke into existence the universe (Gen. 1:1-25).
 - 2) He sunk the ocean beds and raised the mountains high.
 - 3) He gave the power of multiplying and filling the earth to man (Gen. 1:9-18, 26).
 - 4) BY HIS WISDOM THESE THINGS WERE DONE!
6. With those things in mind, we may now wonder why it is that men are seeking answers to marriage questions in the philosophers, Phds, counselors and others who do not look to the Book for answers.
 - a. The answers to our family, home and marriage needs are still in the Holy Book Divine!
 - b. Psalm 119:11; John 8:32; 17:17
7. LET'S OPEN OUR BIBLES AND STUDY THE QUESTIONS BEFORE US...

DISCUSSION:

I. WHAT ABOUT SAME SEX MARRIAGES?

- A. First of all, there is no such thing!
 1. Remember, God regulates the **WHO** of marriage.
 - a. He created male and female for this relationship. (Gen. 1:27; 5:2; Matt. 19:9)
 - b. Never same sex marriages!
- B. Sexual relationships of same sex partners are an abomination to God!
 1. Just the relationship is sinful, much less a so-called "union in marriage."
 - a. Can you imagine someone being joined in the bonds of HOLY matrimony under these conditions?
 - b. It is appalling to the thought.
 2. This perverse lifestyle stands in opposition to marriage and the home.

- a. Homosexuality and lesbianism is an ungodly way of life.
- b. Homosexuality should never be spoken of in the same breath with marriage and home!
- 3. Note the verses that PROVE this lifestyle is sinful.
 - a. God destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen. 18-19).
 - b. Lev. 18:22, *"Thou shalt not lie with mankind, as with womankind: it is abomination."*
 - c. Rom. 1:27, *"And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompense of their error which was meet."*
 - d. Also: Lev. 20:13; 1 Kings 14:24, 22:46; 2 Kings 23:7; 1 Cor. 6:9; 1 Tim. 1:10
- 4. Matt. 19:4-6, *"And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female, And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder."*
- C. Same sex marriages are sinful!
 - 1. It matters not how many states say it is legal.
 - 2. It violates the Word of God, Thus sinful! (1 John 3:4)

II. WHAT IF ONE IS A EUNUCH?

- A. A eunuch is one emasculated, to impose abstinence by emasculation; to be rendered incapable of sexual activity. *"For there are some eunuchs, which were so born from their mother's womb: and there are some eunuchs, which were made eunuchs of men: and there be eunuchs, which have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake. He that is able to receive it, let him receive it"* (Matt. 19:12).
- 1. Three types of eunuch are mentioned:
 - a. Some are born this way.

- b. Some are made this way by the procedure administered by other men.
 - c. Some become such for the kingdom of heaven's sake.
 - 2. In the context of our study on the home, let us observe the one who becomes a eunuch for the kingdom's sake.
 - a. Review Matt. 19:9.
 - 1) An adulterer cannot enter heaven.
 - 2) So if one finds himself/herself in a situation which will not authorize marriage, they must become celibate so as to be saved.
 - 3) Adulterous marriages are forbidden.
 - b. Also, if a person finds himself in an adulterous marriage he must dissolve that marriage and then remain celibate. He must become a eunuch for the kingdom's sake.
- B. Another situation which we must not overlook in observing this question is a position that some advocate which would allow an unscriptural marriage if the partners promised to abstain from sexual relations.
 - 1. First, this would be a situation which would be far to dangerous to be involved in.
 - a. We must never place ourselves in situations which would tempt us.
 - b. 1 Peter 2:11; 5:8
 - 2. Also, the marriage would be unscriptural even without sexual relations. (Matt. 19:9; 5:32; Luke 16:18)
- C. Even if an accident or disease caused impotence (a type of eunuch), there would be no grounds for breaking the marriage vows (Rom. 7:1-3).
 - 1. Sickness or disability is not another means of breaking the marriage covenant (Matt. 19:6-9).

III. MAY WIVES AND DAUGHTERS LEAD PRAYER AT HOME?

- A. First, I want to make a distinction between LISTENING to a little girl say her prayers and having her lead the family in

- B. The same Bible principle applies in the private worship assembly, a social gathering, a sporting event or in any other such area.
 - 1. The women are not to lead in any segment of worship where men are in attendance.
 - a. 1 Tim. 2:11-12
 - b. Prov. 22:6
 - 1) The way we train our children is the way they will go.
 - 2) That is the problem today! Children are being trained in the wrong direction.
 - 3) It is very hard to undo what has been taught at an early age.
 - 2. We must remember that worship is not confined to the church building.
- C. Around the table and at family devotions the father should lead in family prayer.
 - 1. In visiting godly homes I have never seen the time when the mother or other ladies were called upon to lead in prayer.
 - 2. Women certainly have the right and obligation to pray, but not to lead in prayer when there are men in attendance.

IV. WHAT AFFECT DO GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS HAVE ON THE HOME?

- A. Many government programs have made many Americans lazy and dependent upon others to provide for them.
 - 1. The home is in disarray due in part to these government hand outs.
 - a. The government has made many people dependent upon government support.
 - b. However, we do not want to deprive the necessities of life to those who cannot work.
 - 2. The government has taken away self-pride and self-respect of many. By this I mean the ability of a person to hold his head up, knowing that he is shouldering his responsibility.
 - a. Give away programs, welfare, food stamps, etc.

- b. All of these remove family value and family pride.
- 3. Many become lazy and dependant upon hand outs, thus they have no motivation or self respect. It becomes too easy to LET others provide.
- B. Dependency upon these violate the Bible principles of work ethics.
 - 1. God intended that man should work.
 - a. Gen. 2;15; 3:19; Prov. 14:23
 - b. Prov. 27:18, *"Whoso keepeth the fig tree shall eat the fruit thereof..."*
 - c. Eph. 4:28
 - 2. *"But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel."* (1 Tim. 5:8)
- C. Notice also that God requires discipline upon those who will not work.
 - 1. 1 Thess 3:6-11 speaks of discipline, not rewards for being idle.
- D. Government programs often encourage laziness and idleness.
- E. Mrs. Clinton has said that it takes a village to raise our children.
 - 1. Government programs have made it easier for the home to depend on others to raise their children.
 - 2. The Bible says that responsibility lies with the family.
 - a. Mothers and fathers need to take their God given responsibilities to heart.
 - b. It takes God fearing parents to raise up godly children.
 - 3. Fathers must train and provide for the family.
 - a. Eph. 6:4; Col. 3:21
 - b. 1 Tim. 5:8
 - 4. Mothers need to stay home and be Hannahs (1 Sam. 1:11).
 - a. Titus 2:3-5 teaches that mothers are to be "keepers at home."
 - b. If I could change one thing which would help our homes, it would be that mothers would be put back in the home!

- c. I believe this one thing would solve many of our problems today!

V. WHAT ABOUT MENTAL ADULTERY?

A. Notice Matt. 5:27-28

1. Looking upon the opposite sex to lust after them is adultery in the heart.
 - a. Prov. 6:25
 - b. Physical adultery begins with mental adultery! [Prov. 4:23; Matt. 15:19]
2. This sin is caused by allowing the mind to think on those things.
3. The sin is caused and promoted by:
 - a. Soap operas. [Being entertained by the sins of the programs, 1 John 2:15-17]
 - b. Immodest dress. [2 Sam. 11:2-3]
 - c. Uncontrolled minds. [Gal. 5:19-21]

B. Mental adultery must not be confused with the fornication spoken of in Matthew 19:9.

1. Mental adultery is not grounds for scriptural divorce.
2. But it is a sin and it will lead to physical adultery if it is not overcome.

CONCLUSION:

1. The home and family is a wonderful institution.
 - a. Given by God. [Gen. 2]
 - b. Regulated by God's laws. [Matt. 19:3-12]
2. May we always love and honor our homes.
3. As the home goes, so goes our nation.
 - a. If the home is godly, the nation will be strong.
 - b. If the home is godly, the church will stand against the onslaught of the devil.

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The Role Of Wife And Mother In The Home

Ted Thrasher

1. Titus 2:4-5, *"That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed."*
2. The need of good homes today. Poem:

BACK HOME

"If I had the power to turn back the clock,
 Go back to that house at the end of the block.
 The house that was HOME when I was a kid,
 I know that I'd love it more now than I did.
 If I could be back there at my mother's knee,
 And hear once again all the things she told me,
 I'd listen as I never listened before,
 For she knew so well just what life had in store.
 And all the advice my dad used to give,
 His voice I'll remember as long as I live;
 But it didn't seem really important then;
 What I'd give just to live it all over again.
 And what I'd give for the chance I once had,
 To do so much more for my mother and dad;
 To give them more joy and a little less pain;
 A little more sunshine – a little less rain.
 But the years roll on and we cannot go back,
 Whether we were born in a mansion or a shack;
 But we can start right now – in the hour that's here,
 To do something more for the ones we hold dear."

(Author unknown,
 from *The Ideal Home*
 by Gary Colley)

- a. "As goes the home, so goes the church."
- b. Biblical definition of the home as God would have it.
- c. The serious responsibilities of wives and mothers in the home.

DISCUSSION:**I. THE ROLE OF THE WIFE IN THE HOME.**

- A. A "help meet" for the husband (Gen. 2:18, 21-24).
 - 1. Definition of "help meet"
 - a. Suitable or fit helper in life.
 - 2. Physically, socially, spiritually, emotionally suited for husband.
- B. United with her husband in marriage for life (Gen. 2:23-24).
 - 1. Marriage is for life (Rom. 7:2-3; Matt. 19:6).
 - a. Until death parts.
 - b. Rules out trial arrangements.
 - c. Rules out wholesale divorce.
 - d. One exception: fornication (Matt. 19:9).
 - 1) Even in this case only the innocent may Scripturally divorce and remarry.
 - 2. Love her husband (Titus 2:4; 1 Cor. 7:2-5).
 - a. Seek his highest welfare.
 - 3. Pray with her husband (1 Peter 3:7).
 - a. Implied in the phrase "your prayers be not hindered."
- C. Submissive to husband in marriage (Eph. 5:22; Col. 3:18; 1 Peter 3:1-6).
 - 1. Chain of authority and submission (1 Cor. 11:3, 8-9).
 - a. God is head of Christ, Christ is head of man, man is head of woman (1 Cor. 11:3).
 - 1) Since God is head of Christ, not a shameful or degrading arrangement.
 - 2. Obedient to her husband in the Lord (Titus 2:5).
 - a. Christ was obedient to the Father (Heb. 5:8-9).
 - 1) Since Christ obedient to God, not a hateful or unreasonable obedience.
 - b. Exception to the general rule (Acts 5:29).
 - 1) If the husband's wishes conflict with God's Word, must obey God first.
- D. Keepers (workers) at home (Titus 2:5).
 - 1. Definition of "keepers (workers) at home."
 - a. House, the place. Home, the family. Care for the family.
 - b. Homemaking not a dreary or unimportant occupation.

- c. Most needed and respected work a woman can do is to care for her family.
- d. Failure in this area has led to many problems in the home, church and society.
 - 1) Fornication and adultery in the work place.
 - 2) Lack of care for husband's and children's needs.
- 2. Instruction to younger women (widows): "...guide the house..." (1 Tim. 5:14)
 - a. General instruction would apply to wives.
- E. Manifest godly characteristics in the home.
 - 1. Sober (Titus 2:4).
 - a. Stable, self-controlled, ordered life.
 - 2. Discreet (Titus 2:5).
 - a. Sound mind, sane, sedate, sound and serious.
 - 3. Chaste (Titus 2:5; 1 Tim. 2:9-10).
 - a. Modest dress, speech and demeanor.
 - 4. Good (Kind) (Titus 2:5).
 - a. Kind person is easy to get along with and pleasant. Picture of my wife!
 - 5. Hospitable (1 Tim. 5:10; 1 Tim. 3:2).
 - a. Willing and happy to entertain house guests.
 - b. Elders, deacons, preachers cannot be hospitable without hospitable wives.

II. THE ROLE OF THE MOTHER IN THE HOME.

- A. Bear children (1 Tim. 5:14; 1 Tim. 2:15).
 - 1. To "bear children" means more than giving birth (1 Tim. 5:14).
 - a. It means to rear them or bring them up.
 - 2. Woman "saved in childbearing" (1 Tim. 2:15).
 - a. General rule. Does not imply all women have to have children.
 - b. However, those who do have children are to raise them properly. Failure to do so, can affect salvation.
 - c. Expresses the general role of woman as the mother.
- B. Love children (Titus 2:4).
 - 1. "Love" in this passage from *philoteknous*.

