

Get Married and Save the World

A Guide to Christian Marriage,
the Witness of the Family and
Restoring the World

Ordinary Brother

Ackerman has written carefully and insightfully on marriage in a way that is not mere abstraction, but is earthy and integral to living out our trust in God. Ackerman writes engagingly and gives us one perspective and insight after another concerning the nature of a one-flesh union. His use of metaphor, anecdote, and analysis of texts made for a smooth and rich read. The prospects of a healthy, successful, godly marriage seem slim in our degenerate culture and wicked churches, but Ackerman inspires us with the faith and assurance of that ancient sturdy trust in the Word. His is a vision of biblical marriage infused with Holy Spirit power, which far exceeds our low expectations.

He writes with an even-hand in dealing with alternative readings of texts he discusses. He acknowledges differences and nuances. It demonstrates that he has read widely on these issues. Ackerman masterfully dismantles the pervasive weak arguments in favor of divorce and remarriage. He brings the whole counsel of God to this question, as opposed to only a few words. This chapter is a comprehensive teaching on the nature of marriage that is a true service to the Church. I eagerly await the publication of this book as I have no doubt it will be truly pleasurable and edifying to read.

...Overall, Ackerman points out what is actually quite easy to understand, but difficult to implement. The facts are there. The Scripture is there. It is not difficult to understand. But it is difficult to believe and implement because it costs a man his life. But Christ tells us that if we do not pick up our cross and follow Him, then we are not worthy of Him. Ackerman is faithful to the imperatives of our God and assists the saints in seeing this clearly and lovingly. Ackerman has done a great service to the Church with this chapter. I am looking forward to reading the rest of this book in its entirety.

Review of Chapter 4 by Pastor Jack Shannon, author of *Contra Mundum Swagger* and founder of Saint Athanasius Reformed Catholic Church

Dear Thomas, When I was a 20 something young man living in Alberta I returned home to Prince Edward Island with my family for a summer visit. What a profound difference there was from the lone dry, flat prairies of the west and the rolling green hills, red soil and vivid blue seas of that little province of Anne of Green Gables. The profound beauty of my home sweet home never looked so radiant as it did then for my home sick eyes and heart.

As it was then, so it is now. Since you sent me a PDF of your soon to be public new book a day or so ago I have hardly taken the time to surface for air as, for the most part, it also felt like home sweet home. Thank you for letting me read it. You have taught me much and given me even more to consider and reflect upon.

“Get married and Change the World” will encourage many to re-evaluate many things they took for granted that may now need a closer look. Thank you for your work to reach this generation.

Kindest regards, Stephen Wilcox Theological Foundations Ministries

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In a grave they laid thee, oh my Life and my Christ
and the armies of the angels were sore amazed
as they sang the praise of Thy submissive love
-from ***Lamentations, an Orthodox hymn***

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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I thank my parents for raising me to be a person who cares about right and wrong. I thank my wife for helping me in everything that I do, and being a picture of goodness and holiness that I can see before me anytime I want.

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INTRODUCTION

I am writing this book so the Christian today can have a simple presentation of what marriage is according to the Word of God, as well as what the family must be. Normally, it would seem redundant to write such a book, but when I think that the simple Christian will be taught by liberals, apostates and often unbelievers, that they will absorb much of their value system from them, I believe it is urgent to give a simple presentation of the main aspects of Christian marriage. I want the truth to be out there.

The spark of inspiration for this book, really the fire that got me started, was a young man I knew who made a girl with child outside of marriage. I encouraged this young man to marry her, and take care of the mother and child for life. He sounded like he received the idea well. Yet I know he can be subject to many failings as a human being, and is subject to hearing very ungodly advice from both young and old around him. So I suppose I imagine myself speaking to this young man as I write this book. He may have started the union of man and woman in the sinful way, but there is nothing stopping him from continuing instead in righteousness, and that's what we all need on the earth – righteous men. We need more righteous men on earth. In my heart I write this book for him.

While I intend to present the central aspects of marriage, and its central purposes, I will also expound on them along the way. I will do some apologetics and some preaching. It is not primarily a detailed study on marriage, but since I will be both presenting the truth as well as answering some objections from opponents of Christian marriage, I will at times get into a defense of the faith. I will also explain areas of doctrine which marriage clearly connects with, as well as a few that it briefly touches upon. These are doctrines such as the Trinity, the Salvation of man, Original Sin and others. Yet I will not go over them in great detail, as they are only connected points to marriage. I will share some personal experiences along the way too; how things worked out for me and my wife, how our faith leads us in our marriage arrangement, some of the hardships we have been through. Yet those stories are only to help out. I simply want to present God's core truths about marriage, and time tested common sense advice.

This book is not comprehensive. I am only trying to go over the main

points, and then give methods of applying them. If I wanted to be comprehensive, it might be three times longer. The largest section is about the man's headship, and this is because I go into some detail in leading the home itself and manifesting the faith in regular, daily or weekly habits. I sometimes speak directly to the man or to the woman in this book, but I speak directly to the man more often. That's in part because he is the head of the home, and in part because I am a man so I simply have more ideas for him. But I address the woman as well, both with biblical instruction and personal advice. If a woman wants personal help in how to be godly and submissive in marriage, I can put you in contact with my wife, and when she has time she can help you. I have also included a Gospel presentation toward the end. It's not that technical, but I think it presents the main truths in a personal way and I feel the book would be incomplete without it. You will find some extra information in the appendices, tools that are helpful to me and I want them to be helpful to you as a reader.

I titled this book *Get Married and Save the World*, a title I believe the Lord gave me, although obviously the title is only half serious. The Lord Jesus saves the world; the best we hope for in our marriages is to lead souls to Him and to bless our society with the life-giving benefits which flow from the family. It is a serious title though, in the urgency there is with marriage, the importance those benefits have, and our need for a strong witness at this time of collapse. I also thought a nice title would be *Shut Up and Do Your Job* but the Lord didn't lead me that way. It is relevant though, since we really need to think of being a father, mother, husband and wife as our job, and like we might do at work, need to quit complaining and just do our job. No one sits down at their desk in the morning griping at their coworkers, yelling at their boss and refusing to do anything, they just sit down and get to work. It's very simple. The Church would be immensely better off if we had this attitude. However, this book is already very blunt, so it doesn't necessarily need a blunt title. If you don't like blunt language by the way, you probably need to close the book right now, throw it away and go do something else. However, the bluntness of truth is interwoven with spiritual poetry, stories, encouragement and many Bible verses. So you don't have to listen to it all the time.

When I got married, I did not go into it with many doubts or fears. Countless men and women today DO enter marriage with doubts and fears, and some never want to get married at all. I am sympathetic to that. I understand why souls tremble at the thought of a lifelong union today. Yet fear is unnecessary. I went into marriage with complete peace. My main immunity against fear was simply that I knew my marriage was up

to the Almighty and for the purpose of the Almighty. My wife knew that too. We were united on our marriage being a union for God's glory and not about our pleasure and personal goals. We were united in accepting the Bible's teaching about it. We still know today that we do not have to trust in our own strength, but have the rock of Christ instead to trust in. We don't need to rely upon our personalities or our cleverness or our attraction to each other. We simply have a supernatural union and a common goal. Personalities will never be the foundation for the union of man and woman. The Lamb of God will. Therefore, I was not trepidatious going into marriage. I don't believe my wife was either, at least not much. We just try and do what the Word of God says.

People might ask what my qualifications are to write a book on marriage. That's a fair question. I think my qualifications are strong, but you are free to disagree. I have been a believer in the Lord Yeshua for close to 14 years now. He has taken my heart of stone and replaced it with a beating heart of flesh. I am entirely reliant on His supernatural grace. I am entirely undeserving of that life. This book comes from a brother in the Lord. I also take the study of the Word of God seriously, and have studied much of Scripture in great depth. I have spent much time defending the faith as well, both against unbelievers as well as Christians who deny important doctrines. I have many hundreds of pages of that material. I hold Scripture to be holy, completely truthful and authoritative in our life above any other authority. Not that it takes a theologian to figure out or explain the main facets of marriage in the Bible, as I intend to do, but I believe a good knowledge – broad and deep – helps us understand it more solidly and apply it more consistently with Christian truth. But you don't have to be a theology junkie to basically understand these truths.

I also would hold up as a qualification that I have not compromised my principles. I am not trying to please any constituency and I am not afraid of whom I might offend with my teaching. In fact, I have stood up for my faith countless times against those who prefer that Christians are silent. I have spoken truths from the Word of God in environments where they are hated – both Christian and secular. It didn't feel good. But I did it anyway. I have stood for my faith many times when my job was on the line, have been threatened many times to keep quiet, and I have lost jobs for my faith. I don't mean to brag here. However, if you wonder what my qualifications are, this is who I am and I am not going to lie to you about what the truth is, as many pastors and ministers will, just to please someone. I WILL speak the truth, even when my job is on the line. Therefore you can count on me to be as honest as possible with you. The average Christian today has a sense of how compromised churches are, and how compromised other believers are. Some have detailed knowledge

of how compromised pastors are. That's why I think it is better, often at least, to hear teaching from an ordinary brother like me, and not a pastor, seminary graduate or theology student. I'm not saying it has to be me. But an ordinary brother like me. Often more truth is told outside of a church than in it.

Perhaps my first qualification on my resume here should have been that I am happily married. Sadly, this is not true of many among the brethren. The young put off marriage. The older break them up. I believe having been happily married for about 9 years now, with four children (one who passed away as a baby) is as good a qualification as any. Not only that, but I believe the marriage I share with my wife, and our home life, is modeled according to God's revealed will in the Bible. It is a Christian marriage, not a mere societal one. It's not flawlessly perfect. However, we have peace, happiness, forgiveness and we both seek to serve God and serve the brethren in our lives. That's what our marriage is about. In fact, the Lord has been so good to us, in more ways than I can count, that even in a year from now I'd be able to tell you new details of the Lord's blessing on us. God's way works. And when I say blessing, by the way, I mean primarily in the spiritual sense, with physical ones being secondary. God's blessing does not always mean being comfortable, wealthy or without troubles. It is rather His provision along the way, and the peace in heart He gives you. We are abundantly blessed that way in a happy Christian home.

I think you'll find, even though this book has a personal tone, and contains a number of personal insights, that it's little more than a presentation of divine truths about marriage from the Word of God, and common sense traditions tested in history by the saints. Or in other words, what your Bible believing grandparents could have told you about men and women will likely line up 80% or more with what I write here. I am not presenting novelty. I am not being inventive. I'm telling you what your Bible, and your grandparents could tell you, and I'm doing it because the world so loudly disagrees. Base your marriage on divine truth. There are millions who will call you simplistic and archaic for doing so, but that's okay. What the Modern calls simplistic and archaic is actually what's good and beautiful for our lives. It is simple and eternal. God's truths are not complicated. They are written in the Scriptures and are in harmony with the natures He gave us. Let's listen to God here, and not man.

This book will also challenge your worldview, if your worldview is more American than Christian. It will challenge you if your life is based on man-made liberties. I present marriage and the Christian life in the home from a perspective of divine revelation, and secondarily reason. I do not

presume a basis of rights or of personal wish-fulfillment in our lives. Christians are addicted to these things. Our life is not about our freedoms or our wish fulfillment, but about bringing glory to God. We have obligations. We have responsibilities. These things take precedence over the hopes and dreams we idolize. Our dream, as a Christian, should be for the Kingdom. That is our dream. While much of the Church seems to worship a western concept of freedom, I think you'll find this book is dismissive of that worldview, when it is not openly critical of it. Our worldview must be based on God's truth. Not supposed freedoms.

It is impossible not to notice, every day, as I write this book, that we live in a time when the simple truths of marriage are made a mockery of. This civilization has rejected them. Christians, who are marching right in line with the current society too, have rejected them. The children of God have made a mockery of the union between the woman and the man. They have made a mockery of male and female. They blend gender almost as much as the Humanist world. Yet they always stand ready to criticize the nonbeliever, who goes a little further than they do. Christians must realize what they have lost and what they are rejecting. The family is something as basic as food and drink, as basic as shelter, as basic as civil order and law. It is also one of the brightest witnesses to Christ which we can show to the world. It is through the family that we can be a city on a hill, not as individuals, but as a community which loves, supports and protects each other. This witness would outshine many others.

Our Lord Jesus Christ called the Jewish leaders of His day hypocrites, for they denied the same law of God they claimed to uphold. This scarlet letter H certainly applies to our modern Body of Christ. For they claim to uphold morality, yet they scoff at it and break the law freely, always ready with an excuse. This is the Pharisee of today. This is the Scribe. Before the Christian can speak about morality, marriage, family and gender, he must actually respect them first himself. He must actually obey God regarding the family. Otherwise he stands as the Pharisee today, and the axe is already at the root of the tree. You might even say the tree is already felled, yet it just keeps talking. The modern Church needs to repent brothers, and respect all that God teaches in the Holy Bible. It needs to put aside prideful dreams of freedom and humble itself before God and obey. Then – as you love to hear in your churches – the Holy One will hear from heaven, will forgive our sin and will heal our land.

Amen

PREPARATION

Marriage reflects the Salvation vessel of God

Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.
Ephesians 5:25-27

“For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.” This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church.
Ephesians 5:31-32

*I will greatly rejoice in the LORD,
My soul shall be joyful in my God;
For He has clothed me with the garments of salvation,
He has covered me with the robe of righteousness,
As a bridegroom decks himself with ornaments,
And as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.*
Isaiah 61:10

*You shall no longer be termed Forsaken,
Nor shall your land any more be termed Desolate;
But you shall be called Hephzibah, and your land Beulah;
For the LORD delights in you,
And your land shall be married.
For as a young man marries a virgin,
So shall your sons marry you;
And as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride,
So shall your God rejoice over you.*
Isaiah 62:4-5

Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven

and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea.

Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

Revelation 21:1-2

“Come, I will show you the bride, the Lamb’s wife.”

And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me the great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God.

Revelation 21:9,10,11

Christian marriage is a picture of the Salvation vessel. It is a picture of the ark of God and the people who come into the ark. It is a picture of the Christ who died to save us and the precious people that He came to save. It is the picture of the Lord who washes us clean in our heart and the people who submit to His rule and His purification. It is a picture of the unbreakable union between the Son of God and His people.

Marriage connects the opening truths of Genesis – *Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.* (Genesis 2:24) – with the ultimate purpose and end of biblical revelation in the Bible – *“Come, I will show you the bride, the Lamb’s wife.”* (Revelation 21:9) It is rooted in the Garden of Eden and prophesies the Kingdom of Heaven. We see Almighty God and His chosen people spoken of as bridegroom and bride throughout the Hebrew Scriptures. Israel is His beloved. We see this very same language in the closing chapters of the New Testament, with the New Creation and the New Jerusalem coming down adorned beautifully like a Bride. The restored people of God are the holy Bride of Christ, and it is Christ for whom this whole creation was made. *For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him.* (Colossians 1:16) The owner of this cosmos – and any other cosmos that might exist – has taken a wife.

This is why in getting married, you will present to the world this great mystery. The man will show the world Christ and His love and the wife will show the world the Church and its holiness. The man will be a picture of Christ’s strength, protection and leadership, the wife a picture of the Church in its beautiful garments, gentle soul and submission to her husband. What a great honor and pleasure to be able to model God’s salvation for the world. We should be excited at the opportunity, and in

awe that God has called us forth to do it. We should be excited every day at our marriage, and the purpose the Spirit of God has given it. All of these things are true, and God will provide the power for His people to do them.

Walk United in Faith

This modeling of the salvation vessel in marriage is one of many reasons that we must remember God's teaching to us: *Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness?* (2 Corinthians 6:14) If we are to model Messiah and His Bride, then how can this be presented with a person who does not know the Lord? It would be, in the words of these instructions, like trying to combine light and darkness, goodness and evil. Their different natures do not allow them to mix. This passage applies to other kinds of close fellowship with nonbelievers, but it applies very urgently to marriage. Not only does it misrepresent what marriage is meant to represent, but it also puts both parties at odds with each other in marriage, and in a situation of likely conflict rather than the intended peace. It furthermore puts the children of the marriage in a position to receive two radically different doctrines, and see two radically different examples. They will receive no consistent teaching. This is unfair to any child, and is unfair to the child of a believer that they receive abundant false doctrines from a nonbeliever. Do not marry with the unregenerate. They are in the flesh.

This teaching will sound hard for those who are still young or emotion driven. Emotions between men and women often govern too highly, especially for the women, who are more led by feelings. Young people feel an attraction that is strong enough that it often outweighs all reason and common sense, and they easily idolize the object of their attraction in a way that approaches worship. Yet if attractions are this strong, if they overwhelm our mental and spiritual resources, we will not be able to make the wise decision. That only stresses the importance that we have good counsel around us in parents and church community in choosing our mate. It also stresses our need for obedience, to put our will and our feelings completely beneath the Lord and obey Him in all things. It's an exercise in our faith. For if we cannot put our emotions beneath the authority of God, then we are a slave of emotions, and not of God. No matter how powerful the attraction, it must be made slave to God, and we must obey His good will for us, which is to make our marriages wholly Christian ones. Listen to the Bible on this. Do not be swayed by feelings.

This teaching is perhaps the best advice I have taken in life. I was a new believer when I first started thinking about marriage. I had never

thought seriously about it before being born again as it sounded like a downer compared to my sinful lifestyle. When I became a Christian, it was obviously the right path, especially since celibacy seemed unrealistic to me. At the time I had only a basic yet growing knowledge of God's Word. In part, a poor knowledge. Yet I spoke with a pastor about my desire to get married, and he took me straight to this passage from 2 Corinthians. Thankfully, I took it to heart. Even though I went as far as to propose to a nonbeliever whom I'd previously known, she knew that I could not marry her unless she came to the faith over time. This woman was not prepared to wait so long and find out, so we broke it off. That single act of obedience to God's will saved the both of us great trouble and harm, and saved our possible children the same harm. God's will for us is good. We just need to put ourselves under it.

This is a point I have to mention here and will certainly mention again – God's law is good for us. These teachings in the Bible which we must live by are not arbitrary, brother. They are not cruel. They are God's perfect, good and holy will for His holy people. The Bible speaks of God's law beautifully many times, not as a burden, but as something to be yearned for and contemplated. Something we should feel joy in. The psalmist writes—*I delight to do Your will, O my God, And Your law is within my heart.*” (Psalm 40:8) And again—*Give me understanding, and I shall keep Your law; Indeed, I shall observe it with my whole heart.* (Psalm 119:34) And in contrast he writes—*Indignation has taken hold of me Because of the wicked, who forsake Your law.* (Psalm 119:53). If we don't have a yearning for God's law in our heart and our lives, then something is wrong. Just think about the good which comes from following His teachings. In the case I have mentioned, God's will brings a powerful witness to marriage of salvation itself. It will lead souls to Christ. God's will prevents conflict and confusion, both for adults and children. In this it protects from harm and nurtures us. What about other arenas? When you see violence and murder on our streets, you see men not obeying God's commandments, but breaking them. When you see drug addiction, fornication, pride, greed, idolatry, all of these things are a result of man breaking God's law, not following it. Even the pagan is upset by political corruption and injustice, and in doing so he uplifts the law even as he denies the One who gave it. We should be filled with tears of joy to think of the goodness that comes from God's path for us. We should love to think of the peace and life and healing it brings to humanity. The path of our Lord is a path of life. This is true on the simple scale of His commandments. It is true on the transcendent scale of His eternal salvation. The goodness of God's law only witnesses to the goodness of His Savior. Jesus led a life of perfect righteousness. Yet in Him is life.

So when you take hold of God's teachings for marriage, remember they are a tree of life. God's will for us in marriage, or anywhere else – is not burdensome. His teachings are not meaningless rules. Rather, when we take hold of them we take hold of nourishment, health, protection, peace and life. To reject God's commands is to reject all of these. It is to let the garden die. It is to let loved ones around us die. Proverbs 3:18 speaks of God's wisdom and knowledge, saying – *She is a tree of life to those who take hold of her, And happy are all who retain her.* Whatever fear you may have about following the Lord, however burdensome your imagination has told you it will be, however much work you've been told marriage is, whatever rebellion your pride has toward this or that specific commandment – keep God's commands, and pursue righteousness in all things. Do it because God is God and He is sovereign over all things. Do it because it is His command. Let the pride die with the flesh. Trust in God and His Holy Spirit in you. He does not ask you to do what He will not empower you to do, and when you find that you fail, confess your sins immediately and repent, and keep living in righteousness. Give all to the Lord. Our life is to give glory to God. His way in marriage is a tree of life.

“that you may fear the LORD your God, to keep all His statutes and His commandments which I command you, you and your son and your grandson, all the days of your life, and that your days may be prolonged.

(Deuteronomy 6:2)

Prepare for Marriage

Since I am already talking on the importance of marrying another Christian, I should also take the time to speak of other important qualifications. I will mention a few of them more than once throughout this book. I just want to have them here in one place, albeit in short form. Marriage is not something to put off for many years. Yet it's also not something to rush into carelessly. Certain basic needs must be met.

Firstly, let me say what finding a mate is NOT. Finding a mate is not tracking down that one-in-a-million person that exists uniquely to combine with your unique personality. This is a rather romantic notion. Yet it's not true. There are many good partners that can be an excellent husband and wife for the rest of your life. I'm not saying God doesn't have one uniquely prepared for you – of course God's providence rules over all – simply that you should not expect there to be a needle in a haystack you have to look for. The needs of a husband or wife are not that hard to meet. Likewise, you should drop the similar idea that there is an “opposite” half

to your own half; this imaginary person that will complete the pear, or the apple or the fig that's been sliced in half. No, God can complete you in marriage through many different sincere believers. Just ask Him in prayer. You don't need to expect a "soul mate" type experience, although it's possible you will have one.

Also, do not expect that the man or woman who will become one flesh with you ought to raise your emotions to apex level. They don't have to stimulate you like your favorite meal after a three day fast. They don't have to stimulate you like a hive of bees either. Affection and emotion is ideally something that comes along as a side effect of dwelling on the person's faith and virtue, and thinking of a life together with them. We might feel warm affection when we spend time with them. However, if emotion is a driving force equal or above the others, you're in trouble. You will also be made blind by overwhelming emotion and desire, blind to a person's deficiencies as well as any possible dubious aims. What the culture calls being "in love" is on par with a mental illness and trying to choose a mate this way is like driving drunk. There is naturally stronger emotion among the young, or among the innocent, but you should not expect that the one you will marry provide a tidal wave of it. It's not a 20-foot wall of water that rushes in and floods your home. Rather – to complete the metaphor using water again – feelings are more like a beautiful lagoon you wander upon, as you pass through their forest looking for food. They come with the whole package.

It is also common to think that a man and wife need to have excellent compatibility. They need to have these well matched personalities, or many common interests. This is false. The compatibility they need to have is that they both do their jobs, and the common interest they need is God. That's it. Nearly any two partners will have differences in what they like or differences in how they communicate. Those are things that you learn to accommodate over time, with understanding. A good husband cares that his wife has some of her desires in life met. A good wife wants to learn about what her husband likes, even if she hates it. When two people are living as God instructs them in marriage, it is nearly impossible to imagine these differences harming them greatly. Rather, they give us a chance to grow, and to know the other. If anyone could, I could easily claim lack of compatibility with my wife, as her English is not perfect, especially right when we got married, and we have some odd misunderstandings sometimes. If I were looking for fault, or looking for an excuse to complain about marriage, I could, just as anyone could. I can say one thing, and she can literally take it to mean something else. Yet this is not a lack of compatibility on any substantial level. Rather, we are compatible since we have the Holy Spirit, so we learn patience over these

things. If we wrote all of our misunderstandings down, we'd have a good book of jokes, and could laugh about it for years.

What you should expect most, and even require in a Christian bride or bridegroom is this: Above all, as I have said strongly, they must be a faithful child of God. They should show virtue, especially the virtues most important for their gender. They should respect what the Bible teaches on marriage, including the main elements I go over in this book. You should find a man who is prepared to support his household, and a woman who is prepared to care for the children and keep the home, especially once the first child comes along. Your partner must understand that marriage is for life and must not expect a flawlessly perfect partner. They must be prepared to forgive. They must be prepared to live with someone that sometimes they just don't like at all. With a person who wronged them. Many women look for a man who will be highly successful, but this is unrealistic, and often unfair. A woman should look for a man who is responsible and hard working. If you want to waste years looking for someone who meets elite criteria, including criteria that aren't high priority for a Christian, then you are bringing worldliness into your life, and will have a much harder time finding your partner. They don't need to be elite. Just godly and responsible.

Moreover, it is important to meet someone who is prepared to marry within a reasonable timeframe. A man or woman who is ambiguous about the future and has no idea when they want to marry, is probably not a good choice to spend your time with and consider the future with. Marriage ought to be in their plans within a year or two. Otherwise, you might just be dreaming. You'll end up with a fantasy relationship that goes nowhere. Before I met my wife, I was seeing a woman whom I always knew had plans for travel. It was my own fault, and probably loneliness that made me think of her as a serious possibility. In less than a year, she broke it off, so she could leave and see the world. Now God still used that timing to find me the right mate, but from my perspective, it was a poor choice and totally unrealistic. That's also a lesson in not being moved by emotion more than anything else. If your life is full of the Lord, it's not as hard to be single as our emotions tell us. If you have to wait, fill up your life with prayer, service, and intellectual pursuits. They lessen the power of other desires.

There is a lot you can learn about your possible mate in the seeing process, in regards to whether they are godly and prepared to marry. When I was seeing my wife before we married, we also had an informal practice of our roles in headship and submission. A man and woman seeing each other don't have those roles on an official level, but they do model them to a certain extent. We modeled our relationship, not just in

sharing love and kindness to one another, but in communicating our unique position. I could see through testing her that she had a meek heart, and willingly submitted to my lead. She did not rebel against it. She followed my lead and never directly contradicted me. I expressed to her before marriage that I expected her dress to be modest, and her speech to be respectful. For some woman that would provoke a fight. Yet my wife had a godly spirit, as well as a good upbringing from her parents. She showed that character to me long before we married. I would not recommend marrying anyone who cannot take on the role that God gives them, either in this area or any other. Model some of those things before you get married.

The quality of their family matters as well. It may not be a deciding factor, but the family of your mate should not be ignored as an element in marriage. It may sound like a cliché, but to a respect, when you marry someone, you marry their family as well. You will likely be seeing a lot of them. They may be staying over. They will be calling. If your partner has a family full of serious problems, such a drug abuse, violence and criminality, those problems could spill over to your own family. In fact they probably will, unless you truly distance yourself from them by many miles. Those kinds of problems may also reflect unseen problems in your potential mate, as they may feel the need to cover over some vices and hide their true attitude. I would be very wary in a situation such as this. A family life full of ruin can affect both of you, and your children. I have been blessed in this area, and I thank God for it. Not only are my wife's parents virtuous people, but they came to live with us, help out immensely in the household, and came to know Christ after a few years around us. I could not possibly ask for more.

If marrying a non-Christian amounts to being unequally yoked, it is not enormously better to marry a professed Christian who cannot walk together on what marriage is all about, or on virtue, or on faithfulness to God's Word. It will sow seeds of discord, and cause harm. It also fails to complete the witness we have as husband and wife in representing Christ and the Church, if a part of that relationship is missing. However, I wouldn't suggest it's not a problem that can be fixed, as people mature over time, and sometimes they learn in the long run to be more faithful. Naturally. Marriage is for life and there is a long run to look at. Plan for that long journey, even if you have found you already married someone out of harmony with you on these truths. Aim to unite on them. Keep loving each other and doing the job God gave you to do. We must show the longsuffering of our Father.

Altogether, men and women worry too much about marriage. They put it off because of fear. Not that marriage doesn't require serious thought,

but people give it much unnecessary worry because of the terrible failures around them and their own overly high standards. The standards for a partner are good, but they are not perfection. They are few, and not many. The best thing that I ever did regarding my own marriage is ignore what Christians say and simply rely on the Bible. I hope you do the same. You don't need a minister or a counselor or a psychologist to decide on a mate. Most of them don't really believe the Word of God anyway. I remember shortly before marriage I had a pastor recommend a seminar to go to, which seemed like a good idea to me at the time. It was an all-day thing, full of courses and handouts and advice. There were other couples from the church there. Anyway, the seminar included some of the silliest, least biblical and shallowest material I have ever seen in my life. It also gave an ambiguous and essentially false view of headship in marriage. After the seminar, I just told my wife to ignore everything they had just said. We will stick with the Bible and common sense. That's what we've done. It works for everyone who puts it into practice. The Holy Bible is the perfect Word of God.ⁱ

You Get no Daddy?

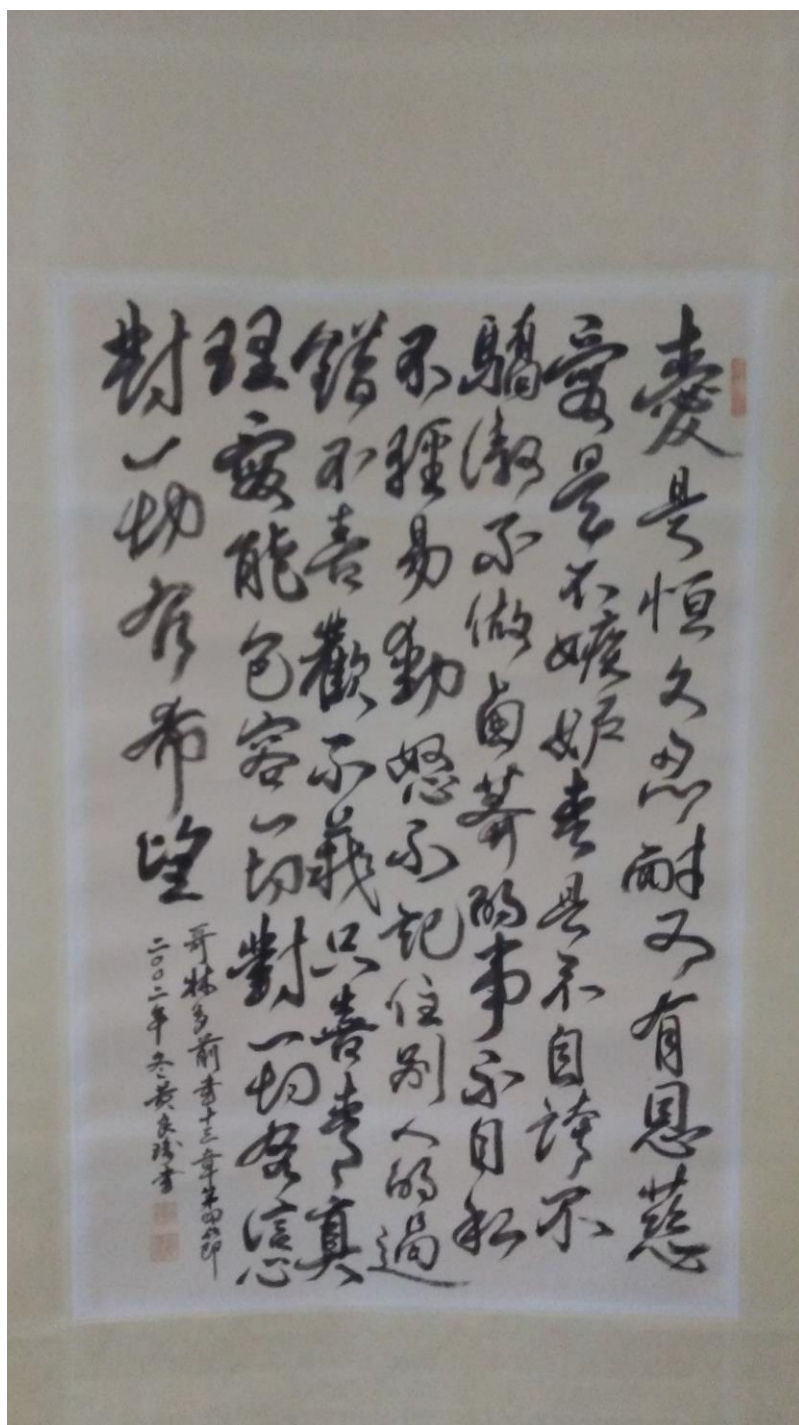
You will run into many Christians who claim that getting pregnant outside of marriage is no reason at all to get married. However, this is a radical departure from the past in this nation. It was understood by almost all Christians that if a couple practiced immorality and ended up with a child, the man did the decent thing and married the girl, and the girl had a husband and the child had a father and mother for life. This would have been the expectation. To deny that pregnancy is a good reason for marriage is to ignore the right of the child to both a father and mother, a right which can easily be deduced by natural law. Both the biological process of having a child as well as what it requires to raise a child shows that the child deserves both parents for life. So should the emotional bonding between parents and child. The simple fact that marriage is the only right place for intimacy should also tell us the father and mother must become husband and wife. In fact, in uniting physically and having a child, they have already completed many of the practical characteristics of marriage. They are so to speak pseudo-married already. They just need to make a commitment and have their union blessed before God. Then they can continue in righteousness.

For either the father or mother to refuse this, is to deny the child what he needs and deserves. Most often, it denies him what he wants as well. Not too many children grow up saying – I'm sure glad I don't have a daddy – or – I'm sure glad I don't have a mommy. Some like to claim that getting

married because you have a child isn't the right reason, since there should be "love" or since they might not be the "right person." However, this is unnecessarily high minded. Number one, above all, it ignores the needs of the child and robs the child of a parent. That's wrong. It also ignores the needs of a woman, and almost demands she be a lone mother, perennially single career woman, instead of having the care and protection of a husband. Then as a mother, she is less likely to be a patient, caring nurturer, and more likely to be worn out, worn thin, and possibly high strung. It also ignores that "love" isn't the prime reason for getting married anyway. In fact, if emotions are too high, as they often are, they compel people to make unwise decisions in whom they marry and become a hindrance. So let's not idealize love. Lastly, it is very clear that practical reasons are not too low minded for God. For the Holy Bible teaches that if we burn with lust, it is better to get married. (1 Corinthians 7:9) That is a purely practical reason, but if we followed that divine teaching, we would have more marriages, more children, and what may have started as lustful desire, can temper over time into the fuel for a lifetime of a productive and happy marriage. What begins wrong can be set right. We just need to obey God. A Christian should never deny their child a father or mother by refusing to marry.

Don't think that the portrayal of the Savior of mankind, Jesus Christ in marriage is too much for a simple person like yourself. We're all mostly simple people. Besides, that's no starry portrayal and it's not a marketing gimmick. It's what the Almighty says it is. A man and wife portray the perfect Savior and His Bride through marriage. They portray the Eternal One and the Holy People He has called forth. God knew that real men and women of flesh and blood and filled with weakness would be getting married, but He told us this is what we reveal: the salvation vessel of mankind itself. God knew His children would sin too, and He gave us repentance and confession to restore us, and commanded we forgive each other. Yet still we reveal the salvation of mankind. If you love God, and you walk it out faithfully, then that is what you show the world. No superb skills are necessary. Only faith and obedience. According to Scripture, there is joy, beauty, peace, love, intimacy and understanding, and only death separates you.

ⁱ As I say in my faith statement, I uphold the inerrancy of Scripture. Many Christians today doubt this or water it down, but it's important to note that Jesus viewed Scripture as perfect and authoritative. So did the apostles. The inerrancy of Scripture has been the belief of historical Christianity from the earliest era. The early Christians may not have used the exact same lingo we use today to define inerrancy, but it is quite clear they believe all of Scripture was inspired by God, and since God is perfectly truthful, Scripture is perfectly truthful too. This teaching can be found from the most prominent leaders and theologians in Christian history. It has only been in a very recent era that believers seek to deny this. If we stick with Jesus' view of the Scriptures, we trust they are perfect, authoritative and cannot be broken.



A Chinese calligraphy of 1 Corinthians 13 on love
by Huang Liang Yu

Chapter 1

THE SALVATION VESSEL

Man is the head, and the representative of Christ.

*But I want you to know that the head of every man is Christ, the head of woman is man, and the head of Christ is God.
(1 Corinthians 11:3)*

If you are the man, you are the authority in your marriage. You are the Christ king. This is a truth written into creation, written into salvation and written in the beautiful theology of the Trinity. It is also immensely practical and full of blessing. We live in a world which regularly attacks the authority of the husband and in doing so attacks the authority of Christ, whom He represents. Don't let anyone cheat you out of your headship or confuse you about what it means. The unity of man and wife is portrayed throughout the Bible, always with the consistent order of man as head, and wife as helper. You and your wife are uniquely designed for those purposes too. You are made for it by the hand of God.

These Three Are One

*"I can of Myself do nothing. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is righteous, because I do not seek My own will but the will of the Father who sent Me.
(John 5:30)*

Man is formed first in creation, something Apostle Paul points out as he explains man's leadership in the Church in 1 Timothy 2. In contrast, woman is created to be a helper, and is secondary in creation. She is of the same flesh, but comes forth from man's being. They are both made in

the image of God, but they are clearly not “equal” in their position and role. Man is primary. Man is head.

We see the same picture of a person who is same in nature, but secondary in role, in the Son of God who comes forth from the Father. The Son proceeds from the Father in time, and proclaims on earth that He comes to do the Father’s will. He says He only does what He hears the Father command, and that He does not do His own will but the will of the Father. The New Testament speaks boldly of the Son’s obedience to the Father. Man and wife are a picture of this divine relationship in miniature, woman coming forth from the rib of Adam, and coming to help man do his will, to seek man’s glory and not her own. She is made of the same nature, but is secondary to him. This comparison continues in relationship, for as the Father and Son commune together, they send forth the Holy Spirit, which Scripture speaks of coming from the Son and also from the Father. Likewise, man and wife, as they unite in intimacy, bring forth from both of them children, through the physical act of their love. Man and wife are in their united nature and their different positions, an illustration of the Holy Trinity, especially as they produce children through their union. The communion of the Holy Trinity is eternal¹, without beginning or end. The marriage unity – man, woman and children – reveals this truth.

Messiah and His Bride

Man’s role toward his wife, is according to Holy Scripture, akin to Christ’s role toward the Church. He seeks to wash her clean in the Word. He loves and sacrifices for her. He never departs from her. He leads and teaches her like Christ, the head of the Church, leads and teaches His special people. Through that unity, the man’s leadership and the wife’s purity and submission, the world gets a glimpse of God’s work in salvation. While Christians have a betrothal now through being one with Christ, the final wedding for the Church is in the future, and this is fully what the wedding of a man and wife in Christ represents; not just the individual being united and washed clean by Christ, but His special chosen people uniting in the Kingdom. It may be a present picture of man saved in Christ. It is also a prophetic picture of Christ’s future return, to take His Bride.

We see this prophesied many times, including by the prophet Isaiah, who wrote to the chosen within Israel: *I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, My soul shall be joyful in my God; For He has clothed me with the garments of salvation, He has covered me with the robe of righteousness, As a bridegroom decks himself with ornaments, And as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.* (Isaiah 61:10) Here the restoration of Israel in

righteousness is compared to the joy and adornment of a wedding. He speaks of the garments not merely as clothes, but as righteousness itself. What more beautiful adornment could we ask for? The future kingdom of God is like a great wedding, and the salvation like precious jewels. The prophet comforts Israel again near the end of his book, writing of the great wedding for Israel: *You shall no longer be termed Forsaken, Nor shall your land any more be termed Desolate; But you shall be called Hephzibah, and your land Beulah; For the LORD delights in you, And your land shall be married. For as a young man marries a virgin, So shall your sons marry you; **And as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, So shall your God rejoice over you.*** (Isaiah 62:4-5) The prophet speaks of a time that ends the nation's sufferings and scourging, a time compared to a great wedding of the sons marry the land of promise. God will rejoice and delight in her, comparing God to the man who is taking a wife and is full of joy at his wedding. This is the promise of new hope. The restoration of the land. The wedding of the land. God and the people like a bridegroom and bride.

We see this event captured in a few crisp words in the New Testament, in Revelation: *Then I, John, saw **the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.*** (Revelation 21:1-2) *"Come, I will show you the bride, the Lamb's wife." And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me the great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God.* (Revelation 21:9,10,11)

Then the apostle goes on to describe the many precious stones surrounding it, like jasper and sapphire and emerald. God's people, his chosen in Christ, will be united with Him forever in an eternal kingdom. This is what man taking a wife speaks of. Not just the individual salvation, but the salvation of an entire people. This is what becoming one flesh speaks of. Marriage is a chance for holiness, for new life and a chance to communicate eternal, divine truth.

Knowing this, who wouldn't want to get married? Knowing this who wouldn't want to show such a witness to the world? That God has chosen a special people to Himself to love and wash clean forever. Marriage is not about personal fulfillment. It is a job to do, and labor for Christ. When we realize how set apart marriage is, we can never treat it as anything but a mission to complete. When we long to hear in heaven the words of the Lord – *well done, good and faithful servant* (Matthew 25:23) – we should know it applies to our married life as well. Can our Lord say these words to us? Did we please Him in our holy union? Were we responsible with the treasure He gave us? We should hunger and thirst even to have the chance. It should be our longing.

The Trinity, the Church and Marriage

I have mentioned that marriage is a picture of Messiah and Bride. I have also mentioned that family is a picture of Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Yet are these merely two arbitrary comparisons? You can be sure they are not. Various passages in John's Gospel unlock the connection between God's love within the Trinity, and our love in marriage. You see, they show how the love between Father and Son models the love between Son and Church. How the headship of Father over Son models the headship of Christ over Church. How the sharing of love from Father to Son models the sharing of love from Son to Church. Once we see these amazing passages, the echo of the Trinity that marriage is becomes less of a mere hypothesis and more of a bold scriptural truth. Patterns within the Trinity provide patterns between Jesus and His people, which provide the patterns of marriage. And all of it is life giving! Divine truth from eternity is cascading down to us in our weddings. Although there are many such verses that show the connection, I find most of them between John 14 and 17.

"At that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you.

"He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him."

(John 14:20-21)

Here we see the Nazarene teach that the union He has with the Father is compared to the union He has with His people. He also expresses His headship in the Church's need to keep His commandments as well as the shared love among them. The love He receives from the Father is also received by His brethren.

"As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love.

"If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love.

(John 15:9-10)

Again we see nearly the same. The Father's love cascades down to the Son and from the Son to the Church. His obedience to the Father is echoed by the brethren's obedience to Him, as is the abiding unity shared by all.

“Now they have known that all things which You have given Me are from You.

*“For I have given to them the words which You have given Me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came forth from You; and they have believed that You sent Me.
(John 17:7-8)*

The truth and the words of the Father come down in like manner; from Father to Son then from Son to Church. The Church is filled with the precious knowledge that the Son came forth from the Father. The ones receiving this truth are the believing ones.

“that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me.

“And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one:

“I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me.

(John 17:21-23)

These are three breathtaking verses. Jesus again reveals the pattern of one abiding in another. The interpenetration of Father and Son is followed with the Church joining in with that divine unity. Amazingly, this is also a cause of the world’s belief. The structure and the union and the sharing of love will reveal to this world that Jesus comes from God. He then restates the elements of this union, revealing that the glory comes from Father to Son and like truth and love, is shared from Son to His Bride the Church. Love, truth, glory pour down. The Son is in the Bride, the Father is in the Son, and the Bride is made perfect through this unity. The love originating in the Father is shared through all. Unity is known by all.

This is why we cannot view the connection between marriage and the Trinity as mere scholastic idea. The husband as picture of Christ is also a picture of the Father. The wife as a picture of the Church is also a picture of the Son. More powerfully, this is why we cannot view the biblical comparison of marriage to Christ and the Church as simple example. It IS example. But it is more. The reality of our union is filled with God’s grace, and it will lead others to know Jesus Christ and know salvation. Marriage is not just a civil affair. It is an instrument of grace. It is powered by the Spirit of God. It makes Christ known. It helps people believe.

That’s essential to remember if we ever ask ourselves – well are ALL the elements of marriage truly important? Is becoming one flesh any more

than practicality, God giving us a useful relationship which benefits society? Of course, each element is essential, both because they are instructed in Scripture, and because they are what reveal God and the Savior to the world. Two buddies united for life does not do that. The headship of the man and the submission of the wife do. Cold and loveless people do not do that either. Ones who honor and love each other do. Childless and quiet homes do not do that. Ones that are fruitful and bring the life and energy of children do. Marriages ripped apart by divorce don't do that. Ones that endure for life do. Each element of marriage reveals God's love and His truth. The horizontal field of mutual love. The vertical tower of authority. The life that is brought forth miraculously from that union. Marriages reveal God. Marriages will lead souls to Christ.

