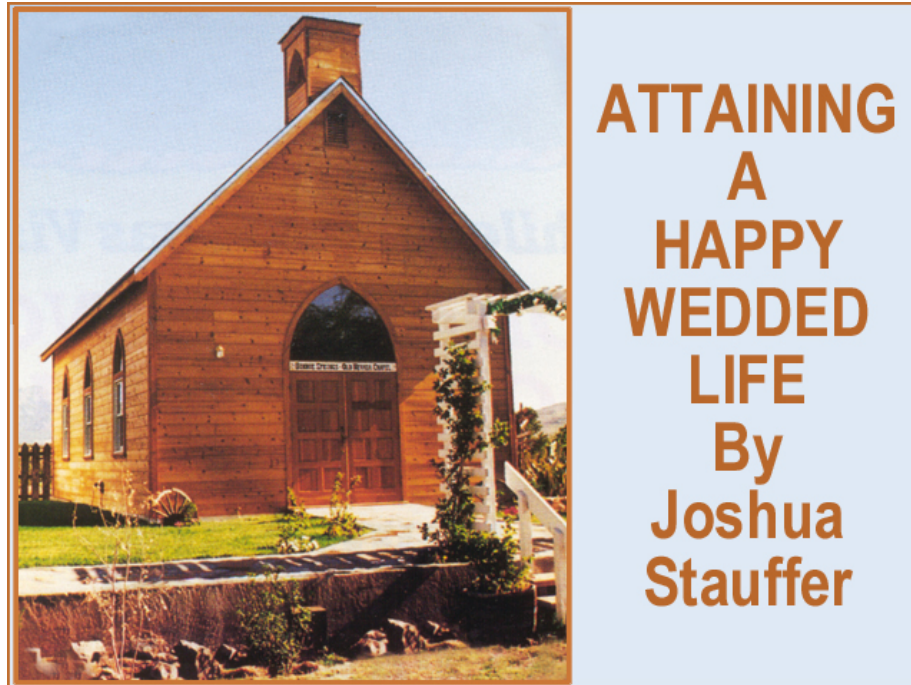


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**ATTAINING A HAPPY WEDDED LIFE
By Joshua Stauffer**



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**Digital Edition 09/25/06
By Holiness Data Ministry**

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FOREWORD

The Lord should not be ignored in the matter of love, courtship, and marriage, but His guidance should be diligently sought. A wrong decision without God's permission may be made that will make life rough and bitter. On the one hand, marriage has the possibility of bringing much joy, and on the other hand it may bring great torture.

God created man, male and female. He made man for companionship. Marriage was instituted for the purpose of mutual happiness and the propagation of the human race. On the divine side, marriage as an institution was set up for the glory of God. When man considers marriage for the glory of God, mutual happiness, and the propagation of the human race, God will be pleased and man will be blessed. When married life is lived as God intended, it will be a little foretaste of heaven on earth. The husband and father becomes the king, the wife and mother the queen, while the children are the subjects. In the home, love, submission, and obedience should reign to make it ideal and happy. The husband is commanded to love, the wife to submit, and the children to obey. This unity and form of living as a unit should constitute a little haven on earth from which each member may find shelter from the storms of life on the road to heaven.

Marriage is the oldest institution in the world, even older than civil government and the church. Marriage should always be considered as a love-life. Love is the great factor in courtship, in becoming engaged, and also in marriage; therefore, it should continue through: out life. Marriage is a temporary arrangement and instituted for this life. It can only be justly and honorably dissolved by the death of one party, or the coming of the Lord.

Since God instituted marriage for His glory and the happiness of the human race, it is not to be wondered at that Satan strikes hard at married couples to bring friction, misunderstandings, and to break up this sacred relationship. The Lord is the great House-Builder. The Psalmist wrote, "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it" (Ps. 127:1). The word "house" in its Biblical usage has several connotations. The most important one is that which relates to a compound noun, meaning father, mother, and all their children, and often all their descendants.

Satan is the great home-wrecker. He is the archenemy of God and man. In the Garden of Eden he became the cause which brought the curse on man, the woman; the animal, vegetable, and mineral kingdoms. This made man a dying creature and turned Paradise into pandemonium. Satan strikes hard and continuously at every home that the Lord sets up, attempting to wreck it as he did the first human pair. When marriage vows are broken or not observed, it leads to a broken home and broken hearts. When the home is broken it makes it harder to gain heaven, and harder to lead the children to Christ.

Marriage is not to be considered without its problems. This booklet, "Attaining a Happy Wedded Life," has been written to be a help to married couples, and it is hoped that it may help some couples to escape the experience of a broken home and broken hearts. Where love reigns, little needs to be said concerning marriage, for adjustments will be made, hearts will be healed, and faults will be overlooked.

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01 -- ACHIEVING A MUTUAL TOGETHERNESS

Courtship attracts two hearts. When courtship is sweet, compatible and mutual, it may lead to an engagement, in which two hearts become betrothed. This means two hearts and two minds of lovers come together in agreement. Marriage unites two hearts into a oneness in which both parties should consider each as an integral part of self.

If a marriage is to be a success, there must be the utmost effort of each party to strive toward a togetherness. This will involve a multitude of adjectives to reveal what is meant. Many good virtues are required, such as faithfulness, kindness, patience, forgiveness, forbearance, thoughtfulness, self-restraint, and a host more.

Of course, the marriage relationship covers several areas of life that should be discussed before becoming engaged. An agreement should be reached in the essential areas of married life in which both parties come to an understanding before the wedding day.

The togetherness of marriage is meant to be a lifelong union between one man and one woman. The ritual and wording of the marriage ceremony should be analyzed frequently, then carefully reconsidered and occasionally repeated to assist in the observance of the solemn vows of the ceremony. This will lead to an ideal state in marriage.

The marriage vow is: "I take thee to be my lawful wedded wife, (or husband), to have: and to hold from this day forward, for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, till death do us part, according to God's holy law."

The observance of this solemn vow is not to be considered as an easy matter all the time. Neither can the newly wedded couple live on nothing but "honey" or on the light of a full moon constantly, without any dark periods. Soon after the wedding the discovery will be made there needs to be a coming down to settle on the earth to make a livelihood and face the actual experience of joy and sorrow which are a part of life. Days of testing and trials will come. No one can expect to escape sorrow, temptations, and difficulties. When the darker experiences of life come, then it is that together the help of the Lord needs to be sought. If this is done, life will become richer, fuller, and more objective.

A mutual togetherness is to be sought in every area of married life. This togetherness should be bound • with the bond of love. It is beautiful to be united so well as to form one purpose. Some suggestions of togetherness are listed:

Love together,
Live together,
Eat together,
Think together,
Work together,
Pray together,
Play together,
Go to church together,
Talk joys over together,
Talk problems over together,
Strive to be a success together,
Strive to enter heaven together.

The art of loving together originated from the moment of courtship, and that love continued until it developed into an engagement, and the engagement terminated in a wedding. However, love should never terminate even as the Apostle Paul wrote to the saints in the churches, "Let brotherly love continue," so in the married life, conjugal love should continue. It is sad that many couples love much more during courtship than they do after wedding days. An ideal example of a love-life is given in Genesis chapters 22-24, relating to the love-life of Isaac. Rebekah was God's choice for a wife for Isaac, who was secured by Eliezer, the go-between, in Mesopotamia who brought her to Hebron where Isaac lived. When the servant introduced her to Isaac, his work was completed. We read that "Isaac took Rebekah, and she became his wife; and he loved her!" (Gen. 24:67). This is vastly different than is the case in many marriages. Love should grow as years pass by, and if this is to be so, it must be a mutual loving together, that is, each party must love the other party, so that love may have something to feed on to cause it to grow.

By all means learn to think together about all the essential matters, such as marriage, home, and family life, and all matters, however small they may seem. Do

remember that married life is composed of many small, as well as important details in life.

Cultivate the habit of talking together the matters of finance and how to handle money wisely. Talk together about what you can afford to buy and how to save money.

Learn to think together about dress, appearance, grooming, personal tidiness; and household neatness. If there is too great a difference in these areas, it may lead to friction, which is chilling to love. Cultivate the joy in expressing a delight in each other.

A togetherness in the learning of good etiquette will aid in the development of graceful and charming manners. This will bring a reverence and respect for each other.

A togetherness in the dining room, and the eating together at mealtime as often as is possible is as important as spending time together in the parlor.

Then think together about religion. Christianity is important for time and eternity; for this world and the next world. Both parties need to be united in their theology. Going to church together and worshipping the Lord together will make life's journey more blessed as you travel together. It also will make it easier to go to heaven together.