- a. "Loving one's children, duly parental." (Bagster, p.427).
- b. *Phileo* "represents tender affection" (Vine, p.703).
- C. Train children (Eph. 6:4).
 - 1. Primary responsibility given to fathers, but mothers are needed to help in this.
 - 2. Part of "guiding the house" and homemaking (1 Tim. 5:14; Titus 2:5).
- D. Discipline children (Prov. 13:24; 19:18; 22:15; 23:13-14; Heb. 12:5^b-6).
 - 1. Not abusive, but corrective and for the good of the child.
 - a. God has provided the proper place and proper equipment for correction.
 - 2. May not be popular or even legal in some places.
 - a. Nevertheless, we must follow God's law, rather than man's law (Acts 5:29).
 - 3. Failure to administer proper discipline in due time is failure to love child.
 - a. Has caused many problems in homes, churches and society.
 - b. God's love for us is manifest in His discipline towards us (Heb. 12:5-6).
 - c. Likewise, our love for our children demands discipline when they need it.
- E. Provide for physical and spiritual needs of children.
 - 1. Physical: The worthy woman of Prov. 31:10-31.
 - a. v.15 – Prepares food for her household.
 - b. vs.16-20 – Works with mind and hands to care for family.
 - c. v.21 – Provides adequate clothing for family.
 - d. v.26 – Controls and wisely uses her tongue.
 - e. v. 27 – Concerned with various aspects of raising children.
 - 2. Spiritual: The worthy examples of Lois and Eunice (2 Tim. 1:4-5; 3:14-17).
 - a. 2 Tim. 1:5 – Unfeigned faith in Timothy was first in grandmother and mother.
 - 1) They imparted their faith unto Timothy.
 - b. 2 Tim. 3:15 – Timothy "from a child" knew the holy scriptures.

- 1) Who taught the Scriptures to him? Not Greek (Gentile) father [Acts 16:1], but Jewish mother Eunice and grandmother Lois (2 Tim. 1:5).
- c. Older women are to teach (train) the younger women [Titus 2:3].
 - 1) Would include mothers teaching and training their daughters.

CONCLUSION:

1. Prov. 14:1 – Wise woman builds her house.
2. Exhortation to women to fulfill their roles as wives and mothers in the home as God has set forth in His Word and build up their homes.

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The Role Of Husband And Father In The Home

Guy F. Hester

Eph. 5:22-33; 6:1-3

1. God has ordained that the husband be the head of the home [Eph. 5:23].
2. Society may not agree, but the Word of God must be our guide [1 Peter 4:11].
3. Paul's instruction to Timothy is good for husbands and fathers [1 Tim. 4:12].

DISCUSSION:

- I. **THE HUSBAND AND FATHER MUST BE AN EXAMPLE OF BELIEVERS.**
 - A. An example is a model or pattern to go by.
 - B. Christ left us an example that we should follow in his steps [1 Peter 2:21; Acts 1:1].

- C. Those who are opposed to a pattern are opposed to Christ.
- D. The proper example can help to save others, especially our own wives and children [Matt. 5:16; 1 Peter 3:1].
- E. Self examination is necessary [1 Tim. 4:16; 2 Cor. 13:5].

II. PARTICULAR AREAS WHERE GOOD HUSBANDS AND FATHERS MUST BE AN EXAMPLE.

A. In **word** or **speech**.

- 1. Speech must be the right kind [Col. 4:6; Titus 2:8].
- 2. Wrong speech is condemned [Col. 3:8; Matt. 5:34,37; 26:73-74].
- 3. Every Christian husband and father must be a good example in word or speech.
 - a. A little boy asked, "Why are bad words wrong for me but alright for daddy?"

B. **Conversation**.

- 1. Conversation may mean speech or manner of life.
 - a. Here it refers to manner of life.
- 2. All at one time had their conversation in the world [2 Cor. 1:12; Gal. 1:13; Eph. 2:3; 4:22; Heb. 13:5; 1 Peter 1:18].
 - a. Now, we are to have a good conversation [Phil. 1:27; James 3:13; 1 Peter 1:15; 2:12; 3:2, 16; 2 Peter 3:11].
- 3. A good conversation of husbands and fathers is powerful in saving our families and reaching those who are lost [Matt. 5:16; 1 Peter 3:1-2].
- 4. A bad conversation may cause our own wives and children to be lost.
 - a. "Mama, when will I be old enough to stay home from Sunday school and church like daddy does?"
- 5. Consider the end of a good conversation [Heb. 13:7; Phil. 3:20].

C. In **love**.

- 1. Does your wife and children see in you an example of love?
- 2. The father who loves his children will administer discipline when needed [Prov. 22:15; Eph. 6:1-4].

3. The most powerful example you can set before them is to love God, for this is the first commandment (Deut. 6:5; Matt. 22:37).
 4. Husbands and fathers are to love their families (Eph. 5:23-25; 6:1-3).
 - a. The greatest demonstration of your love is to lead them, by your example, to love God.
 5. How can we set this example of love for God?
 - a. Love the brethren (1 John 4:20-21).
 - b. Love our enemies (Matt. 5:44).
 6. It is possible for us to know when we love God and others (John 13:34-35; 14:15; 1 John 5:2-3).
 - a. When we love, we possess one of the great characteristics of God (1 John 4:7-12).
 7. Love is one of the Christian graces and one of the fruits of the Spirit (2 Peter 1:7; Gal. 5:22).
- D. In **spirit** (disposition or mind of Christ).
1. Husbands and fathers owe it to their families to have the mind of Christ and walk as he walked (1 Peter 4:1; 1 John 2:6).
 2. What kind of mind did Christ have?
 - a. Christ had a mind to minister to others (Matt. 20:25-28).
 - b. He had a mind of humility (John 13:14-15).
 - c. Christ had a mind to do good (Acts 10:38).
 - d. He had a mind to please the Father (John 8:29).
 3. If your family sees that you have the spirit or mind of Christ, then you are a good husband and father.
 - a. What kind of spirit do you have?
- E. **Faith**.
1. Faith is produced by the word of God (John 20:30-31; Rom. 10:17).
 2. We live under a system of faith (2 Cor. 5:7; Jude 3).
 3. Husbands and fathers should set an example of loyalty to the practice and proclamation of the faith (James 2:18,24; 2 Tim. 4:1-5).
- F. **Purity** (cleanliness or chastity).
1. A father who wants his children to live pure clean lives must set the example in his own life.
 - a. Many boys and girls have taken their first drink from their father's bottle.

- a. The Bible identifies some general social connections and relationships: Teacher/Disciple (Matt. 10:24^a); Master/Servant (24^b); Employer/Employee (Matt. 20:1-2).
 - b. Then there are Divinely established social units.
Note: Two of these are automatic and inherent to human existence, and one is purely elective.
 - 1) Nation/Government: This social unit became necessary, particularly at the Tower of Babel, and every person assumes, at birth, membership in it.
 - 2) The church: "Citizenship" (Phil. 3:20) in the spiritual kingdom of Christ is assumed at the point of one's being "born again" (John 3:3,5; Col. 1:13).
 - a) All such persons as having heavenly citizenship constitute the church in its universal sense. Only in the sense of "loving the brotherhood" (1 Peter 2:17) does the church universal constitute a social unit.
 - b) It is the local church which constitutes a specific kind of, albeit primarily spiritual, social unit (cf. Phil. 1:1; 1 Cor. 12:12-27; 1 Tim. 2:8-12).
 - 3) The home: It is this social unit on which our lesson particularly dwells.
 - c. Each of these implies interpersonal relations, responsibilities, roles, obligations, and questions of Who is What to Whom.
2. The home is a social unit comprised of people brought together in a unique way with some aspects of the relationship assumed (marriage), and others inherent (children).
 - a. Though much is said today about traditional *versus* non-traditional homes, the Divine prototype and ideal is quite clear.
 - b. One man "leaves his father and mother," and "cleaves" unto one wife; the two being uniquely "joined" once and for all by God (cf. Gen. 2:21-25; Matt. 19:3-6).
 - 1) Though we often speak in terms of an extended home, and will always be the "children" of our parents, yet it is clear that in some sense a married pair have "left" what was formerly their homes to enter and form yet another social unit.

- b. On TV, a father is shown standing in his son's room who had been caught with dope saying, "Where did you learn this?" The boy answers, "From you dad!"
2. Purity must start in the heart [Matt. 5:8].
3. Purity is maintained by right thinking (Phil. 4:8; Prov. 23:7).
4. All Christians [fathers, mothers, sons and daughters] are to keep themselves pure [1 Tim. 5:22].
5. It is by the blood of Christ that we are made clean.
 - a. We are made pure by the blood of Christ when we obey the truth [1 Peter 1:22; Rev. 1:5].
6. Our religion is to be pure [James 1:27].

CONCLUSION:

1. The building of a Christian home must begin with the husband and father.
2. To build a Christian home, he must set the right kind of example.
3. When we have better husbands and fathers in our homes, the whole world will be made better.

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Authority In The Home

Alan Adams

1. Social connections, relations, units, and contracts are sometimes necessary and unavoidable; and sometimes assumed. They necessarily entail obligations and responsibilities of those therein. In any event, they are an inherent part of life: No man is an island.

- B. Several synonymous terms are: submit, head, reverence [Eph. 5:21-33, KJV]; subjection, obey [Col. 3:18-20]; obey, Lord [1 Peter 3:6].
- C. Summing up: When we speak of authority in the home, we have reference to—
 - 1. Decision making as applies to and affects members of the home.
 - 2. Governance and limitations of actions of those within the home.

II. THE FACT OF IT.

- A. As stated by Divine revelation [Eph. 5:22-23; 6:1].
- B. As evidenced by conflicts over it
 - 1. Husband/Wife [cf. 1 Cor. 7:12-16].
 - 2. Parents/Children [Deut. 21:18].

III. NECESSITY OF IT.

- A. Man, woman, and child, though all of equal worth in the eyes of God, yet, they have been endowed differently [1 Peter 3:7; 1 Tim. 2:15; Matt. 19:4; 1 Cor. 13:11].
- B. They are suited by their Creator for respective roles [Eph. 5:25,29; 1 Tim. 5:8; Titus 1:4].
 - 1. It is often assumed that God's giving man the headship in the home and the woman a subordinate role was punishment to all women for Eve's transgression, but such is not the case [cf. 1 Tim. 2:12-13].
 - 2. Rex Turner, Sr. makes some excellent comments along this line.
 - a. God's choice of the husband to assume and exercise the role of authority and leadership over the wife and children was based on the fact that he is in a better position to accept the role of responsibility and authority for the home as an institution—a role which is primarily a role of responsibility. The woman's childbearing character, qualities, and nature necessarily impose upon her certain definite limitations. The hormonal changes which her body must necessarily undergo in order to conceive, and the

- 2) And, the fact that they "leave father and mother," shows they were once attached to them in a unique way; they were a part of a home as children.
- c. This leads us to the point that in the forming of this new social unit, the husband and wife have the marvelous privilege of begetting children who are consequently bound to and members of this new social unit.
 - 1) We should also add that children can come to be a part of a home by means of adoption as well as by birth. And,
 - 2) 1 Timothy 5:8 shows that under certain circumstances, one's parents might also become a part of his "household."
3. It is a social unit comprised of free moral beings who — with the exception of children when they are small — choose **how** they will relate to the other members of the unit.
 - a. Herein lies the concept of authority, and thus the title of our lesson: Authority In the Home.
 - b. Authority exercised and respected by free moral beings presents unique challenges fraught with pitfalls and dangers.
 - c. Only by following God's pattern for authority in the home can the dangers be avoided and marvelous blessings enjoyed.
4. As we think of authority as it relates to the home, let us consider...

DISCUSSION:

I. THE MEANING OF IT.

- A. "Authority," often translated "power," comes from the Greek word *exousia*.
 1. It means, in this connection, "the power of rule or government" [Thayer, p. 225].
 2. So, we have Paul telling the women in Corinth to veil themselves that, among other reasons, for the sake of her husband a wife "ought to have authority (*exousia*) on her head, because of the angels (1 Cor. 11:10).

- B. Endowed, therefore innate authority (as discussed above).
- C. Assumed authority (Gen. 2:24; Matt. 19:6; 1 Cor. 7:2).
- D. Moral authority.
 - 1. Where the wife is concerned (Gen. 24:67; Deut. 24:5; Eph. 5:25,28-31; Col. 3:19; 1 Tim. 5:8; Matt. 1:19; Prov. 5:15-19; 1 Cor. 7:3-6; 1 Peter 3:7).
 - 2. Where children are concerned (Deut. 11:18; 32:46; Psalm 103:13; Isaiah 38:19; Col. 3:21; Eph. 6:4; Prov. 3:12; Heb. 12:9; Luke 11:11-13).
 - 3. Where extended members are concerned (1 Tim. 5:8).
- E. Physical Authority (force).
 - 1. Where the wife is concerned: I cannot find where the Lord authorizes the husband to use physical force toward his wife to bring her into compliance with his (the husband's) will.
 - 2. Where children are concerned. The Bible definitely upholds the use of physical, corporal punishment in the training of children (Heb. 12:9; Prov. 13:22; 22:6; 23:13-14; 27:11; 29:15).