Theologically, in a broader sense, God's triune nature touches on ALL our relationships. It touches on our relationship to our children, and on our fellowship with brothers and sisters in the Church. God is the eternal holy family. We are His people, a holy family as well. When our first child came along, I remember saying my name to him, then his name, repeating my name, then his name, and it struck me how parenthood relates to the nature of God. As he got older, and recognized the parts of the body, I'd point to my nose, and then his nose. My eye, then his eye. My head, then his head. I'd give him a piece of bread, and pretty soon he learns to tear off a piece and hands it right back. To me this became a beautiful chance to experience the truth which we speak of now, of God's interrelation and God's love pouring down from Him onto His people. As you raise a child you realize very quickly the outpouring of life, energy and love that is involved. Your children may be dependent on you. They may need to obey you. But you are constantly pouring out your energy on them, and serving them in every way. A new parent realizes that their child has two slaves. Those slaves are named mommy and daddy. No matter their higher position and authority, they use those things to care for and serve their children. Like marriage, every interrelation in some way pictures the godhead. The Father's primacy. The Son's obedience. The mutual love and service. The godhead touches on everything.

This provides a deeper understanding of why anti-Trinitarianism is so satanic. To deny the Trinity denies God's nature, and the order He pours out on the Church, on marriage, and on human relations in general. For example, Modalism rejects that God is an eternal family. It says that God is a singularity, and that singularity merely changes modes of expression. There is no real intercommunion there. There is no picture of God's nature in salvation or in marriage. Some forms of Modalism may say that God can appear as a family when He desires to, but that appearance of coexistence and intercommunion can end any time, as He is just

expressing Himself that way for the time being. Thus Father, Son and Spirit, as we know them personally, do not exist forever. Whereas the true holy triune God cascades His order from eternity upon us, the Modalistic creator vomits up his falsehood and gives the Church no real bread to eat. If God does not have intercommunion with God, He has no relation to give to the Church and to marriage. He is just one big self. Or an amorphous nature. Our marriages then, would not be a picture of Christ and the Church and Christ and the Church would not be a picture of God. Therefore, if you want to know marriage, know the triune God. Have no fellowship with those who dwell in darkness, and deny Him.

What does it mean to love?

Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her.
(Ephesians 5:25)

Not every man will have a chance to take a bullet for his wife. It may be that you do, but at this time and place in history, there's a very small chance of it. Most of the time for most people, giving yourself for your wife, sacrificing yourself for her, reflects other activities. It reflects the work you put into supporting your family, sometimes difficult, stressful or dangerous work. It reflects your willingness to put the flesh to death, giving up sins and destructive habits that would harm wife and children. It reflects the leadership of the home, protecting your wife from both physical and spiritual danger. It reflects caring for her wellbeing, and secondarily her wants, assuming those wants are godly and acceptable. It means giving your time and thought into leading her and your children in prayer and worship at home. It means many things.

The physical protection of a wife, despite our rather safe time and place in history, is still a reality. Men still need to place themselves before their wives and protect them from harm. During one of the recent mass murders in the U.S., when a young man entered a movie theater with a gun, the men in that theater knew enough about manhood to shield the women from the bullets. The men placed themselves over their women to take the bullets for them. This time and era may try to destroy differences between men and women, but this is one of many real differences; the man's strength and protection of the woman. The men knew instinctively to protect their women, and likewise how cowardly it would have been if they'd demanded their women protect them. They shielded the women. Unfortunately, though, this incident did not only involve husbands and wives, but likely men and women practicing immorality with each other, something which in itself brings death and damnation. So the murderer

walking in to door with a gun was not the only culprit. Those practicing immorality were destroying mankind as well. This is just one way that morality ties into protecting human life. For shielding someone from a bullet is not the only way to save their life – practicing morality and justice is too, and like taking a bullet for someone, it involves sacrifice and often pain. We must put the flesh to death.

A willingness to sacrifice your life for another, such as sacrificing your life as a husband for your wife, is truly sacramental of Jesus. It pictures in this earthly world His great atonement for us. It imitates Christ. Presents His reality powerfully to souls around us. While you may be familiar with the seven sacraments of historical Catholic theology, everyone recognizes that a sacrament can be understood in a broad sense also. The Catholic encyclopedia says of sacraments: “Taking the word ‘sacrament’ in its broadest sense, as the sign of something sacred and hidden (the Greek word is ‘mystery’), we can say that the whole world is a vast sacramental system, in that material things are unto men the signs of things spiritual and sacred, even of the Divinity.” Therefore, we can view the husband giving himself for his wife as a revealing of Christ’s sacrifice for His Church, and even God’s eternal desire to reveal Himself in the cross. The husband is a sign of our Savior, “*crowned with glory and honor. . . that He might taste death for everyone.*” (Hebrews 2:9) Much honor is due to the husband for this alone.

Jesus taught His followers: “*Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one’s life for his friends.* (John 15:13) This represents the heart of His mission on earth, to go to death for the purpose of releasing mankind from bondage. He spoke of His coming death throughout His ministry, but His disciples did not understand until after He died and rose, and came to them. Despite all the teaching and the miracles, His purpose was one: to give His life.

The apostle John explains: *By this we know love, because He laid down His life for us. And we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.*

(1 John 3:16) Thus, Christ’s mission becomes the greatest expression of God’s character – of love. When we imitate Christ we imitate His laying down of His life. This is explicit in the New Testament regarding ALL believers, and it is explicit for husbands as a central part of their role. We sacrifice and pour out our life, even if we never need to take a bullet for our wife. Just as Christ “*poured out His life unto death,*” so do we. (Isaiah 53:12) The bridegroom gives his life for the life of his bride.

While sacrifice is exemplary of love, and Christ-like, so is rule. This is the other expression of God’s love in marriage – the husband’s rule. It is true rule expresses other qualities too, but love is expressed in rule in that

the king governs out of love of God and for the good of his subjects. He seeks to better and protect his subjects. Rule is another common sacrament, making visible the invisible, and putting in our hands an eternal spiritual truth.

The rule of King Messiah is prophesied throughout the Hebrew Scriptures in abundance. The prophet Zechariah speaks of Messiah's kingly rule, telling Israel:

*And in that day it shall be
That living waters shall flow from Jerusalem. . .
And the LORD shall be King over all the earth.
In that day it shall be—
“The LORD is one,”
And His name one.
(Zechariah 14:9-10)*

Isaiah 53, the greatest of passages about the suffering servant, also prophesies His rule over the earth: *Therefore I will divide Him a portion with the great, And He shall divide the spoil with the strong, (Isaiah 53:12)*

Psalms 2 speaks in its entirety of God's rule through the Son, including rule over nations:

*“Yet I have set My King
On My holy hill of Zion.”
“I will declare the decree:
The LORD has said to Me,
‘You are My Son,
Today I have begotten You.
Ask of Me, and I will give You
The nations for Your inheritance,
And the ends of the earth for Your possession.
You shall break them with a rod of iron;
You shall dash them to pieces like a potter's vessel.’”
(Psalm 2:6-9)*

Jesus our Lord, whom the husband represents, even during His earthly mission of suffering and death spoke about His own authority. This is clear both in His authoritative teachings on the Torah (law), but also in teachings about his disciples' need to obey. Jesus taught: *If you love me, keep my commandments.* (John 14:15) *He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me.* (John 14:21) This is explicitly repeated, summarized and expounded on multiple times in the first Epistle of John. Love for the head of the Church is matched with obedience to Him, just as love of the head of the home is matched with the

same. Hebrews even shows the link between obedience and salvation, teaching: *And having been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him.* (Hebrews 5:9) That is not to say we are saved merely through an act of obedience, but that we who are saved by Him are also those who obey Him. Those who follow His commandments.

Christ's headship over the Church is also spoken of in language quite similar to that of His rule upon His return.

*And He put all things under His feet, and **gave Him to be head over all things** to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.*
(Ephesians 1:22-23)

Christ's present rule is also clear in Revelation chapters 2 and 3, as the Lord warns the churches about their sin, calls them to repent, and promises judgment if they do not.

"As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore be zealous and repent.

"Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me.

"To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne.

(Revelation 3:19-21)

These are the words of a ruler. They are the words of one who has present authority, not just future authority. Christ being our head means that Christ is our ruler.

This present rule is made complete upon His future return. Christ's future rule over the earth on His return is explicitly stated in the New Testament just as His present headship is.

Revelation 19 explains Christ's glorious return:

Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war.

His eyes were like a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns. He had a name written that no one knew except Himself.

He was clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God.

And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses. Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And He has on His robe and on His thigh a name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.

(Revelation 19:12-19)

Jesus during His ministry even spoke of His judgment over the earth, something not part of His present work but future rule:

“For as the Father has life in Himself, so He has granted the Son to have life in Himself,

*“and **has given Him authority to execute judgment also,** because He is the Son of Man.*

“Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice

“and come forth—those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation.

(John 5:26-29)

The husband loves with sacrifice and rulership.

I think even in this brief overview of Christ’s role and the husband’s, we can see that as a husband you show love through sacrifice and just rule. Through giving of your energies and through governing with authority for the good of the people and the glory of God. It is true we often associate love with a simple feeling of warmth – and in most of its modes love IS warm to touch – but love is more than a warm feeling. It is an action. As a husband this is how you act in love. This is how you lead.

Now I want to make that truth even more practical and applicable to your lives throughout this chapter. As a husband, what things must you do to match this role? How DO I wash my precious bride in the Word? How do I keep her pure and holy? How do I protect her from harm? I intend to tell you much of that right here. Let us start with the spiritual first.

The Household liturgy

One of the best and most basic ways you can live your role as king of the home, is to develop the home liturgy and prayer routine. I use the

term liturgy simply to mean regular religious practices, generally done daily or weekly. It does not mean you have to found your own church or cease going to a local church. I am strongly against those who reject the local church entirely for the house church. In our home we do various devotions throughout the week, and also attend a local church – though since we have moved recently, we have not yet become members of one.

Home liturgy can start with establishing times for Bible study and worship. If either of these is longer than a few minutes – and they usually are – then between work, church and home responsibilities, they might only be weekly activities. Your weekly time of Bible study should be longer than the typical daily reading. You can work through a chapter or multiple chapters at a time. As the husband you are the leader of the study, provide the material, the schedule and the teaching. A husband would not be able to wash His wife in the word without home liturgy, and periods of study of the Word are necessary for this. Naturally, your wife and children may have questions, but they are not the ones to teach at a home study, rather as the husband you are. That sounds like a heavy task, and it is true many souls are unsure about what is true, but you do your best to represent the doctrines of the faith. This of course requires your OWN study and faithfulness to God. If you are not spending time in the Word and are not obeying God, it will become much harder to teach. Yet you have to. This is a part of your role. If they do not get good teaching from you, they may be getting weaker teaching elsewhere, or even doctrinal poison. When it says the husband, like Christ, must present his wife a spotless bride, it includes good and holy teaching received in her heart. It includes leading her in the faith, as much as any earthly thing can. You are the priest and teacher of the home.

Home liturgy also includes worship. You should make sure you have worship which involves singing hymns, written prayer, and reading of the Scripture. Granted, you can do these acts every day, but a regular weekly time will give you longer than a daily schedule allows. Since I am Jewish by my heritage, our regular time of worship is almost always Friday evening, which is the dawn of the Sabbath. We don't begin just after nightfall as Orthodox Jews do, but we still aim for the evening, and have a special Sabbath meal, as has long been traditional in Judaism. If you want to do something similar on Sundays, that would be fitting, and there have been various ways of honoring Sunday through the history of Christendom. We do it on Saturdays, starting Friday evening. To mention another point from Jewish tradition I believe is good for everyone, it is normal for the husband to say a blessing for the wife at the dawn of the Sabbath. This is actually from Proverbs 31, the passage about the virtuous wife, but a blessing for the wife could come from elsewhere, or

from your own imagination. Although not as old a tradition, we also have the wife say a blessing for the husband after that. The blessing celebrates what a good and virtuous wife should be and what a good and virtuous man should be. It honors both of them.

As a husband, remember that leading in worship is to be all the time. Make sure that hymns – the music that worships God – are regular in your home. Even when you are not singing them for worship or for practice, play them for the household and listen to them yourself. Hymns will help cleanse the soul, and keep the household set apart for God. Hymns should not just be an alternative form of music, but the main form of music. Your wife and children do not need Christian truths received into their mind one day through hymns and then vulgar, sensual and sexualized truths the next day through pop music. Keep hymns as the unique song of your home. Do not vulgarize it the rest of the time. Rather, as priest, sanctify your people.

A Sample Household Liturgy

This is similar, but not the same as mine.

Sunday: Bible reading with children

Monday: Psalms

Tuesday: Practice or Sing Hymns

Wednesday: Book study with wife

Thursday: Confession

Friday: Home worship, praise, prayer, Bible reading

Saturday: Memorize Scripture

This list is not trying to include everything. It does not include brief prayers said in the morning and evening, nor blessings at meals. My wife also does short readings and prayers with the children every night.

Prayer and Confession

Being priest of the home, and presenting your wife pure and holy, will include developing household times for personal prayer and confession. It is true that we sometimes find a few minutes here and there for it without a schedule, it is still best to make a basic schedule, as we often tend to forget, or make our prayers very short. Find at least one extended period for prayer each week. These are times you can pray for concerns in your life as well as from written prayer books. If you keep a prayer list, it's a time to pray over ten or twenty of those concerns. Confession is a necessary part of the new life in Christ as well. You cannot lead your special people without making sure there is time to come before God with

this special purpose. Confession is often neglected in the non-Catholic world, ignored entirely, or brought down to a few seconds here and there. Yet you must instruct your wife and children in confession, and make sure they go before God and confess with their whole heart regularly. Confession doesn't just mean saying – sorry about that. Confession involves understanding the evil of our offence, Understanding its wickedness before the Lord. Confessing our sin to God. Rebuking our sin. Asking forgiveness. Asking God's aid to help us sin no more in the future. This is really not something you devote a few seconds to, in the middle of everything else. You should confess with your heart and mind focused on the confession, preferable on your knees. You should spend the time to do all that confession is to accomplish. In the Bible, Psalm 51 is one of the most powerful prayers of confession, and it gives us an amazing example of what confession can be. Psalm 38 is another great Psalm of confession, as well as of deliverance. We should use these tools that we have, which include written examples of confession and our own spoken and personal confession. Use all the tools the Lord gives us. Sin is no matter to wink at. It is an unspeakable blot on humanity. It is evil before the eyes of the LORD. It destroys lives and destroys souls. Confess regularly, and keep a routine of confession for your family as well.

I want to stop here and mention this: that sin in a believer's life is something that confuses more than a few people. Even a mature and understanding believer, when faced with sin in their own life, can look at the situation as almost an impossibility. On the one hand, we are promised forgiveness of all our sins. On the opposite hand we are promised that a good tree – who is a born again soul – brings forth good fruit. He does NOT bring forth bad fruit. So what can we make of our own sin? This conundrum can lead to some people believing one of two falsehoods – either that they can live as they please, and God will just forgive them, or that they can never really have confidence that they are saved, and they just might be damned forever. We must not slip into either view.

One of the biggest keys that strikes the balance, is the practice of confession. We target sin through confession. We seek forgiveness as well. We battle sin. And Scripture even promises that if we confess our sins God WILL forgive them. Sincere confession of sins on our knees before God is a part of that growth, and makes holiness in our lives make sense. It is one of the steps we take to cleanse ourselves of sin, and of real guilt before God. Remember, even though God promises us eternal life, He also promises us chastisement. He punishes those He loves. (Hebrews 12:6) That might not fit into the warm aroma we like the imagine love as, but it is surely loving for a God of love to punish his children.

There are those who will think wickedly – I'll just sin now and I'll take a little spanking from Jesus later – but do not fool yourself. The New Testament examples of God chastising His children include sickness and death. (1 Corinthians 11:30) They include the death of children. (Revelation 2:23) So before you think you can play around with sin as a child of God, remember, God can choose to scourge us harshly for our sin. He can hand us over to Satan. (1 Corinthians 5:5) So confess and rebuke your sin passionately. As husbands, lead your house in regular confession, while naturally the pastor of your church should also teach and encourage such practices. At home, instituting these things is your responsibility. Make certain you do it.

Your Monastery

If you are getting the feeling that being a husband, and also a father, is a little like running a monastery, you are right on target. You see clearly. It IS a lot like running a monastery. There may be clear differences between the two. However, the head of the monastery and the head of the home are doing a similar task and even doing it in similar ways: they are heading a sacred community. That is what the family is, a sacred community to worship the Lord and bless all mankind with. Our first responsibilities, whether father or mother, is to the spiritual nurture our family. One of the primary roles of the man's headship is to run that community, set the routines, put in the guardrails, and oversee the people under him. We're like a monk, we just don't necessarily take a vow of poverty and we are not celibate but for short times. Otherwise, we share in the same mission as a monk does. Men, that is your charge.

While I believe what I've mentioned about prayer, Bible study, worship and confession make up the bulk of home liturgy, I am not suggesting you are limited entirely to those. There are other ways in the home we can grow in intimacy with our Savior. One that I do regularly with my wife is memorization of Scripture. We can know God more deeply by keeping His Word in our heart and mind at all times. We can then meditate on His Word anytime and anywhere. If we are without a Bible, we can still find joy and meaning in divine truth, as it is always on our mind and our lips. When we are sharing the Gospel, we can find we speak God's Word, instead of needing to ask if we can open a Bible with someone. We just speak God's Word, and they will have to listen to it. You can have a special time for memorization every week. You can supplement this by working on this when you have free time. Take out your Bible on the treadmill. Take it out when you have a few minutes free. Keep going back to the same passages and you will instill them in your heart.

Lastly, consider writing and artwork as part of home routine as well.

Writing God's Word can help instill it into our souls in a way speaking and hearing cannot. Write out favorite passages. Write out entire chapters. Countless cultures, including Christian cultures, have used writing itself as a form of artwork. Chinese culture has an ancient history of beautiful ink painting of Chinese symbols, which even if you cannot read them are brilliant to look at. Some combine symbols and artwork together. European Christian culture also turned its lettering into artwork, through creative fonts and through the imaginative decorations of scribes. Hebrew lettering is sometimes made into artwork by Orthodox Jews; as they have a rule against drawing realistic images, they use lettering instead, sometimes bridging the gap by making the letters look like real objects when seen together. Islamic artwork has a similar tradition with the beautiful lettering of Arabic. Artwork itself can be a part of your household worship, as you can make godly images with whatever talent you have, small or great. You don't need to be specially gifted. Just use what you have to create holy images in your home, whether of the Bible or of the saints new and old. In a world that will pound the eyes with images of sensuality, nudity, glamour and fashion, feed your soul images that reflect God's truth instead, images that teach good, images that show restraint and modesty, yet which still are beautiful. Create food for your family's soul through making art.

The husband protects his wife and family.

*Husbands, likewise, dwell with them with understanding,
giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel.*
(1 Peter 3:7)

When we speak of protection, one of the first things we think about is physical protection, placing a barrier between our loved one, in this case our beloved wife, and physical harm. We think of incidents like the shooting I wrote about earlier, or a dangerous home invader. These are legitimate areas in which the man must protect his wife, who is the image of the Church. However, I want to speak more of the spiritual and emotional protection that He offers. In fact, much of what I've already laid out, in terms of leading the home in worship amounts to a kind of protection itself, as it feeds, and builds up the woman and the children in spiritual nourishment. Yet it is equally important to keep dangerous spiritual and occult influences out of the home, and keep our wife pure of them.

The spiritually impure and occult can be especially dangerous to the woman. When Scripture speaks of a husband honoring his beloved as the weaker vessel, it does not only mean she is physically weaker. She is also

emotionally weaker than the man. She is more easily spiritually led astray. We see this in Genesis, as it is the woman, not the man who is deceived by Satan. We really don't know why Adam eats of the fruit and more willfully disobeys than she does, but we know that Eve fell for deception, as Apostle Paul, in explaining woman's submission in the Church, points out Eve's deception as one of the reasons. We could also speak of woman's propensity for witchcraft, and similar occult practices, which attract more women than men. This is likely why the Torah, in its various prohibitions of witchcraft, sometimes doesn't even bother to mention the male witch, but only speaks of the female one. She is simply much more common. Therefore, when a man honors his wife as the weaker vessel, when he lovingly protects her from harm, it means all of these things, not just protection from the armed intruder; he protects her from emotional imbalance and malaise, and he protects her from spiritual deception. The Christ king of the home must put barriers against them.

In regards to home liturgy, simply keeping out false teaching and occult coming from professed Christians is essential. This is one reason why the man should be mature, strong and studied in his faith. If he is weak in faith, he will be weak in discerning false teaching and he will lack much will to protect his wife and home from it. Some of the more obvious false teachings in the modern Church include anti-Trinitarianism, easy-believism, and the Judaizer claim that Gentiles must live like Jews. Yet there are others. Some deceptions do not come with a clear dogma attached, but seem to bubble up in various forms and expression. Other clear ones include the prosperity gospel and the Word Faith movement, both of which have heavy traction in the Charismatic movement, really up to the point of dominating it. Much of Word Faith, along with so-called Catholic mysticism, amounts to occult practice and sorcery. A man needs to be leading his wife in prayer, not in mouthing the same syllables thousands of times until you go into an altered state of consciousness. The Bible shows us what prayer is. Most of what mysticism calls prayer is anything but prayer. It is ancient pagan methods of allegedly elevating the consciousness. You will not find it in the Bible. It flatly goes against what the Bible teaches about prayer and cannot be found in the literally hundreds of examples of prayer in Scripture. Do not let impure spirits take ahold of your wife. Keep her clean of these things.

To tell you a little story, a former employer of mine had been recently divorced. He gave me many details of his sad marriage situation even though I did not ask for them. Apparently it was his wife who had demanded, and then legally forced the divorce to occur. I do not think that he ever wanted one. I believe him when he says he tried to stop it and failed. However, when he told me about the kind of things his wife had

been involved with during their marriage, things he apparently permitted, they included her connection to New Age teachers and Catholic “mysticism.” He may not have desired the divorce, but he helped put himself in that position by not protecting his wife from these elements. That is one reason why the Bible demands that an elder or deacon manage their home well and be the husband of one wife; not that there aren’t ever situations beyond their control, but if they have been managing their home well from the start, much less beyond their control will happen. We as husbands need to manage well. We do not let our wives get involved with false teachers, and the occult. It is a form of self-worship and a deception of the Serpent. It will bring evil on our home.

One area that touches upon both spiritual leadership and protection is choosing a sound church to belong to. You should find a church for your family which is as doctrinally strong as you can hope for, and which also leads the flock in faithful obedience. These two things are key. Make sure the pastor is a man of integrity, not one who panders to the money, practices sin, or is living with a second or third wife. Likewise, when churches go soft, or completely over the cliff with doctrine, it is your role to examine the danger, possibly protest the failing, and at last get your family out. This is important both for your wife and children. Even among Bible believers we may draw lines differently as to what is serious enough to break fellowship for, but you can be confident it’s not just a mere handful of teachings that make a good church. I left Messianic congregations over 5 years ago now over their feminization, which mostly involved normalizing female preachers. I would have left eventually over the Charismatic element as well. Feminization has greatly damaged both church and society, and not only would I reject its false teachings, but I would never let my family be exposed to it as an exampleⁱⁱ. If churches are weak regarding the nature of God or of Christ, that is an even bigger warning sign. If a church cannot teach and defend the Trinity, get out. Even if they make it some ambiguous issue and don’t actually deny the Trinity, they have no business being ministers if they will not teach and defend the nature of God. Protest it, and then get your family out. Some “fundamental” churches these days back into denying the Incarnation. They don’t want to sound too Catholic and say – Mary is the mother of Godⁱⁱⁱ – so they actually go over the cliff and deny that Jesus was God from the womb. You can actually hear that taught from apparently Bible-believing churches today. It is an attack on Jesus’ Deity here on earth. If they cannot get that right they should not be preaching the Word.

It may sound overwhelming, especially with the church in such chaos as we speak, but you can lead your family to the rock. First, you do this through your own knowledge of God’s Word, and prayer for His Spirit to

guide you. Secondly, you do it by examining the traditional commentaries, as opposed to the trends; read the early Christian fathers of the Church. Read Thomas Aquinas. Read Protestant thinkers from the era before Protestants basically stopped believing the Bible. In your choice of modern commentary, and apologetics, stick with those who actually believe biblical truth and are not slaves to the times.^{iv} Teachers and preachers who are rooted in the Bible and in the past, just as you should be. We cannot direct our steps into the future, without being rooted in the past. Look to the saints of old.

From Physical Danger

While I started speaking of protecting the wife from spiritual dangers, I shouldn't ignore the importance of protecting her from physical dangers. Any man should be prepared to physically step in if his wife faces physical harm. This may be from a dangerous intruder, or it may simply be from dangerous work. No man can claim to protect his wife if he allows her to do the more dangerous work in a home and a property. The heavier and risky work must be done by the man or his elder sons. Protection does not include allowing a woman to get a bone crushing injury. While the kind of work we do is somewhat limited in our home, there is still work that I insist on men doing. This includes the heavier digging outdoors, or work with stone. This includes the heavier end of moving, such as big furniture or overweight bags. You protect the woman as the weaker vessel, and you also protect the small child that might be in her body at the time. There is a reason that woman is softer, and part of it relates to her carrying that child and nurturing him. A woman doing heavy labor then, is creating more danger for herself and for a most defenseless child.

A minority of Christians reject all use of force, including self-defense. I am not one of them. I believe self-defense is justified, especially in defending the innocent from harm. In a high crime area, a man should be prepared to defend his wife and children from attackers or home intruders who may seriously harm them^v. For most, that requires a weapon. I remember an Ecuadorian friend I used to play music with told me he once lived in Quito, a very dangerous city and in a very dangerous neighborhood. Whenever he wanted to take a walk with his wife in the evening, he would carry a handgun in a brown paper bag. People would see it and know what it was. In Washington DC for years, which used to be among the deadliest cities in the U.S. keeping a handgun in secret used to be the only security many homes could know, as it didn't become legal to keep one until not long ago. Simply making a choice of where to live is a simpler, and less confrontational way to provide physical

protection for your wife. Look for somewhere safe to live. Study an area before you move there. Investigate whether it's the kind of neighborhood that's likely to go downhill in the future. Unless it is your mission to share the Gospel in a dangerous part of the world, there is no reason to bring your family close to death and destruction.

Provides Comfort

The comfort that a husband provides his wife is in a sense an outworking of his protection. He may not need to stop a murderous intruder once in his life, but his comfort provides some of the same essence to her. A woman needs that. She needs the peace it brings. Women do not pursue danger as much as men, nor behave as aggressively, and they fall prey more easily to stress put upon them. Having the calm strength of their man nearby brings peace to the storm a woman might feel. A righteous man can provide that. A strong man. A feminized and fearful man does not bring the same sense of protection.

The man's comfort is more than just a shoulder, and a reasonably strong one, to rest her head on. It is the stable knowledge that you will be there is the future. That you are her man for life. It is knowing you are more constant than the trees out the window. It is knowing that you work hard and will not stop. It is knowing that you care about her wellbeing and put thought and effort into making her life excellent. It is knowing that you hold her and possess her. Simple things like this provide as much protection, and feeling of peace in a woman's soul as striking down an armed attacker. It is firm ground. It may not have the drama of a fight. But it has all the strength.

To be the man is to play the Christ at home. You are like Christ not only the leader, but also the comforter, healer, deliverer. Your wife should be able to count on your care. She knows she can turn to you in her troubles. That doesn't mean you need to try and solve all of her problems, or scratch every itch she has. I think often times that causes more harm than good. For just as a few hours with good friends can heal us more than 500 hours with a psychotherapist, your intentional love, your upright walk in Christ, and especially your teaching her in the Word of God is a calm assurance that will make her strong inside, and even wipe away years of anguish from her soul. You are her priest. You help her grow within. That makes it especially important that you have a rest in Christ yourself and a strength in Christ yourself. You cannot give what you do not have. Be mighty in God and she will receive comfort from your manhood.

It is interesting though, that while women find manly men attractive,

once the woman is on chemical contraceptives, her tastes often change. This has been proven in studies.^{vi} She becomes more likely to be attracted to less masculine men. That is what the pill and other chemicals do. There is something so powerful about wiping out that part of her womanhood called fertility, that it affects her need for the man's strength and protection. Suddenly, a bit more masculine herself with these chemicals in her, she looks for weaker men. She finds the feminine attractive. It only shows what a drastic thing it is to damage the creation order and attack natural law. It affects everything. Take a woman away from her womanhood; she no longer wants manhood as much.

He Honors Her

Just as Isaiah tells us that Adonai will rejoice in a restored Israel as a bridegroom rejoices in his bride (Isaiah 62:5), so a husband loves to honor his wife. He finds pleasure in her. In her beauty. In her virtue. In her godly modesty and submission. In her blessing as wife and mother. A Christian husband does not cease to honor his wife for all these things. To honor means many things, but here I primarily mean praise her. A husband often knows he should express his love personally to his wife, but it is important that he praise her as well. He should let her know privately that she brings him happiness and blessing, and should proclaim publically that she is a godly wife. He should praise her for all of the wonderful things that she does. As a wife. A child of God. A mother. I try to make a point to at least proclaim how virtuous my wife is at the dinner table after dinner. I also regularly praise her online. In the description in Proverbs 31 of the godly wife, we get an example of the husband's words of public praise for his wife:

*“Many daughters have done well,
But you excel them all.”*
(Proverbs 31:29)

This entire passage is so full of exaltation of the godly wife that there are many great words of honor throughout. In traditional Judaism this passage (verses 10-31) is read every Sabbath to bless the wife of the home. As a Jewish believer, I likewise read it for my wife ever Friday evening, as the Sabbath begins. I would recommend similar rituals for you, even if you are not Jewish. Ritual is important for us to learn, and it teaches us discipline. Since I consider praising my wife to be a part of my job, I like having some set times to do so.

This is something we should feel excitement about. If the Messiah finds real joy in His Bride, in whom she is and what she does, then we should love to rejoice in ours too. If we are not married yet, we should love to anticipate those moments, and her goodness and virtue. We should think of the feeling of worshipping together with her and serving others together. The light of a virtuous woman comes from within (something I will touch on here and elsewhere). It is a spiritual light. It is the light that will light up our homes for us and our children, and provide warmth for guests and strangers. It is not a sensuous thing. It is not fleshy. It does not tempt the way a harlot does. It is good and meek and gentle, and the Lord will work through it to show wisdom to all.

There are many today who like to pit love against authority. They do this to attack the man's authority, and they sometimes do it to attack God's authority. To them, authority means a lack of love. But this is not so. As a husband, the same strength with which you lead your wife, including setting limits for her and correcting her, is rooted in the love with which you rejoice in her, praise her and honor her. It all comes from the same place. In fact, if it were not for that love, you would not be in that position of authority with which to lead her. If not for that leading, the love would be a mere warmth, and not edify her in any real way. The two go together. Never let it be said in marriage or elsewhere that your clear authority is in conflict with your love. The Bible says that God is King and also teaches that God is love. In imitating God the same is true of us. You have the strength of a king, and are warm as a dove.

Let me tell you, for all of the blessing and sheer happiness I receive from my wife, I would be insane not to honor her all the time. I want her to know how she has grown in grace. I want the world to know what a godly woman that she is. Through that, I want the world to know the goodness and light of Christ. I want the world to see the image of the Savior and His Beloved. It is in striking contrast from what I used to know was an

unbeliever, and what I have seen in others who lived as I did. When I was what the Spirit calls a child of wrath “*by nature*” (Ephesians 2:3) I actually wanted the world to see how sensual my lady friends were. I wanted the world to see their flesh. Believe it or not, I had women who wanted me to treat them like harlots in public, and even use them for others to see. I don’t share that image to shock you, but only to point out how upside down the satanic order is. Then I want you to see how God’s order sets it right. My desire is for the world to see my wife sanctified. Holy. Pure. Our desire for ANY public attention is that God gets attention through it. Any chance she and I have to be together is an opportunity to witness to Messiah together. This is why the Bible teaches that mankind’s way is at war with God. (Romans 8:7) And in contrast when we are a friend of God, we put to death the flesh. (Colossians 3:15) Mankind’s way with his partner is sensuality, public criticism or apathy. God’s way is exalting her spiritually. Honoring her virtue. Washing the woman clean in the Word.

that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.
(Ephesians 5:27)

One important thing to add is about criticism of a wife. It may be true that there are some instances where you may have to immediately correct something she is doing. However, as a matter of honoring your wife, it is better that real criticism is done in private, if it is necessary. Husbands AND wives should avoid complaining about the other or openly criticizing the other. In fact, when you see husbands or wives doing this regularly, there usually are serious problems in the home. A husband does in fact have some need to set her right about things, and at times it’s unavoidable to do in public. However, even that needs to be measured and with self-control. No boss wants the world to think of their employees as a bunch of idiots. So he should not talk to them as fools. The spirit of husband toward wife should be one of honoring, protecting, rejoicing and he must lead her with a calm confidence. Just as you publically praise her, do not publically put her to shame.

For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord does the church.
(Ephesians 5:29)

Example of Blessing

If the blessing in Proverbs 31 is not enough, I’d like to give you a

sample portion of the blessing I say for my wife each night. I hope you pray for your wife regularly too. In part it says this:

*Thank you Father for all the happiness and blessing you bring
through my wife
To me and my household and everyone around us
Through all she does as my wife, as a godly homemaker, and
a mother to our children
In raising them up and teaching them your Word
And for all that she does to serve in the Church
And in the community.*

I also ask God to use her as a reflection of the Church to show the goodness of God's way for us, and to protect her from temptation and from evil. I pray for her purity and her holiness. I pray for God to increase her faith and knowledge of the Lord. These are things we should pray regularly for our wives, and also prayers that keep our own minds focused on what our wives do and what God calls them to do. In speaking those words, God burns an ever brighter picture of a virtuous woman's holiness in our mind. It keeps us in our right mind toward her.

Dwell in Understanding

What does it mean to "*dwell in understanding*" as Peter teaches? (1 Peter 3:7) Why is it wrapped together with the teaching to honor the wife as the weaker vessel? One can say a great deal about understanding, but I want to speak about how it relates to the second point. How it can help us to show that special kind of honor you give toward the weaker vessel. You might think for a moment how you treat a beautiful ornament or piece of artwork that can be easily harmed. You take special care with it.

As regards the wife, it can mean understanding her weaknesses and being patient with them. It can mean helping her with her weaknesses as well. Men used to be trained as a matter of common courtesy to help women with certain physical tasks, even if only symbolic help, but this is far rarer these days. Our last pastor used to make sure that every time a woman went up or down the steps to the podium, a man was there to help her. Although it wasn't in my habits, I soon learned to do the same with my wife. It's hardly heavy labor to go up or down stairs, but it is the sign of respect that matters. It honors her as the weaker vessel. It shows a special concern for her, and the protection she needs.

Helping her in her weakness also ties into much of what I have said about protecting her from harm in general, especially spiritual harm. It means she knows she has stability in her husband and a peace in God, so

those temptations cannot attack her so easily. Often the devil is able to lure us into chasing after false gold because we are not so appreciative of the real gold we have. He plays on our sense of emptiness. He plays on our sense of importance. A woman who knows she has her man as protector, and is wrapped in the wings of Christ, is less a target for Satan's attacks.

A woman can be tempted easily to vanity. She can be tempted to fill the void in her life through money, spending, false beautification, or even adultery. A woman filled with the Spirit does not seek after these things. A woman can also be tempted to push her children into the wrong goals or into ambition because of her own unhappiness or greed. She should know she is complete with her man. That she is led. Cared for. Protected. She should be well fed in the Word of God through her man's priestly leadership and covered in prayer. A man needs to recognize her weaknesses, both ones which are common to women or unique to his wife, and help her in them. He leads her forward in the faith. He strengthens her with his strength.

Notice that the teaching ends with the warning "*that your prayers may not be hindered.*" This reminds us how important it is that our lives be ones of righteousness. Unrighteousness in our lives hinders our prayers. This is one powerful reason for the man to follow God's teaching here, as it will help bring peace and righteousness to the household, so God will hear their prayers. A Christian couple living in coldness toward each other, or conflict, is not living in the righteousness they know through Christ. This element of understanding and recognizing the woman's weakness will prevent such a sickly relationship. It will be known for love and peace.

There's a funny meme I saw. It's a guy leafing through a giant book of thousands of pages. It's a comically big book. On top of the picture it says: Volume 1 of Understanding Women finally came out. Or something like that. It plays on the cultural humor that women are unbelievably complicated and that no one, or at least no man, can understand them. There is some truth to that, but it is also used in the wrong way. No husband needs to understand his wife in her every thought and desire. It is not necessary. Women who demand a man be a mind-reader are probably being very insecure or manipulative. Even women don't understand women that way. If your bar for understanding is that complete, we'd have to say that only God knows. What a man needs to do is simply to lead his wife and love her. He needs to do what God instructs regarding marriage and the home. His understanding of his wife is a part of that, but it doesn't, like the cultural humor proclaims, need to be an act of mindreading. It's just basic sympathy, respect and understanding. Just do what God says a man is to do, and leave it up to God to know her every thought. You don't have to. You just need to love and lead her.

The Inner Person of the Heart

Another way in which the man keeps the wife from impurity is in leading her in modesty. The spiritual meaning of modesty is hearkened to in the passages about the great Messianic wedding, both in Isaiah and in Revelation. The Bride is adorned with glorious garments; yet we learn these garments are actually righteousness. They are goodness. The man should desire to present his wife holy in this way, in being modestly attired to represent that righteousness of which Scripture speaks. In this way simple apparel is sacramental just as sacrifice is. It makes real the invisible heart and makes physical the reality of the final Kingdom. It pictures a plain, humble person radiating incredible beauty from the goodness of their soul.

The command to be modest is one for all believers, but it is one that applies especially strongly for women. In fact the only two times the New Testament speaks explicitly about modesty, it is addressing women. (1 Timothy 2:9-10, 1 Peter 3:3-4) Moreover, in addressing modesty for women, each time it relates the modesty of dress to the modesty of heart. Why is it emphasized for women? Scripture does not explain why, but it seems that a covering of purity is important more for women because they are indeed the weaker vessel. They are also the bearer of life, carrying within the tender child. Moreover, the woman is more than the man the object of desire, and modest dress makes men pursue her less aggressively. Many women who went from dressing like the world to dressing modestly will tell you the difference; they received far fewer unwanted advances from men, and the advances they did receive were more respectful and from a better kind of man. Another reason for its importance for women is the biblical connection between nudity and sin. Throughout Scripture in almost all instances being made bare physically represents shame, guilt and sin. We should especially protect the woman from this, including because she is physically weaker and emotionally more tender. Why should a man want his wife bare, and a picture of sin? Why turn his wife into a mascot for shame? To present his wife holy, she should be clothed as a picture of righteousness to the world. That is the biblical pattern. It is also what obviously makes a woman less tempting to men and less likely to inspire lust.

One of the things a husband will need to do is **set standards**. He ought to respect them too, as modesty is not only for women, but only emphasized for them. He needs to set standards of dress that do not show off the bare flesh and which seek to reflect the plainness spoken of in Scripture, a beauty which comes from within the heart, not with jewels, or ornamented hair. He should seek clothes which do not seek to brag or

boast about the person, not following trends or trying to be hip, flashy or elegant. Basically, Christian apparel is simple. It does not boast, as the Christian heart does not boast either. (Romans 3:27) Do not let others make their own judgment call on this practice, men. The reason why we see a Church filled with mostly naked Christians is because we bought the argument that people can just call it as they see it. The Church bought a no-rules system, and now they are paying for it. They pay for it in their Evangelicals half naked in short shorts and their Catholic school girls half naked in short skirts. They pay for it in having Muslims come into their communities and teach them a thing or two about dress. It is a ludicrous embarrassment to the Church, and it came from refusing to set standards. So a husband will have to do that if he wants this biblical virtue to apply in his home, and if he wants to present his wife pure, as opposed to sensual, and an object of lust for other men. The Bible says to present her pure.

One of the first images of holiness I had, both in dress and otherwise, was of Orthodox Jewish women. As I am Jewish from my mother and spent time studying Judaism after coming to faith in Christ, I had a connection to Orthodox Jewish life. The women – and the men as well – practice modesty, with the women reflecting purity very well. How do they do this? The women cover up the body. They wear feminine clothes, such as skirts and dresses. They wear a head covering. They also carry themselves without sensuality or a hipster attitude. As I became less the lone ranger in my faith, and learned more about Christian history than Jewish, I found there was an excellent model of holiness in traditional Anabaptists, such as Mennonites and Amish. Similarly, they also follow both biblical and traditional standards of modesty. The men dress in male apparel and the women dress in women's apparel. The women show their beauty through the Holy Spirit in them, and the simple joy and peace in their faces. They don't show it through flesh or through glamour. I am not the only one who notices this of course. Others would tell you Anabaptists are clearly a picture of holiness. They have been a big model for me, and I recommend them as a model for you. Look up some pictures of them online. Print one out and stick it on your wall as an inspiration. Yet wherever you draw your example from, as a man set rules in your home regarding modest and plain dress. Lead your wife in reflecting this modesty. Make sure her clothing expresses the inner heart of modesty and communicates this virtue. You are in charge. There are no excuses for your wife or daughters to be half naked everywhere. Set rules, and those things don't happen. I can guarantee you that.

There is a reason to protect.

There is a reason to wash her in the Word. There are natural results for the woman being second in creation, and there are real consequences in the woman's deception in the Garden. They are results that require the man's headship, which is why we see it written into the natural order and taught explicitly in the Bible. Virtually every culture and civilization has recognized it. It's not just for Bible Christians. For in nature, without the man's protection, the woman is victim. She is used like a harlot. Throughout history when the army conquered new territory, one of its first choices was to round up all of the women and rape them. This was compulsory for some armies. For other armies it was only the practice if a town had greatly resisted capture. Either way, mass rape by armies or bandits has been common enough to almost call normal. Groups like the Huns or Mongols would slaughter the men and rape the women. The various empires that conquered Israel were known to slice open the pregnant women, rip the babies out of their wombs, and parade around with slaughtered babies pierced on the end of their spears. Many of the Indian tribes in North America, when doing a raid and capturing females, would let the tribe take turns raping them until each was finally given to one of the males as a partner. Even in modern centuries with international law prohibiting these things, various militaries and terror groups have made rape, torture and murder of women their norm. It is in the fiber of fallen nature, these things. Jesus said of Satan – *he was a murderer from the beginning* (John 8:44) – and even though his crime in the garden was deception, the effects have placed violence in the human psyche, especially in the male. From the first generation after Adam murder was known. (Genesis 4:8) When it is not armies or bandits turning women into whores or brutalizing them, young women are often taken advantage of in the home, molested by elders or friends of the family, sometimes to the point this too becomes normal. Women in poverty often turn to prostitution as a source of income and some are forced into it, including as small children. She is a ready victim. Ready to be made impure. Ready to be used for the basest purposes for short term thrill. Ready to be humiliated at the feet of her rapist. She is little more than a beer in the fridge for anyone who wants to use her. These terrible facts are why righteousness is essential. Righteousness. Not merely the family which God has ordained, for despite the good of the family, this evil has been done within its members, so what we need righteousness. The law of God and righteous men do not do this evil. They do not permit it. Righteous men establish justice, and punish evil. Can any man, Christian or otherwise, not see how a righteous husband is there to protect the

woman? To honor her as the weaker vessel? To present her to the whole world as pure?

The other side of the coin when we speak of man's protecting the woman is what happens when women rebel against their submissive role and against their position in the home. When women reject this, they become the source of evil, as wicked as any rapist I have mentioned above. One of the commonest and first forms of rebellion is witchcraft, which is a terrible sin, and which connects the woman to impure forces. Witchcraft is part of the overall rebellion against man, and the God who put man over her. When Genesis 3:16 says "*your desire shall be for your husband,*" it is more literally translated your desire shall be "against" your husband. That is why the very next verse says, "*and he shall rule over you.*"^{vii} It is a contrast to the effects of the Fall on the woman, which is a desire to turn the creation order upside down, and rule over her husband. The rebellion which we see in women is rooted in the Fall. A woman must be protected from it.

Along with rebellion against the man, and along with witchcraft, we can see many other damages done. One quick picture can be gained by looking at the results of the feminist movement over more than a century into the past. Its direct results have been a destruction of the family, gross gender bending, much higher divorce rates, children separated from their parents, exponentially greater violence by women, demands for liberal abortion, the growth of the nanny state and more, including women parading nearly naked in public. Removing the woman from her protected and pure place given by God has also resulted in turning her into a harlot of another kind. Not the rape victim kind. The willful kind. It has resulted in the contracepted, ever-ready for intercourse female of the modern West, the normalizing of whoredom through what some have called "liberation." It has made the average western (often Christian) woman into an unpaid prostitute, who gives it up to many men, but doesn't earn a dime. If you doubt what I am saying, never forget this: the blessed sacrament of the feminist movement is killing babies. It is abortion. This is almost mandatory to be considered a "liberated" woman: the open support of killing children. In this era you see the fruit of complete female autonomy, which includes not just mass murder, but the heartless ability to BRAG about the number of abortions they have with a smile on their face.^{viii} They know very well the child is human. Yet they kill him anyway and smile.

