

MARRIAGE

Sunday Morning: July 21, 2002

Hebrews 13:1-5 "Let brotherly love continue. 2. Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares. 3. Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them; and them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body. 4. Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge. 5. Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee."

Verses one through 5 are words that encourage us to care for each other. There are times when we entertain strangers and they may have come from the throne room of God being angels. We are to remember those who are bound because of the ministry of the Word. Paul being in prison had those who ministered to him. There were those who forsook him.

Text: Hebrews 13:4 "**Marriage is honourable** in all, and the **bed undefiled**: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge."

In Warren Wiersbe's book Be Skillful – Proverbs published by Victor Books he gives us the following observation about marriage.

IN ANCIENT DAYS

"In ancient days, marriages were arranged by the parents. Our modern "system" of two people falling in love and getting married would be foreign to their thinking and their culture. In that day, a man and woman got married and then learned to love each other; they expected to stay together for life. Today, a man and woman learn to love each other, then they get married, and everybody hopes they'll stay together long enough to raise the children."
Warren Wiersbe.

Again in Hebrews 13:4 it is stated that "Marriage is honourable." Take note that the same word translated "Honourable" is also translated "Precious" in the following two passage of scripture.

HONORABLE

1 Corinthians 3:12 "Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, **precious** [honourable] stones, wood, hay, stubble;"

Marriage is precious, it is valuable. Marriage is something to be desired and protected. Do we desire precious stones? Well, the ladies do. Maybe some of the men like to have diamonds and rubies.

1 Peter 1:19 "But with the **precious** [honourable] blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:"

Marriage is a valuable thing and it is to be treated as something of great value.

We live in a society where we throw away things that have lost their value. Today marriage has lost it's value to the point that many now believe the doctrine of demons that teach you do not need to be married.

DOCTRINE OF DEVILS

1 Timothy 4:1-3 "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that **in the latter times** some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and **doctrines of devils**; 2. **Speaking lies** in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; 3. **Forbidding to marry**, and commanding to abstain from meats, . . ."

It is astonishing to me to see that someone who is living by faith, pleasing God, would even

listen to "seducing spirit, and doctrines of devils." You think that they would be able to discern between error and the truth. We need to be aware that these teachers are able to seduce those who are living by faith. They do this subtly. They are teaching lies. They are hypocrites. Their conscience does not even bother them. They do not have a conscience, they deliberately lead the unwary astray.

One way to see if one is a false teacher, check their views on marriage and on the eating of meat and other foods. We weary of those who command to abstain from the eating of red meat is not the thing to do. Be on guard around those who teach vegetarianism. If you can accept these doctrines supported by demons then it will be easier for them to lead you astray on major doctrines.

JESUS APPROVED OF MARRIAGE

John 2:2 "And both **Jesus** was called, and his **disciples**, to the **marriage**."

Jesus honored marriage by attending a wedding in Cana of Galilee. His attendance meant that he endorsed marriage. Where we go and what we attend reflects our approval and disapproval of those events.

MARRIAGE OF THE LAMB

Revelation 19:7-8 "Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the **marriage of the Lamb** is come, and **his wife** hath made herself ready. 8. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints."

Jesus Christ is anticipating marriage as found in Revelation 19:7. The honor will be reversed in the day that the Lord will marry. Today the bride is honored, but in that day we will rejoice and be glad and "Give honour to Him."

DIVIDED ATTENTION

1 Corinthians 7:33-34 "But **he** that is **married** careth for the **things** that are of the **world**, how he may **please his wife**. 34. There is difference also between a wife and a virgin. The **unmarried** woman careth for the **things** of the **Lord**, that she may be holy both in body and in spirit: but **she** that is **married** careth for the **things** of the **world**, how she may **please her husband**."

The phrase "careth for the things of the world" is not the same idea as in the parable of the sower where the phrase "the care of this world" that choke the word of God. Jesus would endorse an institution, such as marriage, that would cause the Word of God to be choked and the married couple would become unfruitful.