Several generations ago, in the days before the personal pronoun "you" took on a singular form, and when a single person was addressed as "thee" and "thou," a husband, each Sunday morning when he heard the church bells ringing the call to come to church, said to his wife, "Wife, thee go to church for thee and me." This occurred every Sunday for several years. She went to church, but he did not. If men do not go to church where God can speak to them, He may, and sometimes does, speak to them in their sleep. God framed a dream, suited to his need, that was personally for this non-church-going husband. He dreamed that both he and his wife deceased at the same time, and that their spirits departed from their bodies. It was then that he assumed the leadership and said, "Wife, let us go to heaven together." We may wonder sometimes how some men will ever get to heaven when they do not live for the Lord together with their wives, nor pray together, nor go to church together on earth. This man in his sleep led his wife on until they reached the portals of heaven. Here again he took the lead and knocked at the gate.

A voice from within said, "Who is here?" He answered, "Mr. and Mrs. So and So."

Again the voice from within said, "What do you want?" The answer was, "My wife and I have both died and have come from earth to enter heaven together."

The porter opened the door and said, "Thy wife may enter in, and she will enter for herself and thee." She stepped inside, then the porter shut the door which shut her in and shut him out. This gave that man such a shock in his sleep that it awakened him. If he did not heed the warning and missed heaven, he certainly will be without excuse in the day of judgment.

The home should be a husband's and a wife's haven on earth in which together they prepare for heaven; therefore, make the home a cheery place. Think together about your furniture, your needs for convenience, and the order in which it will be arranged. Talk together about the meals you serve and the special dishes which you relish. Study dietetics, and together consider the foods which are vital to health and a well-balanced diet.

A husband will act wisely if he will share the burden of the home. Together a husband and wife should talk over the difficulties of the home, improvements which can be made in the family budget, religion in the home, the running of the home, the rearing of the children, the spending of vacation periods, and all the areas which will bring any improvement in the home life.

Your economic recourses and standards of living should be thought through together. Never form the habit of living beyond your means, neither enter into debt you know you cannot pay. Manage together to live within the bounds of your income. If at all possible, budget your living in such a manner that with each pay check a portion may be deposited in your savings account. Together live for the immediate future and also the remote future. Living for the remote future does not involve money or a bank account. Every young married couple should seek to be frugal and learn the lessons of liberality and economy. To attain, and then to maintain such a standard of living, it will be necessary to think and plan together.

The virtue of attaining such a standard of living together will prepare you for the future should any contingency or emergency arise. Sooner or later in this happy manner of home-life, it is expected there may come an announcement of an arrival in your home -- a third member, which will be an expression of your love, your very lives, your flesh, blood, and bones: When this becomes the case, it should bind both together, increase their love for each other, make each one more kind to the other -- yea, bring "days of heaven on earth," for both. Certainly family life should be planned and prepared for together.

When a married couple is blessed with children, this should demand a greater "togetherness" than ever before. This will be the time when the husband-father should lavish more love and kindness upon his wife and children. Here is where the Scriptural injunction will fit into home life very appropriately: "Husbands, love your wives," and "Fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord" (Eph. 5:25; 6:4). The Scripture also states, "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord" (Eph. 5:22).

Pull together, work together, agree together in the rearing of your children to become good Christians, good citizens, law-abiding children, who are honest, well-behaved, and who are an asset to their community and generation. Be agreed between yourselves and maintain only one standard for the entire household.

Make it a matter to be greatly concerned and together be united in having a good church home for the entire family. Gather the children early into Christ's: fold and also into the membership of the church. Encourage them to become a part of the church and to participate in its activities. Always speak well of your pastor and your church. In the importance of its support and attendance, place the church on a par with your home. If you will labor together in this manner, your labors will be richly rewarded in rearing a family, then in your old age your children will rise up and call you blessed.

Agree together that Christ shall be the Head of your house as well as the Home-Builder. A home without Christ can never be what a home should be, because He is the true Home-Builder. Think and talk together about your home, its location and conveniences. Give God some of your time for prayer, Bible reading, family worship, and saying grace at mealtime.

Agree about the paying of your tithe and the giving to the Lord Offerings into the church treasury. You will be blessed in wisely considering these matters together and in carrying out such a plan in life, for it will please the Lord and become beneficial to the church.

Decide before marriage your religious situation in which both can agree: This issue should not be evaded hoping that it will adjust itself after marriage. Marriage should be held off until this matter has been settled agreeably, in which no controversy shall arise to mar the happiness of mutual togetherness. If the difference is merely that of external forms and rituals, both could compromise to find a situation in which agreement may be enjoyed. When this is an issue of standards, godliness, and fundamentals, which vitally concern the spirituality, godliness, salvation, and destiny of their souls and that of their children, this should be a simple matter to settle when it is considered in the light of the Scriptures, heaven, and eternity. The decision which is the best for time and eternity should be decided upon. Such a decision also will bring peace and unity for this life in the home.

When misunderstanding or friction tends to be created, by all means learn how to kindly listen to each other; do not use stern words. Allow each to say lovingly, without being contentious, what is on his mind" and in the heart. Strong love is easily grieved; therefore, unkindness cuts to the heart and leaves a wound. Too often in a critical time a married partner will make a retort with the intention of a sting that will make a wound. Also, another area to watch is when displeasure comes, a married partner will give the other one a "silent treatment" which may

continue for a day without a word being said while a stone-face silence goes on. Such an attitude brings an inward frustration to both parties which is hard for both to bear, particularly to the one with the pent-up feeling. A kindly ventilation of feelings will air out such stagnated atmosphere for the sake of both and bring relief.

The joy of anticipating together the arrival of a child should be shared mutually. The nine months of waiting is a biological law ordained by the Creator. This will give ample time to prepare for an arrival. The father should prepare himself by heart-searchings to see that he is in tune with God, to see that he is loving, sweet, and kind to his wife, that she will be influenced to be holy, and that spiritually, intellectually, and materially, she will not lack in any of these necessities in a time like this. This condition should bring them closer to each other, and the days of waiting should become "days of heaven on earth."

When your home is blessed with offspring, the very expression of your love, together give thought and make plans for the physical and spiritual development of each child. Do not neglect the souls and eternal destiny of your children. When a father and mother pull together, pray together, and go to church together, their virtues may easily be passed on to their children, which will make them more susceptible to the call of the Lord and easier for them to yield their hearts to Him.

The art of praying together should be developed on or before the wedding day. Prayer is essential in every area of life. It is well to take everything to God in prayer. No mistake will ever be made in doing so. It is to be taken for granted that every Christian observes seasons of private prayer daily. However, when special strains of life come, emergencies arise, or problems develop, a husband and wife should learn the art of having special seasons of prayer together for that immediate need. An art is a science which is acquired by studying, experience, observations, and skill. The art of special united prayer should be practiced, observed, and developed.

There are two Scriptures that may be of special value for consideration in this area. The first one is a potent prayer-promise given by Christ that every husband who is the head of the house should know and make use of, which says, "If two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven" (Matt. 18:19). This promise is not made use of as much as it should, and that Christ intended when He uttered it for the good of His followers. Of course, a husband and wife should live in agreement in their general lives and practice. If this prayer-promise is the only area in which they agreed, then this promise will not avail in their prayers together because their lives are not in harmony with other important Scriptures. When their lives are lived in harmony in the general areas of family life, then the practice of this promise becomes a powerful prayer-leverage in time of special emergency.

The other Scripture is recorded in I Peter 3:1-12. There admonition is first given to wives and then to husbands. To wives: "Likewise, ye wives . . ." vs.1-6, and

"Likewise, ye husbands . . ." v. 7, and for both together, verses 8-12. The husband especially should "dwell with his wife according to knowledge (that is, to be loving, kind, and considerate) giving honor unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life (living gracefully together in every area of family life) that your prayers be not hindered." It may be assumed that the area of their prayers concerns them both in their general living and labors, which also includes their children's physical and spiritual welfare. Some husbands are not as loving, kind, and considerate with their wives as the Lord commands. Many wives' hearts have been crushed, made sad, and are burdened by reason of stern words spoken unkindly, a lack of appreciation, or no honor given to them. At home, they are sour, cruel, chide them, and are sullen, or as might be expressed, serve sour milk at home. Then when they are away from home in the presence of others, they act so refined; courteous, and genteel as though they were well-bred and polite, serving their cream to others. This is not right nor pleasing to the Lord, neither is it conducive to a happy married life. A husband should be his best, sweetest, kindest, most polite, to his wife in his home life. Of course; he should be refined and polite in public at all times, but more so at home with his companion and family. This also applies to the wife and mother in her home life.