It's clear that allowing the woman her rebellion, caving in to the woman's desire to rule her man, has resulted in a destruction of marriage, legalized baby killing and epidemic fornication. This is no better than the unprotected woman who becomes a victim through the evils of violent

men. She is now, in her rebellion, the victimizer. She is the perpetrator. She is now the one who uses her body to dominate others. She doesn't need an Assyrian soldier to slice open her belly and spear her child, she does it all by herself. In examining this situation historically, we cannot ignore the fact that many of the changes for the worse in this present nation and culture can be directly found in the "right" to vote being given to women. Now those who worship the U.S. Constitution or who worship Rights Theory^x will be deeply offended by this, but the women's vote has clearly led to more Democrats being elected, and hence a much more permissive society, a more Marxist one, and a more anti-Christ one. This is well documented. The softer female has brought us a softer nation, and has greatly weakened us. When you get feminized you get weak, brother. Should that be a surprise? The woman indeed must be protected from her temptation to rebel. She brings a curse on all of society when she does. Rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft.

Therefore, when I point out the husband's mandate to lead and protect his wife, this is no play acting. This is not mere symbolic headship. It is real leadership, with important consequences if you succeed, and terrible ones if you fail. For: *The great God who formed everything. Gives the fool his hire and the transgressor his wages.* (Proverbs 26:10) The cost of failure is high. Obviously, a great deal also depends on a woman's parents, especially her father, but great evil could be prevented simply if husbands did their jobs in leadership and protection. She should be protected from physical harm, and she should be protected from spiritual harm, including her own rebellious instinct. This is the kind of sustenance Christ gives His Church. This is how Christ leads those whom He is sanctifying. These are powerful ways that Christ shows His love to His Bride, which He will present holy to the world on His return. The husband, following the pattern of the Lord, will do the same.

Leads in righteous choices

The husband is the moral leader of the household. Just as he must lead by setting the household liturgy and giving spiritual teaching, he also has to make sure the home is run in a moral and ethical way. Obviously this can get into various arenas, and I don't mean to try and examine all of them, but I simply wish to make the point that the moral integrity of the house starts and ends with the man. If it is morally corrupted, he is ultimately responsible. Just as we desire to have men of integrity leading nations – despite any cynicism we have about politics – we also want men of integrity leading homes. That integrity will trickle down, and will affect everyone else in the home. It will also be a part of the family's witness, as

the vessel of Christ and His Bride. Heading the home in righteousness is also a part of raising children, as those children learn in large part by example. They will see your righteous deeds, and know to imitate them. They will understand why you do what you do. They will see the law of God in action. To practice righteousness is always to teach others.

Without being comprehensive, let me give you a few examples of moral leadership I have brought into my home. One of the first choices, which I mention elsewhere, is to set standards of modest dress, a standard which has grown with time, from one of simply avoiding the sexualized dress, to one which reflects a modest covering and is also plain in appearance, similar to a Mennonite standard. The same principle is also reflected in rejecting body alteration, and adornment, such as hair dye, jewelry, makeup and similar devices. We've got no silicon here. These things amount to either a worldly distraction, or a clear violation of modesty and natural law. If we are to live according to God's Word, and respect the God's creation, then both of these must be important to us.

In a similar vein, I also led my home in rejecting most use of secular entertainment. We have been massively liberated by this, both in freeing our minds and freeing our time, and avoiding filthy influences on our lives. We don't have a TV, nor listen to the radio. We don't do pro-sports, although we occasionally go see a local game. No super-heroes. While I will talk about the doctrine of separation in a later section, it deserves a mention here, regarding the moral leadership of the man, as it clearly pertains to the ethics of the home. Believe me, if you desire to lead a life in Christ, most of those things will waste your time, pervert your mind or both. I will guarantee you that. You can powerfully protect your family from evil by cutting secular entertainment to a bare minimum.

Another act of ethical leadership was my rejection of what this culture calls "birth control." This was a subject that I studied and meditated on literally for 4 years at least, until I finally got rid of any birth control I had owned, and threw it in the trash. I would not even give it away. I will get into this in more depth in the section on bearing children, but I want to point out it is a clear moral choice whether to use contraception or not. You cannot avoid it. You dare not be ignorant. You dare not make a careless choice. We have been blessed with 4 children from God in nearly 9 years of marriage. How many would have been robbed from us if we'd been dependent on the pill, or grown comfortable with the idea of few children. A great future robbed from the kingdom. God's arrows destroyed. I can think of few more important moral choices I've made in my life than this. You can personally meet the results.

Unlike rejecting contraception, I decided on home schooling for our home well before marriage. I didn't even have a completely biblical view of

gender roles at that time, but it was still clear that the advantage is for the mother to be in the home, and the advantage is for schooling to be Christian schooling in a Christian environment. I would never have thought to turn my children over to secularists, or liberal Christians to be indoctrinated. That's about on par with sending your child to a firing squad. And secondarily, home schoolers prove they do better academically as well. The moral and spiritual reasons, however, were primary. Moreover, I have never had to wonder how we'll buy everything we need if my wife stays at home. I never planned my future based on two salaries. My wife is free to do what many others dream of doing. That is because of simple, moral choices. You need to make them, men. And make the right ones.

I do what I can to keep my home morally clean in other ways. Absolute perfection may be impossible, but we are still responsible to make the best effort with the knowledge and ability we have. I try to avoid using our money to support companies which are the leaders in immorality. I will try to support either ones with Christian values or small family businesses, assuming they aren't awful. We haven't done Starbucks, McDonalds and others for ages now for those reasons. I also switched banks from Bank of America – a major supporter of sodomy – to a Christian credit union, which also supports missions. While we do have to rely somewhat on Medicaid for financial reasons, I have also chosen to support Christian health care both for myself and my wife. This is health care which, while having a smaller network than big insurance companies, will not pay for abortion, contraception, or if it is available, euthanasia. They can also offer a gift occasionally by pooling their money and giving extra to a member who needs it. That sounds a lot better than supporting health insurance that pays to kill babies. Consider it a mandate to make similar choices for your family. They called Jesus Christ “*the Just One.*” (Acts 7:52, 22:14) They did not call Him the lax one, the uncaring one, or the slacker.

Makes sure she does her role

Another area of leadership the husband has is to ensure that the wife does her role. I wish to talk much more about the wife's roles in the next chapter, but it has to be stated here: since the man is ultimately the head, he must ensure that she is doing that valuable work and generally oversee it. Many men have been taught that even if they have headship, it is of some extremely limited kind, or of a vague and undefined nature. This is false. The Bible teaches the wife to submit to her husband in all things, so you ultimately oversee all of her work; even when she has her own

projects to do, it has to be under your rules and guidance.

One of the biggest ways to ensure that your beloved does her role, is to plan before marriage for her to carry out her role in the home and with the children. This simple statement, which would have been generally accepted less than a hundred years ago, now would enrage most of the western world, and would get you called many disgusting names. However, it is true according to the Bible, and is in good harmony with natural law, which shows women to have an advantage in those areas and be specially designed for them. Plan before your marriage that she care for the home and the children, and plan to finance your future (assuming you finance things) according to one salary, and not according to two. If she is NOT doing her role, the buck stops with you. It does not stop with her.^x

You have to realize much of the reason for the bulk of western women, including the bulk of Christian women, working full-time outside of the home, is not just feminism. That's a large reason. It's not the only one. Men have their play in this, even those who are far from being feminists ideologically. That's because when a woman (wife or otherwise) finds herself with a child, she sometimes wants to stay and be with her child at home. Perhaps she has harbored the desire for many years to stay at home with the children. She approaches her husband (or partner in immorality) with the idea, and he tells her. . . no! He says – that's not going to work, because we need the money, how will we afford the house we want, the college for the kids, the retirement, the vacations and so on and so forth. The woman, even one who has been taught to be strong willed, backs down, going with her husband instead, as well as the allure of that extra money. So it's not just career women who have damaged the home. It is men who greatly misuse their authority, and pressured their women to leave the home for careers. It says in the Bible we cannot serve both God and Mammon. Here most of the Christian Church has chosen Mammon. They had a clear choice. And they chose Mammon.

Men can right this. They won't right it overnight, but simply taking responsibility and using your authority justly, will begin to turn the tide. Prepare for a future on one income. Let your wife know before marriage that you expect her to fulfill her calling at home. I spoke about this and other major matters of the home before I ever got married to my wife. I never would have moved ahead if we were not in agreement about what makes a marriage, just as I wouldn't have moved ahead if she rejected the headship role that I had. You start planning your future based on these things, and it becomes much easier. You teach others how to do the same. The Church starts seeing families living this way and others will want to join in. Voices that call for it will be silenced less often. It will come out from the shadows and become normal, at least more so, among believers.

I also expect that secularists will join in somewhat, as they have with homeschooling. Despite differences in belief, truth is knowable to ALL people, and I believe many secularists in our culture will be blessed by this move and some will wish to join. We have to restore the home, brethren. For the men, the responsibility lies with you.

Men can make sure that wives do their roles through their participation in the local church as well. Naturally, many women will want to participate and have ideas about using their strengths already. From the man's perspective, he still has to make sure it is the right kind of help. In the current church world, women want to take on the roles of men. Many churches consider it normal for a woman to be teaching over men, preaching from the pulpit or even heading churches. This is blatantly against the Word of God.^{xi} Not only that, but much less gender bending would have happened to the church if husbands did their job and prevented it from happening. Your wife needs to know she does not usurp men in the church any more than she can usurp you at home. Her role is a submissive one in both environments. Use your authority to prevent it. I'm not saying you necessarily will need to, as many women still respect the Bible on this, but if you have to then do it. You should never permit your wife to pretend to be a man.

One further note on this, churches didn't begin letting in women preachers and "pastors" because of solid, consistent biblical interpretation. It cannot be defended by any consistent exegesis, unless you are a liberal and consider the whole Bible to be non-literal and changeable as you see fit. MOST churches who adopted feminism did so because they wanted to be expansive, and to keep the money rolling in. It has primarily been a decision about money and survival. Many would deny that, but I am confident it's true. When my own congregation, which I eventually left, began gender bending, I spend a number of times personally meeting with one of the staff there. We spoke about both gender roles in the church as well as at home. In the middle of the conversation about women preachers I said to him point blank – churches are doing this because they want to be popular and to be expansive. He thought for a second and said – yeah, there may be some of that going on. It is a business decision, brethren, except for the real liberals who don't care what the Bible says anyway. Yet it makes a mockery of the Bible and how we understand it. It takes WEAK shepherds to slide with the times. Well, we have shepherds at home too, not just in church. We call them husbands. You need to make sure your wife is not involved in that. There are countless ways she can contribute to the church and the local community without pretending to be a man. The church needs real women. Not fake men.

Be her Overseer

While the wife may have a variety of projects that she works on, the husband is overseer of this work. Like a CEO, he may not be making the daily decisions for her, but he still can set standards for her projects, place limitations or tell her it simply won't work. He is overseer of them all. As a husband, I have neither desire nor ability to do the hands-on work of my wife's projects, however, I am still involved and my authority still applies. For example, she may have a routine for feeding the children and for their schedule, however if I see a change I need to make I make it. I have several times had to make sure she gets the children to bed a little earlier. We have a little boy and I have also had to step in and make sure he gets more time outside, since he can get pent up stuck indoors so easily. These may be her domains, and I love the work she does, but as the husband and I can make changes if I see a need. She may also take care of many purchases, but any large ones need to go through me first. Any changes to the yard and house need to go through me. I need to see the homeschool curriculum, books and toys before we purchase them, since it is of great importance what we expose our children to.

That's not a comprehensive description, but I think it gives a good glimpse into how you will have to oversee your wife and a household in general. A significant portion of heading the home is this form of headship. Other kinds I describe in this book are direct. This you might call general headship or indirect command. You only use command authority here and there. The rest is letting things mostly run themselves, and then checking to make sure things or moving correctly. I am amazed at how much my wife gets done, and don't honestly think I could be as productive as she is. As the head of a home, I am impressed. Yet I still hold the reins, and I have needed to use them.

I would recommend setting a time of general review, to make sure everything is going well. It is a chance to make sure that she is taking care of everything she needs to, and also for her to see if she needs to do anything differently. If there are any critiques or corrections you need to give, this may be a better time to do it than on the fly, although that is a judgment call. I used to have a review time like this once a week, and I thought it was helpful, but time doesn't allow it so often anymore. Such a time is good not only to make sure everything is getting done, but is also good to strengthen the leading role that you have, and the helping role that she has. It helps to lock you in to these very well, even if it's not completely necessary. I found it helpful.

One thing to watch over, beyond her various projects, is her attitude. In an era when many women will be trained to reject male headship and to

project an ego, even a wife who desires sincerely to be a Christian can struggle with showing respect to her husband. She may have been trained in put-downs of men. She may want to disrespect him. If you see her starting to go this direction, let her know, either at the time, or at a review time as I just mentioned. Let her know if there has been language or disrespect coming from her, and that she needs to put her heart back in the right place. She should know this is just as unacceptable in a godly home as drunkenness or rampant swearing. She continually needs to put herself under your headship. That is hard in this culture, but God will give her the grace if she asks. It is humbling, but will bring her peace and a sense of protection. She needs to humble herself. One of the reasons it is extremely rare to have any flare-ups in our home is because I do just this – I point disrespect out when I see a little of it. I don't wait for it to become a problem. It helps that my wife has a good character, a good upbringing and sincere faith too. However, even with these three excellent things, the personality, or just a hard time, can push a good woman in the wrong direction. I let her know immediately and clearly if she has disrespected me. She is humble enough to apologize, and I do not have to mention very often.

The Command

Although it should not be necessary to say, I want to speak about how a husband uses authority. More precisely, how he instructs his wife what to do. How to use authority is not a great secret in society, however, when you have professed ministers telling husbands that they are the “head” but they are not the “boss” you will create immense confusion and pretty much rob headship of its headship. I have mentioned this before. I'll mention it again. If you are the head of something, you are the boss. That's pretty much by definition. So husbands, you're the boss.

I think we can see three main ways in which any authority, including husbands, leads those under them. The first is by simple command. This is often necessary, especially with immediate tasks that have to be done, or with setting out the parameters for a project. You speak with authority and you give the commands which need to be followed. No organization would work without this ability. A command can be blunt if it needs to be. In fact, if it's too softly spoken, someone might not even know it's a command, and think it was a mere suggestion or offer. So there are times when it is good that a husband speaks bluntly and strongly about what he needs to be done.

The second kind of leading is through encouragement and discouragement. A husband may use this kind of leading in areas that

don't seem as immediately important as others, or in areas he'd rather not regulate for good reasons. It may be an area where you'd simply like to give good advice. I have encouraged my wife this way in telling her how it would help her throughout the day if she recited Scripture in her heart, or sang songs. I don't demand she do this, though I do have regular times for both of us to memorize Scripture. I simply encourage her to do it while she works, since it would help her stay close to God. I also recommend good places to take the children during the day, but I rarely demand she go there. It just functions as advice.

I suppose the middle ground would be encouragement, but in an area that we WILL use our authority eventually if we have to. The domain might be one in which we give commands, but we'd rather see a subordinate do it through encouragement. One such area for me has been in encouraging my wife toward wearing the headcovering in worship, knowing that she would be nervous and wanting to wait until she really felt ready. It's an area where I would use authority if I need to, especially since it is instructed in Scripture. However, I chose to wait and do it through teaching, and she came to be comfortable wearing it.

As a husband, just like any authority on earth, you have all three forms of leading at your disposal. Naturally, the first is for those things that most require regulation, and for those things most urgently important. Use it. You cannot really be the "head" of a home or anything else in the world if you don't have that kind of leading. Exactly which form you choose and when is sometimes subjective, but you do your best to consider what is necessary and what is most productive. Encouragement and advice is more likely to take longer to get through, although sometimes it is received immediately. They usually apply to those areas of gradual shaping and guiding your wife, when there is time to let her grow and less danger from taking the wrong course. The responsibility ultimately lies with you.

Many men in our culture think they need special talents to be able to lead the home. This is not true. There may be talents that help, but they are not required to lead. If they were, I'd never be able to do my job, because I haven't got any. Yet I am, because it's simpler than people make out. A man simply needs to know his role as head and his responsibilities, and the woman needs to know her position beneath him and do her job. A man need not have special powers of leadership or extraordinary rhetorical skills or persuasive ability. He simply leads, and his wife follows. I am far from a strong personality myself, but I've encountered little difficulty in doing my God-given role because it does not require a strong personality. Simply know your job and do it, and listen to the Word of God. There's all the talent you need. God will use you at the command

of the ship.

Who's the Real Feminist?

Now about all those men who refuse to take command. . . It's clear that the entire upside down nature of modern marriage and the church did not happen only as a result of a feminist clique taking over. They may have their influential ideology, but the movement is also fueled by men who simply will not do what God calls them to do. They will not lead at home. They will not take the leading and teaching roles in churches. They permit their women to behave like men and in some ways encourage them to do so.

We need an end to passive men. And these men are not only the ones who are soft and get fat on the sofa day in and day out. They are frequently man's men, the kind of guys who cut down trees, are ripped with muscle and gnaw on nothing but red meat. Manhood has been pigeonholed into a few hyper-masculine activities, but left to rot in the rest of man's true domain. Men need to behave with manhood in the home, which means taking the lead and organizing what is a holy community. They do not need more than a peripheral connection with sports. They do not need to pursue the most thrill-inspiring or dangerous activity they see advertised^{xiii}. Men need to present the Word of God in Church and lead the people in worship. Men need to work and sacrifice for their faith, not just for their pocketbook. They need to be able to face danger in serving Christ, not in jumping a dirt bike and flipping over backward.

The fact is, if you admire strength, adventure, danger and facing down your enemies eye to eye, serving Christ is the manliest path you can find. You get to be outnumbered. You get to use weapons of spiritual warfare. You get to wear armor. You get to work out your spirit in prayer and humility until it is strong and enduring, able to take any punishment in the world, able to survive any weariness. You lean on your brothers. You look up to heroic men, saints who built the Church. You teach younger men to stand up on their own in Christ. Sports is infantile by comparison. The Church is for real men.

Yet the sad thing is, some of these same men, who will agree the Church has grown overly feminine, and who will nod in agreement to much of what I say here, refuse to do anything about it. They stay passive and fearful of taking command. That's why so many churches have caved in to the feminist doctrine; it just seems so convenient in an era when they can't find male members of their church to do the job. I'm not excusing ministers who compromise on this. They need to pray and raise up men to

the Lord in their own families if they want men leading their churches, but I can sympathize with their position, as they have been left largely without men. The same is true of households where women reverse biblical roles. Sometimes this has not come from a female ideology. Sometimes it's been her response to a man who will not lead her, and she doesn't know what else to do. Then the problem perpetuates itself.

Real men take their manliness to every path in society. They bring it into their role in society, the home and the Church. What we have in its stead is a tendency to stick masculinity into certain niches, usually the ones involving heavy physical activity, large machines and danger. Don't you think the world needs your manhood elsewhere? I'm not saying physical activity isn't good for a man. He should stay in shape. He should be unafraid of physical work and danger. It is also good to remember that a man can still make his living with trade jobs and working with his hands, rather than pursue higher education and sit in an office all day. However, men have simply divorced their strength from most of society, and kept it as a hobby. We need the weekend warrior to come home, and we need professional sports viewing to take a nosedive. A real man has better things to do with his evenings and weekends. He needs to lead his sheep.

No matter what the current culture tells you, brethren, men need to lead. Do not be shy about saying that openly, and in blunt language. Do not be afraid to let your future wife or current one know that you set the rules and you expect her to follow. You'd be surprised how many women will be relieved to hear you say that. Millions upon millions of females didn't rush out to read or watch *50 Shades of Gray* because they hate the idea of a strong man over them. You'd be surprised how many apparently independent women are quietly waiting for a man to take charge and can't wait for the peace of being able to follow him, for the chance to be soft and protected, to be the follower of her man. It might not be the ones you suspect. You could fill an entire stadium with Christian women, often the career type, praying with hands upraised for a strong man to come and take charge. They are waiting for you to lead them, men. Don't let them down.

Stand up for righteousness

If you want an example of what it means to be a man – other than teachings about the husband I give you in this book – how about standing up for righteousness on the job. Obey God's law in the public, civic and business world. There's an example for you. When your boss says promote sodomy on the job, you say no, that would go against my faith

and the law of God. I will not be able to do that for you. When your boss says to treat same-sex unions as normal, explain you cannot do that. When your clients pressure you to promote immorality through your business, you tell them that as a child of God you don't break God's law. Run your business according to the law of God. Do not promote the immorality which has grown popular in this culture, and do not celebrate what is vulgar and lewd. People in your business don't need to hear vulgar secular music, or see the filthy fashion magazines lying around. You can play Christian music, or at least something instrumental that feeds the mind or soul. If you provide reading, make it something that feeds the soul. That alone would make you stronger and more righteous than almost all who profess to be Christians. There's manly for you. No player on a football field who takes a hit is manlier than that.

Not long ago, there was a popular sports idol in the basketball world. Like many sports gods he was worshipped and imitated by millions of fans, mostly men. As a professed Christian, some actually thought it was fine to idolize him, since he professes Jesus Christ. Well, when one of the U.S. states refused to accommodate transsexuals by letting them use the wrong bathroom, this sports god was asked what he thought about that. They wanted to put him on the spot as a public figure who professes faith. Now as a Christian, he had a great opportunity, regardless of what the law would say, to testify to righteousness and proclaim it is wrong to mutilate yourself and pretend to be the opposite sex. He could also have said that people in that situation should repent of sin and even that they could benefit from some mental health counseling. There were many things he could have said that would have stood up for truth and righteousness. Instead, this man-god said that we're all "equal" and should be able to pretend to be the opposite sex in society. This sports idol knew better. He had been a Christian for years. Yet he was a coward. He backed down due to cowardice. I know no one is perfect, but this goes to show you where strength really lies, and it is not in physical ability and athletic prowess. This man had all of that in abundance, and he still acted like a weakling. Strength really lies in standing up for righteousness, and speaking the truth without fear. Can you do that, men? I'm not saying don't keep your body in good shape or get a workout. I'm saying your manhood is needed much more in your living than it is in your playing. And basketball is a game. Being a child of God is not.

Provide for His House

But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse

than an unbeliever.

(1 Timothy 5:8)

Perhaps the simplest form of love and sacrifice that a husband provides is through providing for his household; his wife and children. The man is the provider. Like most of what the Bible teaches on marriage and the family, this teaching is under attack today, including by Christians. Yet it is the truth. The man is the provider biblically, and the man has been recognized as the provider for thousands of years, including in non-Christian cultures.

In fact, if a man does NOT provide for his family, we are taught in 1 Timothy 5 that he is *“worse than an unbeliever.”* This life sustenance that the man brings is essential to being Christian, as is the giving to the church community as a whole. There are those who try and deny the teaching of 1 Timothy 5 with the claim that the Greek word for “any” can mean either any man or any person or anything. This is true. However, when the same Holy Scripture teaches that the wife is to bear the children and keep the home, then we can understand that *“any”* means “any man.” Otherwise, the Bible would contradict itself. A wife is not charged with providing for the family. She is not worse than an unbeliever if she does not bring home the bacon. In fact, her work at home is precious enough that were her husband to die or become disabled, it is better for the community to support her, than to demand she take on the responsibility of supporting the family herself. The community should support her until she can marry again. However, more on that in a later chapter.

A point relevant to all – relevant to “anyone” literally – is that a man’s providing for his family is the basic foundation of how we provide for society and those in need. We often think of helping others as sending aid to someone far from us, even to some far-flung place in the world. However, we care for the world first, by caring for our own. This is family and church community. These are our first charges. If someone in our family needs food or someone in our church needs food, we give it to them and not to the “world.” In fact, there would be far less need to help people far from our community if husbands did their jobs to begin with, which is to provide for the family. We should not have to ask for aid very often if we did. Nor would others need to ask us for aid so often. There will always be tragedies in the world that require our help, and we are blessed to have that opportunity to help, but the people immediately in need are your own. Do your job in caring for them first, including in your church. The world’s biggest aid organization by far is called the family.

This subject is a core part of man’s sacrificial role. Bringing the

practical support for life is a clear part of the man's sacrificial role as Christ of the home. When Ephesians 5 instructs husbands to love their wives as Christ loves the Church, "*and gave Himself for her*" part of that "*gave Himself*" we imitate is the sweat and labor it takes to provide for her and the children. It is always sacrifice. Unless you are one who loves their job, and enjoys going every day, then you understand this is as much an act of carrying the cross as almost anything else is. It makes you tired. It can make you supremely bored. It can bring incredible stress. If you work in labor, it means real sweat, and sometimes blood, in all kinds of weather, blazing hot and ice-blue cold. When I worked labor jobs, during the harder days, I used to repeat to myself a few words from the Bible: *This is my body, which is broken for you.* (1 Corinthians 11:24) I called upon it as my sacrifice; the giving up of my body to a better cause than comfort. The brokenness of the body. The possible danger. This is not just true for working with your hands, but is true for every job; it can make you feel pushed upon, crushed, tired, empty, broken. Yet we do it because we need to. Ideally we do it for the Lord, and give that pain all up to Him. Find that purpose in Him. Speaking of servants the Bible teaches: "*And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men,*" (Colossians 3:23). We are such servants, if even if we do not use the word anymore. We serve our boss as we serve God. Our work and sacrifice is a labor both for our Heavenly Father above, and for our wife, who pictures the beautiful Bride of Christ.

The sacrifice of providing for the family, men, really does cause death at times. It can be literally sacrificial in that sense. Many men have given their lives for their wife and family that way, albeit a small minority. One member of the church we used to belong to had only faint memories of his father, since he died on the job as an electrician when he was little. Countless other jobs contain danger. It's not just police who end up dead. Forestry can end your life and send you straight to Jesus very quick. So can some of the fishing jobs, construction, trucking and agricultural work. The risk of getting maimed or killed is high. Real physical pain is normal. Even in an era when women are encouraged to act like men and work outside the home, the hardest jobs and the most dangerous jobs are almost all still done by men. We should be gracious to men for it.

Even white collar jobs can be dangerous, as many are the lawyer who have been threatened by clients or threatened by people they put in jail, or ended up murdered by one of them. Look up the murder of Thomas Wales, which as of this writing is still unsolved. They are a hated and threatened group. In various countries being a judge or a politician will often bring death, as drug gangs or mafias try and bribe and threaten their way into control. They leave countless bodies in their wake. With

other jobs, death is not always the greatest danger, but often prison time is, as there are a thousand ways to break this or that regulation of business and end up called a criminal. Most people don't have much sympathy for "white collar" workers in prison, but the fact is that some of the time all they did was not properly follow every regulation. Would you wish to be thrown in prison for that? Not being able to follow every last rule is a real danger of the workplace, and no one wants to be in prison. Not only that, but in cases of institutional corruption, when the law really comes down, often what the culprits were doing was exactly what they had inherited from the people who ran the institution before them. They were continuing in a compromised system because they felt they needed to, and they did not want to be the ones to expose what was going on. They did not start the corruption itself. They were just continuing with the flow. Can you be sure you would do any better?

Providing for his family is an act men are bound to. It is a sacrifice that is also an obligation. Just as women are bound to some acts, so are men. We live in an era when being free of bonds is thought of as being good, especially for a woman. Woman is often wrongly portrayed as a victim, because throughout history she needed to be in the home or with the children, or because she did not have every last societal option open to her. Yet it is a GOOD thing to be bound. It is a good thing to be bound to Christ and to God's law. Imagine if man were not bound to what he needs to do. If man never felt the need to provide for his family. If he never felt restrained by ethics. Even a feminist society like the one we currently live in wants a man to be "bound" to pay child support. They'd be awfully angry if he didn't. They don't want him to have a choice. They want his options limited.

You see, a man SHOULD be bound to good things. A woman should be bound to good things. There is no question of being absolutely free, as absolute freedom does not exist, and freedom completely in the abstract is not in itself a good. The Bible teaches we are either a slave to sin or we are a slave to God. (Romans 6:22) One of the two. If we desire to serve God, then we obey His commands too. (Romans 6:18) That means a man provides. It means a woman cares for the children and the home. It does NOT mean we have every societal option open to us, especially women, whose role is closer to home. Western Christians of this era need desperately to stop worshipping freedom. They have adopted an Americanist religion rather than a biblical one. They worship their autonomy, not their God. If we truly worship God, we are servants of God and do not need every option open to our personal desire. We obey God if we are men. We obey God if we are women. The man therefore has been bound throughout history just as the woman has been bound through

history – to do good. One of the great acts of righteousness man is bound to, is the sacrifice of work for his family.

The Reward

There is a reward for you in leading your wife rightly. There is a reward for the world as well, which I hope we would regard as more important. That reward is being able to see an image of the Church in your wife, through her happiness, peace and submission. It is an image that should satisfy you, and one that should set the Christian family apart in the eyes of the world. A woman rightly led, and godly in her heart, has a beauty that nothing else in the world can match. For a wife to have that spiritual and gentle beauty, should bring fulfillment to her leader, just as a beautiful garden brings fulfillment to the gardener. A woman loved, led, taught and protected has that light in her.

I happen to like taking photographs, and it didn't take long in obsessively snapping shots of nature that I noticed that special light that comes just a few hours before dusk. It's not sunset light. It is late day light, and it brings an unearthly glow to natural surroundings, especially to sunlit green. It sparkles. It gives everything it falls on an inner light. Take picture of nature at that special hour and you will look like a brilliant photographer, because nature looks like we imagine heaven to be. That special glow, that patina, is almost what a godly and protected wife has about her. Except the wife's fantastic inner joy, that inner light, is even greater, since it comes in the human soul's submission to God and in the abundant sharing of love. A woman submitted to her husband and guided by him is more reward for our work than we could ask for.

That godly woman is not revealed if you treat your wife as a sensual object. She will look sensual instead. It is hidden if you treat her coldly, or cruelly or neglect to feed her God's bread. She will become cold or downcast herself. It is revealed when you obey God's Word in leading your home. Then she can be an example to you. Without a word, she becomes an example of how the Church submits to Christ, and humbly walks in the yoke of His law.^{xiii} She helps her man in her behavior. She gives him encouragement by providing that picture of man's redemption. She also is a great reward in her heartfelt desire to help her man, the work she does as his assistant and in the home which has more value than any salary in the world. A man, in his wife, has a loving helper who reveals the beauty of God's redemption.

Do not lead her in sensuousness, but in spirituality. Not in loud talk and pride, but in silence and humility. Not in hardness, but in gentleness. Not in fashion, but in simplicity. Not in independence, but in

submissiveness. You will receive that holy reward.

In rightly leading your wife, the world receives that picture as well. They will in a sense know you through her also. Your hard work and teaching will be communicated through her and your children. They need the clear strong words of a man. They need the softer, and more beautiful knowledge which comes from wife and children. The world will know the goodness of Christ's promise through her as well. When your wife is full of the peace and holiness you can give her, people notice the difference. People long for that. They hunger for it. Even a person lost in the worst of habitual sins has a sense in his blackened soul of goodness somewhere. They will see that in the Christian wife. Not a mere niceness. Not simply a warmth. Rather, the joy of God springing forth, and the knowledge that His promise is good. Her peace. Her good works. Her meek obedience. Among all the sensual or unhappy women out there, your godly wife will be a tower of light proclaiming Christ.

Not to brag, except maybe a little, but people always tell me how beautiful my wife is. They happen to like my garden. They like to gaze on it. They say she has peace and sweetness in her soul, and they're not just being nice. She projects that light of God every day. She doesn't try and fake it with attention grabbing clothes, makeup or jewelry. Yet everyone says she is beautiful. That's because the Holy Spirit is within her and she is submitting to God and to her head, which is her husband. I'm not suggesting you need to try and pretend to be happy every day. Some days are miserable. A woman has to stay up half the night with screaming children, and you can look tired. Rather, when the Christian wife is living in godliness that serenity remains with her, even on the terrible days. God didn't make women to be ugly.^{xiv} The Holy Spirit makes her a vessel of light through the hardest days, without having to fake a smile. Her beauty is rooted in the peace of the soul. That's why it reflects the peace of salvation.

Your family is set apart

*For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men,
teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we
should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age.
(Titus 2:11-12)*

*For we have spent enough of our past lifetime in doing the will
of the Gentiles—when we walked in lewdness, lusts,
drunkenness, revelries, drinking parties, and abominable
idolatries.*

(1 Peter 4:3)

*I will set nothing wicked before my eyes;
I hate the work of those who fall away;
It shall not cling to me.*

(Psalm 101:3)

Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world.

(1 John 2:15-16)

One of the most important things you can do as a husband – what I have called the head of a sacred community – is to lead your family as set apart people. That includes that you lead them in a lifestyle that is separate from worldliness. You do not lead them in imitating the world and following its entertainments. A lot of people want to affect the future of the world, both for good reasons and vain reasons, and this is among the best ways to affect the future. Not by being extremely successful at work. Not by having some incredible talent that people admire. Not by starting a political movement. Not by doing something that will get your face in the papers. Rather by leading your home in a set-apart way. You must lead your home in holiness.

There is much to be said about why and how to be separate, but I will just try and cover the basics. Separation is a biblical doctrine. The Bible teaches that the Christian no longer lives for the flesh, but for the spirit. (Romans 8:9) It teaches we are called to be a unique people. (1 Peter 2:9) It teaches that to be a friend of the world is to be an enemy of God. (James 4:4, Romans 8:7) We are also called to stay away from Christians who are false teachers or who live in a sinful lifestyle. (Romans 16:17, 1 Corinthians 5:11) We do not seek the sensuality, the vulgarity, the drunken parties of the world. (1 Peter 4:3) We have a holy, modest lifestyle, characterized by self-restraint, seriousness and prayer. (Titus 2:11-12, Ephesians 5:4) We do not seek after great gain in this world, but are content with what the Lord provides. (Hebrews 13:5, 1 Timothy 6:8) The set apart lifestyle does not seek the vain things in this life. (1 John 2:15-16)

I'll try to be concise: you won't be able to do those things if you are connected to most secular entertainment. You won't be able to do those things if you follow the fashions of the world. You won't be able to do them if you make its goals your goals too. I'm not saying to go out of your way to

be a weirdo, but if you lead your life entirely for the Lord, you will be very different from the world, and you will have very little room for its entertainments. In following the Lord's path, you will see clearly how it is a different path. Others will see that you are different too. Do not let secular entertainment or literature be the norm in your home. It will damage your life in Christ. It will damage your wife and your children as well.

Secular entertainment, besides being a soul-sucking waste of time, alters a person's form of thought and indoctrinates people. It teaches attitudes, it teaches language (something itself which affects our understanding), it teaches what we look up to, it teaches what we look down on, it teaches what and whom we admire, it teaches political ideology, it teaches metaphysical religious beliefs. On top of that, it pumps heightened emotion, regular vulgarity, and lewd sexualized images into the human soul. It does these things over and over again. Claiming that entertainment does not affect our beliefs or actions doesn't hold water. Not only can we see they affect human beings with our own eyes, but studies have shown that television and music DOES affect the human mind.^{xv} In fact, if imbibing the secular culture really has no ill results for the Church, then how come Christians just keep following what the world does, only a step or two behind in its depravity? How come what the world teaches as true, a few years later, Christians come to accept? How come we see the same worldly dress, vulgar language and philosophical beliefs from Christians as are popular in the pagan world? If you let secular entertainment into your home, you are inviting a false teacher to teach you, your wife, and your children.

The simplest way to cut nearly all of it, as I mention elsewhere, is to get rid of the television and radio. Don't listen to secular music. I tossed out almost all that I owned a long time ago. It is primarily about amping up your emotions, not about self-control. Its music is almost entirely sensual, and often vulgar and lewd and its doctrines are self-gratification, materialism, immorality, Marxism and boldly anti-Christian rhetoric. Its music heroes who are worshipped by their followers commonly live openly depraved, immoral lifestyles and know no shame. A Christian family should not be their disciples. Hollywood has always been filthy. From the beginning a century ago, Hollywood was already focused on the flesh, and going out of its way to promote lewdness. That is why American politicians came up with the Hayes Code to censor Hollywood and other media in the U.S. Americans recognized it was filth from the start. The Hayes code put certain limitations on what they could put on the screen, but the movies remained mostly materialistic, and directors tried to get away with whatever they could get away with while staying within the limits of the

code. Then America dropped the code entirely, and the wolves in entertainment were free to do whatever they wanted. We currently read about these actors and actresses who were sexually harassed or raped by movie and television moguls. However, this kind of thing was the norm from the beginning of Hollywood. The “casting couch” was the norm back when our movies were cleaner and we were a more Christian nation. Sodomy was there under the table as well. When actresses got pregnant, they commonly killed their babies through abortions, often being pressured by the entertainment elite to do so. Some of the famous actresses of the early era were known to have had multiple abortions. Hollywood and the entertainment industry has always been a swill of filth. This is well documented. Why on earth would a Christian, called to be set apart by God, want to be entertained by these people? By the immoral? The rapist? The abortionist? What Christian would want their children to be taught by these people? If you care about the lives of your family, do not turn them over to these demons. Put a heavy filter on any media in the home.

When I say media, I don't refer only to what is called entertainment. I also include what is called literature. Words put in writing seem to get heavier respect than images on the screen, especially if they are old, but they indoctrinate as well. I would not treat books as if they are merely innocent, because of course they are not. They have a heavy indoctrinating purpose. In western literature most works of the past 200 years are either pseudo-Christian or completely Humanist. Very few are works that communicate a sincere Christian worldview. For this reason, any involvement with literature should be within a clear Christian framework and for a truly necessary purpose. It may be necessary to read some Humanist literature as a part of studying the history of this civilization, or studying the development of thought. However, it has to be recognized that it is non-Christians, and viewed with a critical eye, the light of God's truth present at all times. How does this work rest on non-Christian presumptions? What teachings are divergent from Christian truth? How would the Word of God instruct us to act, as opposed to this author or his characters? It is also important to be aware of the authors, and what kind of people they were. While there have been a few virtuous Humanist writers, many of the most famous in literature were no more wholesome than Hollywood moguls or rap stars. They lived grossly immoral lifestyles, they mistreated the people around them, they practiced all manner of decadence they could get away with, and many were miserable unhappy human beings. Some committed suicide. Some went mad. You have to recognize what kind of person those works of literature come from, no matter how brilliant the style of writing.

Recognize that any truth communicated is going to be warped by often immoral and self-centered living. Be aware of these things. Literature sometimes is necessary. It is never completely innocent.^{xvi}

Many Christians think they can give sports a free pass. They spend hour after hour in front of games. They memorize their favorite players' accomplishments. They think the Lord's Day means the NFL's Day. However, sports should not get a free pass by you as a Christian head of the home. Not only does it waste immense amounts of time, but sports culture in general is garbage. It is a vulgar and lewd culture. Two out of three of this nation's biggest pro sports feature half-naked dancing girls gyrating for entertainment. What's holy about that? On top of that, the major sports companies all promote immorality, most vilely in the form of normalizing sodomy and promoting same-sex marriage.^{xvii} ESPN has gone out of its way to normalize sodomy.^{xviii} On America's biggest "religious" holiday each year – Superbowl Sunday – a recent celebration included the recognized symbol of the homo-sex movement.^{xix} Why support an industry that promotes that evil? Why let them promote evil to your family? Don't you have a life to lead? I used to watch a handful of pro games a year, but I stopped when it became clear they are on the same moral level as frat boys. I may watch a local game, if it is in a clean environment, but even then, not often.

You're probably also aware of the fact that sports culture is normally idolatrous, especially at the higher and more competitive levels. Christians regularly bow down to fornicating, dope smoking vulgar people who simply do not deserve anyone's high honor. The vast majority of both NBA players and NFL players smoke pot.^{xx} In the women's basketball – and I've never followed it personally – the anecdotal evidence is that lesbianism is normal.^{xxi} Do you want that for your children? Do you want that to be their example, and those people to be their heroes? If you or your children need an example to look up to, drop the sports heroes. Go to the great saints of Christian history. Go to the martyrs. Find someone close to you as well, in your family or community, that can mentor you as a Christian and that you can learn from. Don't idolize strangers who play a game with a ball. They don't need your worship or your money. If you lead your home in holiness as a father, then sports can mean a game at the park for fun. It means go outside in the sun yourself. That way you can get some exercise too.

It is up to you as a father to:

Put a heavy filter on these currents from the pagan world
Deal with any cases in which it may be a true necessity to absorb them
Shine the light of God's Word on them if you must in fact view them

I have provided a number of ideas here, but I have not tried to be comprehensive. This task will require more than I've mentioned, and you will have to make more than a few judgment calls in interacting with a pagan world. In general, if it's a judgment call, err on the side of caution.

Do it all night long

As a father, you would not be likely to let a man get very far if he knocked on your door and said – I'd like to spend the evening rubbing my body back and forth on your daughter's body in a darkened room. Can I take her out? You and almost any father would quickly, and abruptly, send this man on his way. Shame on him for asking such a sick question. However, if the same man rephrased the question in a pleasanter way, such as – I'd like to take your daughter out to dance – most fathers in our culture would accept. Oddly, they reject one, and they accept the other, but they basically are saying the same thing. The man wants to spend the evening rubbing up against your daughter in a dark room; it's just that one of them calls it "dance."

Christians will not get very far in leading a set apart life, and in leading set apart families, if they treat this cultural practice as normal. If you want the message of Christ to be drowned out in noise, raw excitement and immorality, then this is the practice for you. If you want purity and love for your family, don't ever do it. Spend your evenings with your children doing godly things. Pray. Sing hymns. Help someone you know. Give free lessons to the kid next door. Study the Bible and listen to good sermons. Don't go out spending the evening rubbing up against a member of the opposite sex in a darkened room, to the raw excitement of music. We are modest, and sober people according to the Bible. And dance is just a polite version of an orgy.

To qualify that statement, I am not teaching against liturgical dance. I am speaking of mixed dancing and secular dancing. There are legitimate uses for dance in worship, as long as the music is appropriate to worship, and the dance is appropriate, and men stay with men, women with women. You can see good example of male dance from Russia, for example, or in orthodox Jewish dance. It's just men with beards jumping up and down together. I'm all for it. I once saw a video of young Jewish students dancing with their friends to some wonderful Hebrew oom-pa music, boys on one side of the room and girls on the other, and it really looked like they were having great fun. You can also see some good examples of women's dance in Charismatic churches, in which the women wear very modest dresses, run around and wave flags in the air. I see nothing wrong with that. However, to send your young people, or your

old, to dance with the opposite sex is simply cultural SUICIDE and is asking for all manner of lewdness, fornication and adultery to occur. It doesn't take a PhD to figure out what happens when men and women spend the evening rubbing up against each other in the dark.

Story of a Muslim

I read once about Muslim attitudes toward the western world. One story recounted the change of attitude that Muslims have had toward the West, a change reflected in greater hatred of our values. A Muslim recounted how they used to enjoy some western TV, such as the shows that showed Christian families and wholesome people. Now they can tell from our media alone that those values are no longer there. They get naked "sexy" girls and rampant immorality. They're not stupid. They have seen the spiritual nosedive, even from a distance. Another I read about recounted how he had visited the United States, this back when it was somewhat more Christian, and had been invited to a school where they had a "dance." When the lights were lowered, these young people all grabbed their partner and being groping and kissing them. Virtually the whole room descended in what would be called an orgy by anyone that respects purity. Yet he learned this was normal among Christians, even at the time. He came to our country and saw one big Christian ORGY, and the result was clear: he wanted to do harm to the West and knew that his god would punish them. Allah of Islam may not be the one true God, but I would have to agree that God punishes Christians for these things. Indeed, our God sends the likes of Islam upon the West for its decadence. If Christians are a set-apart people, they do not live in that kind of sensuality. It's what the world lives for. Christians have something better to do than have an orgy to music and call it a dance. You need to find something better for your family to do as well.

It seems most Christians today reject the doctrine of separation. However, they do not reject it because they have accepted the whole counsel of Scripture and come to the conclusion that worldliness is okay. Most Christians reject separation because they want to be normal. They want their children to be normal. They want to be accepted and they don't want to be laughed at. That is why Christians follow the world and then train their children to do the same thing. They want acceptance more than they want holiness. They did not reach that conclusion reading the Bible.

You see so many Christians taking on secular ways that it's almost hard to imagine the lifestyle I am talking about. It can also be hard to imagine a Christian APART from their television, their regular shows,

their crooning music or gyrating dances. What would they be like? Well, try this little experiment. Can you imagine a monastery of monks crashing on the couch at the end of each day and passively absorbing their favorite shows? Can you imagine them sitting down at dinner every night and discussing the dating habits of their favorite actors or what next year's summer film season will bring? Do you think those things are very important to them? Were things like that important to Jesus? What about the Amish? Can you imagine a group of Amish blasting the hip-hop and gyrating their butts to it? Or does that just seem ridiculous? Can you imagine them taking turns grabbing a dance partner, locking lips with them, and then maybe moving on to another? It's is totally demonic to imagine. Yet if we can't imagine monks or Amish doing those things, we shouldn't imagine ourselves doing them either! We are no less called to holiness than they are. We avoid worldly attitudes and entertainments. We don't avoid them because it is the faith statement of our church. We don't avoid them because our denomination taught us to. Or because our culture taught us to. We avoid them because we are Christian. If you are born again, you are a Christian, you do not live for the flesh. You live for the spirit. You are a separate set-apart soul and as a man you lead your family that way.