V. PROBLEMS OF IT: What if?

- A. My husband is not what he should be (Respectable, respectful, responsible, kind, etc.)?
 - 1. Be what you should be anyway (1 Peter 3:1-7; 1 Cor. 7:1-5). Perhaps your lack of womanliness and respect for him are at the root of matters.
 - 2. If he is a Christian, then with propriety try to reason with him from the Scriptures (cf. Priscilla's example in helping to teach Apollos, Acts 18).
 - 3. Do not be spiteful, resentful, or retaliate (Eph. 4:26-27, 31-32; cf. Rom. 12:18-20).
 - 4. Be faithful to the Lord first and foremost (1 Cor. 7:10-15). The wife's obedience to her husband is modified and limited by the adverbial phrase, "in the Lord" (Col. 3:18).
 - 5. Protect the health and well-being of your children and yourself (cf. 1 Cor. 6:18-20; Matt. 6:14-15).
 - 6. Pray (1 Peter 5:7).

7. Young women: Date and marry **only** faithful, godly, Christian men. Think with your head, not your passions.
- B. My husband; or, My parents; are not as smart as I.
 1. Use your smarts to help them, yet discreetly and respectfully.
 2. Smarts are not all there is to leadership; just consider Solomon.
 3. A smart person, understanding Divine wisdom in the matter, will willingly submit to whomever the Lord says submit.
- C. My wife will not be submissive, and respectful, and accept my decisions.
 1. Essentially everything under point A [above].
 2. Be what you should be anyway. Your lack of manliness and moral authority may be at the root of matters.
 3. Young men: Date and marry **only** women who are faithful Christians and are committed to the authority of the Scriptures in all things. Think with your head, not your passions.
- D. My parents are not what they should be.
 1. Much of points A,B,C [above].
 2. We have many Biblical examples of such [Josiah, for one].
 3. You must still be what you should be.
- E. Remember, however, that though crucial is obedience to one's parents, it must be "in the Lord" [Eph. 6:1].

VI. BLESSINGS OF IT.

- A. A loving, stable, and peaceful environment in which to prepare oneself for Heaven.
- B. A place of fond and sustaining memories in this world of turmoil—

He who though thus endued as with a sense
 And faculty for storm and turbulence,
 Is yet a Soul whose master bias leans
 To homefelt pleasures and to gentle scenes;
 Sweet images! Which, whereso'er he be,
 Are at his heart; and such fidelity
 It is his darling passion to approve;

More brave for this, that he hath much to love:

—William Wordsworth, **The Happy Warrior**

C. A place which serves as a type of what Heaven is like:
a home [cf. John 14:2].

CONCLUSION:

1. Authority, as it relates to the home, is a necessary and unavoidable fact of life.
2. Only when it is exercised by those whom God has ordained and respected by those over whom God has placed the one in authority, can the happiness of home and hearth be enjoyed.
3. The survival of our homes, our communities, our nation depends: not on the solvency of Social Security; not on the EPA; not on nuclear disarmament; rather, it exists on this matter of "authority in the home."
4. More important: Salvation is directly connected to it. Note again, Turner, — Great and often trying responsibilities inhere in positions of authority. This is especially the case with the direction of the home, for as goes the home so goes the nation, as goes the home so goes the church, and as goes the home so goes the ultimate eternity of the children that spring therefrom.²

¹Turner, Rex A., Sr., *Systematic Theology* [Montgomery: Alabama Christian School of Religion, 1989], p. 122.

²Ibid.

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When The Children Leave Home The Empty Nest Syndrome

Tom L. Bright

1. In the life of most families, there comes a time when father and mother must face the fact that there are no more children at home.
2. Whether it be because the last child graduates from college and moves to a new job or gets married, there is the always present "Empty Nest Syndrome."
3. Many parents never stop to think seriously about what they are going to do when they are faced with an "Empty Nest."
4. This is a question that every parent needs to think about because untold harm and misery has fallen upon many homes that are faced with such.

DISCUSSION:

I. CHILDREN ARE AN HERITAGE.

- A. *"Lo, children are an heritage of the LORD: and the fruit of the womb is his reward" (Psa. 127:3).*
 1. Most parents would instantly agree with these words.
 2. It is unnatural for a parent not to love and cherish their children.
- B. In fact, this love is so great that parents often become so "wrapped up" in their children they loose sight of each other.
- C. Suddenly, one day they wake up and the children are gone.
 1. It is as if they had gone to sleep and had awoken in a totally different world.
 2. There is no more home work, no more school activities, no more taking the children to ball practice, band practice, etc.
- D. They are, as it were, living with a stranger in the house.

- E. Interestingly enough, most couples plan many years for retirement, for those “golden years,” but they never think about the “empty nest.”
- F. Sometimes husband and wife have unknowingly grown apart. It was not intentional – it “just happened.”
- G. The one to whom they had sworn undying love and devotion years ago is now a “stranger.”
- H. Some couples are so unprepared for this time in their lives that sometimes severe problems arise.
- I. It is not uncommon, especially in our modern society, for marital problems to arise – even divorce.
- J. One who has faced this “empty nest” problem would like to offer some advice to younger couples who are yet to face this problem.

II. MAN AND WOMAN — GOD’S SPECIAL CREATION.

- A. In God’s divine wisdom, He created man with the basic need of companionship.
- B. In the second chapter of Genesis, we read of the creation of man.
 - 1. In verse eighteen we read, “*And the Lord God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him*” (Gen. 2:18).
 - 2. Then God brought every beast of the field and fowl of the air to Adam and whatsoever he named them, that was the name given to them (Gen. 2:19).
 - 3. In verse 20, there is recorded a significant statement that is often overlooked: “*...but for Adam there was not found an help meet for him.*”
- C. Verse twenty does not suggest that God intended to give to Adam one of the beasts or fowls as this “help meet.”
 - 1. It was God’s intention to impress upon the man that none of His prior creation was adequate for the “help meet” He had in mind.
 - 2. It was to be something special, unique, and distinctive.
- D. God then put Adam to sleep and from his side He took a rib; from this rib he made a woman and then brought her to the man.

1. This "help meet" was to be unlike anything He had created previously – a special creation, for a special purpose, to be a "help meet" for a special part of His creation.
 2. The Divine record does not tell us of any other such special creation in order to provide a mate for any animal, bird, fish, etc.
 3. This "help-meet" was special, unique, and privileged.
 4. Adam's reaction shows this: *"And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of man"* [Gen. 2:23].
- E. It is only when man understands this and never forgets it that such problems as the "empty nest syndrome" will never destroy this God-ordained, basic foundation stone of any society.

III. "AND THEY SHALL BE ONE FLESH."

- A. Truly our children are a precious, cherished, and priceless gift from God.
1. But however precious they are to us, there is a relationship that is even closer and more enduring than our association with our children.
 2. Someday that son and daughter will decide they have found one they desire to have as their mate – they will leave home!
 - a. Does this mean we are to love them less? Care for them less? Have a lesser concern for their well-being? Certainly not!
 - b. Mark my words – there will never come a time when we will cease to be concerned about our children!
 - 1) They will always be in our thoughts and prayers.
 - 2) We will always want the best for them.
- B. But it is God's design they have their own home – thus, they must leave the home into which they were born.
- C. The question then arises: Upon what are the parents who are left in that home to build?
1. Have they forgotten each other?

2. Has their love unknowingly waned for their mate?
3. Are they able to "pick up" and go forward in a "childless" home?
4. Indeed so, if they have built upon the Divine plan!
- D. Remember this one thought: THE CLOSEST HUMAN RELATIONSHIP THAT MAN CAN SUSTAIN IN THIS LIFE IS THE HUSBAND-WIFE RELATIONSHIP.
 1. The Bible speaks of them as "one flesh."
 - a. This union is so close the thought of "two becoming one" is clearly manifested.
 - b. God intended them to be one in purpose, aim, goal, desire, intent.
 - c. Paul argued that "...He that loveth his wife loveth himself" [Eph. 5:28].
 2. They are "two," yet are blended together so that they are spoken of as one.

IV. THE HUSBAND'S PART OF "ONE FLESH."

- A. According to God, the man is the head of the wife [Gen. 3:16].
 1. God could have:
 - a. Made the wife the head – but He did not!
 - b. Made the children the head – but He did not!
 - c. Made the parents the head – but He did not!
 - d. Made the home a democracy – but He did not!
- B. The husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church [Eph. 5:22-25].
 1. The spirit of submission which the church extends to Christ, its Head, should be the type of submission the wife extends to her head.
 2. But with any authority, there is always a corresponding responsibility.
- C. The husband is to love his wife [Eph. 5:23-28], as his own body [vs. 28], as himself [vs. 33].
 1. This is not a "dictatorial" headship.
- D. He is to provide for his wife [Gen. 3:17-19; 1 Tim.. 5:8].
- E. He is to be kind [Col. 3:19].
- F. He is to:
 1. Dwell with her according to knowledge [1 Peter 3:7].
 - a. Guy N. Woods says, concerning *dwell*, it is "translated from a term which denotes domestic

- association, and sums up the relationships of the marriage state" [Gospel Advocate Commentary].
2. Give honor to her as the weaker vessel (1 Peter 3:7).
 - a. "Honor" is from the same word as "precious" in 1 Peter 3:19.
 - b. Christian husbands are to regard their wives as precious, and to assign them the honor that is their due.
 3. This dwelling with them is to be "according to knowledge."
 - a. Woods says, "with due understanding of the nature of the marital relation, each showing proper regard for the other, and both discharging the duties peculiarly theirs."
 - 1) Men must realize that women are different than men.
 - 2) Regardless of the modern hue and cry to make a unisex society, man must realize there is still a vast difference between the male and the female.
 - 3) This difference is not only physical, but emotional as well.
 4. This "knowledge" does not come overnight, nor on the honeymoon, but is gained only after a number of years together.
- G. He is to protect her [Eph. 5:25].
- H. He is to love her, as Christ loved the church [Eph. 5:25].
1. This is a love that assumes responsibility.
 1. This love is not a dictatorial, tyrannical, despotic, overbearing, unreasonable kind of love.
 2. This is a "saving" love [Eph. 5:23; 25]
 - a. He should make her path to salvation as easy as possible.
 - b. His every aim, motive, word, deed, and action in the marital relationship should be Christ-like, and self-appreciating in character.
 - c. Derogatory criticism, unkind words, impure motives, thoughtless actions and uncouth deed will be non-existent.

- J. This is a *nourishing, cherishing* love (Eph. 5:28-29).
1. The word translated "cherish" suggests the idea of treating with tenderness and affection, to take care of, to hold dear and value highly.
 2. In the original language, it means to keep warm, as a bird keeps her babies warm.
 3. Colossians 3:18-19 urges the husband to "be not bitter" against his wife.
 - a. The basic meaning of "bitter" is "sharp, pointed, keen, cutting."
 - b. Thus, Paul had in mind all that is tender, caring, and sweet.

V. THE WIFE'S PART OF "ONE FLESH."

- A. She is to reverence [respect] her husband (Eph. 5:33).
1. This means "to reverence, venerate, to treat with deference or reverential obedience" [Thayer].
 2. Her life is to be chaste, coupled with *fear* (1 Peter 3:2).
 3. It has rightly been said that a woman needs love and a man needs respect.
- B. How does a woman show this "fear?"
1. By wearing his name (Gen. 5:2).
 2. By submitting to him (Eph. 5:22-24).
 3. By fulfilling her obligations at home (Titus 2:3-5; 1 Tim. 5:14).
 - a. The Titus passage rules out competition, domination, overshadowing, or criticizing.
- C. A woman must understand the commitment of marriage (Rom. 7:1-3; Matt. 19:4-6).
- D. She must understand the thrust of "For Better, For Worse."
1. She will walk unwaveringly beside her husband, hand in hand with him over the peaks and valleys of life.
 2. There is a fact of life that all need to understand.
 - a. Into every life there must come some rain — blessed is the man whose wife has that staying power, who faces life in the light of the great truths of God's word (Nahum 1:7; 1 Peter 4:12; 1 Peter 5:7).