What the Apostle Peter is saying is that a husband who is cruel to his wife and fails to comfort and honor his wife, causing her to live a crushed life, will not prevail in his prayer life. Openly, or publicly, he may appear good and holy to other people, but not to the Lord, neither will he be the success that he should be.

Such a life will greatly reflect itself in the family and react in his children. Fathers should remember that the Bible states that the iniquity of fathers would be visited upon the children to the third and fourth generations (Ex. 20:5). Many children have emotional problems which point to the influence of family life.

In the past generation a minister who should have been a holy man, and loving, and kind to his wife, was very abusive and unkind to her in his words, actions, and deeds. She was defenseless and endured it as best she knew how. They had a little son who was in his formative years. He deeply resented his father's abusive words and acts to his mother. He knew he could not defend his mother, nor manage his father to restrain him, because he was a large and strong man physically. In his little heart seeds of unkindness and resentment were sown which conceived thoughts such as these: "I can not fight my father now, nor manage him, but when I grow up, I will fight his religion. I will get even by taking vengeance on Christ and the Bible." When this lad grew up he became a noted infidel and devoted his life, time, and talent in lecturing against God and the Bible, became famous in his degraded area, wrecking, and ruining the faith of many throughout the nation. The offenses of many criminals who had been considered as model children and appeared as "good boys" were the expressions of long-suppressed resentment against parents, whom they knew were not living before the Lord and each other as love requires. This is one reason that many parents wonder why their children go

astray and their prayers do not avail in their behalf. A loving and mutual togetherness will be an aid in the prayer life, and in getting their prayers through.

Not only should every husband and wife learn the value of praying together, but also be just as faithful in giving thanks to God for answered prayer and for favors and blessings bestowed upon them. Specialize in the art of praising God together for special blessings even as you specialize in praying for special needs.

If the marriage is to be joyful, peaceful, and become a success, another area of togetherness should be considered and practiced. This is the matter of doing for each other what married partners need most to have done. This is the giving to each other the feeling of: You are great! You are needful! You are appreciated! You are wonderful! You are thoughtful! You are inspiring me to aggression, nobility, and success! This is to be expressed frequently in word, and also in subtle ways when the battle is going hard. Then reassurance, comfort, and encouragement will lighten the load of life.

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02 -- CONTINUING COURTSHIP THROUGHOUT MARRIED LIFE

Marriage is a lifelong relationship; and too easily there may creep in a dreary atmosphere; a cooling off in love-making; a neglect of expressing a kind tone in the voice; a failure in giving compliments and notes of appreciation, or a smile; the neglect of making surprises; the giving of little gifts; no sweetness of romance; all of which may bring a drabness in life. One Bible writer in his love-song makes mention of a phrase in the love-life by saying, "Take us the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the vines: for our vines have tender grapes" (Song of Solomon 2:15). Love is very tender; therefore, may be easily grieved.

Courtship is not merely to begin a love life, which is to be discontinued after the wedding day. Courtship should be continued all through the wedded life and never cease so long as both parties live.

It may be well to consider why so many weddings land on the rocks, why homes are broken up, and why so many lovers enjoy the wedded life for such a brief time. There is a reason for all this. The simple reason can be briefly stated; it is that the married couple have ceased to keep up their courtship after marriage, then friction has developed and often increased to the breaking point.

There was sweetness enjoyed in the period of courtship in which lovers began with a weekly appointment to see each other. When their affection began to increase, the time was arranged for a date twice each week. Then three times, and, eventually, every day. Then they longed to be together constantly, and an engagement was agreed upon and the wedding date was set. After the wedding was performed the newly weds started out in high hopes on the "honeymoon" trip. But

sad is the fact, in too many cases before they return, the honey has all run out and the moon has set. Then life becomes a drudge, a drag, and a disappointment. Then the question arises, "Why is this so?" One reason is that the proper adjustments were not made, Which springs from not being properly informed of all that marriage means. It is then that courtship ceases and life seems worthless.

The engagement to each other, and particularly be, coming wedded, naturally accepts a separation from other suitors. To give undue attention to others who become too friendly has become the occasion for friction. After engagement and marriage, both parties should know that from here on the road to travel is single-track. For both to love so pure, noble, true, and mature that neither will give an occasion for jealousy or be guilty of it is commendable and ideal. The lives of many wedded couples started to become stormy when a third party entered in and to whom undue attention was given.

When jealousy enters into the marriage relationship it may become an irritating situation that will mar a happy state. The party accused of giving occasion for jealousy should be very careful so that neither he nor she intentionally or unintentionally, knowingly or unknowingly gives the slightest cause for jealousy. Some women and men are flirtatious without realizing it. When a third party gives undue attention to a married person, he or she should not consider being elated and flattered, nor should a reciprocal attention be returned. Every effort to reassure a companion of love and devotion by loving consultation, wise planning, and becoming conduct should be made. Everything should be done to remove a basic feeling of insecurity by making a companion satisfied, admired, and desired. This should restore confidence and bring an improvement in this situation.

The writer was engaged in an evangelistic campaign in one of the larger churches. He always makes it a policy to attend Sunday School classes: Attending the men's Bible class which numbered more than a hundred members, the lesson that particular Sunday was on "The Folly of Solomon," which was an ideal topic for men. The lesson text stated that the wisest of men married a thousand wives, A man who will marry a thousand wives simply has nine hundred and ninety-nine too many. The teacher of the class said, "Gentlemen, my father died three years ago. Shortly after his death, my mother said to me, 'Son, your father and I lived together in wedded life for fifty years, and all through our married life he never gave me one anxious moment.'" This was an ideal record. Only God knows how much unfaithfulness there is in the marriage realm, and how many wives and husbands have anxious moments because of the unfaithfulness of a life's partner.

The marriage vows should not be forgotten in thoughts and deeds. Each couple should either seek pre-marital counsel or read such books that will be informative in the area of how to live harmoniously. No couple should expect too much on their honeymoon, when they are not properly informed.

Courtship should never cease, no matter how long a couple has been married. One of the best bits of advice to be given to married people would be, Never cease courtship as long as you are married.

Of course, as the years pass by, courtship may take on a different form and express itself in various manners. A beautiful scene of true wedded love and courtship came under the writer's observation in his ministry. In the summer of 1949, the writer was engaged as speaker for a camp meeting in central, eastern Pennsylvania. An aged couple, each being in the upper eighties and having been married for sixty-five years, heard that the writer was the speaker and came from the suburbs of New York City to be in the camp meeting, Sixty-five years of married life is not too long when life is lived harmoniously. This couple conducted themselves properly as though they were just starting in as lovers. These two came arm in arm to the services and sat together on the front seat to the left of the speaker. Again and again, while the message was being delivered, both became blessed. He would shout "Glory." Then she responded by saying, "Glory." As the message was being delivered he became spiritually animated and stood up, shouting "Glory." She looked up at him and also shouted "Glory." Then he became so animated he could not stand still and started to walk slowly across the front of the tabernacle with his right arm up, still shouting, "Glory." The speaker kept on delivering the message, and he observed that this devoted gentleman's wife followed him with her eyes, and also shouted "Glory." When he came to the end of the tabernacle, he returned to the other end still shouting, "Glory." The wife followed him with her eyes to the other end. When he returned and came by her, she stood up and locked her right arm in his left arm, then with his right arm and her left arm uplifted, they walked about shouting, "Glory." All of this, which certainly was in the Spirit, did not detract from the service or the message, but added to its blessing and inspiration. This seemed so fitting and beautiful to the writer that he would travel a long distance again to see another inspiring scene like it.

When married life proceeds as God intended, each one will blend into the life of the other partner until their likes and dislikes, manners, and ways become so integrated, each becomes a part of the other, and as the years pass by, each one begins to take on the features and looks of the other. It has been observed that such couples who walked together through the years, in the evening of life when one deceased, the other companion felt so helpless, so alone, and dependent that the bereaved one seemed somewhat like a fish out of water. Such separations bring a grief, and leave wounds that are long in healing. When the time of parting occurs, blessed memories will be cherished so long as the other partner lives.