In a sense, the good, life-giving, nourishing truths of the family have been twisted and perverted by secular culture. Oddly, you can still see a few original truths there. I find it humorous that secular music is always saying "baby" this and "baby" that when unknowingly they almost have the truth. Secular music says to rock your baby all night long, and if they knew what that meant, it would be good advice. A Christian mother is often up late at night rocking her baby so he can sleep. Sometimes she's up all night. A Christian daughter should learn this hard work from her mother. Even our little girl wants to hold and care for her baby sister. She wants to feed her. One day it will be a good thing if our daughter gets to rock her baby too. Pop music says – I want to hold you all night – but it says it with the wrong intentions. The truth is, you will hold your children at night. You will hold one another, both to show your care, or to comfort each other, as a family young or old. Warmth and tenderness is good. You see, the counterfeit truths that the flesh so desires are real truths in God. You're not going to find real affection or love in "dating" or using another person for sexual relief. You will find it in the love of God. You will find it in the family. In the Church. If you really want to rock a baby, then unite in marriage, have children and then rock a baby. If you want to say – I love you baby – say it to your child. And then act like you do. You will affect the future greater than any world leader on the planet that way.

The Big Excuse

Perhaps the most common Christian excuse for imbibing the secular culture like water is this: well, my children are going to see these things in the world anyway, so it's good they have some idea what they are about. This is their excuse for an immense amount of wordiness, including soaking in the movies, the TV shows, and even being indoctrinated in secular education. Sadly, this argument is very poor.

Number one, we can try testing that argument with other things. Does the fact that people, young or old, are going to experience some lousy things in the world, mean that we should do those lousy things as a habit? We shouldn't accept this logic. Should I stop washing my hands after going to the toilet because I might pick up a virus or bacteria somewhere else? Because I could get it shaking hands anyway? Of course not. We should wash our hands since it cuts illnesses and infections when we do. The fact we might get an illness elsewhere doesn't mean we should have filth on our own hands. Similarly, should the fact that we might see people dressed in a sexual way on the bus or at a job mean that I need to put up sexualized pictures in my own home? Or let my children dress that way? No, it doesn't logically demand it. That would be ridiculous. Many parents claim they're fine with their children absorbing all kinds of moral evil from TV shows because they'll see it somewhere else anyway. Yet you never hear them applying that same logic to hookers and coke. They don't say – Our children will encounter hookers and coke eventually, so let's have hookers and coke at their next sleepover. Hey, all the kids want it! We just want them to be happy. This is a bad excuse for leading a non-Christian lifestyle.

The second and perhaps bigger reason is what I mentioned already: that it clearly contradicts biblical teaching. The Bible is clear on what our attitudes should be. The Bible is clear on what our overall spirit should be. The Bible is clear on setting things which are pure before our eyes. The Bible is clear that we are different, and seek holiness in all our deeds. The Bible is clear on educating our children in the Word of God. It doesn't leave room for worldliness. Therefore, making excuses for your children to be hip to the trends, and entertained by godless men, changes nothing. Our marching orders are in the Word of God. It does not change.

Let's imagine for a second that the nonbelieving world did things kind of like Christians did. Let's imagine that they bent over backward to fit into a Christian worldview. Can you picture the average atheist walking around with t-shirts of biblical patriarchs on them, perhaps Abraham and Sarah, or Gideon at the river, or Elisha working miracles. Imagine if they plastered their clothing and their walls with those things. That would be

surreal. Picture the average atheist giving their children caps with the names of local Christian schools, or lunch bags with the Ten Commandments listed on them. Imagine them doing their best to be cool and spit out the most popular Bible verses, or throw references to the historical saints into their songs. That would be a laugh riot. Why? It would be a laugh because of the great contradiction between their belief system and the way they are acting. I can see two nonbelievers slapping each other five saying – power of the Holy Spirit rocks, dude. The other pumps his fist and says – comin’ down from the Most High! Then they do a fist bop. That scene would be almost as ridiculous as two Christians, as they try and fit into a godless culture, imitate its heroes, learn its popular doctrines and long after its power. Yet that is exactly what Christians are doing. They give up imitating Christ for imitating the world. It is transparently degrading, obviously pathetic, and it is not from God.

Contentment and Gain

Now godliness with contentment is great gain.

For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out.

And having food and clothing, with these we shall be content.

(1 Timothy 6:6-8)

It seems that even parents who are serious about raising their children ethically, often find a way to live for the world by living for gain. This too is unholy. It keeps us living in the flesh. As a husband and father, you should not live for acquiring wealth, education or accomplishments. The goal in leading your family and raising children is being faithful to God and being righteous. Anything else is merely a means to an end.

Four years, eight years, twenty years of education are not necessarily good for the kingdom of God. If they specifically help in a goal you are called to achieve, then perhaps. However, in and of themselves, they cannot be a goal for you or for your children. High salary and prestigious job position, although admired by Christians for literally thousands of years must not be in your sights. Serving God must be in your sights. If salary can sincerely help in serving God, then so be it, but often more money takes people away from the Lord, not the other way around. It’s not a blessing – even if many Christians call it a blessing – but a curse of the devil and a hindrance. Money corrupts. It corrupts individuals. It corrupts institutions. It corrupts governments. It corrupts churches. 1 Timothy 6:10 teaches: *For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.* Surely, money’s ability to

consume people's attention and corrupt them from the truth is one reason the Lord gives us this teaching. We should have contentment on our hearts. Not a strong desire to be rich.

If we were consumed with a desire for higher education, salary and prestige, cars, vacations and retirement, how would we be different from the world? We would be remarkably the same. So this is a holiness issue too. Yet how does one have this peace on the heart? How do we avoid being lured in by the artificial veneer of materialistic success or the vanity of self-importance? I believe the key is the word given in Scripture – contentment. We have contentment. That comes from the knowledge we have eternal peace with our Creator. We are not under condemnation. It also comes with a knowledge that God is in complete control, and we don't need to imagine that we need to prove ourselves worthy to anyone else. God has already declared us worthy in His Son. The Scripture says: *Let your conduct be without covetousness; be content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you."* (Hebrews 13:5) The knowledge that God rules our lives and that we will inherit eternal peace is a great source of contentment, and gives us the ability to serve God without idolizing riches or accomplishments. We know that all we could possibly do in our life is to uplift the name of Christ. Therefore, anything else could only possibly be a tool. Anything that takes us from that goal is wrong.

These truths are essential in your leading your wife and children. Most simply, it is easier to find a godly woman when your life is about righteousness, and it is easier to attract the wrong kind of woman, one who is materialistic and manipulative, if you are all about wealth. The wrong kind of women seem to gather around certain kinds of men like flies, and some of that is because they make riches central in their lives, and that's what the women want. Another reason, is that they are weak, and easily manipulated, but that's another story. There is much greater likelihood to meet a Christ-hearted woman when Christ and not wealth is your goal. It is also a blessing to your children, to know that God is master of their lives. They do not need to live to be better than someone else, or to acquire a mandatory level of comfort and income in order to have value. We seek honor before God, not men. (John 5:44) It is furthermore often difficult to serve God when we are consumed with living at a certain societal level. Often, having fewer things and sharing what you have allows one to live the Christian life much better. This could mean you have to work less, and can devote time to ministry. It can mean you have more money to use for ministry rather than passing pleasures. Monks have for thousands of years lived completely communally, not because poverty itself is a virtue, but because in sharing all things and rejecting a

salary, they are able to use all their time and energies in service, teaching, prayer and other ways of uplifting the Holy One.

Less is often more. Money is often a hindrance. Do you really need that extra car? Do you really need that house all to yourself, or can someone else live there? What value in Christ's kingdom does that expensive vacation have? What value to Christ does that extra college degree have? Why do you go to that fine restaurant? Do you really need to put off marriage so you can stockpile money? In this materialistic culture and in a prosperity obsessed church, such a teaching may seem strange, it may be looked down upon, but it is very much in line with the Holy Bible. It is in line with God's will for us. He wants us to be content with what we have. Often, if the Almighty removes wealth from your life, THAT is the real blessing. When circumstance forces your lifestyle to become more modest so that you have to share with others, or even rely on others, that could be the hand of God. Money, including all its trappings, including the near-worship of higher education, is often a trap for the Christian. It is not sent by God. When we give over our life to the Lord, it means giving over all we have, including our possessions. They must be used for God's ends and in God's ways. Material gain is never an end in itself.

The Job Before You

Much of what I've written will sound like a great task to you. This is especially true if you are unfamiliar with the Christian walk, or have been taught that we can ignore much of the Bible. Do not be intimidated. Do not be overwhelmed. God does not ask us to do something without giving us the guidance, the resources and the power to do it. Take one thing at a time. Learn things step by step. Practice planning and discipline in your life, both as a Christian and as a parent. This chapter is more aimed at fathers, but much still applies to wives, children and all believers. Start putting the Word of God into practice, and start putting good habits that assist in the Christian lifestyle into practice too. Be around godly, mature believers as well, both in a local church and small fellowship. Imitate the good examples of behavior you see. Ignore the weak and the bad examples. Always, always put the Word of God before men.

If you are a man you lead a home. Even if the Christian walk is new, it is nothing too hard for you. Men, including young men, have rushed into battle headlong. They've braved bullets. If they can find the bravery to do that for warfare, you can find the strength to do it for the life of Christ. Young men will go to great lengths to train for athletics, to push their body to see how far it can go, to train it to be stronger, faster, harder and then take all kinds of punishment on the ballfield or the court. To take a

beating and then get back up again. If sports are worth that much strenuous practice, then our Savior and Lord of Creation deserves it a thousand times more. What you think an athlete would do for a game with a ball, do for Christ instead. You are not a small child. You are a man. You are capable and ready for war.

ⁱThe Holy Trinity shows that God is love eternally. He is not just love as a force, but He is actively loving in a relational sense before creation and forever. God did not “need to” create in order to have someone to love. God loves eternally among Father, Son and Spirit.

Sadly, there are many anti-Trinitarians today who seek to deny the truth of God’s triune nature. The most common denial is one of various forms of Modalism. Modalism says that Father, Son and Spirit are merely roles that God is playing. He is changing between them, as He changes between His roles. Hence, the three Persons do not really coexist distinctly.

This is boldly false on multiple levels. The clearest is that Father and Son speak to one another. You do not speak to someone who does not coexist with you. Moreover, both Father and Son send the Spirit. You cannot send someone who does not exist distinctly from you.

However, Modalists will try and deny that Jesus is speaking with the Father by saying that since the Son became man, He is merely speaking to His own spiritual self in heaven. Well ignoring for a second that this explanation itself shows God to be in TWO distinct persons, this claim can be disproven by going to John 17 and John 1. BOTH of these passages show the Son communing with the Father BEFORE He was incarnate. John 17 shows the Son sharing the glory with the Father before the world, and John 1 shows the Son being “with” the Father “in the beginning.” Hence the Father and Son coexist as distinct beings. They do not change into one another.

I have debated Modalists a number of times. On the two occasions that the debate was long enough for me to bring up John 17 and John 1, they ended the conversation and ceased writing to me. They had no answer. These two passages are powerful proofs, among others. God is Trinity according to Scripture. Father, Son and Spirit commune with each other always. Therefore, God is love eternally.

ⁱⁱ Male headship, both in the home and in the Church, is a fundamental Christian doctrine. It is biblical, and it is reflected in about two thousand years of Church history. It also has a profound effect on society and we are nourished when we respect it. I would stay away from any church that gender-bends, whether by female preachers or by female

pastors. It is often the warning sign of far worse slide to come. The churches that have gone over the cliff on morality, almost always went over the cliff on gender first. Women don't belong in those positions, and they weaken the Church when they take them. The man's role in preaching and leading the Church is simple ABCs of biblical doctrine. Keep your family out of feminized churches.

iii The teaching that Mary is the "mother of God" is often confused with other Catholic or Orthodox teachings about Mary. However, it is simply a statement that says Mary bore Jesus in both His human nature and His divine nature. The original term is *theotokos* in Greek meaning "God bearer." It affirms that our Lord was God incarnate. He was God from the womb. The teaching has never meant that Mary preceded God in existence or that she is equal to or greater than God. It merely teaches biblical, orthodox truth about the nature of Jesus Christ.

The denial that Mary is the mother of God was first proclaimed by the patriarch Nestorius in the 5th century, and in little time this was declared as a heresy by the whole Church. He asserted that Mary bore only Jesus' human nature. It is claimed that after much debate later in life that he changed his view, or had been always misunderstood, however, the record shows that he later affirmed that Mary was mother of God under a totally different definition. He tried to talk his way out of it, but he always was a heretic.

iv No commentary is perfect, only Scripture is. As far as modern ones, there are FEW which are not liberal and disregard the inerrant and historical nature of the Word of God. I know John MacArthur's Bible commentary is highly respected. I have read David Guzik a number of times and so far have found him very good. I also use Matthew Henry. Liberal commentaries, whether Protestant or Catholic, will be terrible for your understanding of Scripture and leave you with little solid ground of understanding. That's why liberals have so much problem finding truth in the Bible. They don't actually believe it is true. The early Christian fathers and the influential theologians in Catholic and early Protestant history certainly believed in the Bible's complete truthfulness. They understood that God could not communicate falsehood. The continual doctrine for thousands of years of Christendom is that the Bible is inspired and is nothing but truth.

v The minority of Christians who practice non-resistance can also recognize the man's need to protect in times of danger. However, in their view it is more of a passive protection. The husband places himself between the danger and his wife. He makes a way for his wife to escape from the danger. While I believe in self-defense, I acknowledge this is more in the character of Christ's life in its methods. However, most situations involving attackers do not allow such a clean use of passive protection, and attempting to do so would simply place BOTH parties in danger, not just the man. This is one of the reasons why most of the Church came to believe in the ethical use of self-defense.

vi *Women on the Pill Choose Less Manly Men*, by Tanya Lewis; March 27, 2013 at www.livescience.com

Author's Note: This was reported on by pro-lifers for years before the mainstream media brought it to the general public.

vii This is the same Hebrew word for “desire” found in Genesis 4:7, when God warns Cain of sin, saying “its desire is for you.” This is clearly not a romantic desire, but a desire to control another, in a way which is contrary to God.

viii *Brag About Your Abortion*, by Sebo Marketing at www.unitedfamiliesinternational.org
“Almost half my life ago, #ihadanabortion. I’m not sorry. I’ve never been sorry. I will never be sorry. Just very, very grateful.”

Cecile Richards Urges Women to Boast About Their Abortions, by Rachel Stoltzfoos; Feb. 8, 2017 at www.dailycaller.com

ix There is something to be said about rights, although I have mentioned them elsewhere in the book. The Bible does not teach rights. The Bible is eternal, divine truth and it teaches obligations. So our first place to look in order to know what is right to do is our obligations before God. That does not mean zero rights exist, but rather a right is something that human logic tries to infer from the obligations of Holy Scripture. In fact, in Christian rights theory, that is sort of how the understanding developed. Thomas Aquinas began working out a philosophy of rights (which he called a *jus*) but this began simply as knowing the “just” thing to do. Not as something you deserved to receive. However, it became clear that looking at the obligations of the Bible, one could discern rights. For example, if stealing is prohibited, then property is a right. So the human mind became busy discerning various rights from the obligations, and other truths in the Bible and nature. Naturally, this combined with non-Christian thought, with so-called “enlightenment” thought, and this created a hybrid system of rights, which have roots in Christian and Secular thought. It is through this hybrid that the U.S. government (which is my government) was created.

So while we should respect that certain rights exist, we ought to remember that ONLY if they are firmly rooted in biblical truth or logic should we view them as a right. Otherwise, they are simply an artifact of this culture or this government, and may in fact be in conflict with the will of God. Remember, this culture calls almost any act of immorality a right, and it would be no surprise if they legalized bugging a monkey next week. It has a warped view of rights. I strongly suggest all Christians be rooted in our obligations before God, not our so-called rights.

Voting, which many view as a right before God, is neither good nor evil, nor can one prove it is a right. It is simply what this society deems good. If a democratic system serves God and helps us obey Him, then it is the system to use. If it does not serve God nor help us obey Him, then it is NOT the system to use. It is not good in and of itself. The idea that women ought to vote (simply because men do too) is not very logical, unless you start with secular assumptions. If men are the leaders, and have the most interest in how the government is run, then it seems unnecessary for women to vote. This is doubly true when you recognize that women are more swayed by emotion, and will take what belongs in the nursery to the voting booth. You can look up the statistics for yourself on how the woman’s vote effects elections. They elect Democrats.

x This is because of the man's headship. It is the same reason why we call what happened in the garden the "sin of Adam" even though it was Eve who bit the fruit first. It is also why the Bible says that mankind fell "through one man" (Romans 5:12) even though it was Eve who sinned first. Man's headship and lack of being deceived made him more responsible for disobeying God. Moreover, his headship also made him the representative of mankind, hence bringing it sin and condemnation. Ultimately, since man was first, our bodies (and some would say our souls too) trace all the way back to Adam, not to Eve. He was first in creation.

xi Biblically speaking, and common-sense wise, if you don't like men using the women's restroom, you shouldn't like women using the men's pulpit either. The Scripture clearly prohibits women from teaching or having authority over men in 1 Timothy 2, and again points to her submissive and silent role in church in 1 Corinthians 14. It is ordinary language, and if we understand it how we understand any other text, as read in its local context, then women are submissive in the church and may not teach and have authority over men. That's what the words mean.

Moreover, the biblical patterns from start to finish support that headship and teaching are man's job. Man is the head in creation (something Paul points out in 1 Timothy 2), the Levitical priests were all required to be men, the apostles hand-chosen by Jesus were all men, male headship of the father and husband is both taught and presumed throughout the Bible, nearly every civil leader in Israel was a man, and every example of public preaching in the New Testament is done by men. The ONLY instructional verses on this subject in the New Testament support what tradition has taught us for thousands of years: that a woman cannot teach or have authority over men in the Church. Remember that the next time you complain about how the secularists are destroying gender in our society. Christians destroyed it first, including in the Church. Now we must get on our knees and repent.

xii *'High-Energy Impact': Roy Halladay was flying 'aggressively' before plan crash*, by Joe Giglio; November 8, 2017 at www.nj.com Author's Note: Leading your home like Christ is much manlier than flying an expensive light plane with wild maneuvers at very low altitude. A man of God practices calculated risk. He does not fear danger, but he is not reckless with life either.

xiii This is not to suggest that a woman only should submit when her man is leading her well. She owes her reverence and submission to her man even when he is doing a poor job, or an average one. A wife respects his headship position simply because he is her husband. Not because he is doing great, or has earned it. It is due to him because of his position.

xiv You will notice it is the man's face God covered by nature with a beard. The woman's face may have light tiny hairs, but God through nature made her face uncovered, so that all could see it. The woman is clearly the vessel of the beauty of God's salvation. Man is the captain. He is not built to show off beauty to the world. He shows strength and

knowledge.

^{xv} *Effects of Music on the Mind*: at www.psychologie.com

The Surprising Science behind what Music does to our Brains at www.fastcompany.com
Sex, violence, & rock n' roll: Longitudinal effects of music on aggression, sex, and prosocial behavior during adolescence, by Sarah M. Coyne Laura M. Padilla-Walker at www.sciencedirect.com

Does Rap Put Teens at Risk? Study: Association Found Between Video Viewing Time and Risky Behaviors, by Sid Kirchheimer at www.webmd.com

Does Watching TV Damage Character, by B. Fitzpatrick; July, 2007 at www.humanevents.com

“The National Cultural Values Survey reveals a striking correlation between greater exposure to television and permissive moral views. Heavy television viewers (four hours or more per evening) are less committed to character virtues like honesty and charity, and more permissive about sex, abortion and homosexuality.”

The attitude of today's youth are affected by television programs; March, 2015 at www.ukessyas.com

“In a nutshell, television programs do affect the attitude of youth's today as it enhances negative social development amongst youths, which may lead to aggressive or violent behavior, and they tend to affect self development and self esteem.”

^{xvi} Since I teach English, including literature, I make a point of addressing this point to my students. Most of the literature the past 200+ years is pseudo-Christian at best, and satanically Humanist at worse. It may be necessary in the course of studying history or understanding human thought to spend time with it, but we should not as Christians view it as good food and drink. Rather, we need to examine from the angle of the Christian mind, the mind of Christ, and be able to see clearly where it drifts from the Word of God. Sometimes this is obvious and sometimes not so. When I go over stories or poetry with my students, I also bring in a short lesson on what the Bible communicates on the same themes, and often provide many Scriptures to reveal this. On a writing assignment, I often ask them to briefly come at the story's theme from a biblical perspective, or to offer biblical advice on the situation. I also make note of the authors who were nonbelieving or grossly immoral, and note that their desired lifestyle certainly affected their unbelief and the values expressed in the story. I have also specifically responded to an author's or literary work's attack on God or the Bible, providing some strong apologetics for my students, so they can see such common and arrogant attacks have an answer. I do not recommend treating literature as innocent. It is not. Examine it with the mind of Christ and the Holy Bible.

^{xvii} *The NBA is teaming up with LGBT Entrepreneurs, and that's good business for both*, by Benjamin Snyder, April 28, 2017 at www.cnn.com

23 Major League Baseball Teams to Promote Homosexuality at 'LGBT Pride' Nights, by Michael W. Chapman; May 11, 2018 at www.cnn.com

NFL sides with 'gay' agenda over Christians 'Policies emphasize tolerance and inclusiveness', by Cheryl Chumley; March 21, 2016 www.wnd.com

^{xviii} *Welcome to the Gay Agenda Reeducation Camp*, by Jeff Crouere; May 19, 2014 at www.christianpost.com

“He had the audacity to object to ESPN promoting gay football player Michael Sam and his boyfriend. The network hyped the 7th round selection of Sam by the St. Louis Rams and showed him kissing his boyfriend in celebration after the pick. Of course, the other 7th round selections were ignored by ESPN, who decided to focus on Sam only due to his sexual orientation.”

ESPN Shows Gay Bowling Champion Kiss His Husband in Possible Sports First, by Sadie Gennis; Jan 3, 2013 at www.tvguide.com

^{xix} *Gay Awareness Super Bowl 50 Halftime Rainbow Show Reaches 114 Million people* By Landon Schott Feb 08, 2016 at www.gospelherald.com

“The moment I looked at the live TV screen I saw an entire football stadium designed in rainbow colors that reads, “Believe In Love.” Over 114 million people tuned in around the world to be made more aware and celebrate homosexuality from the largest single platform on the planet.”

^{xx} *Former NBA, NFL athletes estimate marijuana use among players is higher than 80%.*, by Scott Gleeson; April 20, 2018 at www.usatoday.com

^{xxi} *Straight WNBA star: Lesbian culture broke my spirit*, by Mark W. Sanchez; February 21, 2017 at nypost.com

“Me being heterosexual and straight, and being vocal in my identity as a straight woman was huge,” Wiggins said. “I would say 98 percent of the women in the WNBA are gay women. It was a conformist type of place.

“A Whole Stadium Full”: Lesbian Community at Women’s National Basketball Association Games, Susannah Dolance; Feb. 2005 at www.jstor.org

“Fantasizing a large lesbian presence enables lesbian and bisexual fans to actively and interpretively create lesbian community at the games. The women socialize and connect with lesbian and bisexual women, construct lesbian ownership of WNBA games, and define WNBA games as a unique space that is different from lesbian bars and other traditional “gay-only” spaces.”



Pines on Mt. Charleston, Nevada, in the snow

Chapter 2

A SUITABLE HELPER

*Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord.
For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of
the church; and He is the Savior of the body.
Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the
wives be to their own husbands in everything.*
(Ephesians 5:22-24)

Wives, submit to your own husbands, as is fitting in the Lord.
(Colossians 3:18)

Receiving the Mind of Christ

What the New Testament explains with clear instructions, and parallels to Christ and the Church, God reveals from the beginning of the Bible and of creation. The woman is created as a helpmate to man. She is his helper. The fact that this is tied in to creation and to our natures is why various cultures and religions all across the globe, who certainly were not Christian, also recognized the man as head of the woman, and woman as helper to man. It is written into creation.

What we learn in the New Testament is a truth that enriches this simple reality. This is the truth that man and wife, in their order as leader and helper, reflect the vessel which brings us salvation; the leadership and submission of Christ and the Church. When people see you, as a godly wife, they see a redeemed mankind, gentle hearted, accepting with peace the yoke of Christ and following Him. They see man, the rebel since Adam, submitting with joy on his face. They see the Church exalting her King in both word and deed, serving the Lord and serving the kingdom. That is what the wife is an image of.

She is an image of those things as she puts herself under her husband. She teaches us about salvation as she accepts the man's leadership without rebellion, honors him as lord, seeks to help him and nourish the righteous kingdom that he builds. Her relation to her husband will manifest truth. Her peace in submission, in contrast to rebellion, will be

beautiful and in her beauty provide a representation of the glorious Bride which comes down from heaven after the Savior returns. Her beauty is spiritual. It is that of the New Jerusalem.

Since we discussed the channel between the nature of the Trinity, the Church and marriage in the last chapter, I don't have to go back to the start to say that you are a picture of the Son of God. At least as it relates to the Trinity, you manifest that Person of the godhead and help people to believe in Jesus this way. As the Son is the shining of the Father, you are the shining of the man. You are his glory. (1 Corinthians 11:7) In a sense, I'd say you are the outward element of his inner truth and you make it known, in depth and radiance to all. Hebrews 1 powerfully introduces the Son's divinity, saying: "*Who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power.*" (vs. 3) This shows how the Son, coming from the very nature of God in eternity, is like the light from the sun, radiating truth, and also sustaining the creation of the Father, as the Son does the entire cosmos. In miniature, this applies to the wife, as she helps her husband in his goals and sustains his household through all the projects that she does at home. She always seeks his good. She seeks his benefit in this world. She upholds his kingdom.

There was an illustration given by Augustine about the Trinity. It's only an illustration, it's not dogma, but I believe it is truthful and appropriate here. Augustine said that the Trinity was like knowledge (the Father), the knowledge of knowledge (the Son) and the joy springing forth as God knows God (the Holy Spirit). As the spouse who manifests the Son, what does this mean? If knowledge is the actual truth itself, then knowledge of knowledge is sort of a reflective truth. A light shined on truth to reveal its facts and understand how it works. It is the teaching truth as it were. So as the mind reflects on the truth that is, great joy comes as it fully realizes that truth and puts it into practice. I know that sounds very philosophical, but actually it's what we do all the time in our mind. We have knowledge, reflect on that knowledge, and then achieve understanding, which brings joy, and naturally a full usefulness of that original knowledge. It is a picture of the human mind. This can be reflected in your life, in how you seek to understand who your husband is, understand what he desires, and help him apply it to life. Through your helping, others will see HIS self and his work. Therefore, you should have great desire to know what your man is about. You help make him known.

There is no shame, but honor in imitating the Son in relation to the Father. One of the most amazing passages about the Son's submission, in fact His Incarnation, is in Philippians 2. It reads:

*Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus,
who, being in the form of God,
did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made
Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant,
and coming in the likeness of men.
And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled
Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the
death of the cross.
Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the
name which is above every name,
that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in
heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth,
and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is
Lord, to the glory of God the Father.
(vss. 5-11)*

While this humility is to be imitated by all, it is especially relevant to point out here; for the Son was obedient to the Father, and in like manner the wife is obedient to her own husband. Christ did not reject submission. He embraced it and lived it. So must we corporately as a Church. So must the wife toward her husband. If we applied the modern feminist logic, we'd have to say that Jesus was some kind of a "doormat" since He was always doing the Father's will. He let the Father "walk all over Him." You see that's just what they say of the Christian wife. Yet we know that what Jesus did was righteous, was valuable beyond price and required great strength. We know that obedience is good.

Jesus expresses his obedience to the Father many times, especially in the Gospel of John. He says, "*I do nothing of Myself; but as My Father taught Me, I speak these things.*" (John 8:28)

Jesus even sums up his mission with these words in John 6:38: "*For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.*"

As noted in the previous chapter Jesus explains His relation to the Father and His relation to the Church, pointing out that we keep His commandments as He has kept his Father's commandments. (John 15:10) so His obedience models for the Church's obedience which models for the wife's obedience. It is a repeated pattern.

The book of Hebrews, in revealing Christ's superiority and the New Covenant's superiority, points to Christ's obedience as well. It is a reason for his exaltation and a reason for our salvation:

*though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things
which He suffered.*

And having been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him.

(Hebrews 5:8-9)

Just in case we wonder if the Son's secondary status to the Father is merely as He walks on this earth, we are given these startling words in 1 Corinthians 15: *Now when all things are made subject to Him, then the Son Himself will also be subject to Him who put all things under Him, that God may be all in all.* (vs. 28)

It seems even in the final kingdom, the Son is submissive to the Father, perhaps even in deeper ways than we are aware of now. It should be clear submission is not a dirty word. It is part of the amazing nature of the triune God who has sovereignty over all.

You see, despite the amazing truth and beauty of the wife's role, we live in an era when most will tell you to be ashamed to submit to your husband. They will say it is degrading, it's not "equal" or it's horrible for some other reason. We've entered such a gender-bent time that people think nothing of comparing your submission to being raped and your husband's leadership to Nazi oppression. How twisted is that?

Yet tell me what is shameful about the Church desiring to help our Lord and serve Him. Tell me what is shameful about the Christian's desire to obey God, who is our King. What is wrong about the Son's being "*subject to*" the Father, or with the Son's obedience, obedience by the way which won us salvation. Is the Son akin to a victim because He always did the Father's will and is the Father akin to a Nazi because He sent His Son into creation? Is there something inherently unjust about the Father being primary and the Son being secondary? If we thought like a modernist or a rebel we would hate the idea of being put under someone. Yet if we embrace God, who both commands and lives submission, we also embrace being put under. It is a GOOD thing.

All things in life are not equal. Neither are the man and the woman, except in the sense that they are both creatures of God. In our role and position we're not equal. Our jobs are different. The man is primary and the head. The woman subject to him. If you remove much of the emotionalism that both the world and demonic rebellion throw into this truth, it's not very hard to understand. In terms of relationship, we are regularly put under someone else. We are all under God's authority. We are under the authority of the government and its laws. They'll even send in armed men to get you if you break their laws. How gentle is that? A man is under the authority of his employer at work and they certainly don't need to ask his permission for everything they tell him to do. Anyone who deals with customers at work, even if they are not under the customer's

authority, still puts themselves under them in the sense that they are there to please the customer, and make them feel good. Is any of that degrading? This present culture wants ONLY the woman's submission to her man (or to church elders) to sound unjust. Yet it willingly accepts the other kinds of submission. We should all recognize that inconsistency for what it is: the sign of a false worldview.

The Christian loves humility, even if it is hard. Even if the flesh continues to rebel, and must be mortified. We love it because it is how we were saved and what we were saved for. That is why as a wife, you will have to let go of the culture's false ideology; its false ideology about equality and its false ideology about female empowerment. You'll have to fully take on a Christian worldview, one founded in the Holy Bible and in natural law. Embrace the gifts that God has given you. Be obedient as Christ was obedient. In doing so, you will picture the beautiful Church. You will help reveal the Savior to many souls who need Him.

Into the Creation

*And the LORD God said, "It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him."
(Genesis 2:18)*

What is wonderful about being able to reveal the Savior to the world, is the unique way that woman has been given to do it, one which is written into her body and soul: to be a helper. This is not merely an assigned role, such as the boss saying – now lady, could you please help that guy over there. Rather the Designer of creation made her to be a helper and placed it in her nature. THEN He gave her the role. This is true in a different way of men, as they are also designed for their role as priest and leader. Women are uniquely shaped for the sake of man, and to aid him.

All we really need to know this truth is the Word of God, which tells us in Genesis 2:18 that Eve was made to be a helper for Adam. Not JUST to help in general, which of course she is gifted at. But to help Adam specifically. She is designed to help her husband. While we know this from the Bible, we can also look and see in nature a confirmation of this. We can see her more nurturing character compared to man. We can see her more tender character. We can see her greater awareness and concern for people than man, who is more often concerned with action and determining truth. A woman notices people and how they are. She is moved by their faces. She is in tune to their emotions. Even when a little girl picks up a toy truck, which is a boy's toy, she will then be interested in the people in the truck, or perhaps put little dolls there and take them places. It's not top priority to race the truck or crash it. It is more

interesting for her that it's a vehicle for people. A little girl is also more immediately thoughtful of others, without having to receive much instruction to be thoughtful. When our little girl was old enough to notice that I gave her a blessing every night, after I gave her the blessing she immediately thought of her baby sister, and pointed at her, to make sure I gave her a blessing too. She still does that. No one had to teach her. That consideration for people and desire to care of them may be a general trait, but it is part of what helps her in her role as a wife, and bonds her to her husband.

A woman's softness toward her man also shows she was uniquely made for him. The woman can find fulfillment in following her man's lead, and in being malleable to his strength. It enriches her. It makes her feel feminine. In contrast, most men would be ashamed to be led by their wife or to be dependent on her. They'd feel like a small child. It would not be manly. It goes against what manhood is all about. Yet a woman is not demeaned by her softness, but rather fulfilled by it, and often feels deep satisfaction this way. Even in places where the culture emphasizes female independence and women in the workforce, you will find a vast percentage of women, despite decades of brainwashing, still want a strong man. They don't want a weakling. They want strength. Some of them even have to beg their husbands to take the lead, because they have married a passive man. You can't take that away from a woman. You can't change her nature in a secular classroom. It is built into who she is and it is good.

A woman can find deep satisfaction in standing behind a good man and being his help in accomplishing his goals. She can almost effortlessly set aside some of her own desires to pursue aiding her man as an important goal. She takes pride in that. Knowing that she helped a good and a strong man achieve his kingdom. She was his nourishment. His encouragement. His counselor. Men don't really think like that, dear reader. I'm not saying they never want to do something kind for their wives or make them happy. Of course they do. Yet they don't find fulfillment in making it their pursuit to help their wife achieve her life goals and great accomplishments. Moreover, they wouldn't drop those things which are important to them to pursue that kind of assistant role. It is far beyond what a man desires to do. Yet a woman can find deep fulfillment in it, and despite our gender-bent age, many still do. They want to see their righteous man be great in the kingdom. They want to see him reach the top of that mountain. They will set aside their own things for him.

What is really amazing about that is that her design does not merely bless her husband, nor merely bless mankind through the family and through her helpful nature, but it signifies truth about the Almighty. It

makes it real right here on earth. That truth, primarily, is His mercy. His desire for man to be well. His aid he gives us in trouble. His patience and lovingkindness. God is ultimately authority over all there is, and He is absolutely sovereign. God submits to no one. Yet He also loves those He rules over. He forgives their sin. He patiently teaches them. When that divine mercy appears more immanently on earth, it is reflected in the submission of the woman, and her kindness. The sovereign God's mercy, in a sense, is the woman's submission. Just as it became Christ's submission to the Father when He took on the flesh. It is no surprise then, that the wife represents the result of that mercy as well: the Bride of Christ. The redeemed mankind. The Church. We have all been given life by His mercy.

Perhaps the greatest way a woman is designed to help a man, is through her childbearing. She will carry his children and nurture them. She will be the vessel for all future generations. She has an amazingly complex reproductive system and womb and is designed to undergo major changes in her biology when pregnant, and then shift back again once the child is delivered. She is brilliantly designed to receive the seed, bear and nurture it. The seed of Abraham was brought forth by the matriarchs, as they bore the ancestors of the Jewish people. The Savior was brought forth by woman as well. It may rub the wrong way people who preach female independence, but the most honored women in the Bible are honored for bearing children. Likewise, people who preach female power would be ashamed at Mary, who humbly accepted God's will for her and bore the Savior He'd placed within her. Mary was not made powerful, but because of her humility, great power came to the world and the redemption of man. Her humility empowered others, not herself. That's a real woman.

Years ago I heard about one of those beauty competitions. The winner happened to be a Filipina woman. They asked her a question as part of the competition that played upon her homeland. What do you think – they asked – when people typify your countrymen as being caregivers, or house maids or other service positions? Does it offend you? While many would have been tempted to answer that this was an unfair stereotype, the winner of the beauty competition said this: Actually, I am flattered that people think that way. Because it tells me that my countrymen are kind and like to help other people, and I think we areⁱ. We like to be kind to others. See, she saw the goodness and beauty in what others saw, not a demeaning put down. She saw the nobility. It made her proud of her country. I hope every child of the kingdom, every daughter of Sarah, would have a similar attitude. If the provoker asked – I hear you Christian women are known to be helpers of your men, and you stand behind them

– she could answer easily – That’s right. In our kingdom the women love to help their men and are warm and kind and meek. That’s the kind of kingdom we come from.

A Godly Woman is Beautiful

The kind of spirit and behavior I am describing is intimately linked to a woman’s beauty. It is a beauty which comes not from personal adornment or fleshy appeal, but rather from that inner person of the heart, a meek and gentle beauty which pleases God. It is a NATURAL beauty – not found in outward adornment – and it is SPIRITUAL beauty – not found in being puffed up but in being submissive.

The Spirit teaches in 1 Peter 3:

Wives, likewise, be submissive to your own husbands, that even if some do not obey the word, they, without a word, may be won by the conduct of their wives, when they observe your chaste conduct accompanied by fear. Do not let your adornment be merely outward—arranging the hair, wearing gold, or putting on fine apparel—rather let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God. For in this manner, in former times, the holy women who trusted in God also adorned themselves, being submissive to their own husbands, as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, whose daughters you are if you do good and are not afraid with any terror.
(vss. 1-6)

This single passage gives the wife important instructions, and it also reveals great truth to us. Before dealing with the instructions it gives, let me first mention its truths. One is that by a wife behaving gently and obediently, an ungodly husband can come to know Jesus and to know virtue. This is not through his wife’s many words. It’s not through his wife incessantly trying to correct him. It is through her quiet and meek behavior. She provides a guide for him “*without a word.*” (vs. 1) Another important revelation is that her Christ-like nature, her inner adornment, is a unique kind of beauty. A beauty which comes from a gentle heart and is “*incorruptible.*” (vs. 4) This is the beauty which pleases God. The modern western world wants the woman to have the “unstoppable ego of the modern feminist” or the “insatiable sensuality of the gyrating diva.” God wants the woman to have the incorruptible beauty of a gentle spirit.

This simple passage also reveals that the godly woman is connected through time to the saints of old. Peter takes us back nearly 2,000 years before his own time. The wife's meekness and submission is compared to that of Sarah, the matriarch of Israel, who honored her husband Abraham by calling him "lord." (vs. 6) The word lord in Greek is *kyrios*, a title for someone who is above you in rank or for whom you are serving at the moment. It is ALSO the same word used for God many times in the Greek New Testament and the Septuagint. So just as Ephesians and Colossians compare the wife's submission to the Church's submission to Christ, this passage compares it to submission to God. That submission nurtures a heart which is gentle and beautiful. When the wife does her role, she is called a daughter of Sarah. She continues in the line of the saints. She will pass that line on to her daughters. This reflects the character of the entire Church.

It is amazing the unity of the Bible. We see here that just as our salvation is linked to the truths of Genesis, the truths of creation and the fall, so is the marital relationship linked through time and throughout the Bible. Here, just as in the New Covenant in general. Believers are children of the Jewish patriarchs, even if they are Gentile. The family of God is called "sons of Abraham." (Galatians 3:7) The meek submissive women are called daughters of Sarah. God's truth, as if coming from a distant star, shines brighter and brighter as revelation unfolds. Yet it never ceases being truth. It is eternal.

Modesty is Beautiful

in like manner also, that the women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with propriety and moderation, not with braided hair or gold or pearls or costly clothing, but, which is proper for women professing godliness, with good works.

(1 Timothy 2:9-10)

It is amazing how consistent God's truths are. Just as the previous passage we looked at calls the woman to be modest, and does so in the context of submission, 1 Timothy 2 also calls her to be modest, and follows this immediately with a passage about her silence and submission in the Church. There is surely a deep connection between submission and a woman's true beauty, which comes from the heart, and not from adornment. This passage also parallels Peter's teaching in that it calls a woman's spiritual virtue adornment. Peter calls it beauty. We should understand that trying to show off the flesh or cover oneself with ornaments will only cover up a woman's true beauty, not reveal it. A

woman's true beauty is revealed by the Holy Spirit. As she walks in faith. We are told it comes from "*propriety and moderation*" (vs. 9) rather than outward adornment, and reflects the "*godliness*" of a virtuous woman. (vs. 10)

This is essential for women to know. This is especially true in a culture where women believe they need to cover up their face with a mask, hang shiny metal from their ears, dye their hair, get silicon injected into their body parts and shave their body hair to look like a plastic doll or an infant.ⁱⁱ In a culture where they believe these things are mandatory. None of this can ever make a woman look beautiful. None of it. If anything, it tends to cover up inner spiritual beauty. Not that it's impossible to have inner beauty if you are a slave to these things, but they kind of act like static on the TV screen; they disturb and mutilate the image. They also tend to lean the heart away from the Lord, as they are often motivated by insecurity or vanity. They take time, attention, study, money and more, and often simply feed the ego or calm irrational fears a woman has. A woman is not beautiful for any of those things. She is beautiful in her heart, and in her meek submission.

Few women today will hear clear instructions on modesty from their fathers, pastors or husbands. When they hear teaching about it, usually the teaching will involve a very subjective idea of modesty, and simply say: do what feels right for you. This leaves women (and to a lesser extent men) with no clear idea of how to express the virtue of modesty. We need clear instructions. As I mention in the previous chapter in helping men set these standards for their home, a woman's modesty is reflected in covering up the flesh. The world does not need to see your legs, your butt, your boobs, your crotch. It doesn't need to see every curve of your figure through tight clothing. Modesty conceals those things, and leaves them for the husband to see. Modesty also avoids adornment, and trying to call attention to oneself. Scripture gives a few examples, but our leaders need to set some clear rules on this as well. When they don't we see the results – nearly anything goes. I don't know why a daughter of God, a daughter of Sarah, would think that the Holy Spirit needs any help in expressing beauty through her. The Holy Spirit does not need your flesh drawing attraction to you. He does not need you to plaster a mask on your face every morning. He does not need shiny things on your body or an ever changing hair style. When you are reliant on God and pursuing holiness, you will see precisely what I am talking about. And I think you know, if you already are the kind of woman who needs to use these beauty products, that you are in bondage to them. You are dependent. Your inner being is tied to odd beauty rituals your culture has taught you. Set yourself free, daughters of Sarah. The Holy Spirit doesn't need any of that

help. If you need a clear example of what I mean, I can again recommend looking at the traditional Mennonite and Amish standards of modesty. They do an awesome job. I have seen good examples in other cultures as well, including traditional Chinese cultureⁱⁱⁱ, Andean culture and orthodox Jewish culture.^{iv} As we are Christians, however, I believe the best examples come from our faith, and with most of the Church walking around nude in this day, that pretty much leaves the Anabaptists to lead the way.

Another divine truth that ties in to modesty is the biblical head covering. Strictly speaking, it is taught as a symbol of the man's headship, and not as an element of modesty. Yet being what it is, it neatly intertwines its meaning with the virtuous expression of modesty. The teaching from 1 Corinthians 11 calls for the woman to cover her head during worship. Countless Christian communities in history have practiced covering the head all the time, simply out of its meaning and usefulness. This was the norm for almost 2,000 years of Church history^v, until the mid-20th century, when head coverings were dropped almost entirely. In our home my wife covers her head during home worship and congregational worship. However, you will find traditional communities to this day in which the women are covered throughout the day.

The biblical instructions make it clear the meaning of this covering:

Every man praying or prophesying, having his head covered, dishonors his head.

But every woman who prays or prophesies with her head uncovered dishonors her head, for that is one and the same as if her head were shaved.

For if a woman is not covered, let her also be shorn. But if it is shameful for a woman to be shorn or shaved, let her be covered.

For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, since he is the image and glory of God; but woman is the glory of man.

For man is not from woman, but woman from man.

Nor was man created for the woman, but woman for the man.

For this reason the woman ought to have a symbol of authority on her head, because of the angels.

(1 Corinthians 11:4-10)

The head covering, according to God's word, reflects man's authority over her. That is why she would dishonor her head if she prayed or prophesied without it. She would be brazenly declaring that she has no authority. In reflecting authority, the head covering also communicates the creation order; woman came from man, not man from woman. (vs. 8)

It communicates her purpose as helpmate, as she was created for man, not the other way around. (vs. 9) What truths will infuriate the modern, western feminist should fill up the Christian with warmth and joy. We should want to live these truths out. One simple article of apparel communicates multiple divine truths, the creation order and a picture of salvation. The pagan world may scream and shout at this truth. You and I rejoice.

This simple truth is why the head covering is also appropriate in modesty, to be worn all the time. Scripture may not mandate that, but it follows along biblical reasoning. If modesty at least in part reflects woman's submission to man, and if the head covering reflects the man's authority also, then it fits naturally with the discipline of modesty, which we practice every day. It is also practical, as it allows the woman to always be covered any time she wishes to pray or worship. If she did not wear it throughout the day, she could find herself uncovered during worship if she ever worshipped spontaneously. I have heard various Anabaptists give this very same explanation.