- E. She must be one who hopes for heaven.
 - 1. A man finds an invaluable treasure when he finds a wife who not only wants to go to heaven, but expects to go there.
 - 2. With this great HOPE [desire and expectation], she can do nothing less than help her husband.
- F. She should be one who desires to help him grow spiritually.
 - 1. She can do this by example, as well as by what she says.
 - 2. Matt. 5:13-16; Prov. 3:5-6
- G. She must realize she is his "help-meet."
 - 1. In God's scheme, she was created to be man's helper, his complement, that which fulfilled in every way that which God desired.
 - 2. Inferiority or superiority does not even enter into the picture.
 - a. It is the role each must play to fulfill God's design.
 - b. The wife places herself under the leadership of the husband as he leads the family in the way of Christ.
 - c. In return, the husband loves, cherishes, honors, and cares for that which was created for him.
- H. She is to be a source of love and comfort in trying times.
 - 1. She is to succor him in times of trial.
 - a. To whom can he go to discuss the problems that arise in life?
 - b. Only she really knows her husband; and in spite of his shortcomings and weaknesses, she loves him.
 - c. She does not criticize and ridicule him.
 - d. Neither does she store up in her mind his failures in times past to be used at some convenient future time.
 - 1) She realizes his shortcomings does not make him a failure in life.
 - 2) She understands he should be the one to help her in her weaknesses.

- I. She takes pride in her walk before man and God (1 Tim. 2:9-10).
 1. "*Modesty*" is that which is well arranged, seemly, well-ordered, moderate, orderly, decent.
 - a. "In secular Greek... [I]t describes one who disciplines himself and who may thus be regarded as genuinely moral and respectable...The term has the same sense of 'honorable,' 'disciplined,' in 1 Tim. 2:9" (Kittel, p. 894).
 2. *Shamefacedness* involves "...an innate moral repugnance to the doing of the dishonorable act... finds its motive in itself, implies reverence for the good as good, and not merely as that to which honour and reputation are attached" (Trench, pp. 61-62).
 3. *Sobriety*, according to Trench (p. 66), is "properly the condition of an entire command over the passions and desires, so that they receive no further allowance than that which the law and right reason admit and approve."
 - a. Thus, we see "self-control."

VI. WHAT HAPPENS, THEN, WHEN THE CHILDREN LEAVE?

- A. The last child leaving home is something that, for all intents and purposes, every husband and wife must face.
- B. But our interest in this lesson focuses upon the parents and what might and can happen.
- C. Pleasant times can be in the future for those who must face it, but they can also be trying, stressful, and debilitating times.
- D. The future of many husbands and wives facing this problem depends upon whether they have followed the Word of God.
- E. If they have been a faithful, dedicated couple, they will realize this is just another burden they will have to bear.
- F. They must realize there is still a future for them, both as husband and wife and as servants of God.

- G. The needs of their mate will never cease.
- H. The cause of Christ will always have need of dedicated and active Christians. There will always be the need of workers in the kingdom of God.

VII. **WHAT CAN THEY DO TO PREPARE FOR THIS?**

- A. They both must always remember: When they were married, they entered into the closest human relationship they will ever enjoy in this life.
- B. They both must always remember: Regardless of the number of children that grace their union, one day all the children will be gone.
- C. Thus, early in their marriage, let each vow to never forget their mate.
 - 1. Furthermore, let them be sure they renew this vow often.
- D. They must always strive to be the dedicated mate they vowed during their wedding ceremony.
- E. They should take time to be with each other, even when the children are small.
 - 1. Each must have, at least some of the time, the attention of their mate.
- F. They must never forget to express their love for each other.
 - 1. It is never wrong to tell your mate, "I love you."
- G. They must often ask the question of self and of each other: What are we going to do when the children are gone? What preparations are we making? What provisions have we made?
- H. Thus, concerning the children leaving home, each young parent should: 1) Think seriously about the problem. 2) Make definite plans for the event. 3) Determine to carry out those plans.

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The Joy Of The Christian Home (There Is No Place Like Home)

Jimmie Hill

1. To begin a discussion on *The Joy of the Christian Home*, it may be helpful to simply define the terms found in the phrase.
2. *Joy* is a “fruit of the Spirit” (Gal. 5:22) and is simply defined as “gladness.”
 - a. One who is filled with this “gladness” will rejoice.
 - b. It is certain that every faithful Christian has much to rejoice about.
 - c. And as the word *joy* is used in this context, it indicates that this rejoicing is a result of doing that which is both right and good.
 - d. The apostle Paul wrote elsewhere that “*Charity... (love) rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth*” (1 Cor. 13:6).
 - e. To be the home that Jehovah God would have it to be, every Christian in the home must be filled with this kind of *joy*.
 - f. The very nature of *joy* would necessitate the inclusion of *peace* which is also a “fruit of the Spirit” (Gal. 5:22).
 - g. *Peace* is a state of harmony between individuals based upon certain agreements.
 - h. But to be Biblical peace, the terms of the agreement must be those which are authorized by the Spirit if the peace is acceptable to Jehovah God.
 - i. Again, to be the home that God would have it to be, every Christian in the home must be filled with this kind of *peace*.
 - j. Also, Biblical *joy* would include *love* – another “fruit of the Spirit” (Gal. 5:22).
 - k. This kind of *love* is the agape type of love that is to be characteristic in the life of every Christian.
 - l. This *love* enables one to have an interest in the physical and spiritual welfare of another no matter how unpleasant the situation or disposition may be.

- m. To be the home that God would have it to be, this love would permeate the life of every Christian in that home.
 - n. And most certainly, the other "*fruit of the Spirit...long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance*" [Gal. 5:22-23] would be found in the Christian home.
3. Although the word *Christian* is never used in the New Testament as an adjective but always a noun [Acts 11:26; 26:28; 1 Peter 4:16], it is understood in this phrase to mean a home in which the parents and some or all of the children are Christians.
- a. A *Christian* may be defined as follows:
 - 1) One who has obeyed the gospel of Jesus Christ from a firm conviction [Rom. 6:17].
 - 2) One who is willing to suffer for the cause of Jesus Christ [1 Peter 4:16].
 - 3) One who is separated from the world and sanctified to Jehovah God [Rom. 12:1-2].
 - 4) One who is devoted to the church and the righteousness of God [Matt. 6:33].
 - 5) One who appreciates the Truth [Gal. 4:16].
 - 6) One who is willing to accept the Truth and grow thereby [2 Peter 1:5-11].
 - b. These and many other attributes define the *Christian*.
4. Sadly, to many the *home* is nothing more than a place to stay between midnight and dawn or when everything else is closed.
- a. One has said that the home is a place to fight private family battles.
 - b. Another said that the home is the place where one slaves the hardest and is appreciated the least.
 - c. To some the home is nothing more than a place to eat and sleep.
 - d. Please note the following account:

Several years ago, Mr. Henry Grady was invited to Washington to write some articles about the Capitol of the United States. The story goes that he was taken to behold the beautiful buildings and to look at the Capitol from all four sides. Each time that he beheld a different side of the Capitol he would ask, "And this is the Capitol of the United States?" After this experience Mr. Grady

returned home, and on his way he had to stay overnight in a small house with a poor family. After the evening meal, the father of that family said, "Mr. Grady, before we retire each night we read our Bible and pray. We would be glad to have you join us in this service if you will." Mr. Grady said that he would be glad to, and he joined them in their family prayer. The next day Mr. Grady continued his journey, and after reaching his home, he wrote, "I have been to the Capitol of the United States, but it is not in Washington; it is in the American home where the Christian father and the Christian mother respect and read the Bible, and where children are reared by the teachings of Christ." (*The Ideal Home*, p.17, by I. A. Douhitt).

- e. Our nation, our schools, nor our society will ever rise above the home.
 - f. The home has been ordained by Jehovah God and it is to be the center and the foundation of society.
5. Thus we have simply defined *The Joy of a Christian Home*.

DISCUSSION:

I. THE CHRISTIAN HOME IS TO BE A PLACE OF PEACE.

- A. A true Christian home is a place where every family member can turn to, no matter what the situation, and know that he can find comfort there.
 - 1. When one is depressed or lonely he should be able to find solace in the home.
 - 2. When one's business fails or he is having financial difficulties he should be able to find tranquility and moral sustenance in the home.
 - 3. When young people or any member of the family gets into trouble they need to know that the family will support them in what is best for them.
 - a. This does not mean that family members overlook the wrong that other family members do.
 - b. To do so would be to condone sin and thus become guilty of sin.

- c. But every member of the family ought to feel that when he repents he will be accepted in the home.
- B. Love will enable each family member to supply solace, comfort, and strength to every other family member in their time of need no matter how unpleasant the situation or their disposition may be.
- C. In Matthew 5:44 the Lord said, *"Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you."*
- D. Certainly if one can love his enemies, he can surely love the members of his family.

II. THE CHRISTIAN HOME IS TO BE A PLACE OF LOVE.

- A. Biblical love will be shown by the things it does.
- B. A man who truly loves his family will supply their physical needs (Matt. 7:9-10; 1 Tim. 5:8).
- C. But what of their other needs?
 - 1. The apostle Paul wrote in 1 Cor. 13:5 that *"Charity [love] ...seeketh not her own."*
 - 2. Love is not selfish.
 - 3. We often think that selfishness applies only to the physical things in this life but is that true?
 - 4. Paul commands in Galatians 6:2, *"Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ."*
 - a. We are commanded to take up and carry one another in the trials and hardships of this life.
 - b. Christ taught all through His life that we should love one another (John 13:35) and that would be shown in helping one another in the hardships of human existence.
 - c. This would certainly apply to the Christian home.
- D. Every member of the Christian home will not seek his own but will seek the physical and spiritual needs of his family.
- E. Each member of the Christian home needs to know that he can find love and strength in that home no matter what the situation.
- F. The Christian home is to be a place of love.

III. THE CHRISTIAN HOME IS TO BE A PLACE OF FORGIVENESS.

A. Abraham was a very forgiving man.

1. Even though his nephew Lot chose "*all the plain of Jordan*" (Gen. 13:11) without regard to Abraham and even though Lot "*pitched his tent toward Sodom*" (Gen. 13:12), Abraham still had an attitude of forgiveness toward him.
2. When Lot was taken captive by Chedorlaomer, Abraham went to his rescue (Gen. 14:12-16).

B. Esau was a very forgiving man.

1. We know that Esau profaned his birthright (Gen. 25:29-34; Heb. 12:14-17).
2. It is needful that we look at the deception concerning Esau's birthright to fully appreciate his forgiveness.
 - a. Esau's poor, old, blind father was deceived (Gen. 27:6-29).
 - 1) We think that those who take advantage of the elderly today are despicable.
 - 2) Why should Esau be any different?
 - b. Esau's own mother planned this deceit and made sure that it was carried out to the letter.
 - 1) If your mother turned against you and used this kind of deception to take from you all you had, would you not feel hurt and emotionally injured?
 - 2) Why should Esau feel any different?
 - c. And all of this was done to let his brother Jacob have what was Esau's right by birth.
3. But Esau forgave.
 - a. He forgave his father's gullibleness and his being deceived.
 - b. He forgave his mother and her part of the deception.
 - c. And he forgave Jacob as well (Gen. 33:1-4).
 - d. Esau "*fell on his (Jacob's) neck, and kissed him: and they wept.*"
4. And do not forget the words of our Lord as He hung on the cross just before He died when He said,

"Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do" [Luke 23:34].

- C. If Abraham could forgive Lot of his foolishness and Esau could forgive his entire family for their deception and the Lord was willing to forgive the whole world for its sin, should we not forgive our family members who err?
 - 1. Col. 3:13, *"Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye."*
 - 2. Matt. 6:13-14, *"For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: but if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses."*
- D. As we are to exhibit the spirit of patience with the faults of others, how much more so should we exhibit the same spirit with the members of our family.
- E. Every member of the Christian home should know that when he errs and repents, his family will forgive him no matter what he has done and that he can find comfort and encouragement in that home.
- F. The Christian home is to be a place of forgiveness.

IV. THE CHRISTIAN HOME IS TO BE A PLACE OF CONSISTENCY.

- A. Consistency implies there is a standard which must be adhered to.
 - 1. A standard logically implies authority.
 - 2. The authority in the Christian home is the New Testament [Col. 3:17; 2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:3].
 - a. The New Testament authorizes the husband as the head of his wife [Eph. 5:22-23].
 - 1) Woman was made as a *"help meet"* for man [Gen. 2:18].
 - 2) Longfellow likened a woman to the cord of a bow, bending the bow, yet responding to it and one is useless without the other.
 - 3) God's husband and wife are like a lock and key that form one functioning unit.