When love and affection are waning, and no delight is taken in the married life, it is good for each partner to take an inventory of one's heart and life. Ask yourself such questions as: Am I as compassionate as I should be? Do I possess old-fashioned appreciation for my spouse? Do I nag my companion, belittle him (her) or make him (her) feel inadequate? Have I taken stock of myself to keep him

(her) happy? Am I more friendly, cheerful, pleased, and courteous with others than I am toward him (her)? Do I wisely attempt to help him (her) in any weakness to bring strength? Do I give occasions for any grievance to arise? A self-examination like this will be helpful in a stormy period in married life and be like oil poured on troubled waters. Each partner should help the other in the time when the going seems to be rough, to smooth out the pathway for both.

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03 -- ERECTING AND MAINTAINING THE FAMILY ALTAR

In setting up housekeeping, the consideration of furniture to furnish a home with the articles for comfort and convenience form an important matter. The body requires some articles, such as chairs, tables, beds, cupboards, and cooking utensils, with numerous conveniences for the outer man, even that which is physical and material.

One of the essential matters in the family life is the home. It requires more than furniture and a house to constitute a home. The word "home" has a greater connotation than that of a house or a dwelling place. A house and utilities are essential, but these are only one side of the married life. Man is also spiritual, immaterial, and immortal. The inner man has needs, which are those of righteousness, holiness, and eternal life. There also needs to be those acts and habits formed which will help him in his spiritual life to become more devout and useful, especially in relation to those who are the nearest and dearest in his life.

The one essential act in married life is to immediately erect a family altar for the purpose of maintaining family worship. The divine ordination is that the husband has been appointed to be the head of the house, and for this reason the major part of the responsibility in being holy and leading his wife and all the children into heaven, rests upon him. When the husband does not make this the first and great objective of his life (even the salvation of himself, his wife, and children), he will fail God, fail himself, and fail his family.

When we consider that the family is the oldest institution in the world, and antedates society, governments, and the church, and that these all grow out of the family; therefore, all owe their existence and prosperity to the family relationship. The family concept lies at the foundation of society, government, and the church, because all are being made up of families. As the families go, so goes society, the state, and the church. None rise higher than the standard of the families. When families become loose in their views and more loose in their practices, and liberal in their beliefs, it is plain to see that the foundations of society and governments will begin to crumble.

Good society, governments, and churches are contingent on the teaching of good morals in the family. The church is the salt of the earth, and Christian families

are the salt of the church. When this concept is conceived, the importance of secret prayer, and especially families calling on the name of the Lord to restrain the fury of the Lord upon the nations becomes a necessity. Here we learn that family worship is of vital importance. When the truth dawns upon men that Christian families and family worship are the fountainhead of vast streams of influence that will bless the nation, it appears that every family would erect a family altar and faithfully maintain family worship.

Altars hold a most important place in the Scriptures and are mentioned over 400 times in the Bible. They should have an important place in the life of every person, but particularly in family life. Abraham, in the Bible, was preeminently known as the altar-builder. As a man, he sought after God and became known as "the friend of God." His great concern was grace for his children and that his posterity should populate heaven. The great concern in Lot's life was grass for his cattle. As he began to prosper he leaned toward Sodom, a wicked city. Shortly after this with his family, he became situated in Sodom. He lost most of his family, with his possessions in the holocaust of Sodom and Gomorrah, and nearly lost his own life.

An altar on one hand is a symbol of sacrificing to the Lord. It represents Christ offering Himself to the Father as the Saviour and Substitute for all sinners, dying in their stead. On the other hand, an altar is a symbol of worshiping God and the place for prayer.

Prayer should hold one of the most important places in every person's life, particularly is this true in relation to a husband and father for the sake of his wife and children.

No longer than fifty and sixty years ago, fifty per cent of Christian homes maintained a family altar for family prayer and worship. Then it became much easier to reach the children for Christ and the church. This also became a help in preventing juvenile delinquency, as well as a deterrent to crime and lawlessness.

Today it is estimated that only five per cent of the professing Christians have regular family worship. In this area, like many other areas, times have changed, not for the better, but for the worse. Not many young people attend church services faithfully, and crime and lawlessness are increasing at an alarmingly rapid rate.

The nation has been talking much of our crime increase and attribute it to "juvenile delinquency," when in reality, it started with "parental delinquency." When parents slip and fail in performing their duty before God and the children, the next generation will digress and depart much farther from God and righteousness.

There is a startling text which was the heart cry of a prophet, "Pour out thy fury upon the heathen that know thee not, and upon the families that call not on thy name" (Jer. 10:25). Every family, as a family, should call upon the name of the Lord.

This means that in every household there should be a family altar. Calling upon the name of the Lord implies prayer. God expects every family to call on His name and to maintain family worship. When God gave His law to the Israelites, He particularly enjoined upon them to teach it to their children, saying, "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" (Deut. 11:19). "Ye shall command your children to observe to do all the words of his law" (Deut. 22:46). A good manner in which such teaching may be given is around the family altar.

Every family needs Christ. A home without Christ cannot be what a home should be. There will always come a time in each family when there is need for Christ. If He has not had a welcome in the home, it will be a sad and dark time without Him. Jesus was given a welcome in the home of Martha, Mary, and Lazarus. In time of sickness, they knew on whom to call.

Family worship will exert a wholesome influence upon every member of the family. It is there the small children will daily hear the name of the Lord, God's Word, and the voice of prayer. In later years, the memory of the family altar will be one of the sweetest recollections that will linger with them as long as they live. Even when children have gone astray and have, gone deeply into sin, the recollection of the prayers, offered for them, has often turned the scale in their favor and influenced them to turn to the God of their father and mother.

When we consider that a child is born without its will and consent, it does seem right that it should have a godly father and a saintly mother, with a Christian atmosphere in which to grow up for the Lord. Children should be considered as a gift from God and be reared for the Lord, a useful life, and heaven. Fathers and mothers may well give more attention to their children and their eternal welfare. This should become their first great concern in family life.

In the writer's early ministry there occurred an interesting incident that will illustrate the truths that are attempted to be conveyed to parents in this article. Boarding a train in the early evening at Indianapolis, Indiana, for New York City, then up the eastern coast on the Fall River Boat Line for a camp meeting on the upper New England coast, he awakened the next morning in the mountains at sunrise. The scenery was beautiful. A beautiful sunrise in the beautiful valleys and mountains added to the beauty of God's creation that intrigued him. Passenger train traffic was at its peak in those days. Train after train was met that went thundering by, going in the opposite direction. In observing the scenery on both sides, and looking backward on a mountain, a passenger train which had passed by a few moments before was seen going up the grade. This train was made up of two engines and a dozen passenger and Pullman cars. Such a train is designated as a "Double Header." Beholding this double-header, the writer became blessed in soul and mind, then speaking silently to himself he said, "This double-header train is like a family going to heaven. Going to heaven is uphill business. Every family in going

to heaven needs a 'double-header' and all should be coupled together: The husband and father is the head, or engine No. 1. The wife and mother is engine No. 2. The children are the coaches. All need to become lined up and coupled together, then as a family pull for heaven."

Let me first appeal to fathers. The father is head number one. If he aspires to have a wife and children, he should first seek to become as holy and devout as the grace of God Can make him. His greatest concern should be to get to heaven and strive to assist his wife and children to arrive there also. He should see that he is on the main track that leads directly to heaven and that his wife and children are lined up on the same track and coupled together. Then with all of his pulling ability, might, and main, assisted by the divine grace of God push himself up the road and pull his wife and children along; saying, "Come on, wife and children, we are heaven bound!"

A father should allow himself to be admonished a little farther. If he will live so that when he deceases he will be certain of going to heaven, and his wife and children will know where to find him when they decease, he will not have lived nor labored in vain, even though he will have accumulated but little material wealth.

An appeal to the mother is that she is engine number two. It is her privilege and duty to couple on to engine number one and say, "Husband, go on, I am coming," and also to the children, "Come on, we are heavenward bound." If she will live so that it will influence her husband to press forward and induce the children to come along, neither will she have lived or labored in vain, even though she may not enjoy all the finery and luxuries, or possess the time-saving devices and modern conveniences this age offers. What will all the luxuries of this modern time avail when the heart, life, and affections are devoted to them to the neglect of the soul, its needs and the attention of the salvation of the children and their eternal destiny? Let first things come first, which is the assurance of sins forgiven, with a hope of heaven for self and the entire family. The erection and maintenance of a family altar will bring blessed results and eternal rewards to the family. Time should be taken for family prayers and worship.

The children should be coupled on and follow in the steps of their father and mother, serve the God of their parents and say, "Father, go on, Mother, go on, and if you get there before we do, look out for us for we are coming, too." What greater legacy can parents leave their children than that of a holy example and a testimony that they were ready for heaven and would await their coming in due time.