When you have a wife you have to give her attention and spend time with her. If you have a husband you need to spend time with him and care for his needs. Remember if you are in the ministry if you are a pastor, elder, or a deacon you must be the husband on one wife. A man in the pastoral ministry needs a wife. Particularly if he will be dealing with ladies in the congregation or fellowship. A wife in these situations will keep down scandal that might erupt if the man is single and having to be with ladies of the church. A wife becomes a chaperone so that the ministry will be done with honor and above reproach.

Again, these verses tell us that if you marry your attention will be divided.

SELF CONTROL

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

It is very clear that the will of God is our sanctification. Sanctification means separation unto holiness. Living in fornication is to be unholy and obviously not the will of God. To be able to live a holy life we must abstain from the sins of the flesh. Fornication is a sin of the flesh. To abstain from formation we must learn to possess or control our vessel, the natural appetites of our bodies which responds to the lust of the flesh.

BETTER TO MARRY

1 Corinthians 7:9 "But if they cannot contain, let them marry: for it is better to marry than to burn (with passion)."

This verse is telling that if a couple is a struggling to contain themselves, it is better for them to marry. The word *burn* in this verse I believe has to do with passion toward each other. I had some ask me if the word *burn* meant to burn in hell. That is not what that means. To burn with passion is a natural phenomenon that is to be satisfied in the context of marriage.

ONE FLESH

Genesis 2:24 "Therefore shall a **man** leave his father and his mother, and shall **cleave** unto his **wife**: and they shall be **one flesh**."

This verse tells us what a man and a woman who marry are to do. They are both to leave their parents and become one just as their parents left their parents and became one flesh. The word **cleave** can also be translated **to be joined together**. When a man and a woman become one flesh in marriage they are to separate themselves from their parents to become a family. Being one flesh means that when one hurts so does the other. When one rejoices, so does the other.

MARRY SOMEONE WHO IS SAVED

Genesis 24:3-4 "And I will make thee swear by the LORD, the God of heaven, and the God of the earth, that thou **shalt not take a wife** unto my son of the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I dwell: 4. But **thou shalt go** unto my country, and **to my kindred**, and take a **wife** unto my son Isaac."

This verse gives us the Biblical principal when it comes to marriage. We are not to marry someone who is not part of the family of God. The word *kindred* affirms this principal. The word *country*, I believe, narrows the field of choice to those of the same culture. Cross cultural marriage produce strain in relationships and it also reduces the desire to seek and please God.

MARRY SOMEONE WHO IS PLEASING GOD

2 Corinthians 6:14-15 "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers [ἀπιστος, not of faith, not pleasing God]: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? 15. And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth [πιστός, pleasing God by faith] with an infidel [ἀπιστόν, not of faith, not pleasing God]?"

As a child of God we need to have a keen interest and desire to please God and we know that we are doing that if we are just and we are living by faith. A couple should find out if their future mate is pleasing God. This is more significant from the woman's point of view, because the man is the one who is supposed lead the home spiritually. If you marry someone who does not have a desire to please God, then you are going to have conflict in the marriage and the marriage may not last. Ladies, remember you are to follow the man when you become his wife. Man is the head of the woman in marriage as we will see a bit later in the message.

The word *unbelievers* is an adjective. It could be translated *faithless*. Do not be yoked with someone who is not pleasing God. If you are trying to please God you sure don't want to marry

someone who isn't. I have heard this time and time again, "I wish I was married." Desiring to be married is a whole lot better than being married and wishing you weren't.

Can you imagine being married to someone who is in darkness spiritually or living in sin and you are trying to walk in the light and to do His will. There will be constant conflict and strife. This is not just a saved and lost scenario. It is obvious that one should not marry someone who is not in the family. What is in view here is where both are saved but one is trying to please God and the other partner is not.

WALKING TOGETHER

Amos 3:3 "Can two **walk together**, except they be **agreed**?"

In marriage, both should have the same goals and desires and purpose in life. As a couple are you going in the same direction. Is the one you are interested in marrying have a desire for a particular ministry the Lord is leading you to. If the Lord is leading you to the mission field you should not marry one who has no interest or burden to go to the mission field.