- b. The New Testament authorizes the husband to dwell with the wife *“giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel”* (1 Peter 3:7).
 - 1) This does not mean that women are inferior but more delicate.
 - 2) This honor is due to her because *“She looketh well to the ways of her household”* (Prov. 31:27-28).
- c. The New Testament authorizes parents to train their children to respect authority (Prov. 22:6; 23:13; 29:15; 1:7-9; Eph. 6:1-4).
 - 1) Proper teaching is the first step in training.
 - 2) “Nurture” in Ephesians 6:4 means instruction and discipline.
 - 3) “Admonition” means putting into the mind that which is authorized by the Lord.
 - 4) Parents are also authorized to teach their children respect for civil authority as well (Rom. 13:1-5).
 - 5) And discipline is not a “four-letter word” no matter what the government may say – it is authorized by Jehovah God.
 - 6) Brother Marshall Keeble once said that “The trouble with most houses these days is that there are too many electric switches and not enough peach tree switches.”
- 3. To be the home that God would have it to be, every member of the Christian home should know and respect his or her duties and obligations to one another.
- 4. Parents owe it to their children to be Christians and to be consistent in teaching them that which is authorized by Jehovah God and children owe it to their parents to be mindful of these things.
- B. There is to be a consistency in discipline in the Christian home.
 - 1. This doesn’t mean that each child is to be punished in exactly the same way when they are being disciplined.
 - 2. It does mean however that each knows that discipline will be administered as it is needed.

3. We can look at the example of Jacob and Esau and see this principle plainly.
 - a. Even though Jacob and Esau were twins, the two were very different (Gen. 25:26-27).
 - 1) Esau was wild, a hunter, a man of the field with a careless attitude.
 - 2) Jacob was a homebody, content to stay around the house and farm the fields.
 - 3) Jacob also had foresight.
 - b. These differences can be seen in the way Esau sold his birthright as Isaac's firstborn (Gen. 25:29-34).
 - 1) Esau was thinking only of the present and not of things to come.
 - 2) But Jacob knew what he wanted and bargained for it taking advantage of his brother's weakness.
 - 3) No two children are alike.
4. In children, one child may be disciplined with a stern rebuke while another will have to be punished with corporal punishment.
 - a. There was once a man who had two daughters who were very different in character.
 - b. The eight year old was very quiet and passive while the five year old was inquisitive and full of vigor.
 - c. As the father was working one day in their backyard, the five year old started to grab one of his tools from the work table.
 - d. The father warned her not to touch the tool and if she did then he would spank her.
 - e. She stood pondering for a moment, grabbed the tool and took off.
 - f. When he caught up with her he asked her if she had not understood the warning and the consequences, she replied "Yes, I understood but I thought the punishment would be worth it."
 - g. Children are different.
5. To be the home God would have it to be, every member should know that discipline is a must.

- C. Consistency in the Christian home means there will be no parental partiality.
1. Esau and Jacob were victims of parental partiality and the outcome is apparent by the text [Gen. 25-27].
 - a. Rebekah loved Jacob and lied and cheated for him.
 - b. Isaac loved Esau and was willing to go against God for him.
 - c. Esau hated Jacob and Jacob was afraid of Esau.
 2. Parental partiality separates the parents who are to be one in God's plan [Gen. 2:24; Eph. 5:31].
 3. It causes fear and hatred among the children.
 4. One or both parents may have more in common with one of their children more than the others.
 - a. However, one child should not be put before another in a detrimental way or in a way to cause harm to another.
 - b. This causes hatred, resentment, and division within the home and that home does not glorify the Lord Jesus.
 5. In the Christian home, every child knows he can receive the love and special attention he needs when he needs it.
- D. In the Christian home there is the consistency of example.
1. Jehovah God instituted and ordained the first home in Eden and it was a paradise [Gen. 2].
 2. However, this perfect home was wrecked by sin [Gen. 3].
 3. Parents (and children) must set forth the proper example in the Christian home.
 - a. If profanity, gambling, dancing, fornication, immodest apparel, bad tempers, wagging tongues, covetousness, etc., are part of the parent's lives, then it will be seen in their children.
 - b. Again, parents OWE it to their children to be Christians!
 4. No one lives without some kind of influence [Rom. 14:7,13].

- a. Our Lord taught by His example [1 Peter 2:21].
 - b. Paul and the other apostles set an example [1 Cor. 11:1].
 - c. Paul wrote to Timothy *"but be thou an example of the believers"* [1 Tim. 4:12].
 - d. Therefore, we must set the examples for our children.
 - e. Paul complimented Timothy for his faith *"which dwelt first in [his] grandmother Lois, and [his] mother Eunice"* [2 Tim. 1:5].
5. In the Christian home, every child is assured he can look to his parents for the proper example of Christianity.
- E. Because of our Father's consistency (James 1:17) every Christian home is to be consistent if it is the home that God would have it to be.

V. SOME OBSTACLES THAT MUST BE OVERCOME TO HAVE JOY IN THE CHRISTIAN HOME.

- A. The competition of the world [1 John 2:15-17].
- 1. There are many activities that take the children out of the home (and away from the church).
 - a. Athletic competitions.
 - b. Extra-curricular school activities.
 - c. Clubs and other organizations.
 - 2. There are many activities that take the parents out of the home (and away from the church).
 - a. Business affairs.
 - b. Civic and community projects.
 - c. Recreation.
 - d. Social functions.
 - 3. There are many competing elements in the home.
 - a. School work.
 - b. Housework.
 - c. Television, videos games, computers, etc.
 - 4. While these things are not wrong in and of themselves, they must not take precedence over the spiritual matters in the home [Matt. 6:33; 22:37].
- B. The influence of liberalism.
- 1. Many in the church today condone worldliness instead of condemning it.

2. Many mock the authority of the Scriptures and therefore, authority in general.
3. Many have been converted to the name "Church of Christ" but have not learned that God's people are "*transformed*" from the world [Rom. 12:1-2] and are to be "*a peculiar people*" [1 Peter 2:9].

CONCLUSION:

1. Every aspect of *The Joy of the Christian Home* has not been covered in this lesson; however, the things discussed here are important elements in the Christian home.
2. The Christian home is to be a place of peace, love, forgiveness, and consistency.
3. It is to be a haven of safety, comfort, encouragement, and reassurance for each and every member of the home.
4. And while there are many obstacles that must be overcome for a home to be as God would have it to be, our God has not left us undone.
5. May each one resolve to go to the Word of God and "*Set thine house in order*" [2 Kings 20:1].
6. "*As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord*" [Joshua 24:15].
7. May "*the joy of the Lord*" be your strength [Neh. 8:10].

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Discipline In The Home

Walter W. Pigg

1. Importance of family discipline is seen in the importance of the home.
2. As the home goes, so goes society to a great degree.
3. As the home goes, so goes the church in general.

- a. There is a mutual influence of the church, the home and society upon each other.
- 4. There is abundant evidence that the need for discipline in the home has never been greater than at the present.
 - a. Discipline and how it applies to the home needs to be better understood.
 - b. As discipline is better understood, it needs to be applied.

DISCUSSION:

I. DISCIPLINE DEFINED, AS IT PERTAINS TO THE HOME.

- A. "Discipline" is used once in the Old Testament (Job. 36:10), where it is defined as "chastisement, instruction."
- B. In 2 Tim. 1:7 ASV, the word "discipline" is translated from the Greek word *sophronismos*. Thayer defines the word: "an admonishing or calling to soundness of mind, to moderation and self-control" [p. 613].
- C. From *Webster* the following definitions are being used:
 - 1. training to act in accordance with rules.
 - 3. punishment inflicted by way of correction and training.
 - 5. behavior in accord with rules of conduct.
- D. There are two forms of discipline: 1) instructive and 2) corrective.
 - 1. Instructive discipline involves teaching and training.
 - 2. Corrective discipline involves punishment of some kind when rules are broken.

II. WHY DISCIPLINE IS NEEDED IN THE HOME.

- A. God has ordained it.
 - 1. The writer of *Proverbs* speaks:
 - a. Prov. 13:24, "*He that spareth his rod hateth his son: but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes.*"
 - b. Prov. 22:15, "*Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him.*"
 - c. Prov. 23:13-14, "*Withhold not correction from the child: for if thou beatest him with the rod, he shall not die. ¹⁴Thou shalt beat him with the rod, and shalt deliver his soul from hell.*"

- d. Prov. 29:15, *"The rod and reproof give wisdom: but a child left to himself bringeth his mother shame."*
- 2. The Apostle Paul's instructions.
 - a. Eph. 6:1-3, *"Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. ²Honour thy father and mother; (which is the first commandment with promise;) ³That it may be well with thee, and that thou mayest live long on the earth."*
 - b. Eph. 6:4, *"And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."*
 - c. Eph. 5:22-25, *"Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. ²³For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the savior of the body. ²⁴Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything. ²⁵Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it."*
- B. That the home may function as God intended.
 - 1. God instituted the home as an essential unit of the human family.
 - a. A man is to leave father and mother and cleave to his wife [Gen. 2:24].
 - b. Men and women to be fruitful and multiply [Gen. 1:28].
 - 2. Without rules and standards of conduct, chaos results.
 - 3. An arrangement of authority within the family is necessary.
 - a. The man, the husband, is the head of the wife [Eph. 5:23-24].
 - b. The children are subject to the parents [Eph. 6:1].
 - c. The aged women are to teach younger women to be sober [wise], to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands [Titus 2:2-4].

- d. All accountable members are subject to Christ (John 12:48).
- 4. The conditions in homes where discipline is absent is valid proof of its necessity.
- C. Discipline is good for every member of the family.
 - 1. Every person has a personal need for discipline, from the father downward.
 - a. Those not receiving discipline have been cheated.
 - b. The loss to some is measured in terms of: a ruined life, years in prison, sickness and disease, loss of physical life, and even the greatest of losses, the soul.
 - 2. Multitudes of children are being cheated by their parents because discipline is denied.
 - a. Some of those parents are members of the Lord's church.
 - b. Some are materially well off and provide their children with all sorts of material things, but they are failing to give their children discipline.
 - c. Children need to learn respect, a part of discipline.
 - 1) Respect for adults, for parents, other people, civil and Godly authority.
 - d. Children need to learn responsibility.
 - 1) Many children now want "rights" without any "responsibilities."
 - 2) Many have grown up in the past generation under this delusion, causing problems.
- D. Discipline is needed to condition family members to respect God's will.
 - 1. In a majority of today's families there is little or no respect for God's will.
 - 2. This proper respect for God's will is lacking in many families who are members of the Lord's church.
 - a. This accounts for some of the serious problems the church is now experiencing.
 - 3. The child who is taught the proper respect for authority in the home will likely grow up with respect for God's authority, the most important of all authority.

- a. When proper responsibility is learned at home, the all important responsibility toward God will likely be acknowledged.

III. THINGS WHICH MAKE DISCIPLINE IN THE HOME DIFFICULT.

- A. To accomplish the noble objective of discipline in the home, a determination to overcome the problems faced is necessary.
 1. The conditions in today's society are not in the least conducive to the practice of the true discipline which God desires to exist in the home.
- B. Some conditions contributing to the difficulty of discipline in the home.
 1. Lack of discipline in government.
 - a. This is seen from the office of the president down to the lowest offices of government.
 2. Discipline in public schools is very lax.
 - a. The influence of educational psychologists is in the direction of little or no discipline.
 - b. Teachers and administrators are not allowed to administer strict discipline.
 - c. The increasing number of murders by school children is evidence of a lack of discipline.
 3. Discipline is lacking in most homes of today.
 - a. The majority of those children with whom children associate have not been disciplined.
 - b. Not only are children undisciplined, this is true of a great many adults.
 4. Discipline is generally absent in the increasing number of broken homes.
 - a. When discipline is lacking with parents, children are likely to be the same.
 5. The bill of fare of much of what TV has to offer encourages a lack of discipline.
 - a. This involves the lack of punishment for criminal activity; the rights of the criminal being emphasized and the victim's rights diminished.
 - b. The entertainment offerings often promote the lack of sexual and moral discipline.

6. A strong trend in society which holds that few individuals are responsible for their actions, regardless of the nature of such.
7. In many homes, where both parents work, the children are not given the discipline that children deserve for their own well-being.
 - a. Many families are rarely together for a meal. The lack of being together as a family weakens the bond which is found in the ideal home.
8. Discipline is often lacking in the congregation where the family attends services.
 - a. When discipline is not practiced within a congregation, it tends to dampen discipline in the home.
 - b. When preachers, teachers, elders and other members ignore God's law of discipline the failure will be noted by children, even at an earlier age than most realize.

IV. AREAS OF DISCIPLINE NEEDING ATTENTION IN THE HOME.

A. The content and manner of speech.

1. Words are powerful and can encourage good or evil in the home.
 - a. Christ said that in the judgment we will give account for every idle word we speak. Then he said, *"For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned"* (Matt. 12:37).
2. Truth should always be spoken, never lying. Paul said, *"Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor..."* (Eph. 4:25).
 - a. This would also apply to family members. Lying is always condemned (Rev. 21:8).
 - b. Lying is a common thing in today's society. Even our President is known for his lying, and yet to so many that makes no difference whatsoever!
 - c. I have heard parents lie to their children, threatening to discipline them when the children knew the parents wouldn't keep their word.