Family worship exerts a wholesome influence upon every member of the family. While the children are young, tender, pliable, and responsive, their minds need to be filled with good instruction, their eyes behold godly examples, and their hearts feel the tenderness of love and truth. This will become a safeguard in their formative years and follow them through life.

Every father and mother should realize that they cannot afford to bring up their children without the influence of a family altar, What greater joy can there come to a married couple than to be blessed with lovely children who are well disciplined, behave well, love the Lord, hate iniquity, and do right with all their hearts! Such children will succeed in life, be an asset to society, an honor to the State, a pillar in the church, a pleasure to their parents, and a joy to the Lord.

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04 -- RECOGNIZING CHRIST AS THE HOME-BUILDER

There is much implied in the title "Creator-God." As such we recognize that the Creator had no beginning, but all creation has a beginning. The Builder of all creation is the Creator. God the Builder is Spirit and immaterial, while man is material and spiritual. God prepared the heavens for His dwelling place and the earth was made for man. Practically all of God's creatures possess a homing instinct. Among the living creatures on earth, most of them pair up and desire to dwell by themselves, and these select a place where they may dwell together, which to them becomes their home.

Adam was created for companionship and the propagation of the human race. Since man was spiritual as well as material, he also was made for heaven, and it becomes necessary for him to make a twofold preparation, one to provide for time and this world, and the other for eternity and heaven.

The Lord God created Adam and formed Eve to be the first human pair from whom should spring the entire human race. The family is the oldest organized institution in the world. The family throughout the Bible is designated as a house. The greatest concern of every father and mother should be their children and their eternal destiny. This was the great concern of Abraham to whom the Lord promised to make his seed as the sand on the seashore and the stars of heaven. This appears to have been the great concern of the Israelites in general throughout the Old Testament history, even the proper training of their children and their children's children to prepare them to live holy lives and choose the right destiny for their hereafter. The Israelites were instructed again and again by the Lord to train their children to live holy and useful lives, and this may account for the Hebrew race making little progress in science, culture, and inventions, which were as secondary in their objectives, giving their major attention to rearing families and properly educating them for the Lord and His glory.

From the study of the history of Abraham, we are led to the conclusion that his great concern was that of grace for his children, while the great concern of Lot was grass for his cattle. As we follow the history of Lot we see that he lost his cattle and most of his children, and nearly his own soul and life. The Lord and Abraham were on good terms because Abraham was greatly concerned that his posterity become a holy nation. The Lord said, "Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I

do; seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him? 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; that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him" (Gen. 18:17-19).

In his old age the great concern of Joshua, the successor of Moses, who led the Israelites into Canaan and subdued the land and assisted all the families of the Israelites to inherit their homesteads, was that his people forsake idolatry and follow the Lord. He informed them that they could not serve idols and the Lord at the same time. Then he witnessed to the people, stating his own determination which was, "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord" (Joshua 24:15). The term "house" here meant that he as the head, with his wife and all the children, would serve the Lord. This was ideal and as God intended for family life to be lived.

Salvation by the Household

It is not God's purpose that a husband should be a Christian and the wife not; neither that the parents shall be saved and the children lost. Neither is it God's Will for husband and wife to be united for this life, then be separated at death, separated at the judgment, and separated throughout eternity: When God can have His way and the cooperation of the family, He will save the entire household.

The husband is the head of the house and as such he should aspire for the salvation of every member in the family. Generally, if he will seek the Lord with all of his heart, and God with His kingdom first, he will succeed.

Salvation is an individual matter, and no one can ever be saved by proxy; nevertheless, the salvation of each house should be the aim of every family. It would be well for every minister and Christian worker to aim for household salvation. This thought is clearly revealed in one incident of Christ's ministry. When He was on His way to Jerusalem on the Jericho road, a man little in stature, by the name of Zacchaeus sought to see Jesus and could not because of the press of others who crowded around Christ and also crowded him out. However, he sought to see Jesus, and in this he would not be disappointed. He ran up the road, climbed up a tree along the roadside where he could look down upon Jesus and see Him. Little did this little man realize that He Whom he sought also was seeking him. When Jesus came along, He stopped, looked up, and called Zacchaeus by name and instructed him to come down, for He must abide at his house. Jesus invited Himself to go home with this man. It is stated that he made haste and came down, and received Christ joyfully. Evidently he was converted after he started to come down and before He landed. Zacchaeus first accepted Christ in his heart and then into his home. Before the day was over, the entire family was converted and Jesus Himself said, "This day is salvation come to this house." This positively implied that Mr. Zacchaeus, Mrs. Zacchaeus, and all the little Zacchaeuses were converted. This

was Christ's great concern, even bringing salvation to the entire family, which is ideal and the way it should be.

Apostle Paul Believed in Household Salvation

This great apostle was a firm believer in household salvation and aspired for the salvation of every member in the family. His labors at Philippi were blessed with the conversion of Lydia, and then followed the salvation of her entire house. When he and Silas were committed into prison, having been beaten and their backs wounded, they were fastened in stocks. Being unable to sleep, they conducted a midnight prayer meeting, and God answered by sending an earthquake, which shook the prison doors open and released them from their stocks. The jailer was in the act of committing suicide when Paul admonished him to do himself no harm, for all the prisoners were still there. The jailer came running in to Paul and Silas and asked what he had to do to be saved. Paul answered his question, and went further by saying, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved and thy house." The jailer was converted and treated Paul and Silas well, and before this incident closed, the jailer with all his house believed. His house included his entire family with all the servants who assisted him in his official work.

The Lord the Great Home-Builder

The patriarch David wrote a most solemn truth in Psalm 127:1, when he said, "Except the Lord build the house they labor in vain that build it." The building of the house here refers to the rearing of a family. The Creator-God also became the Redeemer-Man. He was the One Who created Adam, formed Eve, and united them in becoming husband and wife, and He is the same Person Who became the Redeemer-Man that He might build the home, not merely in the material and natural realm, but also in the spiritual realm for heaven and eternity.

Probably the greatest expenditure in time, labor, and expense, is that of rearing a family. Rearing a family involves conception, the nine months period of gestation, the long period of carrying a child with all its involvements, which only mothers can understand. Then follows the labor of childbirth, which is a strenuous ordeal for the mother. This does not terminate the labors of rearing a family, for it requires eighteen to twenty-one years to bring up a child and properly train it for its life's work. During these years much labor, care, and cost are involved. When a child is given birth and is being reared for the natural realm and trained to become a success in the financial realm, this training will not prepare a child to live a holy life in this world, neither prepare it for a blessed eternity which awaits all men. Unless the Lord builds the house, the parents are laboring in vain.

Of course, the Lord desires the parents' cooperation in the building of this house. First, the parents should be very godly and maintain a family altar around which the children may grow up. They should so instruct their children that early in life they will seek the Lord as their Saviour. The instruction which the parents

should give to their children should lead them to the preparation for holy and useful lives in which the Lord will obtain much glory and honor. When parents are not concerned for their own salvation and eternal destiny, and much less the destiny of their children, they are not qualified to rear a family in the manner children should be reared. It is a sad fact that many parents bring their children into the world, and only for this world, with its sinful pleasures, thus missing the great objective of family life. It is sad indeed when we consider that children are born of sinful parents and the children are brought up to follow them in their sinful ways, the ways of this world, sin, Satan, and eternal destruction. This is not right nor fair to innocent children who had no choice in determining their coming into the world. When parents are not Christians, they are not properly qualified to rear a family, nor is it fair to their posterity. Every child has a right to have a godly father and a saintly mother, a Christian home, and a Christian influence in which to grow up.

The Ideals for a Christian Home

Several generations ago a handsome young man met a beautiful young lady. They became attracted to each other, and an affinity was created which developed into a beautiful courtship. This courtship proceeded well and developed into an engagement which terminated with a wedding in which these two became one. When they were married, both accepted Christ into their hearts and also into their home as their Silent and Unseen Guest, to become the Head over their home. A family altar was erected and faithfully maintained. Their love expressed itself in giving birth to five lovely children. These children were reared around the family altar and also early in life were led to Christ. This became an ideal Christian family. As the years passed by, the children grew up, married, and erected Christian homes of their own. This godly father and mother lived and prayed together, living in harmony and peace which became conducive to long life. The years sped by and their children grew up to maturity, married, and reared Christian families, also attaining old age. Finally the children began to decrease one by one, going to their glorious, heavenly home, even before the parents deceased. This godly father and mother lived together into their upper nineties, then the sun began to set in their lives. In most cases the husband deceases before the wife; however, in this case the wife preceded her husband. Both of their lives which had worn well, were wearing out, and the wife and mother became very weak as she fingered. While lying on the bed of languishing she said, "Husband, I believe it is dark." He answered, "Yes, Janet, it is dark." After a little while she again said, "Husband, it is night." "Yes, Janet," he said, "it is night." As she lingered, her mind again began to wander, and she said, "Husband, I believe it is midnight." It literally was midnight. Then she inquired, "Are the children all in?" This time he answered, "Yes, Janet, the children are all in." Then she said, "Now I can go to sleep in peace." And in a little while she peacefully expired and made the landing in heaven. When she made the landing, we may very easily feature that she saw her Redeemer and the glories of heaven. Also, her five children may have gathered about her and said, "Mother, you finally made the landing and we are glad to see you here." Then the conversation may have gone on, "Where is Father? We haven't seen him yet. Is he on his way?"