If you can't agree then walking together will be difficult. It does not mean that you will always agree, but you are willing to work those things out as you go along.

MAN IS THE HEAD

1 Corinthians 11:3 "But I would have you know, that the **head** of every man is Christ; and the **head** of the woman is the man (who you can submit to); and the **head** of Christ is God."

The head of the woman is man. As a woman you want to ask yourself does the man you want to marry have Christ as his head. The reason you want to ask yourself that question is are you as a woman going to be willing to submit yourself to your head, your husband.

As a man, you want to ask the question does the woman you want to marry have a submissive spirit in relationship to her father? If she has a submissive spirit toward her earthly father she will have a submissive spirit to Christ. If she has a submissive spirit to her father and to Christ then she will follow you in Christ's leadership in his life.

HUSBANDS KNOW YOUR WIVES

1 Peter 3:7 "Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to **knowledge**, giving **honour** (price, value) unto the wife, as unto the **weaker vessel**, and as **being heirs together** of the **grace** of life; that your **prayers** be **not hindered**."

This verse encourages us to know each other. We are to give honor unto the wife and that does not mean that she is above her head. That would contradict the passage in 1 Corinthians 11:3. This word "honor" means to give "value or price" to your wife. Your spouse is valuable to you when it comes to your prayer life. If you want your prayers to be effective and not be hindered, you need to treat your spouse in a way that you would treat something that is of great value. In other words, you want to treat each other with respect.

You do not need to hold the lantern while she chops the wood if she has only one arm. That is a bit corny, but we need to realize that women can only do certain things. Being the weaker vessel, means that she may be limited in what she is able to do and not do.

TO THE MARRIED

1 Corinthians 7:10-16 "And unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord, **Let not the wife depart from her husband**:"

Verses 10-11 present the Lord's command concerning marriage in general. The wife is not to depart from her husband. It seems good to me that this verse can be applied to the husband. A husband is not to depart from his wife. This verse does not deal with infidelity, just

incompatibility. Incompatibility should be temporary because differences can be worked out.

RECONCILIATION NOT DIVORCE

11. But and if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be **reconciled** to her husband: and **let not the husband put away his wife**.

If a wife or a husband decides to depart let them remain unmarried. Put in another way, do not get a divorce. If separation is needed it should be for the purpose of being reconciled. For a man to *put away* his wife is to be divorced from her. This is not the Lord's will.

WILLING TO SUFFER

12. But to the rest speak I, not the Lord: If any **brother** hath a wife that **believeth not** [not of faith], and **she be pleased to dwell** with him, **let him not put her away**.

Verse 12 deals with one who is a brother. A brother is one who is seeking to enter into the kingdom of heaven. He is one who trying to do the will of the Father. Doing the will of the Father requires living by faith. Paul exhorted those who desired to enter into the kingdom of the heavens to continue in both grace and faith. Acts 13:43 "Now when the congregation was broken up, many of the Jews and religious proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas: who, speaking to them, **persuaded** them to **continue** in the **grace** of God." Acts 14:22 "Confirming the souls of the disciples, *and* exhorting them to **continue** in the **faith**, and that we must through much **tribulation enter** into the **kingdom of God**."

The word "believeth not" is a Greek word that could be better translated "faithless." The one who is "faithless" is one, who may be just, but is not pleasing God by faith. Keep in mind that from verse 12 through 16 deals with the blessing given by God to those who will continue to live with one who is trying to please God and enter into the kingdom of heaven.

What we have is a "brother" who has a wife that does not share his hope of the glory in the coming kingdom of heaven. This brother is told to not put his wife away because she does not see and embrace kingdom truth as he does. If she is pleased to dwell with him he is not to put her away. Paul covers both sides of the situation in the next verse when he give instruction for a woman who is married to a man that does not have the hope of glory.

13. And the woman which hath an **husband** (a child of God) that **believeth not** [not of faith], and if he be **pleased to dwell with her**, **let her not leave him**.