- d. I have heard parents direct their children to lie for them, telling anyone who calls that the parents were not there. An outright lie!
3. Paul says, "*Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth...*" (Eph. 4:29).
 - a. This would include obscene language relative to sex and other matters.
 - b. Children, and many adults, are being bombarded with filthy language by way of TV, literature, movies, and common conversation.
 - c. The language used in homes is sometimes far from what God would approve.
 - d. Rather than corrupt language, that which edifies should be the goal when possible.
4. Language in the home should be characterized by the love which members are to have for each other.
- B. The manner of living. This covers a wide area for which instructions are given in God's word.
 1. God's law on marriage should be taught and upheld in the home.
 - a. His law rules out divorce and remarriage, except in the case of adultery as per the instructions of Matt. 19:9.
 - b. God's law rules out sex outside of marriage (1 Cor. 7:1-5; Heb. 13:4).
 2. The use of alcohol and other drugs must never be practiced or tolerated.
 - a. The *works of the flesh* (Gal. 5:19-21) will keep people out of heaven.
 - b. The works of the flesh are encouraged by today's society.
 3. A proper work ethic should be practiced by parents. And, children should be so taught.
 - a. The New Testament principle is, if any would not work, neither should he eat (2 Thess. 3:9).
 - b. *Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth* (Eph. 4:28).
 4. The pursuit of spiritual things before the secular should be taught and practiced.

V. RESPONSIBILITY OF FAMILY MEMBERS FOR DISCIPLINE IN THE HOME.

- A. The father is the head of the home [Eph. 5:23].
 - 1. The father has the responsibility to bring up the children *in the nurture and admonition of the Lord* [Eph. 6:4].
 - 2. The father is to love his wife *as Christ also loved the church...* [Eph. 5:25].
 - a. The father is never to be a dictator, but should assume his responsibility as head.
- B. Wives are to *submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord* [Eph. 5:22].
 - 1. Wives have an important role in instructing the children.
 - a. Children are told to *obey your parents in the Lord...Honor thy father and mother* [Eph. 6:1-2].
- C. Children are to obey their parents [Eph. 6:1-2].
 - 1. The older children can play an important part in teaching the younger children concerning things which are right and things which are wrong.
 - a. The oldest child often has considerable influence with the younger children.
- D. The parents should always stand together in their teaching and exercise of discipline.
 - 1. Children will often take advantage of the weaker parent in an effort to have their way.
 - 2. It is highly unfair for either parent to threaten their children with the other parent.

CONCLUSION:

- 1. The always sufficient guide for discipline in the home is God's Word [2 Tim. 3:16-17].
- 2. Family members should never look to the works (books) of men rather than God's Word to know what God wants in the area of discipline in the home.
- 3. The lack of discipline in today's society is a reflection upon the generation which looked to Dr. Spock and others of like mind to learn about discipline, or the lack of it.

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Questions #4

Who can get married?

Is desertion a cause for divorce and remarriage?

What is "due benevolence?"

Was Jesus narrow-minded?

Jimmy W. Bates

1. The asking and answering of questions has always been an effective method of learning Bible truth on any subject.
2. The danger is in the **source** from which we derive answers to questions relating to moral and spiritual matters (2 Tim. 3:16,17; 2 Peter 1:3).
 - a. Men have provided a variety of answers to such questions (1 John 4:1; Prov. 14:12).
 - b. The only true answer is that revealed in God's Word (John 8:32; 17:17; Rom. 3:4; 1 Peter 4:11; John 12:48).
3. Only when we honestly study the principles, direct statements, implications, and examples of the Bible, "rightly dividing" or "handling aright" the Word of Truth, will we derive the true answer to moral and spiritual questions.

DISCUSSION:

I. **WHO CAN GET MARRIED?**

- A. God instituted marriage for the good of man (Gen. 2:18-25) and sets forth rules and regulations to govern every aspect of marriage.
 1. God's general rule is one man and one woman for life (Gen. 2; Rom. 7:1-4).
 2. God gives one exception to the rule – **fornication**. Matt. 19:9, "*And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery.*"
 - a. "**Whosoever...**" – applies universally to all people.
 - b. Two groups who commit adultery – continuous action – keep on committing adultery.

- 1) Whosoever shall put away (divorce) his wife and shall marry another, **EXCEPT** it be for fornication on the part of his wife.
- 2) Whosoever marries the one who has been put away (divorced) because of fornication.
- c. **"Except"** – an exception to the general rule set forth in Luke 16:18 and Mark 10:11,12.
 - 1) The one exception is **fornication**.
 - 2) Therefore, whosoever puts away (divorces) his/her companion because of fornication on the part of that companion and marries another (one scripturally eligible) **does not** commit adultery.
- B. One who does not respect (obey) God's rules and regulations on marriage may render himself/herself **ineligible** to get married with God's approval.
 1. The following do not have a scriptural right to marry:
 - a. Those who have a living former companion who was not put away (divorced) because of fornication.
 - b. Those who would marry one who has a living former companion who was not put away (divorced) because of fornication.
 - c. Those who themselves were put away (divorced) because of their own fornication.
 - d. And for different reasons, those who would enter same-sex marriages do not have a scriptural right (Gen. 2:18-25).
 2. One who is ineligible (see above) for marriage may not marry without entering a sinful relationship.
 3. One who is eligible for marriage, yet marries one who is ineligible for marriage also enters a sinful relationship.
- C. **Who, then can get married with God's approval?**
 1. Those who have never been married (1 Cor. 7:9,28).
 2. Those who have been married but whose former companion is dead (Rom. 7:1-4).
 3. Those who have been married but whose former companion was guilty of fornication and was put

away (divorced) because of that fornication (Matt. 19:9; 5:32).

4. These may marry with God's approval as long as they marry one who is eligible according to God's rules.

II. IS DESERTION A CAUSE FOR DIVORCE AND REMARRIAGE?

A. In **1 Corinthians 7**, Paul answers a series of questions the Corinthians had written him concerning marriage. In **verses 10-16** he speaks to the married: ¹⁰*"And unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord, Let not the wife depart from her husband: ¹¹But and if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband: and let not the husband put away his wife. ¹²But to the rest speak I, not the Lord: If any brother hath a wife that believeth not, and she be pleased to dwell with him, let him not put her away. ¹³And the woman which hath a husband that believeth not, and if he be pleased to dwell with her, let her not leave him. ¹⁴For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband: else were your children unclean; but now are they holy. ¹⁵But if the unbelieving depart, let him depart. A brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases: but God hath called us to peace. ¹⁶For what knowest thou, O wife, whether thou shalt save thy husband? or how knowest thou, O man, whether thou shalt save thy wife?"*

1. There are several false views taken on this passage:
 - a. It is argued that **"not under bondage"** in verse 15 refers to the marriage bond and therefore Paul is granting an additional cause for divorce and remarriage on the grounds of **"desertion;"** the so-called "Pauline privilege."
 - b. It is argued that 1 Cor. 7:10,11 shows that Matt. 19:9 is a "covenant passage" applying only to Christians and therefore Matt. 19:9 does not apply to mixed marriages as in 1 Cor. 7:15.

- c. It is argued that 1 Cor. 7:15 presupposes that the unbeliever doing the departing will be or has been guilty of fornication.
- 2. A brief analysis of 1 Cor. 7:10-16:
 - a. **Verses 10-11:** Paul [by inspiration] and the Lord [during his personal ministry] commands the married to remain married. If either departs, then he or she must:
 - 1) Remain unmarried, or
 - 2) Be reconciled to his or her companion.
 - b. **Verses 12-14**
 - 1) "*But to the rest....*" The rest of the questions the Corinthians had asked.
 - 2) In verses 10 and 11 Paul sets forth the general law on marriage and "the rest" (verse 12), refers to specific situations where the general law applies.
 - 3) "*...Speak I, not the Lord:*" – Though the Lord did set forth the marriage law referred to in verses 10 and 11 during his personal ministry, He did not deal with the application of that law to the specific cases the Corinthians asked about. Paul, by inspiration, is dealing with these.
 - 4) Verse 12 – If the unbelieving wife is pleased to dwell with the Christian husband let him not leave her.
 - 5) Verse 13 – If the unbelieving husband is pleased to dwell with the Christian wife let her not leave him.
 - 6) Verse 14 – The unbeliever is sanctified by the believer. The marriage is morally right and recognized by God or else their children would be illegitimate. Therefore, the children are holy.
 - c. Verse 15 – If the unbeliever departs, let him depart, the Christian is not under bondage in such cases.
 - 1) This "bondage" is not the marriage bond, but the bondage of slavery or servitude to the

unbeliever even to the point of giving up Christianity.

- 2) The Christian has never been under such bondage.
- d. Verse 16 – The Christian may be able to save the unbelieving companion.
- e. Summary: In these verses Paul deals with separation or desertion but does not mention divorce and remarriage.
 - 1) Paul taught new converts that marriage is holy and becoming a Christian did not change their privileges and responsibilities to their marriage even if their partner was not a Christian.
 - 2) But, if their unbelieving companion deserted them, their obligation to Christ was greater than the obligation to a marriage partner.
- B. No! Desertion is **NOT** a cause for divorce and remarriage for the following reasons:
 1. Jesus gave only one exception for divorce and remarriage – fornication (Matt. 19:9).
 - a. **"Except"** – "if and only if."
 - b. **"Fornication"** is the only exception.
 - c. **"Except"** shows that **"desertion"** in 1 Cor. 7:15 is not a cause for divorce and remarriage.
 2. 1 Cor 7:10-13 does not teach that Matt. 19:9 is a "covenant passage" that applies only to Christians.
 - a. It is argued that 1 Cor. 7:10,11 deals with a believer being married to a believer and that this refers to Matt. 19:9 and thus Matt. 19:9 applies to Christians only.
 - b. But such is an assumption only.
 - 1) It cannot be proved that 1 Cor. 7:10,11 refers directly to Matt. 19:9.
 - 2) Matt. 19:9 applies universally to all marriages.
 - 3) If either party in marriages involving a believer married to a believer or a believer married to a non-believer [1 Cor. 7:12,13] becomes guilty of fornication, then Matt. 19:9 applies.

3. **"Not under bondage"** (1 Cor. 7:15) does not refer to the marriage bond.
 - a. Greek "*dedoulotai*" from "*douloo*."
 - 1) "To make a slave of, reduce to bondage" and in this text, "to be under bondage, held by constraint of law or necessity, in some matter." – Thayer
 - 2) "Originally the lowest term in the scale of servitude, came also to mean one who gave himself up to the will of another." – W. E. Vine
 - 3) This word is used over 130 times in the New Testament and not once is it used to refer to the marriage bond.
 - 4) In 1 Cor. 7:27, 39, Paul refers to the marriage bond and uses the word "*dedesai*" from "*deo*."
 - b. The verb tense of "not under bondage" (*ou dedoulotai*) in 1 Cor. 7:15, means "action begun in the past and continuing to the present."
 - 1) Paul is teaching that the believer is not presently in such bondage, and has never been in such bondage.
 - 2) Therefore this bondage cannot refer to the marriage bond.
 - c. When Paul says "not under bondage," he was simply saying that the believer is not so bound to the unbeliever that he must give up Christ to hold the unbeliever.
4. 1 Cor 7 does not teach that the deserted believer is free to marry another. Paul is not discussing divorce and remarriage in this chapter.