The mother may have answered, "Yes, children, your father is on the way, and he soon will be coming also."

After a short period of time, this husband and father also deceased and was received home into heaven where he met his Redeemer face to face, and where his wife and children were awaiting his arrival. Here was an unbroken family in heaven without the loss of one member. This father and mother had a peaceful evening in life in which their sun set in a clear sky that left a lingering glory long after they were gone. When their sun set in life, it was, "Good night down here, and good morning up there."

A great question which should be asked by multitudes of fathers and mothers is, "Are the children all in?" That is, are the children safely sheltered in Christ and the heavenly fold? Many parents have made no preparation whatever for their own soul's destiny, and possess no concern whatsoever for their children's destiny. Many children may be out at night and even into the early hours of the morning, going astray, or indulging in sins and crime, while the parents sleep both physically and spiritually, having no concern whatsoever about their children's activities. No farmer would rest or retire if he knew that one of his many milk cows or fattening steers were not safe in his herd, and yet these eventually will be taken to the slaughter house, but children who possess an immortal soul are given no concern whatever.

Every home needs Christ, and the home in which Christ is not given a welcome, is not what a home should be. There will come a time in which Christ will be needed, and needed very much, but has not been recognized, which will be a sad, dark, and lonely occasion.

Much more will be obtained out of married life when life is lived for the Lord, righteousness, and heaven. When a married couple is not living for the Lord and heaven, as the years speed by and the evening of life approaches, those days become sad, dismal, and dark. Then the thought of children following in the steps of their sinful parents, also without God and hope in the world, presents a sad and dark picture.

Let every father and mother recognize that Christ died for all, that He is the Great Home-Builder, and desires to save them and their children, and that there is room in heaven for all, then strive to live godly lives that as families they may be saved, be secure for heaven and eternal glory, thus shunning hell with its eternal torments and sorrows.

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05 -- ACKNOWLEDGING DIVINE ORDINATION

The first law of heaven is order, which is essential to the unity of the Godhead. The first doctrine in the study of theology involves the consideration of the unity of God. God of necessity must be a Trinity for the sake of His infinity and eternal perfection. In God there is' a Trinity in a unity, and a unity in the Trinity. God is three in one, and one in three. However, God is not three in one, and one in three in the same sense. He is three in one in one sense, and one in three in another sense. There has been unity and harmony in the Trinity from all eternity. Never was there a misunderstanding, any friction, or clash in the Godhead. How and why could there be infinite harmony, unity, and fellowship in the Trinity? This is because of an infinite and perfect order or ordination in the Godhead. God is spirit, and there is equality in each Person in essence, Deity, eternity, holiness, love, wisdom, and power. In attributes, God is one, and in nature He is one. How, ever, in office and operations God is three. Since God is three in Persons and three in offices and operations, but one in purpose, ordination is essential to the infinity, harmony, and fellowship in the Godhead. Order leads to unity; unity leads to fellowship; fellowship leads to joy; and joy leads to strength. God the Father is first and highest in His office. As such He is over the Son and the Spirit. The Son of God is subordinate to the Father, and the Spirit of God is subordinate to the Father and the Son.

There is nothing derogatory about being in submission to those who are duly ordained to be over us. The subordination and submission of the Son of God to the Father does not in any manner imply that He is inferior in person to the Father. Subordination and submission to those who are over us make possible promotion and exaltation. There is no promotion for God the Father, for He is the Highest, the Supreme One and over all. He may and should be praised, honored, and worshiped as the Supreme Being. The Son of God in His submission to the Father, and by humiliating Himself, made possible for the Father to highly exalt Him.

Let us recognize that the triune God made man in His image and likeness. In the fullness of time God said, "Let US make man in Our image, after Our likeness: and let them have dominion . . . So God created man in His Own image; male and female created He them" (Gen. 1:26, 27). God is a plural God (a compound unity) and He created a plural man (Eve being created in him, but required a creative act to form her from the living substance of Adam). When we recognize the image of God in Adam and Eve, and that God took Eve out of Adam and formed her from the substance of Adam into another person, then gave her back to Adam to become one again in a new relation (a compound unity), even though they were two distinct persons, there of necessity had to be a law of ordination for the sake of unity and fellowship in the married relationship. The Creator Himself gave the divine ordination in the relation of the first man and woman, and all husbands and wives. If a happy married life is to be maintained, then the divine ordination is to be observed.

Some one may say that from the creation account man should not necessarily rule over the woman because she is of the same flesh and blood as he,

and he should recognize her equality in person. Certainly he should consider her equality in nature in her sphere, and divinely appointed area, for which she was made and ordained. She was made for the man. The man was not made for the woman, but created first and the woman was formed afterward. After the Fall we read in Genesis, chapter three, that the Lord God gave some further instruction which was essential for the human race. That is, the husband should rule over the wife (Gen. 3:16). In the ruling of the husband over the wife, he should not forget the idea of her person in being a helpmeet and companion, even as the Lord God had said in the beginning. The New Testament gives added light for Christian husbands and wives. "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. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything" (Eph. 5:22-24). Also, "But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God. . . but the woman is the glory of the man. . . Neither was the man created for the woman; but the woman for the man" (I Cor. 11:3, 7, 9). The Scriptural admonitions are perfectly safe to follow in every area of life, particularly in the marriage relationship.

In a committee, the general rule is to appoint an uneven number, such as three, five, or seven, so there will not be a tie, and a decision be locked or rest on dead center. In the marriage relationship there are only two and not a third party. Whenever a third party enters in, it will create friction and trouble. Many marriages have gone to the rocks by a third one entering illegally between two lovers.

The Lord has wisely arranged so that in the married life, situations will not become locked or hang on dead center by investing the headship in the man, then the wife should sweetly submit, which will be the salvation of all critical situations.

In marriage two become "one flesh," and one in purpose; however, there are still two personalities, two minds, and sometimes two different ideals, concepts, and two wills that do not blend. When the wife will submit sweetly, no friction will be created. The husband should just as graciously and wisely make the best decision. God has wisely given each animal creature only one head. If a cow had two heads, and one head were determined to go one direction and the other head in another direction, it would create confusion and bring misery, and create "two headaches."

Several years ago a turtle was found which had two heads, which was a freak in nature. The turtle was alive and healthy. This situation created trouble for the turtle. When fed, both heads ate out of the same dish, but both heads became angry at each other and would snap and bite the other head, because each head thought the other head obtained more food, even though it went to the same stomach. Here is a great moral lesson for married people where there is friction and two dominating heads.

The thought here is not that the wife has no voice, or choice in any matter, and certainly her voice should be heard and her choice considered, but let her express herself kindly without any sharp or stern temper, and her choice be submissively proposed, and rather than allowing contention and friction to come to a boiling point, she should sweetly submit when no principle or moral issue is sacrificed.

When the wife contends for her way, two hearts will be wounded. While she is usurping authority over him and that in a heated, ill-tempered spirit, she not only lords it over him, but she will hold him back from succeeding in life. While she is trying to down him, she is downing herself. If she attempts to hold him back, she automatically is holding herself from progress. If she will sweetly counsel with him, stand at his side, and push him to the front, she will automatically arrive at the front without seeking that position, which is most wholesome for both parties.

In many marriage ceremonies the divine ordination of "Wives submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord" (Eph. 5:22), and "They are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law" (I Cor. 14:34; Gen. 3:16), also, "being obedient to their own husbands" (Titus 2:5), is being deleted. Some may smile that such an old-fashioned notion should be brought forward to this time in the twentieth century. These are inspired Scriptures, and revelation and inspiration harmonize with reason. The reversal of this ordination has never been known to work together for good. No wife can have a happy wedded life if she takes over the leadership, lords over her husband, and makes the man the vassal of her will and demands.