Sadly, it will be other cultures and religions that teach the modern West about modesty, and mostly not Christians who do so. Christians SHOULD be leading society in this. They are not. What we see instead is that other cultures, mostly Muslims, come in and establish their own modesty standards. Non-Muslim westerners then are coerced into respecting their standard. Beaches in Europe are already banning skimpy bathing suits to respect the people who command respect: Muslims. Westerners living in or near Muslim communities are being instructed to cover up their bodies out of "respect." It is awfully sad to see westerners and Christians having to take a lesson from another religion, rather than from God and their own teachers, but if you won't listen to reason God is going to teach you a lesson either way. If you won't submit to God, He will bring down the hammer, and you will HAVE to submit to something, whether you like it or not. We all have to submit. That's a point to remember the next time you see Muslim dressed modestly with their head scarf, and Christians dressed with sensuality, and half naked. God will teach his people a lesson, and he will teach that lesson through aliens.

To address the men for a moment upon the virtue of modesty, remember that you should not be encouraging your wife to be a sensual creature. You should be encouraging her to be a spiritual one. This includes not only setting godly standards – and in the home you are the one to set them – but also not pressuring her in the wrong direction. If you demand your wife be a sensual, fashionable, glitzy creature, you are not loving her for whom she is. You are not KNOWING her for whom she is. You're trying to make her another woman. True intimacy is in knowledge.

This is true of emotional bonding, and is also true of physical intimacy and the marriage bed. Truly uniting with your wife means truly knowing her. You don't do that by rejecting whom she is naturally and making her look like a department store manikin. You nurture the humble heart. You feed her with the Word. You lead her in a simple, natural and plain appearance. It is this simple appearance that sacramentally expresses the humble heart. Through the humble heart it sacramentally expresses Christ's humility, incarnation and salvation. You must nurture her inner person. Not shave her, show off the flesh and adorn her like the world. She is a picture of the mercy of God.

Submission in practice

We've talked a while about modesty, which communicates submission. We've looked at the instructions for submission. There is still an obvious question of how to practically live it. How do we instill it on the heart? How do we speak and act according to submission? I will go into some practical advice here, but not at great detail. My wife could tell the women more about this, and in general, it is good to receive teaching and example on womanhood from other women. You probably won't hear that at your church's women's ministry, since many churches have abandoned this truth. You won't hear it at the average conference. Yet one of the biggest roles in ministry that women have is toward each other, especially in helping the younger women learn the love and submission a wife needs to have.

One way that I would explain submission, is that it stems from a heart attitude of saying "yes." It is the desire to do the will of the one we are subject to. Our heart attitude is yes and our word should be yes. This is true to the point it is good to avoid the word no, at least as much as possible. If a "no" literally is necessary, you will find there are other, less direct and very respectful ways to communicate the same thing. Focus on yes, and on your deep desire to help. In Japanese culture, this is almost standard, not just for women, but in the culture in general. Saying "no" is rigorously avoided, and the truth is you will rarely hear it there. They understand the conflict it can cause. They also see the superiority of the other way. This should epitomize the woman's way of speaking to her husband, and is a part of the nature of femininity.

The Son always seeks to do the will of the Father, as we saw before. Spiritually, this is in part where the woman's yes comes from. The woman manifests the Son's coming to do the Father's will. She manifests His denial of His own will that He puts aside to do the Father's will. (Luke 22:42) She manifests His divine submission. You might say it is the

uniting of one's own will together with the will of the other. Similarly, the Church always seeks to do the will of Christ. Believers put aside their personal desires for the path of the Lord which is the way, the truth and the life. The wife's yes to her husband is the Church's yes to the Savior, in whom we believe and obey, and seek to honor forever. Her yes in accepting marriage is our yes in receiving the Savior. Her yes in obeying him is our yes as we obey the Lord, being conformed to His image, His character and will.

This culture may have swum far from giving honor to authorities, but it's still within the reach of our minds to know how to. In a past era, it would be natural in the West to show high honor to a king, as it would be in other cultures. You reverence the king. You listen to Him. You admire that you as a people are represented by this figure. In order to do this, all you do is humble yourself. You lower yourself beneath his command. Most cultures have recognized that it is natural before a king to lower ourselves to our knees, as this expression makes visible how we humble ourselves spiritually. People knelt before kings as well as other sovereigns over them for thousands of years. It instills in the mind and soul what our position is. If the husband is compared to Christ in the marriage, he is the king that his wife needs to humble herself before. As the husband is even called "lord" by the matriarch Sarah, so the husband is viewed as the sovereign, the master of the home, picturing God. A wife should learn awe and respect for her husband, and learn the peace that exists in lowering herself.

While I hate to use this example, imagine that your favorite star was coming over for dinner tonight. Now I don't think Christians should worship pop stars and the like, but sadly many do. They are quite familiar with the excitement, admiration and downright worship of pop superstars. Imagine one of them was coming to dinner. A famous singer. A sports god. A movie star. How would you treat them when they showed up? Perhaps not exactly as a king, since they do not have real authority, but you would certainly reverence them, and show them great attention. You would want to PLEASE them. You'd want them to be happy in your home and have a good time. You'd ask them questions. You'd listen to their stories and laugh at their jokes. Well, you probably don't have a pop star coming over for dinner (and I think that's best anyway). You DO have your husband and you should learn to reverence him in a similar way. You show him the attention. You listen to him. You seek that he is pleased. You treat him wonderfully and ask his advice, thoughts or opinions. You certainly don't try to talk over him. Put him down. Or ignore him. You reverence your husband like a king.

In a similar vein, you can think of your attitude toward a job that you

really want to have. You want your employer to know how much you desire to be part of their team. You want them to know how much you can help them. In fact, how your individual gifts and experience can help them. You want them to know you are faithful, reliable and work diligently to serve them. You seek to know what they're all about. You certainly don't do the opposite when you want a job. You don't act apathetic toward it. You don't act like you don't want to help. You don't act like you don't want to serve the boss. You don't act like a lazy, irresponsible disrespectful worker. You show you want the job and you are ready to work. You show you respect your employers. Everyone knows this. Now the key is, you learn to do that for your husband. You show him you're your enthusiasm and desire to help him. That's where it is MORE important.

Alternatives to no

A woman could reasonably ask – well, if I am to live out the yes, and reject the no, what can I do if I truly NEED to say no. What if he asks me something I am unable to do? What if he demands I do something evil? While many people ask these questions, the answer is surprisingly simple, and I think if you envision the same situation in a non-home environment, you'll think of some good examples yourself. If your husband needs a task done, and you are immediately very busy, there is no need for a no. You can simply say – I am sorry, I am doing something right now, can it please wait? If what you are doing is important, any reasonable man would wait. If what he needs you to do is high priority, you may have to stop and help him anyway, since it is his will. We do the exact same things on the job all the time. In regards to evil, and this really doesn't come up very often, it is very possible to say – I am sorry, I cannot do that since it is against the Lord and I have to obey God. There is actually no need for a no, as you can decline in that way quite well. I believe all my employers have found me an easy person to deal with. I have respected them as authorities. However, I have had employers tell me I cannot evangelize, or tell me I cannot share the Word of God in other ways. I simply tell them – I'm sorry, I cannot comply because it would go against my faith and conscience. I've said that more than a few times. You will rarely hear anyone expound on biblical submission without recognizing the ability to reject a command if it is intrinsically evil. A few people do have such an idea of obedience, but I haven't met any. That said, it has to be recognized that this is only for things which are in themselves evil. You do not reject your husband's leadership simply because you don't think it is the best choice, or because his idea might

not work. You may offer sincere and respectful counsel, but if you don't like his decision, you have to live with it. This happens all the time on the job. It happens in the home as well.

It is interesting to look at some ways that you can offer advice without trying to tell your lord what to do. One of the simplest – and I'm basing this on my own wife who is wonderful in her attitude – is to ask a question. Do you think this would be a good idea? Do you think that would be a good idea? Communicating in terms of questions offers many ideas without presuming to command one who is above you. Words like – I think – or I feel – also qualify a statement, to show it is counsel and not command. I realize that many women already know this, but the problem currently is that most have been taught this does not apply at home. They may be quite softly spoken with a superior at work, but they will not or cannot apply this in the home. Think of your words, Christian women. Think of where they come from. First remember your heart, one of humility and quiet submission; the same kind Christ showed when He became man. Then your attitude, one you show toward the king of the land. Finally choose your words, ones that are gentle and pure, thoughtful and kind. You will not be a picture of the Church loving Christ if you tell the Christ figure what to do or if you put him down. You will be a picture of the Church loving Christ when you adore the Christ figure and speak with reverence.

Silence

It's true some women naturally may have a strong personality, and have never learned to show submission, especially not towards a man. When these women are paired up with men who are quieter by nature, they tend to often take over, without even trying or being conscious of it. You can end up with an upside down relationship. The woman will be speaking. The man generally quiet. The woman leading the conversation, the man just piping in, and usually deferring to her. It's hard to miss.

As a wife, you can correct this tendency as well, without too much trouble. Regardless of the natural bent of anyone's personality, if we truly desire to serve the Lord, He will shape us into a godly form. In this case, a woman who tends to be louder and speak first should learn the virtue of silence. She should hold her tongue when there is not a clear reason to speak. She can also practice asking her husband his thoughts or direction. Then be quiet. She can openly let him know he's in charge. If you think you've crossed the line, and talked over your husband, don't be afraid to apologize. He may not know exactly where the line is, and by apologizing if you've stepped over it, he can see it more clearly as well.

You may not be able to convince a passive man to be more active, especially not from a place of submission, but you can do your part. This is in not being obtrusive with your voice, and frequently deferring to him. Try asking him “May I” questions, which is a clear way to defer to his authority. It is also a gentle way of letting him take the lead, without bluntly telling him to. Over time in seeing your gentle submission, he will be encouraged to take the lead on his own more often. When he sees his wife embracing the helper role repeatedly, and asking him what his decision is, it will likely click in his head that he is the one to make the decisions. He will see clearly that’s his territory.

The Assistant

Another simple way to get at it is to understand the helper role as similar to other assistant positions. True, it’s not exactly the same and has its differences, but some key points are still the same; you want to help your husband in his life, his growth and his home. You want to help him rule. You can ask yourself some of the same questions you would in a business or corporate environment. How can my skills help this person? How can I assist their projects? Are there any projects of my own that will help him accomplish his overall goals? Your own projects may not be independent in the absolute sense, as they are still under his headship, but on a day to day management level they are yours, so some of what you already know and do might become a useful project under his domain. Ask your husband his idea of how you can help him, in the home and as a wife. Pass your own ideas past him for approval. I think you will find, far from the demeaning and useless activity the feminist world has told you it is, being a wife is full of activity, value and requires much thoughtful insight. It deserves to be honored highly. We speak a lot of the wife picturing Messiah or picturing the Church, but we can also compare her to a type of Messiah in the Torah; that is Joseph. Joseph, like Christ, was kind of the ultimate assistant. He assisted his father Jacob. He assisted Potiphar and later Pharaoh. Even while in prison for a crime he did not commit, Joseph informally assisted the other prisoners by interpreting their dreams. In serving others, he was highly lifted up, much like Yeshua would be over 1,500 years later. His example is full of insights.

Expect your husband to take some time in learning to be your head. This is a project for both of you. It does not happen overnight. Some men will tend to be apathetic and give you little leadership at all. This is especially true in a culture that denies or waters down their leadership. Wives in this situation often want to practically beg their husbands to lead, or tell them to lead in some non-commanding way. It can be a

challenge, but give him time to learn. You cannot boss someone into being the boss. Perhaps give him a book to read, and then set the example of the gentle wife yourself, so that he will see you are malleable to his hands. Other husbands are the opposite, and may take command authority to a totalitarian level, or try to treat all decision making as requiring direct command. This can end up with a fairly mechanical form of headship, which gives your own needs, wants and insights little value. A man like this needs to learn to care about the people he governs, not just about the governance itself. He should gain this insight over time, through the Holy Scriptures, through more mature men at his church. Be patient, and let him see the good path. It is not your place to correct him, but you can gently let him know your needs and your willingness to offer counsel to his decisions. Men don't like to be wrong. They think they have kind of a "papal infallibility" thing going on. The answer is not to start pointing out where they are wrong, but to show him meekly the other way, and let him learn from men in the church. Your meekness can help him greatly in his own spiritual growth, as while a man is not a woman, nor is meant to be, a meek heart is what everyone needs before God. Show him that image, and give him that experience of meekness. It will help him in his own submission to God and to authorities. If you want your man to be humble before God, you need to be humble before your man.

Answer to false charges

One of the many often repeated fallacies against this biblical and natural order is that a woman practicing her submission is simply going to be abused. Her submission will make her a victim. To begin with, in this day and age, "abuse" means almost nothing, as people use this term for the occasional harsh word and condescending speech. But if we assume this word to mean that a husband will sadistically torment and treat his wife like a punching bag, then this charge is simply not true. There may be cruel husbands out there, as there are cruel wives, but that in no way negates the husband's rightful authority.

The easiest way to show the falsehood in the feminist logic is simply to see if it applies to other authority structures. Test that reasoning broadly. Does the fact that some parents inhumanly treat their children mean that children should not obey their parents? Of course not. Does the fact that governments ALL behave with some injustice, and a few have been genocidal, mean that we don't need to obey the law of the land? No. That would be a laughable idea. We all accept that we need to obey the law. Does the fact that some employers unfairly treat their employees mean that I don't need to do what my boss tells me at work? Of course it doesn't.

No one would accept that logic. Therefore, if we reject this line of reasoning for other authority structures, we need to reject it for husbands and wives as well. A potential for injustice by a superior does not mean we reject our submissive role.

I haven't done any studies, but I will tell you I believe the opposite is true. Not only does submission not turn an authority into a cruel sadistic tyrant, but rather it makes it LESS likely that the authority will lose their temper or lash out. In fact, 1 Peter 3, which is the perfect inerrant Word of God, says that a woman's silence will HELP the man to know the truth, not hinder him. Likewise, a woman who admires her man, speaks gently to him and does her best to help him, will be met with a man who is more humane toward her. Even when it comes to men who lean toward losing their temper, they are less likely to lose it when you behave like a Christian wife around them. This truth has been taught since the mother of Augustine, Monica taught it to the wives in her town, and they saw their husbands were more peaceable. You don't provoke an angry bull. You treat it gently, and with love. Do you do that with your husbands? Do you quietly support and encourage them and do their will? Or do you provoke them? Yell at them? Try to be better?

Men who lose their temper, or even those who behave very cruelly, don't do it because they read the Bible and interpreted it that way. They do it because of their own wrong urges, and sinful choices. Provoking them won't change a thing. Moreover, when the secularist attacks Christian marriage and says this will lead to sadistic husbands, all they are saying is that they love the law of God and they want husbands to obey the law of God. They're saying cruelty is wrong. That's great. We ALL should want to uphold God's law. But we don't just pick and choose what we want of the law of God. We accept all of God's way for us. We accept that the husband should love his wife and treat her with understanding. We also accept that the wife submits to her husband as to the Lord. We can't have one without the other.^{vi} We can't accept – you shall not steal – and then reject – you shall not murder. The person who wants a husband to be just and kind should realize they are standing up for God's law, and then ask themselves this: why don't I accept God Himself, and everything else that He teaches too? Imagine that. For righteousness comes from God. It does not come from man. All of His law is a wellspring of life.

In fact not only does a godly woman submitting not create violence, the opposite is true. Taking the woman out of her natural place of submission and in the home creates much more violence. Encouraging the woman toward imitating the male does this. Number one, since this has been going on in the West there has been an exponential incredible increase in female violence.^{vii} This increase even includes an increase in murder by

women.^{viii} There has been an incredible increase in violence BY women TOWARD men.^{ix} On top of that, shoveling the women toward independence has ended countless marriages and left many children without a stable home or a father, something in itself which increases violence in society in general.^x It has left untrained, unstable and angry thugs on the street in abundance. It's left other men confused, lost, drug-addled and suicidal. These are young men who needed the leading of a father, and the nurturing of a mother. Instead, they got no father, an independent unnurturing mother and a promise that marriage doesn't really matter. It's been worse than a dirty bomb on society. Demeaning the virtue of a woman's submission has not brought the woman, or anyone else, more peace. It has split the atom, as it were, and burnt things to the ground. It has taken things out of their natural order. Violence is greater, by women, toward women and on the street. That is to say nothing of the increase in abortion that has gone hand in hand with female independence.^{xi} There is a reason God gives us His way. It is not arbitrary. The woman's submission in marriage is a healing balm on all society.

It's not hard to fathom that there is much peace when two people are not always vying for authority. It is an end to all warfare. As I say elsewhere here, the "war of the sexes" is a societal fable. God made us for peace^{xii}. In my own experience, over about nine years of marriage and less than a year of meeting before marriage, we have raised our voices to each other a literal handful of times (not counting all the times we yell across the house because we don't want to get up and go into the other room). A mere handful of times. Of those mere handful not one of them lasted more than briefly, briefly meaning a few minutes of upset. If I thought she had been disrespectful to me in raising her voice, I corrected her on that and she apologized. That's a mere handful of times in all those years. That doesn't happen because she or I have perfect personalities. It doesn't happen because we had great ideas for our marriage or a load of common interests or because we never have any bad days. Far from it. It happens because we do things God's way. God's way is life and peace. People in marriage do not need to be fighting for power, since there is already an authority structure in place. That kind of peace is what happens when BOTH husband and wife get down on their knees before God and submit to His authority. The husband does it to be a godly leader. The wife does it to be a submissive wife. They both do it to be obedient to God in all things and give their lives over to Him. It is HIS home. He can tell us what to do with it.

The last thing I'll say on the topic of warfare here is this: we all know what brought peace between man and God. What brought an end to the

enmity. It was an act of submission by the Son, taking on flesh to do the Father's will. In order to receive that peace we as believers do something very submissive as well; we repent, believe in the Savior and then lead a life in obedience to Him. Peace didn't come through the Son rejecting the Father's will. It does not come in our lives through shaking our fist any more at our Creator. It comes down on our knees. In repentance. In submission to God. If anyone ever tells you submission leads to cruelty remember that. Submission leads to peace.

Answer to Feminist Christians

I need to take the time to answer a few biblical attacks on what ought to be easily understood in Scripture. There are those who will try and turn the words of God on their head and say they mean something else other than headship and submission in marriage. Sadly, biblical attacks on marriage do not just come from obvious liberals, whom we know don't believe the Bible anyway, but also from people who in appearance are Bible Christians. It wasn't always that way, but the pressures of ministry have pushed them that way. The trends have. Churches, denominations and independent ministries have all felt they need to accept feminism in order to grow and be successful. So countless of them have disregarded biblical gender roles, as well as distinctions. After they disregard them, then they come up with some biblical arguments to justify their collapse.

Unless you want to radically change your methods of interpretation just to suit passages you don't like, then there is no reason to disregard what the Bible teaches on gender. If we use a consistent method of understanding, in contrast, we have to accept them. That's why, when you hear attacks on gender roles and distinctions from what look like Bible Christians, they always have to rely on soft arguments, or very bad ones. Rather than rely on clear instructional passages, they have to go look for potential exceptions. Rather than understand a word according to the common meaning of that word in its local context, they have to choose a rare usage of a word, or import something into the context that simply doesn't exist. Some of their methods in trying to escape from biblical gender roles are truly absurd as to be laughable. I would be embarrassed to have to make arguments like that myself. I think some of them are a bit embarrassed too, but they feel they have to, because their ministry demands it.

Before I defend the Holy Scriptures on this subject, let me just say this: if you feel you have to make a compromise in ministry, or anywhere else, don't try and claim it's not a compromise and then look for verses to justify it. Just admit openly that it was a compromise, and then try and fix

things in the future. Then you won't have to do it anymore. However, when you come up with bad biblical interpretation to justify your own compromise, you greatly mislead people. You make people think evil is good. You also make people think it's okay to read the Bible (or any text in the world for that matter) in a loopy-goopy, post-modern kind of way. You mess up their biblical understanding. You make it look like no one can know truth, or that language is not understandable. So stop it.

If we understand the Bible consistently, this topic is not a very ambiguous one. The Bible plainly calls the man the head over the wife. It even does so in parallel to the headship of God and the headship of Christ. (1 Corinthians 11:3) Therefore, the man has authority over his wife. If you try and claim the man's headship mentioned in this passage is a rare or unique kind of headship that has no authority, then to be fair, you'd also have to say God and Christ's headship is that rare and unique kind that carries no authority. Would that make sense? You see, in order to accept a feminist interpretation, you have to change the meaning of words where you see a man in authority over a woman, but then use the regular meaning of words the rest of the time. This inconsistency shows how bad the feminist interpretation is.

Likewise, the Bible plainly teaches that a woman is to submit to her husband in all things. Most of the time it uses the Greek word *hypotasso*, which is the same Greek word used many times for submission to God, submission to governing authorities and submission to masters (which applies today to employers). That word literally means: to put under, or to ordain under. In English it is commonly translated submit, be in submission to or be subject to. Therefore, if your logic is that *hypotasso* does NOT mean submit when it comes to a woman submitting to her man, then to apply that principle broadly, you'd also say that we don't need to submit to God, we don't need to obey the law and you don't need to do what your boss tells you at work. Do we say that? Of course not. If we are consistent with our understanding, the woman submits to her husband just as we submit to any authority.

Moreover, the passage about submitting in 1 Peter 3, which includes the importance of submitting to an ungodly husband, uses both *hypotasso* and also another word *hypakouo*, which most often is literally translated "obey." That is how almost all respected Bible versions translate *hypakouo* here: "*even as Sarah obeyed Abraham calling him lord.*" (1 Peter 3:6)

Where else do we see this Greek word for obey? We see it used for children obeying parents. We see it for man obeying God. We see it for natural forces obeying Jesus in His miracles. Therefore, if we read a text normally, and accept the common use of a word as read in its local

context, we understand that ALL these words really mean obey. Just as children obey parents and man obeys God, women obey their husbands. To deny this is to radically change your rules to suit the occasion. Changing our rules out of convenience is not how we understand language. It is not how we come to truth generally. And I think if you really consider it in your heart, you'll know it is not intellectually honest either. It is a deception.

Moreover, beyond the meaning of the words as read naturally, the context strongly supports that reading. The woman's submission, for example, is compared to the submission of the Church to Christ. Is Christ a true authority over the Church? Yes He is. Do we obey Him? Yes we do. The husband's headship is stated parallel to God over Christ and Christ over the Church. These are vertical relationships, so it follows that the husband's headship over the wife is also a vertical relationship. Sarah's obedience to Abraham is coupled with her calling him "lord," a word which is used for someone who has authority over you as well as for God, who is sovereign over all. So the words should be read according to their ordinary meaning, not some rare one. The context locks us into that. I would point out the same exact thing about other gender roles taught in the New Testament, such as the woman not having the role of teaching over men or leading men in the Church. These passages too are supported by both the meaning of the words and the local context surrounding them. An ordinary reader would have no problem with seeing that. Even unbelievers have no problem picking up the Bible and seeing that. We have to come up with very silly ways of reading language to claim they say anything different.

What those who wish to ignore gender roles typically do, as I've mentioned, is ignore the plain and clear instructions, and replace them with weak methods of understanding, or with very poor ones. For example, they try and insert a very rare meaning of the word, where it does not fit. Or they try and dig up an exception somewhere, and use that alleged exception to ignore the rule. You shouldn't have to do things like that. For example, feminists will claim that a wife and a husband submit to "one another" as a rare hammered flat usage of submission does legitimately exist. Yet this fails badly for multiple reasons. Number one, the vast majority of uses of submit – both the Greek word as well as Hebrew words translated the same – have to do with submitting to an authority above us or to a more powerful force. That is by far the main usage, so it's the one we go with unless there is clear reason to go with another. Moreover, they ignore the context, which as I've already pointed out makes it clear that this submission is like to Christ and to God. Why ignore this context unless you have an agenda?

Some point to the use of submitting to “*one another*” in Ephesians 5:21 to try and overthrow the clear vertical submission of wife to husband which follows^{xiii}. However, this would pit the Bible against itself. Truth does not contradict truth. The use of submit to one another is in the section still talking about how the congregation should treat one another. It actually ends that section, which included instructions on singing hymns and giving thanks to God, and naturally refers to the congregation’s attitude toward one another. Go back and read it yourself. Submit in that usage can be understood to mean putting the needs of others before your own needs. It can mean being kind and considerate. Yet this is in no contradiction with the teachings on authority which follow. Why should it be? One can be kind to people in general and think of their needs, yet at the same time hold authority and submit to authority. This is natural and we do it all the time. Just an hour ago I asked my wife where she wanted the flowers planted, she told me, and I planted them there. That has nothing to do with authority. I am the authority in the home. It is odd that feminists try and use this rare usage of submit to ignore the husband’s authority, yet do not use it to ignore the authority the Bible teaches that God, parents, our employers and governments have.

To further test this theory they have about the meaning of “submit” we could do this little experiment: Contact a feminized church near you. This would be the kind that disregards male headship and has either female preachers or pastors. Let them know you will be coming to their church next Sunday and will preach from their pulpit about patriarchy and male headship. Then see what they say. If they reject your plans, you can remind them that the Bible teaches us to submit to “one another” so they are way off base to refuse the patriarchy sermon you plan to give. They’ve got to submit to you just as you submit to them. Let’s see if that plan works. Or let’s see if they just interpret submit more literally and refuse to let you preach. You see, they respect authority when **THEY** are the ones who have it. They simply don’t want to respect the man’s.

Another very sad attempt to avoid women’s submission, both in marriage and elsewhere, is to scrounge up an alleged exception, and claim this means we don’t really have marital submission. I honestly don’t know why people bother making arguments like this. To begin with, it is clear to all of us that exceptions do not make rules go away. Exceptions are cases that appear at special times for unique reasons. It is not common practice to ignore Scriptural teaching because of them. In the case of marital submission, I don’t see that feminists even have a single exception. Sometimes they may go to Deborah (the poor woman gets misused incessantly), but with her they don’t even have an exception. There are no

signs that Deborah rejected her husband's leadership. Moreover, she is a civil leader in the Mosaic Covenant; she is not a wife in the New Covenant. There are no prohibitions on women civil leaders in the Mosaic Covenant, however, if men and women are doing their jobs, it will be a very rare situation, and it was at that time. She is the only female leader over Israel in 400 years of judges and many more centuries of kings for BOTH north and south, although Solomon shared a throne with his mother for a time. Either way, an extremely rare case of a female civil leader in Israel does not make plain instructions in the New Testament about wives go away. Why on earth would it?

Another even sadder argument you'll hear, is when feminists claim that Abraham listened to his wife Sarah regarding Hagar, (Genesis 21:9-14) so therefore the husband isn't really the authority in the home. Sometimes the wife is. You know, arguments like this truly demean the person making them. This is one of those I'd be embarrassed to make myself. A good leader regularly takes counsel of those under his authority and that should be obvious. Kings take counsel. Employers take counsel. Husbands take counsel. Sometimes you do what the person under you thinks is the best idea. In this case this is what Abraham did, with revelation from God showing him that Sarah was correct. History was made because of it. Yet there is no logic in the world that says taking a person's advice means you are not their authority. The Scripture plainly says the husbands ARE, so they are. Trying to point to Abraham taking Sarah's advice as an attempt to overthrow male headship ought to show all of us how bankrupt feminist doctrine is.

Since exceptions are the stock in trade of this and other forms of liberalism, it's worth taking the time to point out what a bad idea relying on exceptions is. That's especially true of Old Testament ones. If an exception really makes a rule go away, then just a few verses down the road from Deborah, we have Ja'el who practices deception in killing Sisera. (Judges 4:17-21) Can we use that as an excuse for lying? Can we ignore plain biblical teaching about honesty because of it? What about Phinehas, who practices vigilantism, and spears two sinners without even a trial? God even praises him for it. (Numbers 25:7-13) Can you and I kill sinners without a trial? Can we ignore rules about obeying government law in order to kill sinners ourselves? If we followed feminist logic we could do these things. How about Judah and Tamar, who practice incest, although from Judah's limited perspective it's only fornication? (Genesis 38:14-18) Does this example mean that we can ignore that incest and fornication are wrong? And what about those patriarchs giving their wives away? (Genesis 20:2) I hope no one uses that as a justification for wife swapping. What about Moses and murder?! (Exodus 2:11-12) Yet if we

followed the logic that attempts to ignore gender roles in the Bible, we would be forced to accept all these things and more. We would be forced to follow the exception and ignore the rule. Yet that would be irrational and evil. So I must emphasize what I have said from the beginning: if you use consistent methods of understanding the Bible from start to finish, you will HAVE TO accept biblical gender roles and distinctions. If you want to ignore them, you have to invent specialized rules just to suit the occasion. Yet that is not how we understand ANY language, even outside the Bible. It's not how we come to truth.

Magnify the King

The woman who respects what the Word of God teaches honors God. She may be in great conflict with her society which rejects it, but she is treasured by God, and pleasing to Him. The woman who rejects this teaching blasphemes the Almighty. (Titus 2:5) She spites God. There is in the woman's submission a teaching on the way that Christ saves the world, as well as a teaching on the creation itself. The woman's humbling herself beneath her man is a small picture of Christ lowering Himself to take on flesh and die for us. It is a picture of the Christian way, which is gentle, meek and humble. The woman in her submission fulfills a brilliant piece of her nature which God placed in her, and also sends peace into this world, starting with the peace she brings to her husband, and the peace that is there for her children and she builds the right moral order for society, which itself provides us stability and peace far into the future. We could not have righteous families without it. Therefore, we should give no heed to those who deny the woman's submissive position. That submission is true and beautiful.

I've provided a few of the biblical truths that marriage illustrates. It is a picture of salvation as well as the Trinity. I also find a similar truth in nature. I used to live in south China, and regularly saw the wonderful banyan tree, which grows in many warmer climates of the world. You see it often in parks, and sometimes along the side of roads, although the latter is a bad idea. It struck me that the tree's structure is a picture of man and woman in creation and in marriage. For the banyan tree does something very uncommon for a tree. After it has grown for a short time, small roots begin to hang down from the branches themselves. They hang in the air and grow slowly to the ground, and then become aerial roots, going from the earth to the branches of the tree providing nourishment. Over time, when a tree gets larger, the roots grow thicker, eventually in appearance like small trunks themselves, and help support the large branches as they grow far outward. I once saw a great banyan outside of

Yangshuo, China that spread out so far and had so many roots supporting it that you thought you were in a forest. The largest of such great trees is supposed to be in India. Thousands of people could fit under its shelter. I find the tree beautiful, and mysterious. It is also strong and sturdy, with thick branches growing out from the trunk. The tree sends forth its roots, and then the roots nourish and support the tree in its broad expanse.

The biology of the tree reminds me of the reality of man and woman. I don't think it's hard to see. The man is primary, as is the tree as it grows straight up from the ground. The woman is secondary, coming from man's own flesh, literally coming forth from his body, just as the roots grow down from the tree's branches. The woman grows and matures and helps her husband, just as the roots reach the ground and provide nutrients to the tree. The woman also helps maintain his whole kingdom and uphold it, just as the roots are able to grow strong, and support branches that spread almost straight out, branches that would surely fall with the weight without such extra support. The man and woman are distinct from each other, yet part of the same single vibrant being, as the tree is one, despite the roots uniqueness. Man and wife are one.

I hope Christian women can realize their beautiful role is not meager, but it is secondary. It is not weak, but it is under someone else. I hope they can also see the goodness and peace in helping and strengthening their man, nourishing him, uplifting his kingdom so it does not fall. I hope they know joy in nourishing him and in turn grow strong from his strength. Familial peace and societal peace depend on it. So does psychological stability. So does obedience to God. This unholy culture will tell you being second to your man makes you nothing, when in actuality it reaches down through the generations and saves lives in each one. Your humility saves lives. Looking up to the one above you isn't degrading. It is the mind of Christ.

*And Adam said:
“This is now bone of my bones
And flesh of my flesh;
She shall be called Woman,
Because she was taken out of Man.”
(Genesis 2:23)*

ⁱ Having lived overseas for 12 years of my life, I can say that Filipinos are the warmest, kindest and most caring people you will meet. I’m not just saying that to be nice. I always love to meet Filipinos for that reason. They also sing universally well, and have many top pool players.

ⁱⁱ It’s a silly cultural habit, when you think about it. And it’s anti-natural. Women spend on average \$10,000 dollars on razors and shaving products in their lifetime: *Razors and Blades for Shaving: Do Women Pay More?* by Anu Hastings; October 18, 2016 at www.indix.com

ⁱⁱⁱ When I stayed in small villages in China, the local women wore long robes, which were quite modest and feminine. When they needed to do some work in the nearby rice field, which are wet and swampy, they simply rolled up the bottoms slightly as needed. When they were done’ they naturally lowered them. This makes sense as modesty, and as making necessary accommodations within reason. It seems unbelievers have more sense on this than many Christians. Shame on the Church.

^{iv} *Dressing like a Jew! Jewish Modesty Laws! Tzniut, . . .* by Rabbi Asher Mez; Dec. 30, 2008 at www.youtube.com

^v *Head Coverings Through the Centuries* at www.scrollpublishing.com

Note: I highly recommend reading this entire article, which comes with many pictures from art, archaeology and modern photography to document the use of head coverings by Christians through the ages.

^{vi} We have heard an endless parade of people try and reinterpret Ephesians 5 so that a woman doesn’t REALLY have to submit to her husband. How many have we heard reinterpret the same chapter so that a husband doesn’t really have to love his wife? Not many. I wonder why.

vii *The Nation; Women Doing Crime, Women Doing Time*, by Clifford Krauss, 1994 at www.nytimes.com

Author's note: Although this writer has all kinds of excuses for women in crime, and even seems to praise them for "branching out" of traditional crimes like prostitution, the evidence is not ambiguous that women are much more involved with crime than before, including violent crime.

Women and the Criminal Justice System: Gender Matters, by Meda Chesney-Lind, Ph.D. at www.gvsu.edu

Towards a Feminist Theory of Violence, by Monica Pa, 2002 at <http://chicagounbound.uchicago.edu>

Theories of Female Criminality: A criminological analysis, by Mohammed J. Islam et al; International Journal of Criminology and Sociological Theory, Vol. 7, No. 1, December 2014, 1-8

"For example, Adler cited statistics from UCR that show that between 1960 and 1972, women's arrest rates for robbery increased 277 percent compared with a 169 percent increase for men (Curran and Renzetti: 2001). What is more, Adler argued that females were not only engaged in greater criminal activity than previously, but their crimes were assuming a more serious and violent character."

viii *Homicide Trends in the United States: 1900-74*, by A. Joan Klebba, MA at <http://europep.mc.org>

ix *The invisible domestic violence – against men*, by Nicola Graham-Kevan; June 7, 2011 at www.theguardian.com

"That women accounted for 7% of all convictions for domestic violence last year will come as a surprise to many. But what is not clear is whether the growing numbers of women convicted – a 150% increase in five years – represents a rise in actual cases of female-perpetrated domestic violence."

Harvard Study Says 70% of Domestic Violence is Committed by Women Against Men, by Joseph Earnest; November 15, 2013 at www.newscastmedia.com

"The Harvard study found that when violence was one-sided, meaning unprovoked, both men and the women themselves who took the study said 70% of the time it was the women who committed violence against the men."

x *Children from broken homes 'nine times more likely to commit crimes'*, by Andy Bloxham; November 4, 2010 at www.telegraph.co.uk

xi *United States abortion rates, 1960-2013*, compiled by Wm. Robert Johnston at www.johnstonarchive.net

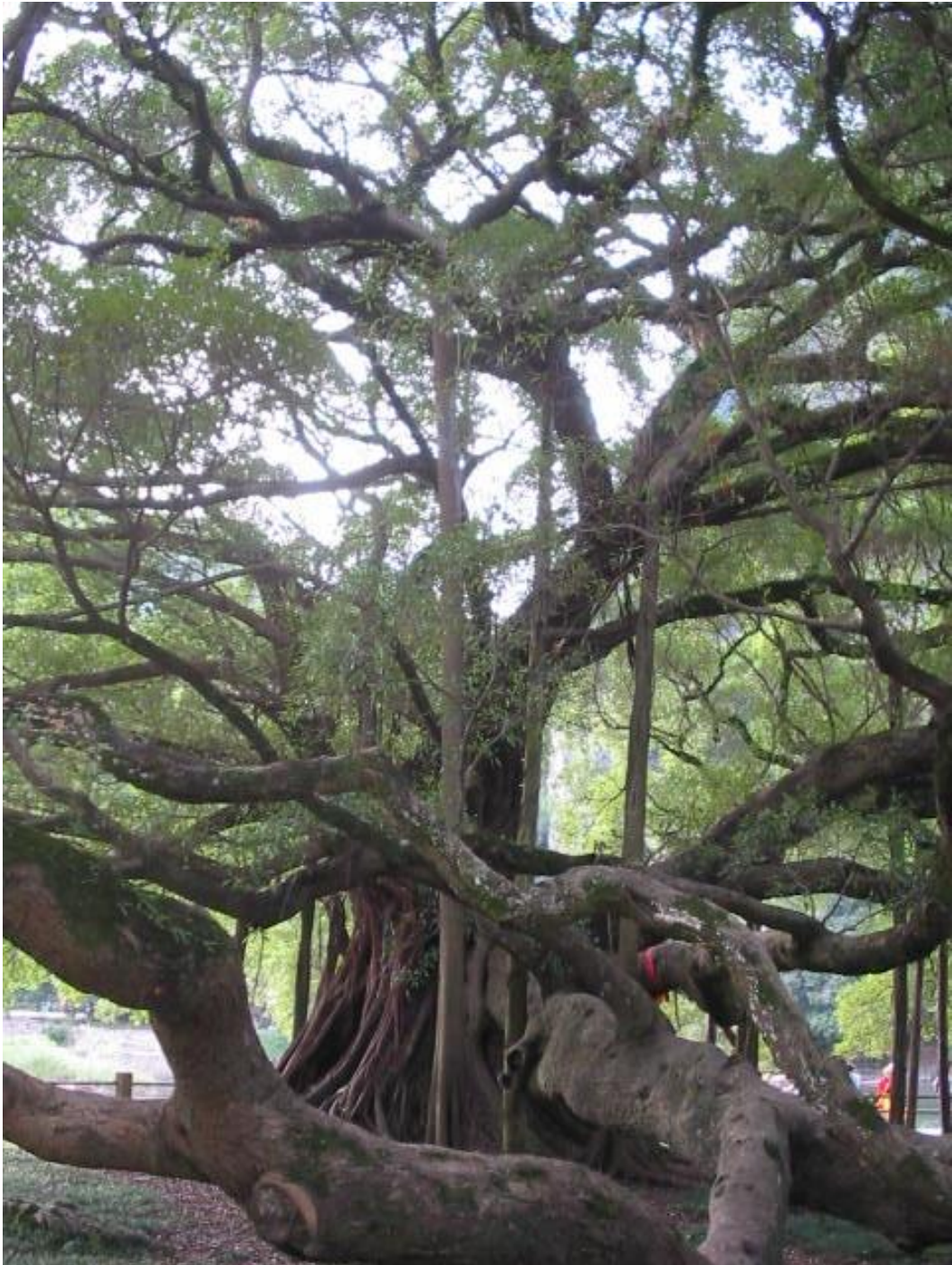
xii The way that Jesus makes an end to war, disarms the principalities and powers, reminds me of an old joke. It goes like this: There's a young man conscripted to go to war. He does his basic training and is ready to go out to the battle field. He gets in line to pick up a gun, but when he finally gets to the front of the line, they are all out of weapons.

What am I going to use in battle, he asks the officer? The officer looks around and hands him a stick. Here's a stick for you soldier. What am I going to do with this – asks the young recruit. Well, when you see the enemy coming, just point it at them like this, and say – bangity-bangity-bang! Oh, I see, says the young man. What if the enemy gets too close for that? Well, says the officer, you use it like a bayonet, like this, and you say – stabity-stabity-stab. Got it? I got it sir, says the young recruit, still not sure if this was going to work.

The young man goes out to battle, and he sees the enemy soldiers coming in the distance. He holds his stick like a gun, points it carefully at them, and says loudly – bangity-bangity-bang! To his amazement, the soldiers begin to fall down. Great, he thinks. This really works! Suddenly, several soldiers make it past their defenses, and one is rushing right at him. He holds it like he's going to use the bayonet, just like the officer told him, shoves it out several times saying – stabity-stabity-stab! Again, to his great surprise and contentment, the soldiers fall down. Finally, he sees one single enemy walking toward him in the distance, very slowly. This should be easy, he thinks. He points his gun, and declares loudly – bangity-bangity-bang! This time, the man does not fall down. He tries it again. Bangity-bangity-bang. Still this soldier just keeps coming at him. Finally, this slow-moving fellow is almost upon him. Alarmed, the young man pokes his stick toward him, and yells – stabity-stabity-stab! Still, this soldier will not fall! The man simply knocks him down, and walks slowly over him, and all the while he hears the soldier say – tankity-tankity-tank.

War may be hell, and that may not be exactly how disarmed powers try to fight. However, it reminds me of the helplessness of Satan after his defeat at the cross, after the Lord Jesus disarmed the powers of war, and put them to an open shame. (Colossians 2:15) He makes a mockery of them. All of the fear they inspire and the firepower they seem to have are simply a laugh. He has triumphed over them. In the same way, God disarms the powers by which men and women think they need to wage war against each other. Their weapons are useless. The enemies are clowns. Trust in the Lamb of God to disarm them in you as well. Through faith and through love. He has put the devil to an open shame.

^{xiii} For a good overview of what this phrase really means I recommend this article: *Lesson 47: Submitting to One Another (Ephesians 5:21)* by Steven J. Cole; May 14, 2013 at <https://bible.org>



The Great Banyan outside of Yangshuo Town, Guangxi, China

Chapter 3

KEEPER OF HOME

the older women likewise, that they be reverent in behavior, not slanderers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things—

that they admonish the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, homemakers, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be blasphemed.
(Titus 2:3-5)

Therefore I desire that the younger widows marry, bear children, manage the house, give no opportunity to the adversary to speak reproachfully.
(1 Timothy 5:14)

And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression.
Nevertheless she will be saved in childbearing if they continue in faith, love, and holiness, with self-control.
(1 Timothy 2:14-15)

I've talked about marriage as a representation of Christ and the Church. This is the most explicit scriptural explanation. I've spoken about marriage as portraying the Trinity through its relationships. I'll get creative with some other metaphors of my own. Here I'd like to use the comparison to a King and his people. The husband, of course, is the king. The wife is his people, or his land filled with them.

Perhaps this isn't entirely original. That's because Christ already is a king and His Bride is a people, but the picture is still its own. The reason I want to speak of the wife as his people now is because I wish to discuss her essential role in bearing children and keeping the home. Under the king's protection, she fills up his domain with life, and a good spirit for all who enter it. Bearing children, you can guess, means more than carrying

them in her womb but also nurturing and raising them up. Keeping the home means caring for the needs of the household, most of which are done in the home and any attached land, with a smaller amount done outside, such as going to the market, helping a neighbor, or making other purchases.

While many people in the West of this current era take it as an insult or a slap to the face, the Bible teaches that the Christian wife is to bear the children and keep the home. That's simply what it teaches, and it teaches this in language as simple to understand as anywhere else. It is a woman's role. Most other cultures, which never had the Bible, had similar thoughts. This is because man naturally has certain strengths which make him the provider and protector, and women are uniquely designed to bear and nurture children, and are better for home life. You don't need to be a Bible believing "fundamentalist" to see the obvious. It is a part of God's natural design.

We cannot really speak of marriage, the family and the Christian home, without speaking of this element, which is as essential as the rest: The wife's role in the home. If you remove that element you have done it great damage. It is not possible to underestimate its value. If people pursue high salaries and fancy cars, they ought to pursue having a home which is both natural and Christian, one which contains the virtuous homemaker at its heart. The wife is the heart of the home.

The number of important things that the woman does from this role is hard to count. I'd like to give you a simple list of all my wife does, but before I do, it is important to note that the role of the homemaker is not as two-dimensional as some would like to have it. Many have a narrow view of what a homemaker is, because they saw or heard about the 1950's homemaker, who had already lost some elements of her role. Many also have a narrow view of the homemaker because they hate the idea of women being in the home, so they want to portray it in a derogatory way, as a wife who sits around and has nothing to do all day. This is a patently absurd portrayal, and those who make it have little interest in learning what the role actually is. God gave it to women, both in the Bible and through His creation, and it is an awesome, fulfilling role worth more than any salary in the world.