III. WHAT IS "DUE BENEVOLENCE?"

- A. 1 Cor 7:1-5, ¹"Now concerning the things whereof ye wrote unto me: It is good for a man not to touch a woman. ²Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband. ³Let the husband render unto the wife due benevolence: and likewise also the wife unto the husband. ⁴The wife hath not power of her own body, but the husband: and likewise also the husband

*hath not power of his own body, but the wife.
5Defraud ye not one the other, except it be with
consent for a time, that ye may give yourselves to
fasting and prayer; and come together again, that
Satan tempt you not for your incontinency."*

1. In this text Paul gives instructions concerning sexual privileges and obligations in the marriage relationship.
 2. A grievous mistake is made in neglecting Bible teaching on this subject.
 - a. The Bible condemns adultery, fornication, homosexuality, incest and all other forms of sexual immorality [Gal. 5:19-21; 1 Cor. 6:9-11].
 - b. The Bible also teaches that sexual expression within the marriage relationship is good and right and involves privileges and obligations on the part of both husband and wife [1 Cor. 7; Heb. 13:4].
 - c. We must not allow movies, television, books and magazines to form our view of sex.
 - d. The Bible presents the only healthy view of sex that we must teach our young people as well as the older generation.
 - e. Proper teaching on this subject is essential to healthy marriages.
 3. Since God created us sexual beings, we should not be ashamed of this facet of our lives.
 - a. God's original pattern [Gen. 2:18-24].
 - b. Christ's endorsement [Matt. 19:5-6].
 - c. Paul's appeal to the original pattern [Eph. 5:31].
- B. Analysis of 1 Cor. 7:1-5: Sexual privileges and obligations in the marriage relationship.
1. **Verse 1:**
 - a. *"Now concerning the things whereof ye wrote unto me:"*
 - 1) The Corinthians had sent Paul questions concerning marriage.
 - 2) Paul, in answering these questions, gives some needed instructions on the sexual relationship in marriage.
 - b. *"It is good for a man not to touch a woman."*

- 1) "Good" from "*kalon*" meaning under certain circumstances it is good not to marry.
 - 2) Does not mean morally good, that is, ordered by the law of God.
 - 3) Paul does not say it is "better" for a man not to touch a woman.
 - 4) Paul uses this word in verses 8 and 26, because of the present distress (persecution) upon them it was good not to marry.
2. **Verse 2:** *"Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband."*
- a. If a man or woman prefers to marry, inspite of the present distress, Paul does not in any way discourage it.
 - b. *"To avoid fornication"* – one purpose for marriage.
 - 1) "Fornication" condemns the soul (Gal. 5:19-21; 1 Cor. 6:9,10).
 - 2) Many today are living together in fornication rather than a Scriptural marriage.
 - c. Other positive purposes for marriage:
 - 1) Companionship (Gen. 2:18).
 - 2) Sexual communion: "one flesh" (Gen. 2:24; Matt. 19:6; Eph. 5:31).
 - 3) Procreation (Psalm 127:3-5).
 - d. Shows God's plan – one wife and one husband.
3. **Verse 3:** *"Let the husband render unto his wife due benevolence: and likewise also the wife unto the husband."*
- a. *"Due benevolence"* – conjugal rights, marital duty.
 - b. Sexual expressions of love in the marriage bond are not only a privilege, but a duty of both husband and wife.
 - c. This obligation involves proper knowledge of the needs of one another (1 Peter 3:7).
 - d. Each is to render to the other. The sexual relationship is a two-way street. Neither has greater freedom nor greater responsibilities than the other.

- e. These responsibilities must not be taken lightly. Neglect in this matter often results in one seeking satisfaction with another, thereby, committing fornication.
- 4. **Verse 4:** *"The wife hath not power of her own body, but the husband; and likewise also the husband hath not power of his own body, but the wife."*
 - a. Both husband and wife have given up some rights to their bodies when they married. The power over one's body is surrendered to the other.
 - b. Neither the husband, nor the wife has the right to refuse the marriage privilege to the other.
 - c. Marriage is a holy bond between two people who have become one (Gen. 2:24).
- 5. **Verse 5:** *"Defraud ye not one the other, except it be with consent for a time, that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again, that satan tempt you not for your incontinency."*
 - a. "Defraud" from "apostereo" means "to rob, despoil, defraud" – Vine.
 - 1) Don't deprive, refuse, rob, or cheat each other.
 - 2) No right to withhold what belongs to the other.
 - 3) This would forbid the withholding of sexual favors in order to punish one's spouse or to grant favors for good behavior, which is really a form of prostitution.
 - b. *"Except it be with consent for a time."*
 - 1) A mutual consent or agreement.
 - 2) This agreement is for a definite period of time – not indefinitely.
 - c. *"That ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer;"*
 - 1) "Give" from "scholazo" means leisure. "So as to have leisure time for prayer." (Robertson)
 - 2) "Fasting" – sexual fast.
 - d. *"And come together again, that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency."*

- 1) Not to be a prolonged time.
 - 2) Satan knows and exploits our weaknesses [2 Cor. 2:11; 11:14; Matt. 4].
 - 3) Satan knows how strong the sex drive is in most people.
 - 4) "Incontinency" from "*akrasian*" which literally means "not strong."
- C. God's plan for every aspect of marriage is the best. No other arrangement will work.
1. God's plan requires husband and wife to render "due benevolence."
 2. One is not innocent in marriage break-ups and unhappiness if he/she fails in this matter.

IV. WAS JESUS NARROW-MINDED?

- A. The Way of Christ is perceived to be "narrow-minded" by many people.
1. Christians who faithfully and uncompromisingly hold to the doctrine of Christ and refuse to bid God speed to those who do not abide in this doctrine are often accused of being narrow-minded [2 John 9-11].
 2. Such an accusation is actually against Christ and His Way [doctrine].
- B. Christ declares that His Way is narrow [Matt. 7:13,14; cf. Luke 1:24].
1. "**Strait and narrow**" – difficult, restricted, "hemmed in," strictly adhering to the rule book or pattern.
 2. As opposed to the "**wide and broad**" way – unrestricted, liberal, optional, no rule book or pattern.
- C. Was Jesus narrow-minded?
1. If teaching that Jesus is "the way, the truth and the life" and no one can come to the Father but by him is narrow-minded, then Jesus was narrow-minded [John 14:6]!
 2. If claiming to have "all authority" in heaven and on earth makes Jesus narrow-minded, then he was narrow-minded [Matt. 28:18]!
 3. If teaching that salvation is "only" in the name of Christ is narrow-minded, then Jesus was narrow-minded [Acts 4:12]!

4. If teaching there is only "one church" and salvation is in that church is narrow-minded, then Jesus was narrow-minded [Matt. 16:18; Acts 2:47; 20:28; Eph. 1:4,22,23; 4:4-6]!
 5. If teaching that one must **hear, believe, repent, confess faith in Christ and be baptized** in order to be saved is narrow-minded, then Jesus was narrow-minded [John 6:44,45; 8:24; Luke 13:3; Matt. 10:32,33; 28:19,20; Mark 16:15,16].
 6. If teaching that the Christian must be faithful unto death in order to go to heaven is narrow-minded, then Jesus was narrow-minded [Rev. 2:10]!
 7. If teaching that one must worship God only and in spirit and truth to be acceptable is narrow-minded, then Jesus was narrow-minded [John 4:24; Matt. 15:9]!
 8. If teaching that we must seek "first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness" is narrow-minded, then Jesus was narrow-minded [Matt. 6:24,33; 12:30]!
 9. If teaching there is only one cause for divorce and remarriage [fornication – Matt. 19:9; 5:32] is narrow-minded, then Jesus was narrow-minded!
 10. If warning against and exposing false teachers is narrow-minded, then Jesus was narrow-minded [Matt. 7:15,16; 23; Mark 13:22,23; Luke 20:45-47]!
 11. If teaching there is absolute truth that must be understood, believed, obeyed and taught is narrow-minded, then Jesus was narrow-minded [Matt. 15:6-9; John 8:32; 17:17; 14:6; cf. Eph. 3:4; 4:15; Rom. 2:8]!
 12. If teaching that the way to heaven is "strait and narrow" is narrow-minded, then Jesus was narrow-minded [Matt. 7:13,14]!
- D. Actually, the Will (doctrine) of Christ revealed in the New Testament is our pattern (Heb. 8:5) and final authority in all we teach and practice in religion (Heb. 1:1,2; 2 Tim. 3:16,17; Col. 3:17; 1 Peter 4:11; Gal. 1:6-12; 2 John 9-11; Rev. 22:18,19; John 12:48).
1. Any teaching that is more restrictive than the doctrine of Christ is too narrow.

2. Any teaching that goes beyond the doctrine of Christ is too broad.
- E. Let us determine to abide in the doctrine of Christ and if that makes us narrow-minded, then so be it!

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The Home As God Would Have It

Bill Crossno

The Bible is the book and only book to study about the home as God would have it. The Bible is the only book that will give the correct answers to every problem the home faces. It is perfect in distributing the ingredients that make the home function as God would have it. Sad to say many home occupants will go to unprepared men for discussion about their home and it's future. Today in most counseling circles, the counselor will suggest divorce rather than try to remodel the home's structure. Today the book shelves are loaded with books on the home and many remedies for the problems, but the only source for all to trust is "God's Holy Word." If it is followed to the letter by all of its occupants, the home will flourish in God's Kingdom, the church, the community, and will be a light to the world around it.

THE HOME WAS DIVINELY ORDAINED

That the home was instituted by God is without question. ¹⁶"And the Lord God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it. And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: ¹⁷But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die. ¹⁸And

the Lord God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him. ¹⁹And out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof. ²⁰And Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field; but for Adam there was not found an help meet for him. ²¹And the lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; ²²And the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. ²³And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. ²⁴Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh" [Gen. 2:15-24].

It was God who created the man and woman [Gen. 2:7, 22]. It should behoove both to follow His instructions that the home would always function as God would have it. Our blessed Lord and faithful Son of the Almighty God, Jesus Christ, agreed with the Father. ³"The Pharisees also came unto him, tempting him, and saying unto him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause? ⁴And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female, ⁵And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh? ⁶Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder" [Matt. 19:3-6]. The great and scholarly Paul also agreed, ³"Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth. ⁴For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving: ⁵for it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer" [1 Tim. 4:3-5]. When man and woman decide to spend the rest of their lives together as one, it would be of the most importance to them both if they would set down and study

the Bible and said scriptures, long and without partiality. Many homes are divided before they are molded for their duration. The church must play a major roll in the teaching programs to entice our young people to accept the importance of marriage and it's future. We must teach against divorce when it is without proper Biblical authority. We must teach against pornography, lasciviousness, lust, abortion, homosexuality, fornication, adultery and the problem that causes these sinful things to flourish, modest apparel, abuse, social drinking, dancing, gambling, etc. When godly elders maintain God's Divine Will, fathers and mothers will work together for God and the home. When the church is weak on said applications, the homes are also weak on the most important responsibility it has (2 Tim. 2:15; 2 Peter 3:18). The home is the basic unity of society. When it breaks down, society suffers. For that reason homes need to be solid and permanent. When marriages break down, children inevitably suffer. Couples suffer also, for a divorce leaves scars and feelings of failure, not to mention loneliness.

THE HOME AS GOD WOULD HAVE IT

The latest dictionary defines marriage as "the social institution under which a man and a woman establish their decision to live as husband and wife by legal commitment, religious ceremonies, etc."¹ From a general knowledge of scripture we may say that marriage is an institution from God to man for the birth and preservation of the human race; for the comfort and pleasure of the husband and wife; for the cultivation of moral purity and refinement which are so necessary in a society where Christianity flourishes; and a union which God forms intended to last until death parts them. Originally, marriage was intended to be the union of one man and one woman for life. The prophet argues this point by saying God made only one woman for Adam, when he could have made more, for "he had the residue of the spirit. And wherefore one? He sought a godly seed" (Malachi 2:15). But the "hardness of heart" of man caused God to allow an exception to the original plan.² But not so in the New Testament.

INDISPENSABLE INGREDIENTS

Eph. 5:23-31

WHAT IS A GOOD FATHER?

²⁵"Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; ²⁶That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, ²⁷That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. ²⁸So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. ²⁹For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nurisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church: ³⁰For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. ³¹For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh" (Eph. 5:25-31).

Every husband ought to ask himself, "What kind of husband and father does God want me to be?" This is the critical question. Providing leadership in God and Christ centered care should be the husband's foremost task. The Old and New Testaments speak to fathers about their responsibility for the home, how they are to teach and train their siblings. They must teach God's commandments, goodness and love. ¹"Now these are the commandments, the statutes, and the judgments, which the Lord your God commanded to teach you, that ye might do them in the land whither ye go to possess it: ²That thou mightest fear the Lord thy God, to keep all his statutes and his commandments, which I command thee, thou and thy son, and thy son's son, all the days of thy life; and that thy days may be prolonged. ³Hear therefore, O Israel, and observe to do it; that it may be well with the, Lord God of thy fathers hath promised thee, in the land that floweth with milk and honey. ⁴Hear, O Israel: The Lord our god is one Lord" (Deut. 6:1-4). "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it" (Prov. 22:6). "Children, obey your parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord. ²¹Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged" (Col. 3:20-21).

Gladys Hunt wrote: "Leadership is man's role in God's plan — Leadership which affects the home and the Church — and requires taking the initiative, making decisions, and the courage to do both."³

It is the father's place to develop the moral and ethical pattern for the family to follow. The home is and must be recognized as an institution of learning, a place where God and Christ must be taught, lived and worshipped. The home used to be where its children spent the most of their time, but not anymore. So, dads must take advantage of every opportunity to teach them the rules as God would have them according to His Divine Will. If the father sets the proper example before his children, they will follow that path through life and their children will be taught as easily.