The noted Alexander MacLaren spoke wisely when he declared: "No woman ever had a satisfactory wedded life who does not look up to, and reverence her husband. For its full satisfaction, a woman's heart needs to serve where it loves."

Another noted scholar of the past generation, the Reverend William B. Riley, said, "I have in mind at this moment two people who have lived as husband and wife half a century. The woman is physically and mentally the stronger member of that union, but in fifty years she has never once made the husband feel that fact. She counsels with him as carefully as though he were a Gladstone in intellect, and reverences him as truly as though he were a prince, and the sweetness of the relationship is at once an inspiration and an ensample. Such women find little difficulty in 'sanctifying even unbelieving husbands,' and after all, that is the greatest work that any wife can accomplish."

Added to the other side of married life and the admonition of wives being in submission and obedience to their husbands is another divine injunction, namely; "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself for it" (Eph. 5:25). Here often lies the weakness of husbands. Husbands who do not love their wives as themselves are falling short of the grace of God, the commandment of God, and fall short in being a good husband. A husband who

does not love his wife as he loves himself, and becomes sullen, stern, speaks unkindly to his wife, will be hindered in his prayer life. The wife who is nagging in her demands, fretful in her duties, and censorious of her husband, and is highly tempered in her nature, will fail her husband, and also pursue an unwholesome policy that militates against her spiritual and physical health, which certainly does not tend to prolong the life of herself or her husband. Nor will such a state be conducive for the children to grow up in a wholesome environment.

The love enjoined upon husbands is not to be considered as not being under their control, or that it comes and goes as it will. This is a mistake. It is to be under the control of the will and to exceed eros or conjugal love that is fluctuating or often volitional and optional. The agape love which is the highest type of love and rooted in the will, will help to save the marriage from a stormy period because the will is a strong element in personality and holds steady during the stormy period till calmness reigns again.

Three times in Paul's writings he admonishes wives to be in submission and obedience to husbands, and only once to love them. Husbands are commanded again and again to love their wives. Wives seldom need to be commanded to love. They do not fail so much in this area. Their temptation is not so much to fail at the point of affection, for their femininity generally secures them in this area of life. Their temptation is to get out of their divinely ordained realm and lord it over husbands and attempt to bring them under.

Husbands are made to rule. In the beginning of the human race, God gave man the governing spirit. Affection is more natural to the woman than the man. For this reason the husband is commanded to love his wife. A man by reason of his masculinity may be tempted to make too many stern demands, and his physical powers may tempt him to become a conscienceless potentate. Men have been known to be courteous, civil, smiling, and sweet all day long to every patron, but when they came home, they were critical, stern, and sometimes contemptible. Such husbands cannot bless their home nor lead their families to the Lord.

It is possible for a man to labor long hours daily, make much money, furnish elaborate homes, have automobiles, increase servants, all of which will be accepted by the woman, and then not make use of the art in being tender, gracious, and complimentary as in former days. Such wives have reasons to conclude they have lost much of their first love. Husbands should recognize that generally the life of wives and their duties are made up of, and entail many little details. If they will give little attentions, little gifts, and compliments, that will give their wives great joy and they will feel compensated without great gifts that are accompanied with little love.

Let wives obey the divine injunction "Submit yourselves to your own husbands," and that sweetly and cheerfully. This will make it easy for husbands to love them. Then husbands, the divine injunction to you is, "Husbands, love your wives." If you will, it will make it easier for wives to be submissive. Also, the

husband should recognize that Christ is the Head over him and he needs to submit himself under Christ, even as he expects his wife to submit herself under him.

It has been said, "Marriage is a fifty-fifty proposition." This is not always so. It would require a very ideal married life, and a very perfect state and stage to live a perfectly balanced life between two parties. Under stress and strain there are times when it may be necessary to conform to a "sixty to forty proposition." When one married partner does not come to the "fifty" mark, but fails and goes down to the "thirty" point, this will bring a strain of "seventy" points upon the other party. To save the home and peace, one partner should pull the heavier end of the load until matters become adjusted properly. Wherein one is weak, let the other one bear the burden, and thereby fulfill the injunction, "Bear ye one another's burden, and thereby fulfill the law of Christ" (Gal. 6:2), which is applicable to married life, as well as in the Christian and church relationship. When each married person will recognize his or her divinely ordained position, it will wonderfully aid in attaining a happy married life.

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06 -- REIGNING OF LOVE AND SUBMISSION

It is well to differentiate between love and affection. A good definition for love is: "Love is the voluntary choice that always seeks the highest good of the object loved." The advice that the Apostle Paul gave under inspiration was, "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself for it" (Eph. 5:25). Here is one area in which the weakness of some husbands becomes manifest in that they fail to love their wives as the Scriptures and the laws for a happy married life require and demand. The advice given to wives is, "Wives submit yourselves unto your own husbands as unto the Lord" (Eph. 5:22). Here the weakness of some wives becomes apparent, that is, failing to be submissive, and strive to lord it over their husbands. A wife will serve best if she will recognize from whence the first woman came, even Eve, who was the mother of all living, and that was from the man's side, near to his heart. It is interesting to observe that God did not take one of the twenty-eight bones in a man's foot to form the woman, which should be a lesson to man that God did not intend for man to tread a woman under his feet. Neither was the woman taken from one of the twenty-five bones in a man's hand, which suggests that she was not supposed to do the major part of the work in married life. Nor was the woman taken from his head, for her to lord it over him. But a rib was taken out of man's side near his heart, which leads us to conclude that a woman will serve best at a man's side, seeking to regulate his heart life. The Lord God took of the living substance from Adam and formed the first woman, then presented her to Adam to see what he would name her. 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). The word "woman" has several beautiful connotations. God did not intend for her to be a "woe-man," but a woo-man, who was to woo and be wooed. The word "woman" comes from the

old Anglo-Saxon and means the mistress of the home and family life, as well as her husband's chief assistant. Also, the word "husband" has the connotation of a house-band, upon whom rests the headship, and whose love for his wife and family should bind them together into a oneness of objectiveness and of glorifying the Creator-God. This also indicates that the major responsibility for making a home and of wisely leading the family into holy living rests upon him. A husband or wife should never consider that it is derogatory for a wife to be in submission to her husband.

The Bible injunction given to a husband is that he should love his wife. Three times this commandment is given. He is commanded to love his wife as much as he loves himself, which means he should not spend lavishly on himself, and she receive but little, or a scant supply. He also is commanded to love his wife "as Christ loved the church and gave Himself for her." This love in the Greek is designated as agapo and not eros. This special love involves the will. It may be explained as a redemptive love, as being willing to love even to the extent that involves suffering. Christ's love constrained Him to suffer and die for the church. There will come crises and temptations, and unexpected tensions that will bring a chilling to love that the will must be exercised so that a spirit of resentment or sullenness will not creep into the love-life. When he loves in this manner it will help in resolving many critical situations in a peaceful manner. This means that he should suffer in his love when it is needful and beneficial to his wife. Sometimes this may be necessary in married life. As he would defend himself from harm, he should do the same for her. Provide for her wants as he does for his own, and give her an equal share.

A husband should recognize that a wife deserves more than Christmas presents, birthday presents, and costly furniture, all of which are fine, but that her heart hungers for something more, which is the hearty, continued, and daily affection of his heart. Nothing can take the place of affection and love. A husband or wife should not assume that he (she) knows the love possessed without an expression in acts and words. God knows our desires, knows we love Him (if we do), but He wants us to tell Him of it every day. So in married life, each companion should verbally express love to one's life partner. A husband should recognize that next to the claims of God, his wife has the strongest claim upon him. Of course, others have claims also, such as relatives, friends, and neighbors, but not to the extent that does a married partner. A wife also should recognize that her husband has the strongest claim on her, even next to God, and that even loved ones should not hold priority in this area.

A husband also should know that a wife's life is made up of little matters, articles, and details, which make it easier to become the mistress of the home. Home life is made up of many little duties and details. Her husband should make her life happy by little courtesies and little gifts, as well as larger gifts. Since love is a wife's only wage, the husband should not scrimp in his paying these wages.

The duty enjoined upon the wife is to be submissive to her husband which will wonderfully help in his love for her. On the other hand a husband should not forget that if he loves his wife it will be easier for her to be submissive in her area. It is all too easy for some to be hurt by what they interpret as a slight, then to withhold their affection and brood about being lonely. Loneliness is a characteristic of too many modern marriages. Better than maintaining a silence and brood over it, is to break the silence, frankly talk the matter over, come to an understanding and let harmony be restored, and live in peaceful companionship.