This verse is telling the woman who is seeking to enter into the kingdom of the heavens by faith not to leave her husband. If her husband who is faithless is please to live with her, she is not to leave him for a better situation.

NOT LIVING BY FAITH

14. For the **unbelieving** [not of faith] husband is sanctified by the wife, and the **unbelieving** [not of faith] **wife** (a child of God) is sanctified by the husband: else were your children (who are in the family of God) unclean; but now are they holy.

This verse tells us what the blessings are if the faithless spouse will continue to live with the spouse who is living by faith. Again we are not talking about spouses that are lost but saved but not pleasing God by faith. If the man and his wife or the wife and her husband will continue in the marriage the faithless partner will be blessed in that he or she will be sanctified or set apart. If they stay together then their saved children will also be clean and be blessed by the parent of faith. Children who are not saved would not be considered clean, so I believe the context of these verses is dealing with the saved and not the lost individuals.

The spouse and children of those who are living by faith will be vessels fit for the master use as found in 2 Timothy 2:21 "If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, **sanctified**, and meet for the master's use, *and* prepared unto every good work." We see that the sanctified will have an inheritance in Acts 26:18 "To open their eyes, *and* to turn *them* from darkness to light, and *from* the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and **inheritance** among them which are **sanctified** by faith that is in me." and in Acts 20:32 "And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an **inheritance** among all them which are **sanctified**." The spouse and the children of the spouse that is seeking to enter into the kingdom of the heavens by faith will provide a portion for those who are sanctified by staying with their spouse and not departing.

BROTHER OR SISTER

15. But if the **unbelieving** [not of faith] depart, let him depart. A **brother** (seeking to do the will of the Father) or a sister is not under bondage in such cases: but God hath called us to peace.

The spouse of a brother or a sister that leaves the relationship is bound by verse 10. They are not to marry. Allowing the offended partner to leave is to do so to keep peace in the family. Again the departure of the offended spouse does not allow the brother or sister to remarry.

KINGDOM SALVATION

16. For what knowest thou, O wife, whether thou shalt **save** thy **husband**? or how knowest thou, O man, whether thou shalt **save** thy **wife**?"

The salvation in this verse is not the common salvation but the so great salvation of Hebrews 2:3 "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard *him*;" This salvation was the gospel of the kingdom of the heavens which pertained to an heavenly inheritance. If the spouse that is not living by faith or seeking to enter into the kingdom of the heavens will stay in the marriage there is a possibility that they might see the value of living by faith and seeking to enter into the kingdom of the heavens.

ONLY EXCEPTION

Matthew 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**."

Divorce is not allowed except in the case of fornication which is adultery. I am persuaded that if a partner in marriage is guilty of adultery that the innocent party can divorce the spouse if they can not deal with the offence.

THE UNFAITHFUL ARE TO DIE

Deuteronomy 22:22-24 "If a man be found lying with a woman married to an husband, then they shall **both of them die**, both the man that lay with the woman, and the woman: so shalt thou put away evil from Israel."

We can draw a type from the Old Testament law. The guilty parties were to be stoned to death. The putting to death of the individual that was married would be, in type, the death of ones spouse which would make the innocent partner free to marry again. This is confirmed in the following verse.

BOUND TILL DEATH

1 Corinthians 7:39 "The wife is **bound** by the law as **long as her husband liveth**; but if her

husband be **dead**, she is at **liberty** to be **married** to whom she will; only in the Lord."

BE RECONCILED

1 Corinthians 7:11 "But and if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband: and let not the husband put away his wife."

Even in the case of adultery there is room for forgiveness. When we think of the nation of Israel, she is the wife of God. God did not divorce her nor put her away because of her sin of adultery. Israel has been unfaithful in her relation with God. Isaiah 50:1 "Thus saith the LORD, Where *is* the bill of your mother's divorcement, whom I have put away? or which of my creditors *is it* to whom I have sold you? Behold, for your iniquities have ye sold yourselves, and for your transgressions is your mother put away." There should be room in our hearts for forgiveness. God wants us to be reconciled to our spouse. The relationship can be renewed.