To just get started, here is a list of tasks my wife does, including some which are long-term projects. The list might get longer. It might change a little. However, it represents a pretty good amount of what God's role for women can amount to in this day:

- Clean the home

- Cook meals on the weekdays (I usually cook weekends or holidays),

provide meals for guests
Homeschool the children (this is very time-consuming), otherwise look after them, take them to the doctor, park, other activities, help get their stuff together when we all go somewhere
Bear and give birth to the children that the Lord our God gives us (this of course requires great stamina and strength and discomfort)
Shop for food and housing needs
Do most hands-on work for large purchases such as home and car
Keep our finances in line, do the taxes
Do most hands-on work in having repairmen over
Do most hands-on work for any litigation that might occur
Bring food to elderly neighbor
Take her parents to doctors
Do various kinds of research, be it for a trip we'd like to take or something we think we need. When I regularly did travel writing, she helped me immensely with research for most articles because of her Chinese language skills.
Teach children at our church, at Awana or homeschool coops, occasionally join me for pro-life work
Learn to make stuff (a work in progress) with the sewing machine
Help maintain garden
Translate for me when I do Bible reading, or other witnessing for Chinese friends and family
Spend time with scripture reading and prayers (with some of my guidance of course), witness to personal friends (also with some of my guidance)
Sell things occasionally online
Keep her husband fantastically happy

I think you can see, it's impossible to characterize this job as sitting around. It is busier than any job I've ever had, but almost all of it takes place in the home. Even that which takes place outside of the home is still rooted in the home and family. As any mother can tell you, taking care of children is a 24-hour job, so a mother always works the night shift. How some people in our society characterize this as "not working" is beyond me. It is a full-time job. It's simply one which resides in the home.

You can also see the multiple major areas the job covers. We can see it nourishes the family with food, makes the environment look lovely, provides education, provides other nurture and teaching to the children, honors the king of the home, makes occasional money though not much, teaches children in the church and community, helps neighbors and assists in many other projects in the household, including some of my

own. It honors the king, it helps the king rule the land and it fills the land with life and peace. So I compare the wife to the people who fill up the king's land. A good Christian people.

I am happy to say that it's my leadership that assures we have a home so full of life. That the land is full and not empty. I led the home that direction from the beginning, and let my wife know this was essential before we ever got married. I may not have been as trusting in the Bible back then as I am now, and I didn't mind her working part-time outside the home until our first child, but I knew the importance of the role, and the dangers of leaving your children to be raised and educated by others. Before we met, my wife was planning to go overseas (she's originally from China so overseas to her meant Canada) to get further study, and then presumably a career. Many formerly traditional Chinese women want the same thing. She left those plans behind so we could get married and then have a home together. She is not alone in that either. There are many more women who would do the same if they felt they had the opportunity, and if their men led them that way. We would have an entire tide of them coming in, and the Church would be full of blessing and life because of it. They fill up the lands of their king, and we would fill up the land of our eternal King, the Lord Jesus.

It is hard to let a day go by without being thankful that our children God has placed in our home are with us, and not being raised up by strangers. I could thank God every day for the fact they are being nurtured, raised and taught by their mother, instead of learning godless hedonism in secular institutions. No special training in sodomy for us. No kids groups devoted to transgenderism. No indoctrination into relativism and naturalism. We have our godly community instead. It starts with the family, yet it branches out into the local church, other local ministries, as well as unbelieving friends and neighbors. Yet it all begins in the home. Not in being one of a million drones in a secular institution. Rather, in being loved by Christian parents, taught by a faithful mother, further instructed by other saints we know. We should never in good conscience turn our children over to a godless system to be raised. Do not do it to your progeny.

You could simply call the homemaker a benefit for humanity. It is not replaceable with anything else. It is not replaceable with a salary. A salary does not walk and talk and have a soul and nurture the next generation of man. A homemaker does. It is so intertwined with being a woman and being a wife that it's impossible to separate. One of the great benefits is her ability not just to teach children at home, but also in the community. Our wife has helped out with the children in local churches we've attended as well as other Christian kids' groups. She currently is teaching

Chinese to a small number of children at a homeschool group. It's teaching both in a Christian environment and with Christian materials and messages. On top of that, when our boy has a friend over who is not a believer, or who is from a worldly Christian home, she has a chance to tell them about God and Jesus Christ and read to them from the Bible. In the secular world, it kind of works the other way around. Christians send their children into a hostile secular environment, and into a completely godless system, so they are swamped with not only the false philosophies of man but also soaked in a vulgar and lewd culture, and they come back having been indoctrinated into something else. I'd rather have it work the other way around. Every wife can do this, at least on a small scale. She can bring the unbelieving children a word from the Lord.

The modern western Christian considers it almost a dogma that they must raise up their children within certain institutions and furthermore inculcate them in certain cultural elements. They think they have to be normal, basically. It is clear, however, that not only does being normal mean self-destruction and worldliness, but the opposite is quite possible if we desire it. We do not need to send children to be educated in age-isolated groups in large number. We do not need them to aim for the highest level of education possible (especially if they are a girl). We do not need them to watch the latest movie, play in secular organized sports, have a graduation or a prom. It may seem attractive to some. Yet it's not necessary. In a largely materialistic, and often anti-Christ world, it surely does more harm than good. God gave us the family and the church. He did not give us the school. The basic unit for society is the family, not any institution devised by the state, no matter how self-important, highly honored and established in tradition. Society starts with the family. The man is leader and provider. The woman fills it up with life. She is the heart of the home.

The godly wife can also be an immense help to other family members. In our case, her parents live with us. They are a great help to us, and she also helps care for their needs, especially in taking them to doctors and helping when they are sick. As they get older, this will become more of a need. If my own parents require such help, she will do what she is able for them. This life-preserving element of her role would have been considered normal in a past era, unless a family was wealthy enough to have servants. She cares for me when I am sick as well, though obviously my care requirements are less than her parents. Helping the sick or elderly, only epitomizes what it means to be a homemaker. It means to care for life. To nurture it. To preserve it. It is sad in an era when many women think the life-saving role is to be a doctor, and spend tens of thousands of dollars trying to become one, that they are missing out on the TRUE

life-saving role there is: to be a mother and a homemaker. That is the true life-saving job.

There are some who think that role is impossible for them, even if they want to. They've been led to believe they must have two salaries, or else they won't have the money they need. There may be individual examples where this is the case, although even then you want to do your best to plan for the future so you can change things. Yet it is not impossible as people make it seem to get by on one salary.ⁱ You cut the expenses. You plan for less upscale of a future. You drop some luxuries. You move to a less expensive area to live. A homemaker can also save a great deal of money simply by homeschooling the children, and also making wise choices in purchases. My wife has saved us thousands of dollars that way, including finding good deals on a house and a car. A homemaker can, on occasion, make some money from the home, although I wouldn't count on more than a few extra dollars here and there. If she has a skill she can do at home, and it doesn't take her away from her other tasks, it can be added income. Women in other parts of the world still commonly make handicrafts at home, close to their children all the time. Then they can send their wares to a market. Investments can also be made from home if you have the starting cash.

Moreover, the claim that we need two salaries to survive has been a self-fulfilling prophecy. For as more and more households became two-salary, it helped to drive prices of many items way up.ⁱⁱ Prices aren't set in stone. Houses aren't made of gold, and the price of gold changes anyway. The added income to the household from a second salary has been a major factor in the high prices we face, including in the price of housing, and this has been well documented. If more wives returned to the home, prices would simply have to drop as well, since the money would not exist to pay absurd prices for things. Not only that, but despite the near doubling of household income, it hasn't raised the average amount of savings a family hasⁱⁱⁱ, since not only do prices go up, but families simply tend to spend more when they have the cash to burn. That's one reason you can look at the 1960s and see that a man at this time could support a wife and several children, and own a home, all with one single income at a blue collar job. His family had all they needed. Despite economic changes, somehow millions of families, albeit a minority, still manage to get by on one income today. That includes this author's family. So do not tell yourself it is impossible. It's more possible than you think.

I realize Christians in this culture will need to make changes in how they plan their life to respect the woman's calling to the home. They will be hard changes, but necessary and enriching for the community. One of the

biggest changes will be in how we view education. We do not need to view the highest education level as the best, since not only is that not true, but it would take most women off of their path if they aimed for the highest education they could attain. For men, education should be geared toward their godly calling, and what is necessary for their life. For women, it should be geared toward being a wife and mother. This rules out much of what a career student goes through these days, and often does not require a college education. Our pastor's wife never finished her college education, as she was getting married and she knew that was much more important. It certainly hasn't hindered her that she dropped out. She has been a godly pastor's wife, helped sustain the life of the church, and currently provides a homeschool-like education to a small group of local Christian children. Who needs college when you've got that? Amish and traditional Mennonite women commonly do not have a college education either, since they embrace their roles as wives and mothers. Not only that, but because of the success of their husbands in business, it seems most Amish or Mennonite families are middle or upper middle class. Some would count as rich. I have never personally met a poor Mennonite, but I'm sure they exist. They accomplished that financial stability with a single income and very few if any children going to college.

The idea of dropping continued education, and with it all the career dreams, seems like a shocking attack to some. You may speak this truth quite intelligently and kindly, but you might as well have launched an aerial attack on someone's heart. People have been so entrenched in the idea that life is all about following the desires of the heart (men included) that what I describe seems like a fate worse than death. Yet we are not called to worship our own heart. We are called to worship God and obey Him. Life is not all about being a doctor, a lawyer or an astronaut. It's all about giving glory to God. So if God has called the woman to the home, then that is how she glorifies God. Our desires are not our authority. God is our authority. What should be more important to a godly woman, fulfilling the sparks of desire that pass through the heart, or raising up the next generation of saints? I hope that's not a difficult question for you. I hope you don't have to strain at an answer. It should be easy.

Freedom. Indoctrination. College debt.

This culture has made a false god of freedom, brethren. Our freedom is not in desire fulfillment. Our freedom is in Christ, and being free in Christ means being a slave to God. May God help the Church which thinks desire fulfillment should lead our lives. Moreover, it is a deception to say that the modern secular female is free. She has very little choice other

than to follow the path she is almost forced down, that of chemical infertility, decades of secular education and work full-time outside of the home. For how many women in this culture will see motherhood and homemaking approved or encouraged? A few may get that at home. Not very many. Almost none will get that from their peers and from schools. They will see the role of homemaker either disregarded or disrespected, and will see higher education and careerism encouraged, expected and almost mandatory. At a certain point, God's calling in the home will be almost invisible. Not only that, but many of those women, after years of schooling, will be deeply in debt; thousands, tens of thousands, hundreds of thousands of dollars. A woman deeply in debt doesn't have much "freedom" about whether she will work full-time outside of the home or whether she will take care of the home. She has one choice: work full time and pay off that debt. Perhaps, in a rare case, she could marry a very wealthy man who could make the college debt disappear, but what are the chances? Most of those women don't have a choice anyway. They will be debt slaves. They will not be able to care for the home. That, my friend, is not freedom.

Even if you like to think the jobs women take in the career field are necessary, remember, it is the home which is necessary, since it is God's calling and as a role in society is truly indispensable. If a female astronaut didn't go into space, a male would go. Generally, society has to bend the rules to get women into certain positions anyway, since they are not as good as men at some tasks^{iv}. Various schools, jobs and the military have to lower the bar for women, so they end up getting lesser candidates and they end up getting lesser results^v. Men are simply better at many of those jobs. If someone needs to lower the bar for you, no insult intended, you are not equal. You are not as good. Our society is full of men who can do those jobs, and often do them better. It is full of men who need that job to use their talents and to support their family^{vi}. If you ever ask yourself – what would that woman be doing if she weren't out there being an industrial engineer or something – the answer is simple: she'd be doing much more important things in the home.

I realize all of this is a strike to the ego of some. It is a strike to the ego also of some women with very well-fed egos. Let me ask you this though. As a Christian. When Christ became man, did He come and join us in a comfortable place, a luxurious one, a middle class one? Or did He come humbly, to be born in a manger? Amidst dirty, smelly animals? When He descended from the heavens did he arrive as a blazing streak of supernatural light, brilliant in glory, so that all men immediately fell upon their knees before Him? Or did He take on the flesh, born of a woman like any of us, with a body like ours, which suffers tiredness, grief, pain,

illness and death? Our God we worship, in becoming man, chose the humble way to join us and redeem us. He didn't appear in great brilliance, except briefly to three of His apostles. He led a humble life. There was no beauty in Him that we should desire Him. (Isaiah 53:2) Likely he had an average education at best. He grew up in a town the high society viewed as country bumpkins. He didn't live out any dreams, but the will of His Father, to which He conformed His own perfect will. Through learning obedience, He became the author of eternal salvation. (Hebrews 5:8-9) He was humble. He was a servant to others. (Matthew 20:28) God became man and He didn't follow His desires and dreams and ego. God followed God.

So what I'm telling you, however this conflicts with the ego and the lifestyle and the expectations you have, being humble is better anyway. Almost all that stuff is vanity. Humility will accept the simple path of God, and it will accept letting go of big dreams for God. Society needs it more than it needs more affluent homes or female CEOs. It needs obedience. It needs humility. It needs many more good wives and homemakers.

What do you lose when you think career is a great gain? You lose the full-time mother. You lose the full-time wife. You lose the fulfillment of being with children, which nothing in the world can replace. You lose the chance to provide children with a Christian environment and education and replace it with a secular, or at least very worldly one. You lose having a caregiver present for your family members. You lose at least some of the home cooked meals, lunch and dinner. You lose many of the handmade goods. You lose what could be a small home business as well, one which is morally clean, unlike the secular ones. You lose many opportunities for the wife to care for children in the church and the local community. You lose what could be a local activist, who cleans up the neighborhood businesses. You lose the satisfaction of a man having a wife to come home to every day. You lose a regular host for guests. You lose. . .

Well, we could go on. The point is people focus in on what they will gain by taking the woman out of the home, but they do not count the immeasurable costs. They don't count all they are throwing away. They artificially elevate the importance of a career. They irrationally devalue the role of the homemaker. That's ALWAYS the trick. There are those who will say this kind of teaching is too offensive, and can make people feel bad about themselves. However, if the disobedience of Christians is an affront to God and it is harming the society, then maybe it is right to feel bad sometimes. There are things in this world WORTH feeling bad about. We just need to feel bad in the right way. We need to feel bad in understanding how wrong this is, and in seeing the harm it causes. Then we need to respond to the bad feeling in repentance, and confession to

God. We need to use that bad feeling, which is there for a very good reason, which often comes from the Holy Spirit, and let God do His work on us. Let Him change us. We need to stop doing what we are doing and turn back to God instead.

Keep Them Sterile

One thing that has to be addressed, especially if we want to see clearly on this subject, is the price required to have a woman imitate what a man has traditionally done. What does it take to put the woman through many years of higher education, and then send her off to have a career? Motherhood does not often wait that long. Marriage shouldn't generally wait that long either. So society, including many believers, becomes supremely unethical to make this manlike woman a reality.

Firstly, they keep her hopped up on contraceptives, often from a young age. These contraceptives are against nature and are wrong – something I'll get into in a later chapter – and are commonly the cause of early term abortions. The most popular kinds of contraceptives, the chemical kinds, are specifically designed to thin the lining of the woman's uterus, so that if a child of God is conceived, that child will die within a few days or weeks, in the presumed safety of his mother's womb. They turn the woman's place for bearing children into a little Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Life will not survive there. It's a poisoned well. IUDs (intrauterine devices) are one hundred percent abortifacient in their qualities. It should not be necessary to destroy a woman's fertility, and cause grave risk of death to her child, just to pursue good goals in life. And if you have to use unethical means to pursue your goals, here's the thing: they are NOT ethical goals, even if you thought they were in the first place. You do not do evil so a presumed good will come of it. (Romans 3:8)

Along with turning the woman into a walking death factory, society keeps women pursuing men's role by making sure she can kill her baby when a child comes along. All that contraception only shows that people view life as a curse, a baby as a curse, so when one finally comes along the continuance of that attitude is often to kill the child in the womb. A couple in marriage who have a godly attitude toward children do not do that. Yet unmarried couples, who view children as getting in the way of their goals, often do. Married women who think it will hold back their career do. Abortion is not just the go-to solution for many prostitutes, it is the go-to solution for many young women, college students and professional women. It solves their alleged problem by killing a baby. This is the reality of how you try and make a woman act like a man; you keep her hopped up on chemicals, you wipe out her fertility which is central to her

womanhood, and often you kill her babies. If that's what you've got to do to meet your goals, find different goals to meet. Because that is evil.

At a time when young people could be marrying and starting families, they are instead encouraged to spend years in seemingly endless education, pursue pleasures of all kinds including an abundance of self-destructive sin, and pursue their materialistic aims in life, under the guise of following their dreams. Lives have been destroyed by all of this selfishness. A future has been lost for the Church and our society by the loss of these families and the children they should be bearing. We need more husbands and wives and more righteous Christians. We don't need more youthful decadence. We need more children raised up in righteousness. Not more college degrees. Christians think it is almost a birthright to waste away years of the best child-rearing time in endless pleasure or personal goals. They sin like demons, end emotionally wrecked, untrusting of the opposite sex, they have children out of wedlock, they abort other children to death, they obliterate their life and their future with drugs, they become suicidal just like an unbeliever, all during the best years of their lives. This is especially disastrous for the woman, who should be kept pure, and who will be used and abused so many times^{vii}. It is especially important for the woman who has a biological clock, and has her best and safest childbearing years when young. This disaster demands a radical change of lifestyle among Christians. Youth is an advantage for having a family. It is not a license to sin

Apostle Paul wrote: *Therefore I desire that the younger widows marry, bear children, manage the house, give no opportunity to the adversary to speak reproachfully.* (1 Timothy 5:14)

These were young widowed women Paul was speaking to. Some of them were not that young, but hadn't reached old age yet. He instructed them to marry and bear children. It is interesting the immediate topic that inspired that teaching was that many of these women were being busy bodies and wasting their time in ungodly activities. How much more important is this teaching when we see what the unmarried spend their time with today: contraception, fornication, abortion, self-fulfillment, materialism. I could see the apostle making the same point to our churches, but in a much stronger way. The godly path for a woman is in bearing children and keeping the home. It prevents a great deal of impurity. It holds back a flood of sin. Along with the countless life-giving benefits it brings us. The debauched college student is in stark contrast to the pure, Christian wife.

Why Deny Plain Instructions?

While this is not primarily a book of apologetics – and I have written many essays and defenses on this topic elsewhere – I want to answer a few of the points of those who deny the woman’s role in the home. To deny is what modern western Christians seem to do best, so it demands I spend some time in explanation.

To begin with, I have to state again what ought to be convincing for us above anything else: the ONLY instructions on this topic in the entire Bible say that the wife is to bear the children and keep the home. They are both in the New Testament. The Bible does not contradict the Bible, so it would seem strange that anything in Scripture ought to lead us to believe otherwise. Both Titus 2:3-5 and 1 Timothy 5:14 teach in plain language what we have known for thousands of years. They tell the woman to bear the children and keep the home.

Moreover, Scripture even ties a woman’s bearing children to salvation itself. In explaining the woman’s submissive role in the Church, Paul ends with this:

And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression.

Nevertheless she will be saved in childbearing if they continue in faith, love, and holiness, with self-control.

(1 Timothy 2:14-15)

That doesn’t mean you have to have children to be saved, but it reflects that bearing children is the outworking of her redemption and part of the sanctification process. It stands as an answer to the deception and the fall in Genesis 2 he has just mentioned. Despite her role in sin entering the world, her redemption involves bringing new life into this world. Yet there is suffering involved in bearing new life, suffering which helps sanctify her: the woman is saved in childbearing. This places incredible importance on the natural function that God gave women.

While we get our marching orders from verses which instruct, and examples are purely secondary, it bears noting that the long description of the virtuous wife in Proverbs 31 is of a homemaker. This is woman who seeks to do her husband good, spends the vast portion of her time in the home and is highly honored for it. She spends many hours preparing food for her family and their servants. She spends many hours making clothing, both for the household, and to take down later to the market. This woman could be an Amish housewife. She does ALL of this work in the home long before we had modern technology to make the process speedier. The passage calls her a virtuous wife. It says her worth is far

above rubies.

Some people try and turn the passage on its head, and claim that since she takes some of her goods to the market, she is not a housewife. This is fallacious, as no career woman in the world has the time to spend hours preparing food and making clothing by hand long before modern technology for an entire household. None. The fact that she makes some money from home activity is not in conflict with her role. A homemaker can indeed do things for money if time allows. Many Amish and Mennonite wives, who take their role in the home very seriously, spend some of their time that way too. My own wife has helped me with a little online business, and it doesn't take that long to take boxes down to the post office and mail them. It's simply called a home business. Homemakers sometimes do this. However, career women NEVER spend the countless hours at home like the Proverbs 31 woman does. That's why the very same passage says that "*she watches over the ways of her household*" (vs. 27) and not "she watches over the ways of her boss's office." She very clearly is a keeper of the home, and a premier example for women. Don't let anyone tell you otherwise.

As far as a second example, the matriarch Sarah is portrayed as a homemaker. Not only is her obedience to Abraham held up as an example for obedience among wives in the Church (1 Peter 3:6), but when the three angels visit Abraham, one of the most defining events in salvation history, she is there doing her role in the tent, preparing food for the guests. (Genesis 18:6, 9) It is Abraham who is outside the tent, dealing with his priestly role. This woman who is wife of the father-by-faith of Christianity is a homemaker. This same woman is honored highly in Hebrews 11, held up as a great woman of faith not because of her career or empowerment, but because of her childbearing: *By faith Sarah herself received strength to conceive seed and she bore a child when she was past the age* (vss. 11-12) And how important it was in salvation history, for from her womb came the son of promise Isaac, and from HIS wife came Jacob and the rest. This is the foundation of Israel and the outworking of salvation history. It came from Sarah's womb. Not from her career. She received "*strength*" from God not to be a bossy wife or earn a salary, but to conceive seed and bear a child. There is female strength for you. My wife has had four – all by C-section – and she is a strong woman. Female kick boxers do not represent female strength. Mothers do.

Undebatably the greatest woman role model in the entire Bible, the mother of Jesus Christ and the God-bearer, did her greatest work for the Lord through childbearing. When she said – *let it be to me according to your word* (Luke 1:38) – she wasn't asking God to pick her career for her. She was accepting the child of her womb, and a child who would bring

about the salvation of Israel. Her beautiful act of submission to God is a submission to having children. In fact, many in the historical Church even title her according to this great act. Titles such as Mother Mary. Or Mother of God. They don't title her according to her salary. When Jesus suffered upon the cross Mary was there too. Jesus spoke to his mother and to his beloved disciple, who in a sense represents the Church. Who represents us. And what did Jesus say to him and Mary? He said "*woman, behold your son.*" And looking to John, He said, "*behold your mother.*" (John 19:26-27)

Those are only three example I've given you, but I believe they are three of the most primary – the detailed description of the virtuous wife, the example of Sarah's homemaking and biblically honored childbirth and the example of Mary's submission to God and timeless remembrance as a mother. So I hope you can see the feminist approach doesn't just ignore the only two instructions on this subject in the Bible, it also ignores biblical patterns and examples, as well as natural law.

Sadly, you don't just see the woman's role attacked by liberals and feminists. It will be attacked by apparent Bible believers as well. I tend to believe this is because of their compromises, which they have made and are stuck with, but some truly are pulling the wool over their own eyes if they think they can maintain a traditional view of biblical authority and also deny the woman's role. The very same biblical view that demands we accept the plain words of the Bible and which demands we treat it as an authority, assures that we take these instructions at face value. It's just what the words mean. To ignore these instructions demands we either change our rules to suit this occasion, or change our view of the Bible entirely.

I have seen more than a few Christians claim they uphold biblical headship in marriage, but then deny the woman's role in the home. This is absolutely arbitrary. They are both simple instructions. Moreover, I have heard Christians claim we don't have to follow those instructions because of this or that exception they supposedly found in the Bible. Yet this is the very SAME reasoning they reject when they defend headship in marriage. They REJECT that an alleged exception could overrule the instructions that man is the head. So why reject the value of exceptions when it comes to headship and then embrace exceptions as being the deciding factor when it comes to homemaking? Either exceptions can destroy rules or they cannot. We can't change our view of exceptions just to suit the occasion, and insert our own preferred lifestyle in there. It's inconsistent, and won't help us understand truth.

I have already addressed how poor it is to claim that an alleged exception overrules a plain teaching. However, to sum up, we do not

commonly use exceptions to do this when we reason through a subject. Rather, we give the high priority to instructions. If we could make an exception be a deciding factor for us, wow, we could make most ethics in the Bible disappear immediately. Sadly, some would love that. We follow instructions in life, not exceptions. Exceptions are things that happened in special circumstances and for a unique reason. They are not instructions to do the same, not even once, much less continually. Moreover, when you see people looking for a justification to ignore the instructions of the Bible try and present exceptions, very often, they are not exceptions at all. They are actions that occurred in widely different circumstances, and shouldn't even be brought up. In the case of homemaking, there may be one or two biblical exceptions. There may be a few current life exceptions too, especially in cases where a family has no source of income and there is no choice. Yet those are exceptions, not the rule. And if working outside of the home is necessary to avoid homelessness, we do not forget what the rule is, and we try and right things in the future. Often that indeed can be righted. A wife who works outside of the home to avoid being thrown out on the street is not disregarding God's authority. Yet a culture which treats this as a norm and a good is disregarding God's Word. It is plain disobedience. We do not live in a culture that permits the exception. We live in a culture that trashes the rule. This demands a response and immediate repentance.

Commandment or Culture?

One common more liberal attack on the woman's role is the claim that it is mere ancient culture, and can thus be ignored today. Liberals commonly make arguments like this, in this subject and many others, but it is usually a poor one. Most clearly, the claim that a wife's role is nothing but culture is itself nothing but an assertion. They cannot prove this. The text does not say this. So we have no real reason to believe the claim. Ironically perhaps, the attack that keeping the home is mere culture is itself a cultural assertion, soaking in modernist values and feminist thought. So if the idea is we can ignore something which is mere culture, then we need to ignore this argument as well. Let us pay the liberals no heed then. Their own logic demands we ignore them.

Another problem with this approach is that logically, if you and I can just point at plain instructions and identify them as mere culture, then we could make most of the Bible's teaching go away like that. This is why liberals ALSO use the culture argument to attack prohibitions on sodomy and the male-female nature of marriage. They think they can point and shoot, and call nearly anything mere culture. They don't have to prove it.

And if plain instructions are mere culture, then what about: *You shall not murder.* (Exodus 20:13) Perhaps this command was only given at a time when the earth's population was well under a billion and we didn't have the depletion of resources and pollution we have today. Surely God just gave this command to the Israelite culture at that time. That means we can ignore this ancient teaching, since culture is different today. In a planet with 7 billion people, you SHALL murder. How about that? Ain't the culture argument fun?

Perhaps the strongest and clearest refutation of the culture argument is that the Bible, multiple times, ties in gender roles to things that transcend culture. I am speaking broadly of the various roles taught in the New Testament, not just this one. The woman's call to marry and bear children is tied on to her salvation in 1 Timothy 2:15. Is salvation only culture? This observation also forms part of the explanation for the woman's submission in the church, and immediately follows it. Her submission in the Church is another gender teaching which is defended in 1 Corinthians 14 as being "*commandments of the Lord.*" (vs. 37) Are commandments of the Lord culture? Moreover, a woman's subjection in marriage is compared to the Church's subjection to Christ. Is the relationship of Church and Christ no more than culture? The woman's role is furthermore treated as more than temporal culture by being tied into the patriarchs, from an era and culture almost two thousand years before Paul was writing. (1 Peter 3:5-6) So apparently, it transcends culture there as well, and also confirms it is good to respect past eras. If we let the Bible do the talking, the order in the home and the church are more than temporal cultural traits. Rather, they are guided by transcendent truth.

The culture argument also rests on some terrible presumptions. It presumes that plain instructions are mere culture. It presumes that things which are cultural are value neutral or bad, and thus can be changed. In actuality, observation proves that things in culture are often very good and should NOT be changed. It presumes that older culture should be changed but newer culture is better, yet this is also demonstrably false, as ancient cultures contained provably true and good things, while modern culture contains some absolutely despicable things and many falsehoods. It presumes to know better than the Bible and the apostles. Moreover, it ignores the simple fact that a woman's role in the home is also tied in to her biology and emotional makeup, both of which are observable to anyone and transcend culture. It also ignores the many good things which come from the homemaker role, and the harm that comes from taking it away. I don't think it is possible to make the culture argument here and not be resting almost entirely on presumption and

seeing only what you want to see. No one should accept that reasoning. The woman's role in the home rests in biblical truth and nature.

No Escape by Context

Some people also try and squeeze out of Paul's instructions in 1 Timothy 5 for the young widows to marry, bear children and keep the home by saying those instructions were only given because of his response to the many women who were wasting their time away. Hence the teaching is limited to this context. However, this argument fails easily as well. Number one, the plain teaching in 1 Timothy 5 is in good harmony with Titus 2, which also teaches the woman's role and contains NO such context itself. Moreover, Paul never states this is the ONLY reason for women to do these things. In fact, cultures across the world for thousands of years have accepted the woman's role, because that truth is not locked into the fact he's warning the women not to waste their time. It transcends that small situation.

It is true that the immediate stimulation for the teaching is that he doesn't want women wasting their time, but it is presumptuous to claim that's the only reason. We regularly point to general truths while speaking of specific situations. We do it all the time. This is what Paul does here. It's like if my pastor said he'd heard many in the congregation were getting drunk, and he desired that they stay away from drunkenness and practice self-control. Is the truth we should stay away from drunkenness and practice self-control ONLY true when people at that time were getting drunk? Is it NOT true for everyone else? Or is it ONLY true for that congregation at that time? Can we say, as the liberals logically should: it's fine if people in general get drunk, just not that congregation at that unique moment in time? That would be absurd. Clearly, the pastor is speaking of a current situation, and responding by pointing to broader truth^{viii}. The same is true of Paul here, as he teaches for young women to marry and keep the home. That's why it's in good agreement with the other New Testament teaching on the subject, and natural law as well. It is a teaching that applies to all of us at all times.

I'll just stop here^{ix} and point out that many of the arguments you will hear from feminists trying to reinterpret the Bible's gender teaching use the same kind of logic used by sodomy-supporters trying to reinterpret the Bible's gender and marriage teachings. I can guarantee you that. I have debated at length with the feminists many times. I am also familiar with many of the pro-sodomy arguments and have debated homo-activists who claim to be Christian. The feminists and the sodomy supporters rest on some of the same soft reasoning and surreal logic.

They try and rely on alleged exceptions instead of rules. They try and take rare usages of words and insert the rare use where the common one obviously belongs. They will ignore the context and the logical flow of a text, reinterpreting it in a way that reads absurdly. They will insert interpretations that never would have been understood by the audience at the time, and take phrases to mean things which the Hebrew audience never would have. They will completely ignore the truth revealed by natural law, which is in harmony with the Bible. As I've mentioned, they both think they have the right to point at a teaching, claim it is mere culture, and ignore it, all the while forgetting that it is THEY who insert their cultural beliefs into the discussion. Seeing that the feminists and the sodomy crowd have so much in common, it is hard to imagine that the former Christian collapse to feminism didn't lead to the later collapse on morality and marriage. Once you go soft in understanding, you go soft on more than one doctrine. You don't have the strength to uphold the truth.

As a Christian preparing for marriage, or already married, I passionately want you to know the simple truths from God's Word. I want you to be able to see how convoluted is the modernist recreation of what was once the Christian faith. You need to be able to see through those lies. Christians have come to reject this and many other teachings, not because they discovered we'd totally misunderstood the Bible for centuries, but because they wanted to follow the human heart. They have placed their yearnings over God's. That's why their arguments by Scripture are so oddball. They're not trying to draw from the words of God the truth within them, rather they are trying to insert their own truth into them, and are willing to jump through a lot of hoops to do it. The simple, plain understanding is correct. Don't let another brother mislead you. Or a pastor. The family as we have traditionally known it does not need redefining. It has been correct, because it is rooted in God's Word and nature.

The Future of the Family

Many people are concerned about the future of the family. I hope you are too. You know, you can watch the dissolution of the family spread from western countries, and be injected in every nation across the globe. This is in part through the indoctrination of the media. It is also from governments and NGOs which have a preplanned assault on the family. They intend to take over in every nation and culture. To do that, here are three of their biggest ingredients. You might say a 1-2-3 plan of assault:

- get the women out of the home and away from the children
- get the children into state schools, the more secular the better

wipe out future generations through contraception and abortion

These three steps are being done and have been done in populations of billions across the planet. They are very effective in harming the family, killing babies, and making future generations more dependent on the state. The state has always been powerful but now it is more like a family. It takes the role of family. In some places, contraception and abortion have even been forced upon women.^x There is evidence of women being sterilized without their knowledge or their husband's knowledge.

I know many Christians would agree that the secular assault on the family is a terrible one. They would agree that abortion is wrong, and some would agree that contraception is wrong, at least most of the time. They don't want to see the family replaced with the state.

But notice Step One of this process. Step one is to get the women out of the home and away from the children. You see, they understand this is necessary to destroy the family and take over. You cannot have their children, if their children are with their mother. You cannot break up the family as easily if the woman is taught to submit and is led and supported by her husband. You have to attack those things before you can take their children.

You also have to replace their values with western ones if you're going to convince them that having many children is a bad thing. It took many years of indoctrination to even get westerners to think that way^{xi}. It takes indoctrination to get Africans and Asians to think that way too. Stay with the family. Stay with tradition. Don't let their false teachers entertain you or teach your children. If the family stays, much else will too.

The Real Battle

It's hard to miss that the destruction of the family is planned according to what its perpetrators say are good intentions, and doubtless attractive ends: the ability to follow the desires of the heart, seek pleasure and have comfort. These are alluring to anyone. Yet this isn't just true in pushing women to pursue peak education levels and a career, but is true of other familiar attacks that affect the home. It's true of the claim that marriage is a temporary contract rather than a covenant for life, or that marriage can be between ANY two people, or between three people or four. These doctrines come from the same place. It's true of the attack on male headship in the home, attacks which also debilitate the lifelong nature of the union, and surely cause many marriages to end. It's true of the claim that marriages should be infertile and without children, and that a child is anything less than a blessing. These attacks all fit naturally together because they debilitate the family as God plans it. They deny its core

elements. More to the point, all these attacks come from one unique place: that of making the human heart and desire the determiner of our future, and not God.

That is where the real battle begins, children of God. It's not just whether a Christian wife will be spending her time canning goods at home around her children or going out being an optometrist or something instead. That is a small battle in the larger overall war. It is about whether we will make our heart the determiner of truth – as Satan tempted Eve in the garden saying, *“has God indeed said. . .”* – or whether we will respect God's truth and submit to Him. That is the battle with Satan we have to win. Those are the temptations we have to overcome. All of the truths of marriage which the Lord God gave us are good and beneficial for our life. How can we disdain even one? The desires of the heart, however attractive, cannot compete with God's path for us, which leads to life. The family according to God's way will heal the wounds on this society. Satan does not want that. No matter how much your culture is pushing you to embrace gender-bending and marriage ending, stand with Christ and the few who do not flow with the culture. Stand as the only one if you need to.

Sisters, if your social circle disdains you for keeping the home and meekly serving your husband, let them leave and find someone hipper than you to hang out with. You don't need the praises of your culture. You don't need to match the expectations of some character on television. You ONLY need to be faithful to God. That's it. If you get funny looks because you tell people you're hoping for a future of caring for your children, take those funny looks as anointing from God. King David was mocked and scoffed at by his enemies, yet David is remembered as a man after God's own heart (1 Samuel 13:14), and his enemies were either forgotten forever or punished with destruction. Know that in keeping the home and nurturing your children, you are God's vessel of life for the future, including the future of His Church. You are empowering to others. That is a mission together with the matriarchs Sarah, Rebekah, Rachel and Leah. It is a mission, though lesser, that can be compared with the mother of God.

More than you think

A man might ask himself – well where is this western woman who wants to drop the career to stay home and care for the kids? He might think there are so few there's no point in looking. The fact is there are more than you'd guess. There are even women who have been raised from day one to think having a career is the right thing, who later respond to their natural inclination or to their faith by desiring to be a mother and

homemaker. They may not even be open about it. They may feel if they are too open, they'll be called weak, and disrespected. I haven't done any polls, but I assure you they are many. God made women different from men, and the leaning toward the home life and toward children is in her nature. It is not just an aspect of culture. In fact it entered the culture because of our natural design. They may be waiting right now for a man who openly proclaims he is looking for a woman to do what women have always done. You just need to make it known. Trust that God will provide that woman for you. Then you walk in faith.

I've pointed out the importance of planning from the beginning of this book. This willingness to plan a marriage based on our faith and based on ethics needs to be primary, and our emotions need to be secondary. No matter what fond affections you feel toward a possible mate, you must make a priority of faith and virtue. You must be willing to reject marriage to someone of insincere faith, or who does not plan to live the right way. You go into disaster if you follow your feelings in choosing whom to marry. Man and wife both deserve the other to do their role. Be open about it and be committed from the beginning.

Finally – and this is primarily for western men – it is well known that if you are really surrounded by feminists in your city and have not been able to find a good woman, than women from other cultures or countries often have more traditional values. True, the secular elites are trying to change that, but it's still true as of this writing. If you have to, you may find more feminine and godly women in parts of Asia or Africa or the Latin world.^{xii} Obviously, the danger is you may get scammed. If you spend very little time getting to know a woman from afar, that can be doubly dangerous. However, if you actually have a year or so to get to know them in person and live close to them, it may be a better choice than your current locale. I found when living in Asia, in speaking of possible marriage with several women, that NONE of them had any attitude about the fact that the man was the head of the home. True, many are being trained to have careers, but they are a big step closer to tradition anyway, as they may have learned about homemaking from family, and their culture is not as hateful of that role as the West is. Just like anywhere else globally, that job was recognized for millennia as the role of the wife. God brought Ruth the mother of Jesse and David to Israel from a distant land. You can bring godly and life-giving women from afar, to bring us future kings.^{xiii}

I'm going to England and I'm going to see...

One of the exercises you give in teaching English is simple fill-in-the-blank sentences, which can be really fun. You can practice any

element of grammar that way. Students can use their imaginations to finish the sentence with whatever grammar point you're working on. One of the practices I would do in teaching children, was to ask them where they were going to go and what they were going to do there. It practices the "going to" future, which we use all the time. If you do it with places, you can talk about taking a trip, and then they'll tell you what they do on their trip and what they see there.

As I think about how much the Christian wife brings life and blessing to a home, I am reminded of that little exercise. When we go to a place, it is the people and the activities we go to see. We don't just go there to see the leader and hang out with him. If we were going to England, most of my foreign students would say they were going to see a building there, such as Big Ben, or see a soccer match, since they love soccer. Some might even want to see the trains. Not too many would say they want to hang out with the government. The nation they want to see is run by the government, but it's usually not a top interest. It's the life of the nation people come for. The activities. The appealing character.

The same is true in the household. The man may be the boss, the king as it were, yet he is acting through the wife and his children, so it is their life and activity that make the home appealing. It is the wife who plays the biggest role with the children, especially when they are young. It is the children who bring newness, excitement and constant activity. When we go to a foreign land, we rarely go to see the king. To see the husband, in our comparison. They go to see the life and character of the good people that fill up his kingdom. The king rules over the domain. His people fill it up with life. Just as the Son and Spirit are the way in which the Father reveals His will and His character more closely, the wife and children are the way the man most fully expresses himself. In a culture which demands that there are two kings – and no people to rule over – we should more starkly see the goodness and wholesomeness of God's order in the home. The land does not need two kings. Not only is that impossible, but it robs us of the very reason we came to his domain in the first place. We came to know the life, the activity, the character of his land. Only a woman can provide it. She is the bright splendor of the man.

For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, since he is the image and glory of God; but woman is the glory of man.

1 Corinthians 11:7

"On that day I raised My hand in an oath to them, to bring them out of the land of Egypt into a land that I had searched out for them, 'flowing with milk and honey,' the glory of all lands."

ⁱ *The Completely Achievable Path to Becoming a One-Income Family*, by Joshua Becker at www.becomingminimalist.com ·

6 Tips for Living on One Income, by Ellen Neuborne; at www.parents.com

How to Live on One Income (& Love It), by Janae Wise, October 2013 at bring-joy.com

ⁱⁱ *Are you worse off than Mom and Dad*, by Jeanne Sahadi, Sept. 11, 2003 at money.cnn.com

The Two Paycheck Effect, by Jeffrey Korzenik; Dec. 28, 2009 at www.marketwatch.com

The Two-Income Trap: Why Middle-Class Parents are Going Broke, by Elizabeth Warren and Amelia Tyagi, International Edition; August 17, 2004; published by Basic Books

ⁱⁱⁱ In fact the savings rate overall has gone WAY down. *Personal Saving rate in the United States from 1960 to 2017* at www.statista.com

^{iv} *Advantage Women*, by Colleen Flaherty; April 14, 2015 at www.insidehighered.com

This female author doesn't mind that women are favored in this industry, but is honest enough to quote the most recent study: "suggesting that women candidates are favored 2 to 1 over men for tenure-track positions in the science, technology, engineering and math fields."

What Board Directors Really Think of Gender Quotas, by Mararethe Wiersema and Marie Louise Mors; November 4, 2016 at <https://hbr.org>

This article details various European countries using quotas for hiring women, which demands a certain number of females be hired regardless of other factors: "Norway was the first to adopt a quota for female board members (40%) in 2004. Other nations followed suit – adopting either mandatory quotas (Germany, France, Belgium, Iceland, Italy) or voluntary goals (Austria, Finland, the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden, the UK), with goals for female representation ranging from 25% to 40%."

^v *Are Males Being Discriminated Against on College Campuses*, by Richard Vedder; November 12, 2018 at www.forbes.com

Special efforts are made to get women to study in the STEM disciplines, where men are numerically dominant, but no such effort is made to increase the number of men in other fields where women significantly outnumber men. Over 80 % of obstetricians doing their residency are female: are there any efforts to lure men into obstetrics?

Army fitness tests to be re-written to make sure female soldiers can qualify for frontline

duty, by Tom Sculthorpe; April 3, 2016 at www.dailymail.co.uk

Nearly half of females failed to graduate Army Infantry training, standards were also lowered, by Staff Writer; May 22, 2017

However, some sources who graduated from within the unit -whom requested concealed identities to protect their new careers- claimed a clear double-standard between males and females in their training cycle, including lighter rucksacks and lower expectations.

vi *1 in 5 US Men Unemployed*, by Kevin Spak; January 8, 2010 at www.newser.com

This was during the U.S. recession, but follows the overall trend of men in the workforce suffering from job loss more than women: Male unemployment has hit an all-time high, with a whopping 1 of every 5 working-age American men jobless, according to the latest government figures. The economic downturn has been especially brutal on traditionally male-dominated fields like construction and manufacturing, the Huffington Post explains, leading some to label it a “mancession.”

vii *Report Details Female Students’ Sexual Promiscuity*, by Jennifer Kabbany; July 15, 2013 at www.thecollegefix.com

Of course men prefer casual sex, and they get it from all too willing females on campus, as these misguided gals sure do “play that game, too,” as the headline noted. Unfortunate and sad.

viii A similar example of a broad principle being used in a specific situation would be Isaiah 5:20: “Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil.” I don’t think a pastor has ever lived who didn’t use that principle to speak of people in his own day who call evil good. Yet Isaiah is speaking in the context of the sins of national Israel. We can see that in speaking of the particular situation of Israel about 2,700 years ago, the prophet communicates a broad truth which is true today as well: that is a condemnation of those who treat evil as good and good evil. It didn’t stop being wrong 2,700 years ago.

ix Well not really finished. . . below are a couple of other objections answered:

You will sometimes hear attempted outs by people sympathetic to the wife’s role in the home, people who perhaps have read those Bible passages and don’t radically reinterpret them, but still want a way to live differently than God instructs. One common such excuse is to say – Well sure, God instructs a woman to keep the home, but He never PROHIBITS a woman from ever working outside the home. Well what do we make of this? You know, God does not need to specifically prohibit a long list of actions in order to instruct us what to do. Just as if your boss told you to prepare notes for him, he does not have to specifically tell you it’s wrong to talk on the phone instead. Or to read a book instead. If he told you to prepare notes, that’s what you do. So the lack of a prohibition does not mean we aren’t bound to respect the woman’s domestic role.

The fact that God has not called it sin for a woman to ever work outside the home simply leaves it open for the unmarried to spend some time with that, and it leaves it open for a widow with no means of support to do so. If not, then if a woman lost her

husband and went to pursue full-time employment, it would be akin to robbing a bank! Yet it is not. She is only doing what she has to do and has no other choice. However, we can't turn around the fact it's not always evil for a woman to work outside the home and claim we don't have to do what God told us. Of course we have to do what He told us. Those are His commands. If we willfully choose to ignore them, we are sinning before Him.

Likewise, some Christians will claim the Bible does indeed teach the wife's role at home, and then suggest that some people are just "called" to live differently. Some women have a career "calling," presumably from God. This is also nice-sounding nonsense. God does not call anyone to disobey Him. So if a woman feels she has a calling to a career, it is a calling from her own rebellious mind and not from God. God does not call people to disobedience. It may be that the Almighty provides some women with the ability to make some money from the home alongside numerous other household activities. It may also be that God may give a woman who has lost her husband a work opportunity out of necessity, along with the tools to fulfill it. However, since God's only teaching in the entire Bible is for the wife to bear the children and keep the home, we can be confident that God does not give career women their calling. That would pit our Creator in conflict with Himself.