The duty also is enjoined upon the wife to obey her husband (Gen. 3:16; Titus 2:5). This duty of obedience is not absolute; therefore, it is to be interpreted by good common sense. Children are commanded to obey their parents "in the Lord." They are not under obligation to obey a command to lie, or to steal. So it is with the wife; if the husband demands that which is wicked, unreasonable, or absurd, the wife is not bound to obey, for this is not "fit in the Lord" (Col. 3:18).

There also are spheres in the home that concern both parties in which the husband ought to obey the wife and yield to her wishes. The wife should be content with the location and surroundings that seem best suited for her husband's business, and best for the interest of the entire family.

It is a wife's duty to make her husband's home as happy as she can. The home should be made a haven in which each one finds protection from the storms of life, and from which each one may triumphantly make the journey to heaven. The home should be the place where he finds his greatest earthly joys, and the sweetest earthly rest. It is a wife's duty to make his home as much like heaven as possible. There are scores of ways in which the wife can do so. First, is by her own sweet disposition, which will attract as well as hold him. The inward adorning of the heart and mind with the Christian graces are of great value. The matter of a woman's dress and appearance to please her husband is of value and merit. The Bible teaches that "whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things" (Phil. 4:8). These virtues also are wholesome in the marriage relationship. A slovenliness and carelessness in dress will detract from the admiration and love a husband has for a wife. If the wife will "dress-up" only for the eye of strangers, or the transient guest, and not do the same for the eye of her husband, she has lost some of her first love. To the extent a wife will practice sweetness, loveliness, kindness, purity, and making the home pleasant, to the same extent will the husband be induced to spend his evenings and much of his spare time at home.

An unpleasant home life where the atmosphere was not inviting, and the home has become unattractive, has turned the scale with many men and started them on a downward path. In the life and labors of the noted William Hutton, there came to him a country woman seeking counsel. She informed him that her husband

had lost his love for her, spoke unkindly to her, sought the company of others and often spent his evenings away from her, which caused her much grief. She thought he might be able to tell her how to cure her husband of his ways.

He told her the remedy is a very simple one, and he had never known it to fail. Said he, "Always when you meet your husband, treat him with a smile."

She thanked him and went away. She was not too certain whether it would work in her favor. Anyway, she wisely considered that it would not cost her anything, neither would it do any harm. Diligently she practiced the admonition given to her, and discovered it worked majestically in her married life. Several months later, she returned to the minister with two fine chickens, which she asked him to accept, saying, with tears of gratitude, that she had followed his advice and her husband was cured. Said she, "He no longer seeks the company of others, but treats me with love and kindness, and again has become a 'home-bird'."

When married couples have trouble in their home life, and friction arises easily, and their first-love is growing cold, let them remember what it was that brought them together in the first place, and how they treated each other in getting started in their love-life. Marriage does not mean that courtship should cease. It should be continued all through life. Speaking in simple language, the same strategy employed in capturing a mate, will, if made use of, work in holding him or her.

The home should be more than just a snack-bar, where each one in the family eats when he wishes, and food that comes in bars, that is, commercialized. A good meal, where the family meets together to enjoy a well prepared and balanced diet, should be planned and be enjoyed together.

Then also, the home should be more than a place to sleep, and that at irregular hours, in retiring or in arising, without any disciplinary regulations.

The importance of love and submission cannot be overemphasized in every area of married life. This is for the sake of peace of mind, good digestion, rest and sleep, and harmony, which will bring happiness. Husbands need to be loved, admired, looked up to and honored, which will greatly inspire them to aggression and to be triumphant in their undertakings. Wives also need to be loved, admired, and honored as the weaker vessels, and also as joint-heirs and partakers of the grace of God, and all its blessings. And husbands, please don't forget the command of God in regard to the virtuous and industrious wife, "Her husband shall call her blessed, and praise her" (Prov. 31:28).

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07 -- ACQUIRING A GOOD UNDERSTANDING

Understanding people is a great art. One of the great trials of life is to be misunderstood. In courtship and marriage the art of understanding each partner is very essential. This art to some extent is developed during courtship, but generally not sufficiently to make good success in marriage. Neither is it developed sufficiently after marriage in many cases to help smooth out and resolve marital problems.

It does seem that two lovers should be able to sit down together and both be good listeners, listening understandingly and sympathetically, while each one unburdens the heart to his or her companion. To do so requires patience and humility, and if this can be done, it will save the services and fees of a marriage counselor or a psychiatrist, as well as save heartaches and mistrust.

The marriage partner who will not listen patiently to the grievances of a companion and allow him or her to unburden the heart, is not an understanding companion. The great law of counseling should be observed, which is that of being a good listener. This will allow the burdened one to relieve himself or herself of a heavy load that is carried. It often is true when a burdened person can unburden the heavy load of his heart that in itself will wonderfully lighten the load, if an understanding and sympathetic partner will listen patiently. The discussion should not lead to heated words, but kindly discuss the problem and allow the difficulty to be resolved through kind words of understanding.

A companion should not act independently in important matters. These should be discussed understandingly and an agreement reached in a decision that has been wisely considered, and that which will be the best in the long run.

It is a sad state in marriage where either husband or wife commands the other in the form or tone with which children or servants are commanded, and still sadder when in a stern voice with a heated temper and unkind spirit demands are made. Husbands and wives should recognize that strong love is easily grieved or wounded. Also, a strange look or strained tone of voice may cause a wound of heart. It is wrong to retort in a manner that has an intent of a sting in an answer, or to purposely humiliate and hurt a partner.

Cultivating the art of fellowship in marriage also has its virtues. Tritely, fellowship has been expressed as, "Two fellows in the same ship." This is not true at all times, but may have a connotation that teaches a moral lesson. True fellowship cannot be attained without a good understanding and complete frankness with each other. When love cools off, a husband or wife may very easily give expression in a manner for the managing of the other partner to gain a self-purpose in having one's own way. A husband may become too domineering, and silently make his personal decision for his selfish purposes. When this concerns both parties the matter should be resolved in a mutual manner for the best interest of both parties. Many wives have learned to resort to the practice of nagging continuously, knowing that by repetition they wear the husbands down and so

achieve their objectives. Such women should know the advice a scholar once gave: "Ladies, harping won't make you an angel."

The term "matrimony" has the connotation that this arrangement was ordained for the mutual help and comfort that the one partner should render to the other, whether in time of joy or sorrow, prosperity, or adversity. Marriage presupposes the fellowship that brings trust, confidence, and mutual understanding, which will lead to both ease and peace. Such a state of sweet and peaceful fellowship cannot be achieved or maintained without each partner being completely frank and conversant.

The marriage relationship will increase in the realm of fellowship through the sharing of life's interests. The husband makes a mistake if he withholds from his wife all the knowledge of his business, profession, and plans. Likewise, the wife will miss much in life when she fails to discuss the daffy routines of life with her spouse whom she loves. The joy of sharing should be developed and maintained in the family relationship. Each should listen attentively to the other partner's interest, and express a loving delight in a partner's concern, for that does not militate against the wholesome relationship in marriage.

Generally a man's life is involved in business and great issues which concern other men. In the main, his concerns are objective, and this should be so. On the other side of a married relationship, a woman's sphere is the home, little details and duties which make up her place in life, and these are subjective. As a rule, these duties are repetitious. These are necessary in her life and domain, and are what it requires to make a home. Each one should wisely consider the sphere and purpose of the other partner and never speak derogatorily of each one's place and purpose in life. This will lead in maintaining a good understanding in the marriage relationship. Also, an appreciation for each other in the different spheres of life will make it possible for the other partner to carry on faithfully and cheerfully. Attitudes in married life should be considered because they may mean more than that which is said or not said. Attitudes may express themselves in wanting to help, or that of willfully ignoring a longing; of making a companion feel inadequate and as having been defeated, or on the other hand as being heroic and triumphant; or as being to blame or being innocent.

When a husband or wife retreats from a nearness or affectionate attitude, there may be something in the other's conduct, words, or temper that is killing his capacity to feel close. There could be something in one's own personality that causes him (or her) to avoid closeness.

A husband should not become inarticulate in the home. He may take it for granted that the wife and children know he loves them, therefore, need not to be told in words. A good manner in which love may be expressed is in words, even in being told. A wife may easily be hurt by that which she interprets as a slight, by withholding her own affection and brood over her loneliness. It were better for her

to come out of her silence sweetly and lovingly than to live in a suppressed state. If a couple can get through the silence to each other, then in a loving manner express or manifest appreciation, a great problem will have been solved.

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THE END