A father is an example to his family. He must lead them in Bible Study. Martin Luther once called the home "a school for living." The Family is a primary nurturing place for Christian education. It is where the father imprints on his children the gifts of love, patience, forgiveness, kindness, and obedience. These qualities are but learned by a father's example. The church cannot function properly nor grow into maturity in Christ unless parents are nurtured in the faith [good preaching, Bible classes, good religious magazines, personal Bible reading and prayer, etc.], and in turn exercise their vocation of living for Christ in communicating and demonstrating the gospel to their children at home.⁴

It is said the average father spends about seven minutes per day with his children. Shame on the daddy that loves his children so little (Eph. 6:4; 1 Tim. 5:8; Heb. 12:9). The Christian home must be a place where the husband and father directs his family spiritually (Matt. 6:33; 1 Peter 4:19).

¹"Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. ²But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. ³And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper. ⁴The ungodly are not so: but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away. ⁵Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.

"For the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish" (Psalm 1:1-6).

WHAT IS A GOOD MOTHER?

Eph. 5:22; Col. 3:18; 1 Peter 3:1

The Bible teaches that whosoever findeth a wife who is truly good [one with great strength of character] has found something which is far more precious than jewels. A husband can truly trust in such a woman, and she will be a source of great riches to him. She will do him good — not harm or evil — all the days of her life [Prov. 31:10-12]. In which case, her children will rise up and call her blessed, and her husband will richly praise her [Prov. 32:28]. "The woman is truly qualified for the work God has assigned her, keeping the home, bearing children, maintaining love as influenced by God through Christ our dear Lord. She is the companion and security of her husband. She is the hope of humanity."⁵ If the home is based on the teaching of the Bible, the Word of God [King James or American Standard 1901], the home can and will be always in God's blessings. When the mother follows the role in which God has planned for her, the home will be stable, secure and firm to the end.

Thomas Warren's concepts of a truly ideal woman is worth our examination.⁶

1. She must believe in God [Heb. 11:6; Psalms 145:20].
2. She must believe in Jesus as the Son of God [John 8:14; Rom. 20:30-31].
3. She must be a Christian [Mark 16:15-16; Gal. 3:26-27; Rom. 6:3-9].
4. She must understand the commitment of marriage [Matt. 19:4-6; Rom. 7:1-3; 1 Peter 3:1-7].
5. She is one who shares as a Christian should [Titus 1:2-3; Phil. 4:4-7].
6. She is one who shares the sorrow, affliction, and tribulations of life with her husband [Prov. 3:5-6; 2 Peter 1:5-11].
7. She shares with her husband the great joy of becoming a parent [Eph. 6:4; Prov. 31].
8. The ideal wife is one who gives love and receives love [Eph. 5:22-23].

9. The wife is her husband's companion in sexual delight [it is to be shared with no one] [Prov. 5:15-19; 1 Cor. 7:1-5; Gal. 5:22-23].
10. The ideal woman is one who constantly strives to help her husband to grow spiritually [1 Peter 3:1-3; Matt. 5:13-16; 2 Cor. 3:1-2; Phil. 2:15-16].
11. The wife which God would have is one with whom her husband can be himself [Rom. 2:1; 2 Peter 3:18].
12. The wife is his help meet who is suited for her husband [Gen. 2:18; 1 Cor. 11:3, 8-9.]

¹⁰"Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies. ¹¹The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her, so that he shall have no need of spoil. ¹²She will do him good and not evil all the days of her life. ¹³She seeketh wool, and flax, and worketh willingly with her hands. ¹⁴She is like the merchants' ships; she bringeth her food from afar. ¹⁵She riseth also while it is yet night and giveth meat to her household, and a portion to her maidens. ¹⁶She considereth a field, and buyeth it: with the fruit of her hands she planteth a vineyard. ¹⁷She girdeth her loins with strength, and strengtheneth her arms. ¹⁸She perceiveth that her merchandise is good: her candle goeth not out by night. ¹⁹She layeth her hands to the spindle, and her hands hold the distaff. ²⁰She stretcheth out her hand to the poor, yes, she reacheth forth her hands to the needy. ²¹She is not afraid of the snow for her household: for all her household are clothed with scarlet. ²²She maketh herself coverings of tapestry; her clothing is silk and purple. ²³Her husband is known in the gates, when he sitteth among the elders of the land. ²⁴She maketh fine linen, and selleth it; and delivereth girdles unto the merchant. ²⁵Strength and honour are her clothing; and she shall rejoice in time to come. ²⁶She openeth her mouth with wisdom; and in her tongue is the law of kindness. ²⁷She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness. ²⁸Her children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her. ²⁹Many daughters have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all. ³⁰Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain: but a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised. ³¹Give her of the fruit of her

hands; and let her own works praise her in the gates”
[Prov. 31:10-31].

PARENTS MUST TEACH AND GUIDE THEIR CHILDREN

Eph. 6:4; 2 Tim. 3:15-17; Jude 3; Rev. 22:18-19

Parents have an awesome responsibility in rearing their children in our fast paced society. Children in kindergarten know more today than their parents did in senior high. A first grader can get on the Internet and see what he or she wants to see. They can even purchase whatever they want by punching a key. Parents must monitor their every need. Schools are now showing XXX rated movies to their first graders without parental consent. Many parents say, “So what?” But, what about Christian parents? Do we stand up and stand out for truth as God would have us? What does the Bible tell us to teach our children? We are to teach them about modesty, temperance, worldliness, delinquency, weakness and strength according to Bible knowledge and not that of lowly man. We are to teach them by way of examples in word, faith, virtue, knowledge, self-control, patience, Godliness, brotherly kindness, love, purity, and obedience. Leave these doctrines out of your child’s life, and you leave your child out of the doctrine of Christ and the church, making his or her chances for heaven very poor. We want our children to excel in sports. Most sports have a different God than the one a Christian is to serve and worship. Think! What am I doing with my son and or daughter or both? What direction am I leading them? Is God there first, last and always? [Prov. 22:6; Eph. 6-4; 2 Tim. 3:15]

CHILDREN MUST RESPECT AND OBEY

Trust and Obey, the beautiful old hymn we often sing is a wonderful lesson to both young and old. Our young people have a fearful test every day as they face a world of abuse, both physical and mental — though these problems are our everyday accomplishments or failures. They are for each to overcome. Young people have both good examples from the Old and New Testaments. Look at the good first. Able,

Joseph, Daniel, Rachel, Ruth, they all remained faithful. Just as did Timothy, Titus, Mary and Martha. The duty of every young person is to become a Christian. Learn to know the meaning of respect for God (Matt. 7:13-29; 2 Tim. 3:15-17). Obeying God first begins at home by learning to obey parents. *"Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. ²Honour thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise; ³That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth"* (Eph. 6:1-3). Do not let your peers lead you in the wrong direction (Phil. 4:13; 1 John 3:18; James 1:21-25). The jewel of the home is children that obey God and parents. Young people, remember who you are. Do not be a "Cain, Hymenaeus or Alexander." Just be a Christian.

ENDNOTES

1. The Random House Dictionary of the English Language, New York 1969.
2. The Spiritual Sword. Page 2, Part 1, Roy H. Lanier. April 1972 #3
3. Gladys Hunt, Focus on Family Life. (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House), p.26.
4. Bible Foundations, Book 374, Vol. 3, No. 3, p.13, 1974. G.A.C.
5. The Spiritual Sword. Vol. 15, April 1984. No. 3, Inside Cover [Warren].
6. IBID.

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Our Heavenly Home

Charles Blair

1. There are descriptions of heaven given by God to show man what is waiting for him.
 - a. Heaven is said to be like a precious stone, clear as crystal (Rev. 21:11).
 - b. The city is said to be of pure gold like clear glass (21:18).
 - c. It is a land where the gates are never closed nor is there night (21:25).
2. God also shows it to be something beyond the physical things of which we are familiar such as gold or stones.
 - a. It is a place where God will wipe away all tears.
 - b. The cause of those tears, death, sorrow and pain will have been removed (Rev. 21:4).
3. What each of us searches for is the motivation to reach the land on the "far away strand."
 - a. This study concerns itself with the proper motivation for heaven.
 - b. We shall strive to point out what waits if we fail at this task.
 - c. Finally, to encourage us all to want to go to heaven more than anything.

DISCUSSION:

- I. **THE CHURCH HAS DIFFERENT DESCRIPTIONS BUT NONE SO BEAUTIFUL AS THE CONCEPT OF A HOME:**
 - A. It is called the house of God (1 Tim. 3:15).
 - B. This house is built for a habitation of God through the Spirit (Eph. 2:21-22).
 - C. Each member of the body of Christ is to be a living stone in this house on earth (1 Peter 2:5).
 - D. How often we say that earth and the activity here is preparing us for heaven.
 1. Those who learn to love the kingdom and serve the Lord with joy look forward to heaven (Matt. 6:33).

2. It is a joy which is born because man has learned about the idea of home through the church which Jesus bought with His own blood [Acts 20:28].

II. OUR EARTHLY HOMES PROVIDE US WITH KNOWLEDGE; THE IDEA OF THE CHURCH IS LIKEWISE A SPIRITUAL HOME WHERE WE LEARN VITAL LESSONS WHICH WILL TAKE US TO OUR HEAVENLY HOME:

- A. We learn how to love our physical families [Eph. 5:22-25; Titus 2:4-5; 1 Peter 3:1].
- B. This spiritual home of the church shows us how to treat one another [Eph. 4:31-32].
- C. It shows us to love God [John 14:15].
- D. The way we were raised in our physical home often determines how much we desire to return back.
 1. Pleasant memories of by-gone days and relationships with those we love makes returning home again, a joy to be anticipated.
 2. Service to God in the church develops a yearning for our heavenly home [Eph. 3:21].

III. WE NEED AT THIS POINT TO MAKE AN IMPORTANT DISTINCTION BETWEEN WHAT WE CALL "HOUSES" AND "HOMES."

- A. From our human understanding, houses are locations where we live.
 1. We place the address on our driver's license or our checks.
 2. Houses then are where we live. Addresses that can change with the passage of time.
- B. Homes, as I am using it in this definition, is "how" we live.
 1. The reason this is important is because we strive to teach children that we may have to move from one house to another but our home is where we are.
 2. If we understand this truth, then no matter what takes place in life, home is where the family is.
- C. It is therefore imperative that we set in the hearts of our children right conduct, behavior and attitude.
 1. Our homes are how we live.

2. The material for those homes are our beliefs and principles.
3. With the passage of time, those beliefs and principles should not change but remain constant.

IV. WHY IS HEAVEN APPEALING TO US? IS IT BECAUSE OF THE STREETS OF GOLD OR IS THERE A GREATER MOTIVATION?

- A. Heaven is described as a place and as a location.
 1. The idea is often expressed that heaven is up as we stand here on earth [Rev. 10:5].
 2. It is seen as a dwelling place [John 14:1-3; Rev. 13:6].
- B. It is a place where the things which wait for us is something truly beyond our comprehension.
 1. The man caught up into the third heaven was not allowed to utter what was there [2 Cor. 12:34].
 2. The things prepared is beyond any thing we could imagine [1 Cor. 2:9].
- C. As wonderful as these things are, the real motivation is to be with God.
 1. A home is not just a location; it is the relationships within that location.
 2. We want to go to heaven, not just a location, but the place where God is.
 3. I will have my turn to shake hands with Jesus and thank Him for all He did.
 4. I will be able to say to the Father, thank you so much for sending Him to die for us.

V. WHAT IF I FAIL IN THE TASK OF LIVING FOR GOD? THEN IT IS NOT A HEAVENLY HOME WITH GOD BUT IT WILL BE AN ETERNAL ABODE WITH SATAN:

- A. A basic promise by God to His children is that He will never leave them nor forsake them [Heb. 13:5-6].
- B. Hell is a place where God is not.
- C. Jesus, while dying for us, cried out from the cross those words about God forsaking Him [Matt. 27:46].
- D. Can there be any more expressive definition of hell than the place where God is not?

- E. We have never faced a crisis so bad that we could not call out to our God.
- F. I would not want to have to live in a world [hell] where I could not reach God with my prayers.

VI. MY FRIEND, HEAVEN WILL SURELY BE WORTH IT ALL AND IT IS WITHIN THE REACH OF ANYONE WHO IS WILLING TO PAY THE PRICE.

- A. Paul spoke the great truth that God is very near us [Acts 17:27].
- B. God wants to get us all home to Him (2 Peter 3:9).
- C. Here then is the ultimate question for us all. Are we willing to pay the price to have eternity with God and the redeemed of all the ages (Luke 14:28)?
- D. The door which leads to heaven is through Jesus Christ. His yoke is easy and His burden is light. He bids us all to come.
 - 1. There is a hell to be avoided; heaven to be gained.
 - 2. The heavenly Father waits for our decision.