You could imagine if you want other examples of special callings that disobey the Bible. For example, the Bible teaches that elders should not be drunkards or brawlers. Yet what if I told you some drunkards have special callings to be elders. Or that brawlers might receive a calling. You probably wouldn't take that too seriously and would immediately suggest that the only way a drunkard or a brawler would receive a calling to be an elder would be if they changed their lifestyle first. That's logical isn't it? The Bible also teaches that marriage is between a man and a woman, yet what if one of the liberal "churches" taught that some men have a "calling" from God to marry other men. You'd ridicule the very idea. In a similar way, we should not take seriously the idea that career women have a calling. It amounts to a destruction of the harmony and truthfulness of God's Word. ALL that the Almighty teaches in truth, and He will not lie.

× *U.N. Complicit in Forced Sterilizations*, by Wendy McElroy; December 23, 2002 at www.independent.org

"Some Peruvian health workers reportedly received bonuses ranging variously from \$4 to \$12 U.S. for each woman they "persuaded" to have a tubal ligation. Doctors and hospitals were pressured to meet sterilization quotas. It's not surprising that reports and testimonials of forced sterilizations abound."

Sterilization of Women and Girls with Disabilities; November 10, 2011 at www.hrw.org
China's one-child policy itself leads to forced abortions, PRI Staff at www.pop.org

"The draconian campaign that I witnessed began by ordering young mothers to have abortions, arresting them when they refused, and incarcerating them under conditions of extreme psychological pressure. Those who still refused were physically dragged into the local medical clinic, where they were held down on the operating table while they

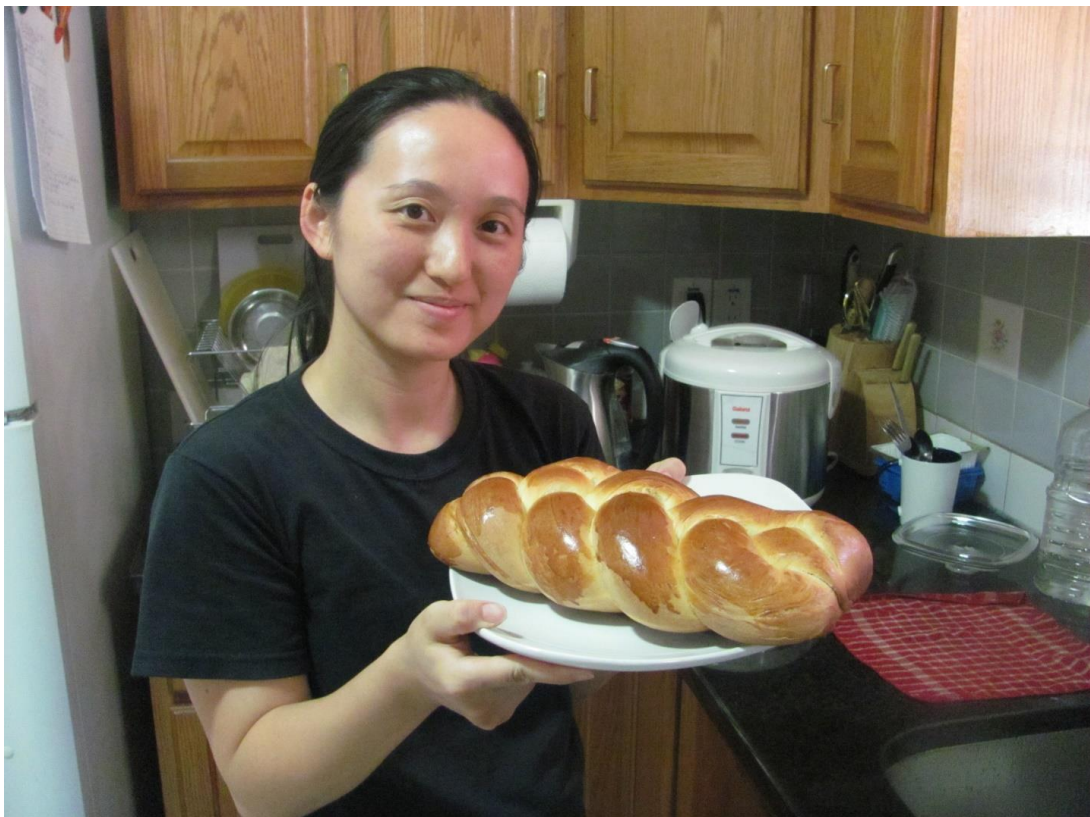
were aborted and sterilised. Many of these women were in the third trimester of pregnancy. Indeed, some were already in labour.”

^{xi} *Families as Roommates: Changes in U.S. Household Size from 1850 to 2000*, by Todd Schoellman et al; August, 2007 at <http://editorialexpress.com>

“While the average American in 1850 lived in a household of 6.7 members, the average American today lives in a household of only 3.5 members, a 48% drop. The decline affected people of all ages and birth cohorts.”

^{xii} Naturally, you don’t always have to leave the country, as many of them come over to the West. However, if they have been here since early childhood or were born here, chances are much higher they have taken on the mainstream cultural values.

^{xiii} I’m sure that has to be unpleasant for a western woman to read. However, it has to be said, as many men in the West are sick of manly women. Be understanding. If more women in your own country behaved as God calls them to, men would not have to take out the globe just to look for a wife. If you are upset by this, encourage other women to do their jobs, and do yours as well. Future generations will thank you.



Woman with a challah, but not a cariyah!

Chapter 4

ONE FLESH UNTIL DEATH

*“Have you not read that He who made them at the beginning
‘made them male and female,’*

*‘and said, ‘For this reason a man shall leave his father and
mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become
one flesh’?*

*“So then, they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore what
God has joined together, let not man separate.”*

(Matthew 19:4,5-6)

I remember I was working outside doing yardwork at a house. I was out near the street. There were on-and-off gusts in the air, but up high it must have been stronger. I heard a loud sound coming from near the house I was working at. Looked and didn't see anything. Then I heard it again, and twisted my neck to see. Suddenly an ear-splitting crack peeled through the air and a long, wooden splitting sound. A thick limb on a tree by the house had been ripped off in the wind. It landed thankfully right between the car in the driveway and the house, only barely touching the car and scratching it. I could see where the meat of the tree had been ripped apart, as the limb, and then the whole side of the tree it was attached to, separated painfully from the rest.

Thank God no one was hurt. I thought back to a few weeks ago, when I had been there with the boss and about 5 other workers, and we'd all been going back and forth through the gate into the back yard. We passed right under the tree. Any one of us could have been hurt or killed. Today, I'd been the only one on the property.

What strikes me about that terrible break, is that it was clearly not separating two different things that happened to be attached. If you separate two things you just untie them, or disconnect them. Rather, it was ripping apart one single organism, the tree. That was the reason for the long, terrible tear I heard. One organism was splitting, and being destroyed. The other impression is the danger. The crushing power of the falling limb. The unpredictable nature of the fall. I had felt only average breezes on the ground. They must have been greater higher up.

Just as we do not rip apart one organism, unless we mean to dismember or kill it, we do not separate the one flesh of marriage. We do not rip off its arm or its legs. For truly when man is joined with wife, they are no longer two, but one. We may see two entities with our eyes, but the Spirit of God has created a new single body from them. It is God who has joined them together in His grace. His special power makes this so. If you were to take one member, one spouse, out of a marriage, it would not be like removing a can of soda from a pack. It would be like splitting the tree above. It would rip one organism in two.

Only Death Separates Us

The constancy of Christian marriage is rooted in man and wife being joined by God. The fact that it brings stability to man, wife and children along with stability to society comes from its core nature and purpose. God makes it. Man cannot end it. The lifelong nature of marriage is knowable also through natural law, as many other cultures have recognized that, at least in intention, marriage is a union for life. This is clear in that the union produces children, who require the father and mother and continual care. The father and mother will later rely on help from their children in their old age. It is clear in the powerful emotional bond produced through love and physical intimacy. It is clear in the sustenance provided to society through stable families. It is clear in the severe pain and trauma caused by separating the two. You don't have to be a Christian to recognize that marriage is more than a temporary joining between two people. It is a union for life.

We as Christians know it is supernatural. We also know that its permanence is a part of its witness. For just as the love of the husband signifies the love of Messiah for His Bride, just as the submission of the wife signifies the submission of the Church to Christ, the permanence of marriage signifies Christ's constant presence with His Church. Christ will never leave His Church. (Matthew 16:18, Hebrews 13:5) He will be with us until the end of the age. (Matthew 28:20)

One of the things you should know going into marriage, is that your

spouse will always be with you. If you are married, you can expect to grow old with that person. You will go through marriage, birth of children, raising them, and then barring tragedy or martyrdom, you will grow old together. I say that with confidence because that is how God made marriage. He told us so. This is a central truth that you should be united on before you get married: that you will be united for life and that nothing can ever separate you. I went into marriage with my wife fully agreed on that. Not only did we commit ourselves to our lifelong union, but we committed ourselves to forgiveness. We were very open about the fact that sin occurs in every marriage, and that the solution is to forgive. To continue to live with the person. To continue to do our job as either husband or wife. The response to harm will be to forgive. This is one of many reasons why I went into marriage with no doubts, and why we both have peace together, without worry. Our marriage is lifelong by its nature. Not by our personal willing. But by its nature given by God.

Our bond reflects Christ's covenant with the Church. When you are married, that will be true of your bond as well. Be joyful about that. It shows the world, among other great truths, the unbreakable bond between the Lamb and His Bride. No earthly trouble will ever separate husband and wife. Only death separates us. Yet for a husband to send away his wife shows the world Christ sending away His Church, perhaps to marry Islam or New Atheism instead. A woman leaving her husband shows the world the Church returning to harlotry and to living under God's wrath. It shows the world redemption offered mankind and redemption rejected. It shows the world that the new birth is false. The new creation isn't new. And one is not one but two. God does not make all things new.

Marriage brings peace. That peace is permanent. The world will tell you about a war between the "sexes" in part within the lustful conflict between man and woman. It will tell you about a war between the sexes in woman's desire to do what man has traditionally done, and take over his role in society. When I was an unbeliever, and used women like playthings as most selfish men do, I used to say – the war of the sexes is over, and I won. That's an unspeakably arrogant thing to say, I know, but there was some decent logic behind it too. I reached a point where I knew I could get what I wanted from a woman. She could not get what she wanted, at least if it was the stability that woman has traditionally desired. Moreover, I didn't have to work, as I knew she could make the bulk, if not all of the money. That's quite a victory if you think about it. But the secret of the situation is this: there is no war between man and woman. God made us compatible. If we do things God's way, there is peace. This is true. Do things God's way and you will have peace in marriage. In part that is why

marriage is a little form of God's redemption, a miniature of the salvation vessel. There is an end to the enmityⁱ. There is a permanent union. The sovereign redeems and protects his people. The husband washes his bride. It is too great and important to be a temporary contract. Rather, it fills up all of life.

If the average man, who runs through woman after woman, were to see things clearly, he would see how anti-life this is. He has likely experienced some of the harm already. He has experienced some of the pain and caused it in others. However, if he could see the harm he would realize how it turns the good upside down. He has to play games or lie to achieve his end. He has to stunt emotional bonding, which is a real, tangible process, unnecessarily causing extreme and long-term pain. He becomes a spreader of disease. He likely has brought children to life through immorality with his harlots, and those children will not be given the care and protection that God and nature dictate they have. They will either be killed in the womb by an abortionist, or they will be raised outside of the protection of a family, being exposed to much greater danger that way. The smallest among us will be tossed to the cold, uncaring elements. After many years of his whore-mongering, he is left without seed, a society is left without a future, and he has no children to help him in his old age. If his neighbors have behaved the same way, their kids won't support him either. Their kids won't exist.

You see to treat the union of the woman and the man as temporal, is to destroy. It is to turn God's order upside down. Yet this is not only true for the fornicator. It is true also for the spouse who has an "affair." It is true for the people who practice polygamy, albeit for slightly different reasons. Likewise, it is true for those who send away their husband or wife and take another. They are sinning. They are breaking God's order. They are making the union of man and woman into partner swapping. They may tell themselves it's okay, they don't do it often, they have a good reason or a host of other things, but the man or woman who takes a second spouse isn't better off than the fornicator. They aren't that different from the polygamist either, they simply have their spouses consecutively, rather than all at once. All of these are against God's intention for us.

I say some of the same things to Christians who think they can end marriages as I say to people who try and justify other kinds of immorality. Not only is it against God's Word, it is documented to be harmful. Immorality of all kinds is documented to be harmful. Ending marriages is likewise harmful. Among other things, children are more likely to be exposed to harm, they are more likely to be abused by a step-parent, they are more likely to end up in crime and violence if separated from a father. We knew a lot of this ages ago, but much of it is really beyond dispute at

this point. The results of divorce alone have been tracked for over two decades. What we knew to be true has been proven. The effects on the children are clearly negative on every level, including the emotional harm and the harm to their own future marriages.

According to a summary of well-documented facts at The Heritage Foundationⁱⁱ:

Children whose parents have divorced are increasingly the victims of abuse. They exhibit more health, behavioral, and emotional problems, are involved more frequently in drug abuse, and have higher rates of suicide.

Children of divorced parents perform more poorly in reading, spelling, and math. They also are more likely to repeat a grade and to have higher drop-out rates and lower rates of college graduation.

Families with children that were not poor before the divorce see their income drop as much as 50 percent. Almost 50 percent of the parents with children that are going through a divorce move into poverty after the divorce.

Religious worship, which has been linked to better health, longer marriages, and better Family life, drops after the parents divorce.

The divorce of parents, even if it is amicable, tears apart the fundamental unit of American society. Today, according to the Federal Reserve Board's 1995 Survey of Consumer Finance, only 42 percent of children aged 14 to 18 live in a "first marriage" family—an intact two-parent married family. It should be no surprise to find that divorce is having such profound effects on society."

A study entitled *The Unexpected Legacy of Divorce: A 25 Year Landmark Study* documents the effects of divorce over several decades from the 1970's to 1990's. Included in this report are negative effects at various stages of life from childhood to adulthood. Of adolescence it says:

Overall, there was more acting out among the adolescents in the divorced homes than those in the intact homes. This finding coincides with reports from large-scale studies (McLanahan & Sandefur, 1994). One in five of the girls had her first sexual experience before age 14. Over half were sexually active with multiple partners during high school. The girls told us they often frequented bars where pickups were common. They were driven by the wish to be held by a man and to be sought after. Sex itself was not their goal but rather the price they paid for the attention. Several said that they would have sex only if they were drunk or high on drugs. Precautions were rarely taken. Although we neglected to tally the incidence, several of the high school girls reported having multiple abortions.

Of adult relationship the report further includes this almost predictable result:

One third of the men and women were openly pessimistic about marriage and divorce and sought to avoid both. "If you don't marry, then you don't divorce, "was their mantra."

Only a few were outright cynical. The majority were eager, even desperate, for a lasting relationship, and fearful that they would never achieve it. They did not want the lives their parents had. Their message was clear: "My parents' divorce is still incomprehensible to me. They met in college. They fell in love. They were compatible in their tastes and values. So, what is to keep the same fate from happening to me? "Over and over, they told us, "I'd love to get married, but I'm sure that I'd jinx it. "Or, "Any relationship I'm in will dissolve."

This should not shock us. What an astoundingly selfish thing that parents still say – oh my child will understand that we're getting a divorce. My child won't be harmed by it. My child knows mommy and daddy are better off apart. – What selfishness. What self-delusion. We have known for two thousand years that God makes us one in marriage for life. We have known for many years before modern studies that the effects of divorce are harmful. Yet man returns to his own vomit and keeps telling himself the same self-satisfied lie: "My children will understand my children will not be harmed." Well, that is a possibility. But it's also a possibility that if you leave your small child in the middle of the road, that traffic will not kill them. Still, you don't go leaving them in the road under the belief they just might live. That would be insane. Therefore, we do not assume that OUR children are the ones that won't be harmed. Children are harmed by divorce.

Trust

There is much more I am going to say on the one flesh union that pictures salvation, but I want to stop for a moment and speak about trust. Trust in God first. Trust in Christ. The life of the Holy Spirit with us. I have personally met believers who have the same attitude about marriage as those children of divorce listed in the study. They have the attitude that it is bound to fail. They are not confident in their ability to have a successful and happy marriage. They don't trust that the partner they might marry will stay with them, but fear they just might run off at any point, sooner or later. It goes without saying that the believers I've met with this attitude are not married yet, and some are not especially close to finding a mate. Their attitude has shaped their actions. Their attitude has destroyed their confidence. Moreover, it has not just been their own

parents who have given them that idea, but the society in general, including other Christians. For even if they did not come from a splintered home themselves, they likely know others who have, they know the dangers, they know the common social expectations of fighting and breakup. They know that many other Christians don't even believe in biblical marriage anyway. Who wouldn't be scared away from marriage? To watch Christians who have been married 20 or 30 years send the other away can be shocking. Why should the future generations believe in marriage?

You know, we are not a people who get truth from other human beings. We are not reliant on other human beings ultimately for the guidance in life which counts. We are a people who receive divine truth from God, and we have the Holy Spirit dwelling with us. (John 14:26) So I answer the above questions with my own question: how can we who are alive in Christ let sinful men steer us from our course? How can we who have been brought out of sin and death, fear death once again? If we have a Savior who conquered the grave, we should not fear death. Or pain. Or divorce. If it was up to fellow Christians to lead us in our faith, we'd be lost. That's true of marriage. That's true of anything. I have worked in ministry several times, and seeing the kind of compromise and corruption that exists, I'd say if it were up to mankind to lead me, I'd just go back to being an atheist. I'd never say the name of Christ again. Man's example, even the better examples, falls short. It is a failure. Yet the Bible teaches that we who have the Holy Spirit of promise are being washed clean, made righteous, conformed to Christ. (Ephesians 1:13, 1 Corinthians 6:11, Romans 8:29) See that's up to God, not up to man. It says that the Spirit of God will guide us in all truth (John 16:13), and that even when man fails in the greatest ways God is still true to His promise. (Romans 3:3-4). No amount of disgraced marriages can ever take us from our course if we believe in God. If we believe in all that He tells us. We will never be confounded by failed marriages.

Therefore the conclusion of what I am saying is this: that as a Christian you can have a successful, peaceful and godly marriage if you trust in our Lord. If you are a child of divorce, you can have a successful, peaceful and godly marriage if you trust in our Lord. If everyone you personally know is divorced, you can have a successful, peaceful and godly marriage if you trust in our Lord. Trust in Him and obey. One preacher that I follow talks about marriage in his own family, and how 22 out of 25 close relatives either got divorced or had children out of wedlock. That is 22 out of 25! Yet he is happily married, and raising up many children in the faith. Those failed relationships did not stop him; they only inspire him to do his job more earnestly. The world needs the witness of

your marriage, including the witness of your kind forbearance if things start to go wrong in your marriage. Including the witness of your forgiveness when your spouse sins in your marriage. The world needs your children raised up in the Lord. It needs your children raised up in virtue. It needs the image of the perfect eternal God that marriage is. Unless you plan celibacy uniquely for the sake of service to God, the world needs to see your marriage.

If you have ever read about the mutiny on the Bounty (the real life event not the movie) you will hear about what is possible in the way of survival. Much of the crew of the British ship the HMS Bounty mutinied, in part from missing the pleasure of Tahiti and in part from the harshness of the captain, and they set the deposed captain Bligh and the sailors loyal to him off the main boat in a simple 23-foot open vessel. Now, a 23-foot open boat is not how you want to sail on the seas, yet the mutineers had control over the boat, and the rest had to survive on this glorified raft. Captain Bligh, in a ridiculous maritime feat, sailed the small, overloaded boat about 4,000 miles from the south Pacific to southeast Asia. He lost only a handful of men in the incredible journey. In a way, believers are like him. We have seen the mutineers take over marriage. In fact, we have seen the mutineers take over the churches. Yet we have been given enough grace to take our men and protect our men on a long ocean voyage. What we have is little, but with God's supernatural power we arrive at our destination. The countless divorces we see are distressing, but they are not distressing enough to mean we will fail. We have all the tools we need. God gave them to us. He navigates for us. You can trust that God will make you one flesh with your spouse for life.

By the way I want to mention what happened to the mutineers. The mutineers, led by an ironically named Fletcher Christian eventually landed on an island in the middle of the south Pacific. They began fighting amongst each other. They killed most of their own people. The men discovered how to make liquor from the native plants, and things only got worse. The women tried to escape from the hellhole and failed. In the end it was only one man and a handful of women left, plus their children. The rest died. This is what will happen to the destroyers of marriage as well. Those who stay with the captain and ride in his boat, will make it to safe shores. The captain is amazing. The rest will inherit death, but there is still hope for their children.

A Club That Would Have Me as a Member

I remember when I saw our first child at the hospital, just after he'd been born in, I knew that instant that he would be blessed by us. He

would be powerfully blessed by having me as a father, and by my wife with me. He would always have that, to teach him and love him and train him. He would never have to see one of us gone. At least barring tragedy. He would never have to take a train just to see one of his parents once a month. There was nothing over confident in that feeling either. I didn't think I had any special skills. I simply knew he would be blessed, since God has given us His promise, and since He has also given us His instructions. Since the basic biology and social makeup we all have DEMANDS that he receive those things from us. I knew this child would be blessed.

That was a far cry from how I thought before I was a believer. When I lived without the light of God, and when I practiced immorality, my view was different. As far as marriage goes, I really figured I wouldn't want to be a part of any club that would have me as a member. That's an old joke, but it's how I thought. If someone wanted me as part of their club, there must be something very wrong with them in the first place. So why would I want to join their club? Growing up with a lot of depression, and experiencing it for many years, I also thought it would be better not to reproduce at all, as I may pass that despair along to my children. That would be a curse to them. I did not expect to marry. I did not trust at all that I'd be good for a child. I did not trust myself nor did I trust the women who might be a potential mate. That makes sense too. When you spend years using women, and them using you, it's hard to imagine what a stable bond is in the first place.

Yet when I knew the light of God, and our little child knew his first breath and the light of the world around us, it was no trouble for me to say I will bless this child. A large part of that knowledge is also the knowledge that I and my wife are united for life, because that is what marriage is. As I said, our very biology and society itself demands it. God commands it. So I knew at that time our child will not experience the instability, and even open warfare that occurs in many relationships. He will be raised with a certainty of who his parents are, that they love each other, that they love him, and that they are there for him, day after day and year after year, with the same power that brings up the sun and moon. My wife and I have become one flesh. In this, far beyond the knowledge of a child on the first day outside the womb, he would receive a wellspring of life.

No longer Two but One

When we hear the phrase that man and wife become "one flesh" I think our first instinct is to think of its spiritual meaning. It refers to husband and wife having one purpose together. It refers to husband and wife

having a great closeness or invisible bond. This is all true. However, I think if we want to appreciate what God does in marriage, as well as in intimacy, we have to realize that part of the meaning of these words is physical. In what ways do man and wife literally become one flesh?

Perhaps the most obvious way is that in the marital act, in physical intimacy in the marriage bed, the two bodies join together as one. Just as we were physically one before God made Eve from Adam's substance, so we are physically one again, even if in a different sense. This is perhaps why Paul teaches that one can even become "*one flesh*" with a harlot (1 Corinthians 6:16), because there is a physical level of the meaning. Just as obviously, the husband also leaves a piece of himself in her called his seed, and this seed may physically unite with a part of the woman known as the egg. Their children will contain a portion of both their father and mother. The two become one flesh through this process in their children. In line with this physical unity and reproduction, we learn from modern studies something unexpected: that a female stores male DNA in her brain, DNA that comes from her children and enters through her uterusⁱⁱⁱ. As the man's DNA is part of the child's, she contains a piece of both of them in her body for life. We don't fully understand the mechanism, but it is real. The couple comes to share DNA physically.

On top of this, we know that husbands and wives share the same microorganisms that crawl on us and in us, both good and bad. They share illnesses, which come from bacteria and viruses. Their bodies suffer and heal together. Modern science also teaches us that empathy has a physical reality in the brain. Actual brain cells serve the purpose of mirroring the feelings of another so we can feel what they feel in a way. While this may be true outside of marriage as well, two partners who have lived together for years, and are emotionally intimate, have little mirror images of the other in their brains.^{iv} Moreover, the pleasure of emotional bonding actually functions somewhat like a drug. It fills pleasure receptors. The bonding in marriage, a bonding so strong it is meant to last for life and often includes great emotional grief when it ends, includes the physical movement of bonding chemicals driven by our husband or wife.^v Our heart is shared with our spouse that way. Our spouse's heart with ours. Studies have even shown that couples who stay together many years also begin to LOOK a little like each other.^{vi} Perhaps by imitating the expressions of the other countless times, their faces begin to share the same shape. Therefore, our spiritual union is reflected in the physical. It is not mere metaphor to say we become one flesh. Our bonding is without a doubt a physical one.

This is one reason why love is so satisfying to the core of our being, and why it is so agonizing to break up a union; we are not merely two human

beings sharing the same goal. We are not just two people attracted to a facet of the other. Rather the union God has given us literally makes us one in the core of our beings. It unites our flesh. From the most visible organs of our body to our innermost mind which resides on the brain, we become one. The power of that union, and the wretchedness of ripping it asunder only gives us a glimpse into divine truth; truth of how God the Father and God the Son share in the same being together, although theirs is perfect and ours imperfect. It also gives us a glimpse of how the Christ is bringing us into His world, through taking on flesh. God took on our nature and lived every experience in it. Now He brings us to live with Him and He with us, living within and among us. You think you are intimately one with your spouse. You are more so with God in Christ.

And all the body does

The unity of our flesh from two beings to one reflects a unity of all that we have and that we do. Our goods become shared possessions. Our money shared funds. Just as Father and Son share in the glory together, just as the Father passes the divine nature down to the Son, a man shares in all that he has with his wife, and all that that she has also comes under his domain. It is like a little commune. And if you have ever been the type to get romantic about communes or communism, here's your chance to learn about communal living; get married and share everything with your spouse. Then share it with your children, and pass it on to them (at least that which you don't give to the church and the community). I may have headship over all of my family's funds, and my wife needs to ask me before making any larger purchases, but all I have is for her and our family. Were she to ignore the need to ask me before making large purchases, she would not be stealing. She would be disobedient, but not a thief. You cannot steal what already belongs to you. In fact, in most instances, I am content to bring home the paycheck, and let my wife take care of the funds, as well as the regular purchases. What's mine is hers. What's hers is mine. There is a computer I generally sit at to do my work, but if she needs to use it, she knows she can, unless I am busy on it. She tends to use the tablet, but if I desired I could use it too, just as long as I could figure out how to. Obviously there is girly stuff that she has in her possession. And a few things that I exclusively use. Yet even these are shared property, and do not properly speaking belong to anyone. As a unity of one flesh, we practice communalism that way. The goods pass among each other, and to our children. I have authority over all of them, but they are for everyone.

The actions and activities of husband and wife also get shared, even

though there are unique ones to man and woman. The act basic to marriage of raising children is a shared act. My wife takes on the most imminent part of that when they are little, being the one closest to them, feeding the babies, putting them to bed at night. I also play my part, though when they are little my part is not as close as hers. I help out if she needs it. I play with them. As the children get older my role with them grows. Husband and wife intertwine themselves in nearly all activities I can think of. Yet they do so without losing their distinction, and sometimes their unique role. They minister in the church together. They host guests together. They take trips together. They may experience many hardships as a unity as well; losing a job, dealing with an unruly child, losing a family member or simply getting lost on the road and frustrated together. The unity of flesh becomes a unity of everything flesh does. When I shared the Gospel with Chinese speakers overseas, my wife became my interpreter, and also ministered to the women. We were thoroughly involved witnessing, but in different steps in the process and in different jobs.

There are people whom I think hyper-spiritualize existence and say “we are what we do.” I disagree. We are the beings in bodies that God made us. However, those bodies are designed for all that they will do, so our actions are enwrapped in our bodily design. Our mind’s design. Our spirit’s essence. As a Christian we were created for good works (Ephesians 2:10), and that is what we put our body to doing. We are made to give glory to God our Father and His hand made our flesh wonderfully designed to fulfill that glorification. As man and wife, we do those things as one flesh not two. Our bodies, united, serve God as one.

The sharing within marital life reflects the eternal sharing within the godhead, even in the act of redemption. You might say then, that our sharing is also sacramental, as marriage itself is. Our sharing reflects the sharing of the God we worship. Being “one flesh” manifests the Lord’s oneness. While it would take a lengthy essay to present all the Bible passages on this beautiful topic, the Scriptures reveal the same sharing of goods and of actions among Father, Son and Spirit of God. It is harder to speak of “possessions” with God, yet still we see a sharing from Father to Son, as all of creation, the largest possession one could possibly have, belongs to God. (Psalm 50:10-12) Yet we are told that all creation was made FOR the Son. (Colossians 1:16, Hebrews 2:10) We know the Son will reign over that creation (1 Corinthians 15:25-28), and will reign with His children (that’s you by the way if you are born again). What belongs to the Father belongs to the Son. We also see Father and Son united in divine actions; we see this in making the cosmos (John 1:3), forgiveness (Matthew 9:6), and even in judgment of the world. (John 5:22) We see this

in bringing men to faith, as we know that the Son calls to His sheep (John 10:1-14), yet we also know we cannot believe on the Son unless the Father draws us to Him. (John 6:44) We see it too in perseverance or keeping the faith, as Jesus shows that the power of his hand depends on His Father's hand, and does so in the process of teaching His oneness with God:

“And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand.

“My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father's hand.

“I and My Father are one.”

(John 10:28-30)

Perhaps most greatly, we see Father, Son and Spirit, all sharing together in the glorious act of resurrection, the resurrection of Christ that brings us life^{vii}. Jesus spoke plainly of his power to rise from the dead, saying *“No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This command I have received from My Father.”* (John 10:18) We know the Father participated in this saving event as passages such as Acts 5:30 tell us *“The God of our fathers raised up Jesus whom you murdered by hanging on a tree.”* Furthermore, the Holy Spirit played a hand in this miracle, as we are taught, *“But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.”* (Romans 8:11) The holy family of the Trinity share in essence, life, and all activities including the one that miraculously saves the lost soul. This is the greatest miracle in the Bible. It is the act of the family together. How can we not marvel at the honor we've been given to manifest this truth through marriage? The sharing of treasures. The harmony of action. The work of witness. How can we not desire our family to love in the way that God loves, completely in our nature, and all we have and all we do? Our marriage in oneness pictures the God who saves. Our marriage leads souls to Him.

The completeness of what it means to become one flesh is a major reason that tearing apart that flesh is so hateful and violent. It is one reason why it is so traumatic, leaving people angry for years, callously betrayed, and leaving children without the stability and peace that they need. Not only are many divorces followed by anger and emotional trauma, but sometimes they are followed by actual violence, murder or suicide^{viii}. Every time I see a news story about a familial murder, I check to see what the state of the marriage was, and typically I see the marriage was about to end or was ending. This is hardly a surprise. Not to justify sin, but violence, murder and suicide are predictable results of divorce.

Two people in their bodies have been torn apart, in their emotional bonds, they have had their possessions divvied up, their house or houses split, their children usually turned toward one parent and against the other. They've often been accused of things they never did and demonized by the other. Not rarely, false accusations have been made to the police and government institutions have become involved. The flesh, the belongings, the beautiful and intimate actions that make up our life as a couple have been torn asunder. It is no wonder the Lord God forbids this, and compares it to violence. It is no wonder it drives some to end human life. It is not the uncoupling of two people. It is the painful sawing in half of one man.

God Hates Divorce

*“For the LORD God of Israel says
That He hates divorce,
For it covers one’s garment with violence,”
Says the LORD of hosts.
“Therefore take heed to your spirit,
That you do not deal treacherously.”
(Malachi 2:16)*

In one simple revelation God tells us His attitude about divorce: He hates divorce. This was true even in the time of Moses' Covenant when there was some limited permission to divorce and take another wife, and when there was a limited permission for a man to take several wives. God hates the sending away of a spouse. We must love what God loves, and hate what God hates.

God calls up Israel on its sins, here for its sin of dealing treacherously with the wife of man's youth, who is the wife by covenant. Like many souls echo in words today, the Almighty states the importance of bringing forth godly youth from marriage, for this is what He desires. God has made them one, therefore *“let none deal treacherously with the wife of his youth.”* (Malachi 2:15) It is then that the Lord continues by saying that He hates divorce, and comparing it to violence, which covers us like a cloak.

Strangely, there are those today that wish to rewrite this passage. They don't want it to say as boldly what it says: that God hates divorce. They will interpret the Hebrew word for divorce *“shalach”* to mean some other kind of putting away. In this they will try and hammer away at God's truth for us.

Yet this passage is solid, and it means what most have always taken it to mean. It may be true that the word *“shalach”* very commonly means to send something away, not necessarily a husband or wife. However, this

pointing to the common meaning changes nothing here. It indeed is translated “divorce” when the context dictates it. For example, in Deuteronomy 22:19, which it clearly talking about the captive wife taken into the home. “Send away” naturally means divorce. It is also used in conjunction with the phrase write a “certificate of divorce” in various passages including Deuteronomy 24 verses 1 and 3. Therefore, when we see the context of Israel treating the wives of covenant treacherously, we rightfully translate “He hates sending away” to mean “He hates divorce.”

If that context is not enough, the simple New Testament knowledge that God unites us for life, and man may not separate us, locks us in just as powerfully into “*shalach*” meaning divorce. For we know better than they did in Malachi’s time that God’s intention has always been for man and wife to be united for life. Therefore, that great ripping and tearing, that attempt by man to divide one great organism into two, is a sin, and to unite with another is adultery. In light of this alone, we should see no ambiguity in the prophet’s words.^{ix}

Interestingly, the attitude of the modern Church toward this sin in our midst is almost the same as the attitude of Israel that Malachi relates. For despite its sin of divorce and despite its other sins, Israel still had the gall to say:

*“Everyone who does evil
Is good in the sight of the LORD,
And He delights in them,”
Or, “Where is the God of justice?”
(Malachi 2:17)*

So too do the Christians of today, those who boldly bear the cross or profess the name of Jesus say: “All who send away their spouse are good in the sight of God, and His grace covers them.” And “Surely God will not punish those who take other husbands or wives. God is loving. He does not condemn.”

This same damnable lie that Israel told itself is the same phrase repeated ad nauseum today. “God doesn’t condemn my divorce. God will not punish me.”

Well it was a lie then. It is a lie now, brethren. Be warned.

Moreover, be suspicious of anyone who wants to reinterpret that passage, in this way or any other. They have an agenda, and it is to make light of the Church’s sin.

What I used to believe. Why I changed.

A wife is bound by law as long as her husband lives; but if her

husband dies, she is at liberty to be married to whom she wishes, only in the Lord.
(1 Corinthians 7:39)

Like many Christians today, I used to believe that there were at least two legitimate reasons that one could have a divorce, and then remarry. In fact, I was still under that deception when I got married, although in our personal agreement, my wife and I both understood that we practice forgiveness, and not divorce. The reason why I accepted what so many others do, is that I did a lazy form of exegesis; I made the heart of my understanding come from three words in Greek: *“except for fornication.”* Not only that, but the versions of the Bible I had read had translation such as *“except for marital unfaithfulness”* or *“except for sexual immorality.”* So I was not even certain on the exact words. But either way, in looking for an answer to marriage questions in the New Testament, I relied mostly on three words. That is a bad idea. I had also some basic familiarity with the other common exception, and had never given much examination to 1 Corinthians 7, when it says one is *“not under bondage”* and that there should be *“peace.”* Although there exists no permission to remarry in that passage, like most I was happy to see it there anyway, or write it in. It just made sense to me personally. I also could have been held sway by some of the other MORE than 2 exceptions that Christians claim, such as physical violence, but I was not wholly convinced. If you had asked me at that time what the Bible teaches, I would have said that divorce and remarriage is sin, except for adultery and the forced divorce by an unbeliever.

I finally came to respect the lifelong nature of the marriage covenant while doing research to write a page about marriage for my Church reform website. In doing research, I was confronted with two realities that changed my mind. Number one, I actually sat down and read all of the New Testament teachings on marriage, divorce and remarriage, and was confronted with multiple passages that state without qualification that marriage is for life and that remarriage is adultery. The Scripture even states plainly that man and wife are united until death, and once the partner dies, you are then free to remarry. They are not ambiguous scriptures. Therefore, if we are going to approach what three words in Greek mean, we need to do it within the understanding of the main clear scriptures that teach on the same subject. Scripture cannot contradict itself. Number two, I was also faced with the teachings of the very early Church, teachings which commonly take the Bible at face value, and condemn remarriage. Most of the earliest of the Christian Fathers who wrote on this subject did not permit one divorced to remarry. In their

writings they are even faced with the situation of an innocent party in adultery who is separated from their spouse, and they instruct that person to remain single. They take it for granted what the New Testament teaches, that if a separation occurs, you either reunite with the spouse if possible, or you remain single. They knew it was a hard teaching. Yet that is what they taught. They knew the temptations of lust. Yet they taught this simple truth.

In fact, if you look at the history of the Church, it has primarily been one of gradually falling away from a respect for the lifelong nature of marriage. The earliest writings boldly condemn remarriage as a sin although they permit separation in very limited circumstances. Then, close to the end of the early Church era, we see a single teaching by John Chrysostom saying remarriage should be allowed based on "Pauline Privilege." This over time found its way into Catholic Church canon law. Around the time of the split between the Western and Eastern Church, over 1,000 years into Church history, the Eastern Orthodox branch officially allowed remarriage as a doctrine of their church, and today could be described as liberal regarding it. Almost 500 years later with the Protestant revolution, the major early Protestant leaders found some limited allowances for divorce and remarriage, at least one was downright liberal. Protestants on the whole, though most churches permitted remarriage under limited circumstances, stayed married for life. The biblical teaching about marriage, the common sense importance of marriage, and social stigma all kept Protestants mostly united for life. Once liberalism came to the Church, Protestant Christians began divorcing and remarrying like there was no tomorrow, with a complete collapse happening in the middle of the 20th century. That is almost 2,000 years after Christ. The 20th century also saw the Catholic Church become liberal with annulments and the 21st century saw them allow Communion for the remarried, this accomplished under a Pope who is clearly not Catholic in his belief system. The Anglican Church did not let down its guard completely until the early 2000's. That is how long it took for Satan to rip Christians as a whole away from Christ's teaching on marriage. He did it step by step over 2,000 years.^x

Yet if we respect all the New Testament Scriptures which speak directly on this topic, and if we respect the earliest voices in Church history, then the Church today, like Israel in Malachi's time, is dealing treacherously with the wives of its covenant. It must repent of its sin. The prophets of today, as Malachi of the Second Temple era, must warn the Church of God's judgment. We must call it to repent.

A Look at the early Church

It is hard to say the early Church was monolithic on anything – except maybe baptismal regeneration – but if we look at the early Church writings on marriage, the major view is clearly that of a respect for the lifelong nature of marriage. They take the Bible at its word. They take Jesus and Paul at their word. The early saints who came after the apostles and developed much of orthodoxy were not afraid to preach to their congregations that a spouse who was separated could not marry again. When faced with church members who were separated or divorced, they took a clear stand on there being no remarriage. These men were great saints, some of whom were imprisoned or gave their lives for the faith. The earliest of them knew the last of the apostles, who was John. Their testimony should carry significant weight with us, certainly more than the latest independent church to open up, or the latest evangelical preacher to hit it bigtime. Listen carefully to their words. They built the Church after the apostles. I will include much, though not all of their commentary. You can look up the rest yourself.

Hermas:

“I charge you,” said he, “to guard your chastity, and let no thought enter your heart of another man’s wife, or of fornication, or of similar iniquities; for by doing this you commit a great sin.”

But if you always remember your own wife, you will never sin. For if this thought enter your heart, then you will sin; and if, in like manner, you think other wicked thoughts, you commit sin. For this thought is great sin in a servant of God. But if any one commit this wicked deed, he works death for himself.

Attend, therefore, and refrain from this thought; for where purity dwells, there iniquity ought not to enter the heart of a righteous man.” I said to him, “Sir, permit me to ask you a few questions.” “Say on,” said he.

And I said to him, “Sir, if any one has a wife who trusts in the Lord, and if he detect her in adultery, does the man sin if he continue to live with her?”

And he said to me, “As long as he remains ignorant of her sin, the husband commits no transgression in living with her. But if the husband know that his wife has gone astray, and if the woman does not repent, but persists in her fornication, and yet the husband continues to live with her, he also is guilty of her crime, and a sharer in her adultery.”

And I said to him, “What then, sir, is the husband to do, if his wife continue in her vicious practices?”

And he said, “The husband should put her away, and remain by

himself. But if he put his wife away and marry another, he also commits adultery.”

And I said to him, “What if the woman put away should repent, and wish to return to her husband: shall she not be taken back by her husband?”

And he said to me,

“Assuredly. If the husband do not take her back, he sins, and brings a great sin upon himself; for he ought to take back the sinner who has repented. . . In this matter man and woman are to be treated exactly in the same way.

–The Shepherd (Book II) 4:1-10

Justin Martyr wrote:

“In regards to chastity, Jesus has this to say: ‘If anyone look at lust at a woman, he has already before God committed adultery in his heart.’ And, ‘Whoever marries a woman who has been divorced from another husband, commits adultery.’”

“According to our teacher, just as they are sinners who contract a second marriage, even though it is in accord with human law, so also are they sinners who look with lustful desires at a woman. He repudiates not only one who actually commits adultery, but even one who wishes to do so; for not only our actions are manifest to God, but even our thoughts.”

(First Apology 15)

Clement of Alexandria:

That scripture counsels marriage, however, and never allows any release from the union, is expressly contained in the law: “You shall not divorce a wife, except for reason of adultery.” And it regards as adultery the marriage of a spouse, while the one from whom a separation was made is still alive. “Whoever takes a divorced woman as wife commits adultery,” it says; for “if anyone divorce his wife, he debauches her;” that is, he compels her to commit adultery. And not only does he that divorces her become the cause of this, but also he that takes the woman and gives her the opportunity of sinning; for if he did not take her, she would return to her husband.”

(Miscellanies 2:23:145:3)

Origen:

For confessedly he who puts away his wife when she is not a fornicator, makes her an adulteress, so far as it lies with him, for if, “when the husband is living she shall be called an adulteress if she be joined to another man;” and when by putting her away, he gives to her the excuse of a second marriage, very plainly in this way he makes her an

adulteress. . .

Just as a woman is an adulteress, even though she seems to be married to a man, while a former husband yet lives, so also the man who seems to marry who has been divorced does not marry her, but, according to the declaration of our Savior, he commits adultery with her.

(Commentaries on Matthew 14)

Basil the Great wrote:

The man who has deserted his wife and goes to another is himself an adulterer because he makes her commit adultery; and the woman who live with him is an adulteress, because she has caused another woman's husband to come over to her. . . The woman who lives with an adulterer is an adulteress the whole time.

The woman who has been abandoned by her husband, ought, in my judgment, to remain as she is. The Lord said, "If any one leave his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, he causes her to commit adultery;" thus, by calling her adulteress, He excludes her from intercourse with another man. For how can the man being guilty, as having caused adultery, and the woman, go without blame, when she is called an adulteress by the Lord for having intercourse with another man? A man who marries another man's wife who has been taken away from him will be charged with adultery. . .

–Amphilochius 199

Ambrose of Milan:

But what shall I say about chastity, when only one and no second union is allowed? As regards marriage, the law is, not to marry again, nor to seek union with another wife. It seems strange to many why impediment should be caused by a second marriage entered on before baptism, so as to prevent election to the clerical office, and to the reception of the gift of ordination; seeing that even crimes are not wont to stand in the way, if they have been put away in the sacrament of baptism. But we must learn, that in baptism sin can be forgiven, but law cannot be abolished. In the case of marriage there is no sin, but there is a law. Whatever sin there is can be put away, whatever law there is cannot be laid aside in marriage.

–On the duties of Clergy:1:257

And what else did John have in mind but what is virtuous, so that he could not endure a wicked union even in the king's case, saying: "It is not lawful for thee to have her to wife."¹¹⁸ He could have been silent, had he not thought it unseemly for himself not to speak the truth for fear of death, or to make the prophetic office yield to the king, or to indulge in

flattery. He knew well that he would die as he was against the king, but he preferred virtue to safety. Yet what is more expedient than the suffering which brought glory to the saint.

–On the duties of Clergy, 3:89

No one is permitted to know a woman other than his wife. The marital right is given you for this reason: lest you fall in a snare and sin with a strange woman. “If you are bound to a wife do not seek a divorce,” for you are not permitted, while your wife lives to marry another.”

–Abraham 1:57:59

You dismiss your wife, therefore, as if by right and without being charged with wrongdoing; and you suppose it is proper for you to do so because no human law forbids it; but divine law forbids it. Anyone who obeys men should stand in awe of God. Hear the Word of the Lord, which even they who propose our laws must obey: “What God has joined together, let no man put asunder.”

–Commentary on Luke, Sec. 8:5

Jerome:

In explaining the testimony of the apostle, “The wife hath not power of her own body, but the husband; and likewise, also, the husband hath not power of his own body, but the wife,” we have subjoined the following: “The entire question relates to those who are living in wedlock, whether it is lawful for them to put away their wives, a thing which the Lord also has forbidden in the Gospel. Following the decision of the Lord the apostle teaches that a wife must not be put away saving for fornication, and that, if she has been put away, she cannot during the lifetime of her husband marry another man, or, at any rate, that she ought, if possible, to be reconciled to her husband. In another verse he speaks to the same effect: “The wife is bound . . . as long as her husband liveth; but if her husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband; she is at liberty to be married to, whom she will; only in the Lord. I find joined to your letter of inquiries a short paper containing the following words: “ask him,(that is me,) whether a woman who has left her husband on the ground that he is an adulterer and sodomite and has found herself compelled to take another may in the lifetime of him whom she first left be in communion with the church without doing penance for her fault.” As I read the case put I recall the verse “they make excuses for their sins.” We are all indulgent to our own faults; and what our own will leads us to do we attribute to a necessity of nature. It is as though a young man were to say, “I am over-borne by my body, the glow of nature kindles my passions, the structure of my frame and its reproductive organs call for sexual intercourse.” Or again a murderer might say, “I was in want, I stood in

need of food, I had nothing to cover me. If I shed the blood of another, it was to save myself from dying of cold and hunger." Tell the sister, therefore, who thus enquires of me concerning her condition, not my sentence but that of the apostle. "Know ye not, brethren (for I speak to them that know the law,) how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth? For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband, so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. So then, if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress." And in another place: "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." The apostle has thus cut away every plea and has clearly declared that, if a woman marries again while her husband is living, she is an adulteress. You must not speak to me of the violence of a ravisher, a mother's pleading, a father's bidding, the influence of relatives, the insolence and the intrigues of servants, household losses. A husband may be an adulterer or a sodomite, he may be stained with every crime and may have been left by his wife because of his sins; yet he is still her husband and, so long as he lives, she may not marry another. The apostle does not promulgate this decree on his own authority but on that of Christ who speaks in him. For he has followed the words of Christ in the gospel: "whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced, committeth adultery." Mark what he says: "whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery." Whether she has put away her husband or her husband her, the man who marries her is still an adulterer. I have not been able quite to determine what it is that she means by the words "has found herself compelled" to marry again. What is this compulsion of which she speaks? Was she overborne by a crowd and ravished against her will? If so, why has she not, thus victimized, subsequently put away her ravisher? Let her read the books of Moses and she will find that if violence is offered to a betrothed virgin in a city and she does not cry out, she is punished as an adulteress: but if she is forced in the field, she is innocent of sin and her ravisher alone is amenable to the laws. Therefore if your sister, who, as she says, has been forced into a second union, wishes to receive the body of Christ and not to be accounted an adulteress, let her do penance; so far at least as from the time she begins to repent to have no farther intercourse with that second husband who ought to be called not a husband but an adulterer. If this seems hard to her and if she cannot leave one whom she has once loved and will not prefer the Lord to sensual pleasure, let her hear the declaration of the apostle: "ye cannot drink the

cup of the Lord and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table and of the table of devils," and in another place: "what communion hath light with darkness? and what concord hath Christ with Belial?"

–Letters 55, 58

Augustine:

This we now say, that, according to this condition of being born and dying, which we know, and in which we have been created, the marriage of male and female is some good, the compact whereof divine Scripture so commends, as that neither is it allowed one put away by her husband to marry, so long as her husband lives; nor is it allowed one put away by his wife to marry another, unless she who have separated from him be dead. Our Lord, therefore, in order to confirm that principle, that a wife should not lightly be put away, made the single exception of fornication; but enjoins that all other annoyances, if any such should happen to spring up, be borne with fortitude for the sake of conjugal fidelity and for the sake of chastity; and he also calls that man an adulterer who should marry her that has been divorced by her husband. And the Apostle Paul shows the limit of this state of affairs, for he says it is to be observed as long as her husband liveth; but on the husband's death he gives permission to marry. For he himself also held by this rule, and therein brings forward not his own advice, as in the case of some of his admonitions, but a command by the Lord when he says: "And unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord, Let not the wife depart from her husband: but and if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband: and let not the husband put away his wife." I believe that, according to a similar rule, if he shall put her away, he is to remain unmarried, or be reconciled to his wife.

–Commentaries on the Sermon on the Mount, Harmony of the Gospels, Homilies on the Gospels

For whosoever putteth away his wife except for the cause of fornication, maketh her to commit adultery. To such a degree is that marriage compact entered upon be a holy Sacrament, that it is not made void even by separation itself, since so long as her husband lives, even by whom she hath been left, she commits adultery in the case where she marries another, and he who hath left her is the cause of this evil. But I marvel, if, if it be allowed to put away a wife who is an adulteress, so it be allowed, having put her away, to marry another. For holy Scripture makes a hard knot in this matter in that the apostle says, that, by commandment of the Lord, the wife ought not to depart from her husband, but, in case she shall have departed to remain unmarried, or to be reconciled to her husband. . . I can not see how the man can have

permission to marry another, in the case where he left an adulteress, when a woman can not be married to another when she left an adulterer. Seeing that the compact of marriage is not done away with by an intervening divorce, so that they continue as wedded persons one to another, even after separation, and commit adultery with those with whom they be joined, even after their own divorce, either the woman with the man, or the man with a woman. Neither can it rightly be held that a husband who dismisses his wife because of fornication and marries another does not commit adultery. For there is also adultery on the part of those who, after the repudiation of their former wives because of fornication, marry others. . . No one is so unreasonable to say that a man who marries a woman whose husband has dismissed her because of fornication is not an adulterer, while maintaining that a man who marries a woman dismissed without the ground of fornication is an adulterer. Both of these men are guilty of adultery.

-Adulterous Marriages 1:9:9

A spouse, therefore, is lawfully dismissed for cause of adultery, but the laws of chastity remains. That is why a man is guilty of adultery if he marries a woman who has been dismissed even for this very reason of adultery.

-ibid., 2:4:4

A woman begins to be the wife of no later husband unless she has ceased to be the wife of a former one. She will cease to be the wife of a former one, however, if that husband should die, not if he commit adultery.

-ibed, 2:4:3

Therefore to serve two or more (men), so to pass over from a living husband into marriage with another, was neither lawful then (in the Old Testament), nor is it lawful now, nor will it ever be lawful. To apostatize from the One God, and to go into adulteress superstitions of another, is ever an evil.

-On the Holy Spirit; Doctrinal Treatises; Moral Treatises.

One thing I just want to emphasize here for you, and I'll leave you to digest it yourself: these men were not afraid to offend someone. Nor were they afraid of teaching that the Christian walk was a difficult one. They weren't afraid to scare away the so-called seekers. They were preaching the truth, even though they knew it went contrary to the will of literally millions of souls. They obviously also understood the nature of temptation, and a person who is separated from a spouse may feel tempted to sin. But they recognized this can be no more justified for the divorced spouse than it can be for the single young person. The divorcee

can no more commit adultery than the youth commit fornication. We are guided by the Holy Spirit. Not by hormones. These men knew that and they were unafraid to offend.

What the New Testament Says

The New Testament speaks plainly about marriage many times. Let's look at those clear scriptures first.

*The Pharisees came and asked Him,
"Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife?" testing Him. And
He answered and said to them, "What did Moses command
you?"*

*They said, "Moses permitted a man to write a certificate of
divorce, and to dismiss her."*

*And Jesus answered and said to them, "Because of the
hardness of your heart he wrote you this precept.*

*"But from the beginning of the creation, God 'made them male
and female.'*

*'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and
be joined to his wife,*

'and the two shall become one flesh';

*so then they are no longer two, but one flesh. "Therefore what
God has joined together, let not man separate."*

*In the house His disciples also asked Him again about the
same matter.*

*So He said to them, "Whoever divorces his wife and marries
another commits adultery against her.*

“And if a woman divorces her husband and marries another, she commits adultery.”

(Mark 10:2-12)

Here we have a passage similar to Matthew 19, and which also begins with a question from the Pharisees. The truths presented here are the same as Matthew 19, except for the exception clause and the interesting context of the ending. When questioned if a man may divorce his wife, Jesus responds by pointing out that the teaching of Moses in the Torah, which gave a vague unspecified permission (Deuteronomy 24:1), was only given because of the hardness of Israel’s heart. So the Lord is saying this was a special concession to Israel at that time. Then he takes us back to the beginning to show it was not always the way. He takes us to Genesis 2 and points out that because God made Adam and Eve *“one flesh”* they are not two but one. He then gives the plain teaching that what God joins together man may not separate. This is a key point here: God does the joining. Because He does the joining, mankind cannot separate it. Later his disciples questioned him on what must have been a difficult teaching, and He explains further that anyone who divorces their spouse and marries another commits adultery. It is sin.

This is a very plain teaching. I think you would have to ignore it entirely to claim that a Christian may end their marriage and then marry another person. According to Jesus, we cannot truly end our marriage, because it’s joined by God. We cannot ever take another spouse, because that is adultery. That’s God’s Word. Adultery is grave immorality, prohibited in the Ten Commandments and condemned throughout the Bible.

Is it an arbitrary claim that a spouse who takes a second spouse commits adultery? Is it just because God said so? Well, it is because God said so but it’s not arbitrary in any way to say remarriage is adultery. Rather the reason behind this teaching is clear here and elsewhere: because God has joined us together for life. Since we are joined for life, and since man may not separate this, even if we physically leave a partner we are still married. Even when we have a civil divorce certificate we are still married. If you have a marriage covenant with your partner and you sleep with another partner, you are naturally committing adultery. So this is plain old adultery. The person who remarries is having physical intimacy with someone other than their spouse. That’s called adultery.

“Whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery; and whoever marries her who is divorced from her husband commits adultery.

(Luke 16:18)

This passage from Luke is one without a surrounding context, and comes in the middle of a number of other short teachings. There are some who try and read relevant meaning into the surrounding teachings, but I do not. I see it standing alone. This brief teaching only repeats what is said in the passage we just read from Mark 10 as well as what is taught elsewhere in the New Testament, that to take a second spouse is adultery. This passage is especially important however, because it makes clear that both the person sending away and the person sent away commit adultery if they remarry. It does not leave room for the argument that remarriage is clean if it was the other person sinning or that remarriage is clean if the other person divorced you. It teaches that both the person sending away (in this example the man) and the person being sent away (here it's a woman) commit adultery if they marry another. Please read it again yourself. It is very clear in what it says.

Or do you not know, brethren (for I speak to those who know the law), that the law has dominion over a man as long as he lives?

For the woman who has a husband is bound by the law to her husband as long as he lives. But if the husband dies, she is released from the law of her husband.

So then if, while her husband lives, she marries another man, she will be called an adulteress; but if her husband dies, she is free from that law, so that she is no adulteress, though she has married another man.

Therefore, my brethren, you also have become dead to the law through the body of Christ, that you may be married to another—to Him who was raised from the dead, that we should bear fruit to God.

(Romans 7:1-4)

This opening of Romans 7 also expresses the lifelong nature of marriage. It's true that it's being used as an example to communicate the coming in of the New Covenant, but it is crystal clear on the nature of marriage regardless. It says that a woman is bound to her husband for life. When he dies, she is released from the marriage bond. If she takes another husband before he dies, she commits adultery. Yet with the death of her husband, she is no adulteress if she remarries. That's because death ends the marriage bond.

Some people try and escape from the plain teaching of this passage (which agrees with other New Testament teachings) by saying that it is only an example, but this is no reason to ignore it. We speak the truth while using examples all the time, and this example happens to use the

known nature of marriage; that it is for life. That's why the comparison works. Others try and avoid its meaning by claiming that we can be dead to the law in a spiritual sense^{xi}, hence being free from marriage does not require the actual physical death of a spouse. However, this does not fit the example in Romans 7 itself, nor is it taught anywhere in the Bible. The example of being freed from the law, as one is freed from marriage, includes the death of Jesus, an actual real bodily death. Jesus died and rose from the dead. In this death, we go from being married to the old to being married to the new. It took a real physical death to accomplish that.

Now to the married I command, yet not I but the Lord: A wife is not to depart from her husband.

But even if she does depart, let her remain unmarried or be reconciled to her husband. And a husband is not to divorce his wife.

(1 Corinthians 7:10-11)

This is a good one to remember for multiple reasons. It speaks especially to people who may already have a strained relationship and be separated. Here, God gives us two choices if a separation from our spouse has occurred. Choice one is to remain unmarried. Choice two is to be reconciled. There's not a lot to miss about this passage. It does not offer another alternative, such as taking on a second spouse. It only gives two options. This passage as you can tell is in good harmony with the three we have already looked at. We see divorce taught as wrong. We see that even if spouses are separated, they must not remarry. Nothing here is out of line with Mark, Luke or Romans.

A wife is bound by law as long as her husband lives; but if her husband dies, she is at liberty to be married to whom she wishes, only in the Lord.

(1 Corinthians 7:39)

This ending of chapter 7 sums up briefly much of what we have already seen. Marriage is for life. With the death of one spouse the other can remarry. There's no ambiguity there. Moreover, it's in perfect harmony with the passages we've already looked at.

When most people want to justify the practice of sending away a spouse and marrying another, they go straight to Matthew 19 (which is what I used to do) and point to three words in Greek which read: *except for fornication*. (vs. 9) Many Bibles take a looser translation of the word, and say "except for sexual immorality" or "except for marital unfaithfulness" but this is misleading. The Greek word *porneia* is literally translated fornication. This is the best reading.

Let's look at the entire passage though, and read the whole thing in context. Let's also look at the unique ending of Matthew 19, which I believe strongly supports that this teaching prohibits remarriage.

The Pharisees also came to Him, testing Him, and saying to Him, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for just any reason?"

And He answered and said to them, "Have you not read that He who made them at the beginning 'made them male and female,'

"and said, 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'?"

"So then, they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate."

They said to Him, "Why then did Moses command to give a certificate of divorce, and to put her away?"

He said to them, "Moses, because of the hardness of your hearts, permitted you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it was not so.

"And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality [literally fornication], and marries another, commits adultery; and whoever marries her who is divorced commits adultery."

His disciples said to Him, "If such is the case of the man with his wife, it is better not to marry."

But He said to them, "All cannot accept this saying, but only those to whom it has been given:

"For there are eunuchs who were born thus from their mother's womb, and there are eunuchs who were made eunuchs by men, and there are eunuchs who have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake. He who is able to accept it, let him accept it."

(Matthew 19:3-12)

This passage is very much like the one we have seen from Mark 10. It opens with a question about divorce by the Pharisees, as does Mark, though this time the question is whether one can divorce for any reason, something which was permitted by some religious teachers of the day. Jesus' answer is remarkably similar. This time He begins by taking us to creation, and pointing out that God made man and wife one flesh. Since God joined them together, man may not separate them. Next He answers why Moses had given permission to divorce, and the answer is the same:

the hardness of Israel's heart. Divorce was a temporary concession to Israel. Then He publically gives a similar teaching to the private one he gave in Mark 10. He states: *whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another, commits adultery; and whoever marries her who is divorced commits adultery.*" (vs. 9)

I want to point out that, even in this teaching, the final words "*whoever marries her who is divorced commits adultery*" are what end the passage with the exception clause. If it really allowed for divorce and remarriage as we understand it, it seems strange to end it that way. However, the biggest problem with claiming that the exception clause permits remarriage is that it flies in the face of the other teachings we looked at. The New Testament both in the Gospels and the Epistles says that remarriage is adultery and one may only remarry after the death of the spouse. We should expect that anything here would be in line with those teachings. Therefore it's best to read this passage in the light of all else the New Testament says, and we have just gone through them. We didn't see an exception clause for remarriage anywhere. It must mean something else.

There are TWO main ways in which this exception clause has been taken historically, two ways which leave it in harmony with the teaching that remarriage is adultery^{xii}. The first is the understanding of the early Christian fathers, the earliest leaders in Church history after the apostles. Their common understanding was that Matthew 19 allows for an exception for divorce, but not for remarriage. They interpreted *porneia* in this context as meaning adultery, and said that if there was ongoing and unrepentant adultery by one partner, the other could separate and divorce. However, they took the following phrase at face value, that marrying the one sent away is adultery, and they took the other teachings we examined at face value, and did not allow remarriage. That means a divorce in the Christian world does not mean what it was in the Mosaic world, since there is no true severing of the spiritual bond and taking a new spouse is not possible. They understood the Bible does not contradict the Bible.

The second understanding, which was not present at the time of the early Christian fathers, is to understand it as speaking of fornication, or immoral relations before marriage^{xiii}, not adultery AFTER marriage. I have seen this explanation cited as far back as about 400 years ago. If we understand it this way, it allows for a divorce during the Jewish betrothal period, which was much like a marriage but the partners had not moved in together yet^{xiv} OR the discovery of pre-marital fornication immediately after the wedding. The latter would be, as is discussed in Deuteronomy 22:13-21, if the man discovered he had been lied to about his wife's

virginity. He may have discovered it immediately after they moved in together, and while the Torah commands she be put to death, evidence from tradition is that capital punishment was often forgone and replaced with divorce or tolerance. In that sense, divorce for fornication would be an early annulment. He had been defrauded into marrying, so it was not a valid marriage.

This explanation has two advantages, although both explanations allow Scripture to be in harmony with itself. The first advantage is that it uses the plain meaning of *porneia*, which is fornication. It doesn't try and insert adultery or marital unfaithfulness in there. In fact there is a unique word for adultery in Greek, and this is *moichao*, the exact word used a few words later which is translated adultery. To use the Greek words, it reads: *whoever divorces his wife, except for porneia, and marries another, commits moichao; and whoever marries her who is divorced commits moichao.*" They are two different acts. *Porneia* and *moichao* also appear multiple times in the New Testament side by side, as two distinct actions^{xv}. Secondly, this makes sense of why the exception clause appears only in Matthew (both chapters 5 and 19) but not in the other Gospels or Epistles. Matthew is viewed by most scholars as having been written to a Jewish audience^{xvi}. The Jewish audience would have recognized the importance of purity during the betrothal period as well as the reference to fornication in Deuteronomy 22. That is why we see it here and nowhere else. The exception is for pre-marital fornication.

The ending of this passage from Matthew further hammers in that this is a very difficult teaching. The disciples are blown away enough to say that if this teaching is true, then it's better not to marry. The Lord answers by pointing to the necessity of being a "eunuch," meaning remaining single for the sake of the kingdom. The teaching is for those who will marry, not for the celibate. (vss. 10-12) The idea that one could only divorce and remarry for adultery was one commonly accepted teaching in the 1st century Jewish world. It was one of the two major teachings^{xvii}. If all Jesus was saying is – you can't remarry unless there is adultery (and not even using the right word for adultery) – then this reaction and Jesus' subsequent response make no sense. They are actually absurd in the context of Jesus merely repeating a teaching common to that day. Yet this ending fits perfectly well into it being a very heavy teaching, a teaching reflected either in the historical view – that divorce is permitted for adultery but not remarriage – or the fornication view – that only fornication before marriage allows for taking a new spouse, because one has been defrauded. It is about the first thing I thought when reading this teaching for the first time too. Who would want to marry? Both the disciples' amazed response and the Lord's answer – to point out the

necessity of celibacy – flow logically from a permanence of marriage teaching.

To further show how strong this context is in prohibiting remarriage, you've got to realize that many churches consider pornography and emotional relationships to be adultery, thus permitting divorce and remarriage for those actions as well. Not only do you demolish countless marriages once you allow that to happen, but you make the Lord's words further nonsensical. There is no difficult teaching here if you can remarry because your spouse looked at filthy pictures. There is no need to call people to celibacy if an emotional relationship is all it takes to make a marriage temporary. In fact, Jesus just gave a downright EASY teaching if that's the case. According to one survey I found^{xviii} in over one third of marriages, one or both partners committed adultery. Imagine how many others looked at dirty pictures or were emotionally close with someone besides their spouse. You could EASILY end the strong majority of marriages if that's how you read Jesus' teaching. All the more reason to respect marriage as a lifelong covenant.

What scripture says about adultery

I don't think it's any small thing to live in what God calls adultery. Do you? I don't think a believer has any right to continually live in sin, boldly and without repentance, and say – it's no big deal, God will understand. Or to say – it's no big deal, everyone in society should treat it like it's normal. Yet this is what people say regarding their adultery when they split with a spouse and take another one. They say – It's alright to live in sin. Would you ever think to say that regarding fornication? Would you think to say that regarding sodomy? How about a man who marries a man or an adult who marries a 6-year old? Does God's grace cover their living in sin?

The Bible says “*you shall not commit adultery.*” (Exodus 20:14) That's the Ten Commandments, remember. It also makes clear that a professed Christian living in sin will not inherit the kingdom. This includes specifically the sin of adultery. 1 Corinthians 6 teaches that sin will keep us out of the kingdom:

Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God.
(vss. 9-10)

This is the same passage we use to point out that sodomites will not inherit the kingdom. Adulterers will not either. Hebrews 13:4, in a teaching about the purity of marriage says: *Marriage is honorable among all, and the bed undefiled; but fornicators and adulterers God will judge.* So the Lord promises judgment on those who commit adultery, not those in a marriage, which is pure. Why do Christians want to make light of this? God will not be mocked. (Galatians 6:7)

Moreover, it is clear that coming into the new life in the Savior means leaving the old life, and sin behind. The same passage which says adulterers will not enter heaven ends with the teaching that if we are in Christ, those things are behind us. *And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.* (1 Corinthians 6:11) Those sins are in the past. This in the exact Scripture Christians use to show sodomy supporters that the Bible calls us to leave sin behind, not continue practicing it. Does it only apply to sodomy? It says adultery quite clearly too. Romans 6 is another great passage to show that if we are truly born again, we do not continue to walk in the flesh. Although I could quote the entire section, I think verses 8 to 12 should suffice:

*Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him,
knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more. Death no longer has dominion over Him.
For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God.
Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord.
Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts.*

There is no permission here to continue in sin. There is the reality that if we are born again, that our old self is put away, being crucified with Christ. The new self lives in Christ, who is righteousness and eternal life. Our new life is HIS life and that life is righteousness. Where is there room for living in adultery there? Where is there room for a second wife, a third husband, a fourth spouse? Go reread Romans 6 again. To be a Christian is to repent of sin and live for righteousness. The Church has brought judgment on itself and the whole world through ignoring this. It has brought disaster through its adultery.

Forgiveness

“Take heed to yourselves. If your brother sins against you, rebuke him; and if he repents, forgive him. ⁴ And if he sins against you seven times in a day, and seven times in a day returns to you, saying, ‘I repent,’ you shall forgive him.”
(Luke 17:3-4).

That is a command at the end of this teaching by Jesus. It says: you shall forgive him. It bears great importance, especially when we see adultery used as a reason to leave a spouse and take a new one, to look at forgiveness in the New Testament. To forgive is a command. It is not an option. God commands us to forgive and you accept in entering a marriage that your forgiveness will be required.

The Lord’s Prayer, which we might call the prototype of all Christian prayer, asks God to forgive our sins, just as we forgive those who sin against us. (Luke 11:4) Those two statements are related. We want God’s forgiveness. His forgiveness is likened to how we forgive others. Now imagine if we did not forgive others, but came to God asking for His forgiveness.

Likewise, in the Gospel of Mark, Jesus teaches most concisely:

*“And whenever you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, forgive him, that your Father in heaven may also forgive you your trespasses
“But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father in heaven forgive your trespasses.”*
(Mark 11:25-26)

Do we really have any questions about what that means?

Throughout the large majority of Christian history, the large majority of marriages lasted a lifetime. This is not because there was very little adultery. In some parts adultery was almost normalized. Men took concubines. Women, somewhat more discreetly, had affairs. In some towns, ones very Christian by faith, people could often see married men strolling down the street with a woman other than their wife. Yet we did not see marriage as an institution collapse. Why?

There are many reasons, but a big part of it is that marriage was viewed as important, and divorce and remarriage was viewed as a sin. There were also legal prohibitions which made it difficult to divorce and remarry. Somehow, hundreds of millions of people over many hundreds of years had marriages that lasted for life, and it wasn’t because adultery was extremely rare. Sin in general was not extremely rare. Somehow the

modern Christian wants to think that to be married for life is almost a spiritual ideal; an ideal such as loving God with all your heart, soul and strength for every day of your life. That would be an ideal. No one has ever done it except for Jesus. Marriage for life is not an ideal. It is a norm and a good. It's normal. Marriage is important enough that it can and does survive sin, including the sin of adultery. The Christian should stay together for the importance of marriage, and for the necessity of forgiveness, among other reasons. They must not depart from their spouse.

Remember the parable of the wicked servant from Matthew 18. The servant, who is in debt to his master, begs his forgiveness, and his master releases him mercifully from his debt. Then the same servant REFUSES to forgive another who owed HIM money. His master heard of this, and immediately threw him into prison, suddenly bringing down on him the punishment for his debt. Jesus ends the parable with these words: *“So My heavenly Father also will do to you if each of you, from his heart, does not forgive his brother his trespasses.”* This is a powerful warning, brethren. He will bring down righteous judgment on you if you do not forgive your brother's debt. If you bring down punishment for your brother's debts, our heavenly Father will do the same to you.

Matthew 19 has got to be the most popular passage Christians point to in order to justify their remarriage. Apparently three little words in Greek are good enough, despite everything else the New Testament teaches, and despite the other teachings in the very same chapter. Yet adultery from a spouse does not demand running over to another partner. It demands forgiveness. People respond to this sin, the infidelity of their partner, as if it were something worse than death. They respond to it as a great psychic blow, one that rips them to pieces. Ultimately though, what does this sin from a partner mean? That you didn't keep them entirely captivated all the time? That they experienced temptation and gave in? That they couldn't focus their entire life on you? We should remember that God Himself, ruler of the universe, deals with an adulterous people. He deals with professed Christians, sometimes sincere Christians, who wander off into sin, or boldly mock God. Yet He forgives us over and over. He may punish us, but He forgives. The prophet Hosea was called by God to prophesy in a very strange way. He was called to take a harlot as a wife. (Hosea 1:2-3) Normally, a righteous man would never think of taking a harlot as a wife, but this is what the prophet had to do. This act of physical prophecy would teach Israel what God Himself did with them. It showed them God was married to a harlot. When Hosea's wife left and returned to harlotry, Hosea would take her back, just as God took Israel back after its sins. (Hosea 3:1-3) You see, people cheat on God. So you've

got to ask yourself: Am I more special than God? Are you so incredible and fantastic that no one would ever cease being faithful to you? That you would always have their attention and desire? Well people commit adultery on the Almighty. It puts things into perspective if they commit adultery on you too. It's a terrible sin. I'm not trying to justify it. Yet God commands us to forgive one another^{xix}. If we refuse to forgive He promises judgment.

I hear many Christians currently saying that judgment is truly on the Church and on our society. Almost all believers I talk to say that. Do you really doubt our destruction of marriage has something to do with it? Or our lack of forgiveness? Or our turning our children over to an uncertain future so we can be supposedly happier? Judgment is truly upon us. How many children of Christians even believe in the faith? Some, but when they do, often it is with disregard of many of the basic doctrines. How many children are raised without a father, or going back and forth between homes? How many are abused by step-parents? How many children see their parents living with another partner and think this excuses their OWN sexual sins, which they commit perpetually? How many children have embraced a sick culture which says every act of immorality is good and God's law is evil. It is impossible to say we care about our future generations and then continue to live in sin. We CURSE future generations when we do that. Is there judgment on the Church? At this moment in time, populations of Christians and the children of Christians are being replaced by populations of Muslims, who openly plan to take control and establish their law. The historical enemies of Christendom flood formerly Christian countries by the million. No judgment? Entire nations are being replaced.

When western society accepts the abomination of same-sex "marriage" there is no doubt that the damage done to marriage by Christians – the breaking of the marriage covenant in divorce – is simply going to its logical conclusion. That is to make marriage into any union you want it to be. Christians like to talk about traditional marriage, but they don't know what it is. Traditional marriage is not just one man and one woman. It is one man and one woman for life. Years ago, when same-sex unions were beginning to get popular, a secular ice cream maker came up with a flavor of ice cream to promote sodomite unions. They called it Hubby Hubby.^{xx} Yet this comical name is almost appropriate in describing marriages in the Church too. Hubby is a great term. Because what use do we have of the terms husband and wife? We really don't know if one person is a husband or a partner in adultery. We don't know if another is a wife either, unless we ask. We just know they are partners, and the Church wants everyone to accept them. Sound familiar? Adulterers want their

marriage equality. As twisted as it is, “Hubby Hubby” might be good terms to use for Christian partners, as we have no idea what partnership is going on anyway. We could just drop husband and wife entirely.

To tell you a story, years ago I was working in a ministry. One of my colleagues came and asked if I could take a few minutes to pray for his “partner’s daughter.” She was living a lesbian lifestyle and had recently taken part in a same-sex “marriage” with her girlfriend. This was back when you had to cross state lines to have one. It became clear in talking to my colleague, a sincere believer from what I could tell, that his marriage was not his first, and it was not his partner’s first either. I was very honored that he asked me personally to pray for him. However, no matter how uncomfortable it was, I told him that I ALSO wanted to pray for him and his partner, as I trusted in what Jesus said about marriage, that if we take another spouse it is adultery. It is not a real marriage. It is a sin. He accepted my attitude about it, and I prayed both for him and his partner to learn the Bible’s teaching about marriage and to repent of their adultery, and also for his step-daughter, who was living in an abomination. I prayed in a heartfelt way for both pairs. Later I gave him the biblical passages and several articles on the subject, and still pray to this day for his repentance, as well as for his partner’s daughter. I pray God leads them out of sin. You see, it’s hard to tell the difference between those two abominations. Just as I have to put some things in quotes speaking about sodomite unions, I have to put some things in quotes speaking about second and third ones. They are both a MIRAGE. They are not what they claim to be. Furthermore, I have prayed many times, sometimes in tears, for people’s children who are lost to the homosexual lifestyle, or who live in homosexual unions, and I can sympathize with the grief these parents must be feeling. It’s not an uncommon situation these days. Yet it seems so vain for Christians to beg God to lead their child out of sin when they themselves live in it too. They need to be praying for their own repentance first. They need to be begging God to help them repent and to forgive them. For the judgment is coming down already, and it is a terrible one.

The Church has to end its disobedience and unforgiveness. The hardness of unforgiveness is present even when a divorced person does not remarry. To reject being reconciled when it is reasonably possible to reconcile is also an act of unforgiveness, and hardness of heart. It is continual punishment of the other partner for whatever they have done. A person who has truly forgiven is willing to reconcile. There may indeed be situations in which reuniting is a true impossibility. A dangerously violent person, for example, who threatens your life can make it impossible to reconcile in a practical sense. However, even in those hard situations,

don't expect that being separate needs to be continual. Many are the testimonies of men and women who changed, and ceased being violent. God does His work on the human soul. In Christ, we are new creation, and have the supernatural work of the Holy Spirit in our souls. Even the unbeliever can experience change, as God works on them through common grace. Dangerous people, criminal people, often change. So don't rule it out. The teaching of the Prodigal Son (Luke 15:10-24) is true in principle of husbands and wives too, and of fathers and mothers. We must never force them to be far off. Forgiveness truly is letting a person's debts go. It also means treating them as normal, as restored, unless there is a true practical impossibility. A forgiving person is willing at heart to reconcile.

What special secret is there to being able to forgive? It seems like the hardest job for the average Christian. Like having to lift a great heavy stone. No man could lift it. Yet we know with the right leverage a man can move stones of many tons, and spin them around like a toy. Do not go seek the answer from your church's guidance counselor. You probably won't get the answer from your pastor, as pastors have given up on Christian marriage entirely. You're probably not going to get it from your friends. What can allow that forgiveness and reconciliation? There's a fascinating passage from Exodus about an event during Israel's wanderings. The people reached a place called Marah, where they found springs of water. If you can imagine the relief of finding running springs in a hot desert, and bone-dry climate you can imagine how reliving it looked. Yet these springs were bitter, and not good to drink. The people began complaining against Moses. Would there be another rebellion? Yet God showed Moses a certain tree. Moses cast the tree into the water the water became sweet. All Israel was able to drink from it and quench their thirst. (Exodus 15:22-25)

What is that tree, brethren? What will make our hearts from bitter to sweet? The word in Exodus is the same ordinary word for tree elsewhere. That is 'ets in Hebrew. The tree of life. The tree of knowledge of good and evil. Cursed is every man who hangs from a tree. Galatians 3:13 refers to Christ relieving us of that curse, because He was hung upon a tree. That special tree God revealed to Moses was the cross of Christ. It is the wood you cast into the river of bitterness. Into the waters you can't drink. The waters that poison you. The cross will lead you to being able to forgive your spouse, and will sweeten the waters of your own soul. That is the cross Christ hung on, and which we carry every day. Cast it into the river.

God made a special promise to Israel after he healed that bitter river. He told Israel that if you keep my commandments I will never bring upon you the sicknesses that I brought upon Egypt. (Exodus 15:26) He did not

just turn around their temporary backsliding, but gave them a reward if they walked the walk now. We need to do the same. We don't just accept Christ's healing power upon us. We need to live in His commandments daily and walk the walk. That's part of the secret that helps us to forgive. As we obey God, and we realize how hard it can be, and as we see our own failings and need for repentance, we can more easily sympathize with others, and be more willing to forgive. Forgive your wayward spouse. Do not force them away from you. Keep God's commandments as He taught us so that you learn them in your heart. For he tells us: "*I am the LORD who heals you.*" (Exodus 15:26)

Rumble Fish

Forgiveness is a divine teaching to remember the next time you think about complaining about your spouse, or hardening your heart to him. It is a divine mandate. Not forgiving comes with a warning of terrible judgment. Consider that before you ever consider putting your spouse down or claiming that you just married the "wrong person." Man and wife should not live in conflict. I hear stories about husband and wife who scream at each other and about marriages which are simply a battle of wills. There are people who live as if marriage were about two competing armies, each vying for the kingdom. I hear about husbands who are cruel and insulting to their wives, as well as the epidemic of Christian wives who rebel against their husband's authority and refuse to submit. Why would any Christian ever live like this when we have God's Word and His Spirit? When we have eternal life granted by mercy? Even the heathen can have peaceful and sweet marriages just by the common sense God gave them and by virtues they are taught. Why is it so many Christians are WORSE off than they and show LESS virtue? Why is it they seem almost unable to live together?

Listen people. We're not rumble fish. You don't stick two people in a room together just to see the fight break out, or to see one of them get destroyed, or have to be tossed out on his head like a drunk in a bar. You don't have to put them in two separate rooms just to keep them from attacking. I can remember reading the book *Rumble Fish*^{xxi} when I was a boy. It uses the metaphor of the Siamese fighting fish, or Betta, which is a popular fresh water fish with a peculiar trait; the males of the species will attack each other if kept in close quarters together^{xxii}. In fact, it will even get aggressive with an image of another fighting fish or attack its own reflection. You don't keep them in a bowl together. The fish was a metaphor in the story for youth violence, and youth gangs, the fights that broke out when these kids were in a neighborhood together. At the end of

the story, the main character takes his fighting fish down to the river, and he pours them out there. Now they're somewhere they will have room to live, and they won't be at each other's throats. They won't fight anymore. It was really a touching story.

That may have been a metaphor of youth violence in the book, but it almost could have been a metaphor of Christian marriage. You just can't put these two rumble fish in a bowl together. You put them in a room, a fight breaks out. Always. You've got to separate the two, go throw them in the river, give them somewhere else to live where they don't need to be near their partner. The only way for peace is to set the beasts free. This could sadly describe marriage after marriage today. It could describe the sentiment of husband and wife, who harbor animosity, and regular conflict, whether it's screaming at each other, or simply being as cold and uncaring as possible, distant in the soul. It may even be violence toward the other. Then the same two Christians think the only solution is what the main character of the book does at the end – to be set free from each other. To have some time and some space. That's about half of Christian marriages for you, and even when they don't pour the fish out of the bowl, they may simply stay together while harboring the same spirit, the same attitude, and wishing the destruction of the other. The children of God live like this and there is no love in it.

Yet that is fundamentally not who we are. Nor is it the way we are called to live, either as human beings or as Christians. Almost all of the conflict we see in marriages could be done away with simply by following God's way. That continual pattern that could just as well be youth violence, or inter-generational violence, would pretty much disappear. Follow God's order for the creation He made. A wife must recognize she is made to be a helpmate to man, not to be another man. Not another leader. There is only one leader. She must recognize her need to put herself under her mate, and see the goodness of that. It should be natural to her in soul. It is no surprise that the softness and submission of the woman in the marriage bed mimics the softness she is to have toward her man in marriage. She submits to him. She yields to his strength. A husband must understand he must honor his wife as the weaker vessel, and present her to the world holy and precious and clean. She is to be honored as a wife and mother, and praised for her virtue. Her beauty is to be simple and spiritual, not sensuous or lewd. He is her protector and provider, and that should take up the bulk of his energies in life. When it says a man must be willing to give his life for his wife, it doesn't necessarily mean he will literally have to die. It most often means he gives his energies entirely over to God, wife, and family. That is his life. He pours it out for them.

It gets awfully hard to harbor hatred toward one another when you

take those roles seriously. It gets hard to be cold and loveless. When you pray, sing hymns, read the Bible together a lot of the rest just falls into place without needing to figure out how. I believe almost all couples out there going to so-called counselors, seeking psychological help, threatening divorce could save their time, their money and their marriage just by going to the Word of God and doing what it says. That is all you need to do. I have been called archaic for saying that, but believe me, a simple man leading his home in the Word of God, and a husband and wife doing the things God commands us to do, will rarely or never need to pay a supposed expert to help their marriage. You do not need an expert to help you. Get on your knees. Open your Bible. Sing praises together. We are not rumble fish. We are human beings, and we can get along. The children of God especially should be known for our lifelong and peaceful marriages. The Holy Spirit does not rumble. Except with the devil.

Mark 10 Rewrite for the Church

It seems in allowing continual divorce and remarriage in the Church, today's pastors have almost literally taken us back to Moses' day. They have taken us back to a time when this was permitted, because of the hardness of Israel's heart. We do not appear to be in the New Covenant, but in the Old. It struck me how little has changed in two thousand years, so I was inspired to rewrite Jesus' teaching to the Pharisees, but update it to modern Christians and see if it works. I think it fits perfectly:

The **Christians** came and asked Him, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce *his wife?*" testing Him.

And He answered and said to them, "What did **Pastors** command you?"

They said, "**Pastors** permitted *a man* to write a certificate of divorce, and to dismiss *her.*"

And Jesus answered and said to them, "Because of the hardness of your heart **Pastors** wrote you this precept.

"But from the beginning of the creation, God '*made them male and female.*'

'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife,

'and the two shall become one flesh'; so then they are no longer two, but one flesh.

"Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate."

(Mark 10:2-9)

You see you could replay this exact interaction in a church today and it would make sense. The Pharisees would be the modern so-called Bible Christians. Jesus' response to them would make sense in light of the Church culture which has given up on trying to enforce ANY real discipline regarding divorce and remarriage, and permits members to separate for almost any reason. The pastors will say they have to permit it, for the people have hardened hearts. They do not want to be faithful to God.

It should be obvious to us that there is a reason why marriage had to be treated as more holy in the New Covenant. There is a reason why we cannot simply continue as under Moses. That is because Messiah has come, and is with us in the Church. He is among us. Marriage never could have signified under Moses what it signifies today. We have the full meaning of marriage to communicate to the world now: that Messiah has come and saves His people from their sins. (Matthew 1:21) He covers His bride in clothing of righteousness. (Isaiah 61:10) It is the New Testament which also finally reveals the Trinity, whereas before it was hinted at but not fully revealed. This same revelation of the Trinity in the New Testament is a revealing of the order of Christ and the Church, as I discussed in the first chapter, as well as the order of man and wife. Marriage cannot stay as it was under Moses. We are in a new order now.

This among other reasons is why it is so diabolical to allow ending of marriages and coupling with new partners. It is about as anti-Christ as allowing animal sacrifices in church. It goes back to the Covenant of Moses. It returns to Temple Judaism. It goes back under a limited revelation where the picture of Messiah was veiled, and the family-nature of God unclear. Christians who permit this because of the hardness of heart, just as Moses did, are living as under the previous covenant. It is a denial of the New Covenant. It is a denial of Christ's power over the new creation that He has made us. To live in the New Covenant is to accept the covenant of marriage for life.

Pauline Privilege

A very common justification churches find for remarriages comes from 1 Corinthians 7:13-15. It reads:

And a woman who has a husband who does not believe, if he is willing to live with her, let her not divorce him.

For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband; otherwise your children would be unclean, but now they are holy.

But if the unbeliever departs, let him depart; a brother or a

sister is not under bondage in such cases. But God has called us to peace.

Paul teaches that a Christian spouse who has an unbelieving spouse should remain married. They can be a sanctifying influence in that person's life. They can at least help point in the direction of the Savior, and bring other godly influences into the home. However, if the unbeliever departs – we'll say demands a divorce or completely abandons the person – the Christian spouse is "*not under bondage.*"

While this passage never says anything about permitting remarriage, it has been used for many centuries to justify remarriage, including in the Catholic Church. I have searched through Catholic articles looking for when this officially became allowed, and none could provide a date, but all acknowledge it is ancient. In the earliest of Christian fathers, I have seen it nowhere. However, there is one citation at about the end of the 4th century by John Chrysostom for a permission of remarriage here, for what has commonly been called "Pauline Privilege."^{xxiii} So likely it crept in later in the period of the early Christian fathers, the Church found it convenient to use, it grew in its acceptance, and eventually became part of the Church's official teaching. However, it's not in 1 Corinthians 7 itself and I've never heard it cited before the end of the 4th century.

Probably the biggest reason many claim these verses permit remarriage is because it says the believing spouse is "*not under bondage.*" This they interpret to mean "not married" and then move to the conclusion that taking another spouse must be acceptable. However, this is flawed logic from the start.

Number one, the very same chapter, in verse 39 says plainly that marriage is until death of the spouse, and only then can one remarry. The very same chapter in verses 10-11 says that in the case of a spouse who has left, you must either remain single or reconcile. This is the same chapter and only a couple of verse apart. So why would verses 13-15 be saying something entirely different and in contradiction. It would also be in contradiction to the other marriage passages we looked at above.

The clearest reason this is flawed logic is that the passage never says that the believer is "not bound" in the marriage sense. Rather, it says he is "*not under bondage.*" This is a different word entirely. The Greek word is *douloo*, and is NOT the word used for bound in marriage, even in the same chapter. Rather, the word referring to marriage is *deo*, and is translated "bound" in 1 Corinthians 7:27 and 7:39 along with Romans 7:2. *Douloo* is used various times to refer to being under bondage to a master or under bondage to God.

To give you one example, Acts 7:6 reads:

“But God spoke in this way: that his descendants would dwell in a foreign land, and that they would bring them into bondage and oppress them four hundred years.”

That phrase “bring them into bondage” is from the Greek word *douloo*. That’s the same one Paul uses here. Does that sound like marriage to you?

We also see it in Romans 6:22, which reads:

But now having been set free from sin, and having become slaves of God, you have your fruit to holiness, and the end, everlasting life.

When we see “become slaves” it is that same word from 1 Corinthians 7:15. Yet marriage is nowhere in sight.

Deo, in contrast, refers to being bound in marriage or bound in the sense of two things connected together or tied up. Therefore, if “bound” and “under bondage” do not even have the same meaning in Greek, it is unreasonable to think “*not under bondage*” refers to an end of the life-long covenant and completely wrong to assume it allows for remarriage. Go ahead and check a concordance yourself, and look at the uses of these words. You will see the same thing.

So what is Paul saying when he says the spouse who is forced to depart from an unbeliever is not under bondage? It simply means they do not have any duty to fight for the marriage or under any marriage responsibilities now that the person has walked away. You are not a slave to them. It does not mean they have no marriage covenant anymore, which would be a bold contradiction to what we’ve been told, even in the same chapter. “Under bondage” doesn’t mean married.

It’s only Adultery Once?

Another common way that Christians try and excuse adultery, is to claim that when Jesus said it was adultery, He only meant the first time. He only meant you commit adultery when you marry another, but after that first time the relationship is holy. It is no longer adultery. Is this honestly what you think, brother? Not to condescend, but I think people only make claims like this to squeeze out of the difficult passages about marriage. They’re looking for any loophole they can find.

Basic intuition would tell us that when someone says their adultery is in the past, while they are still going to bed with a person other than their spouse, someone is bending the meaning of adultery quite a bit. The two parties did not cease going to bed together. They continue to do so. It requires a radical change of thinking of what adultery actually is to claim

it has ended in the past while the intimate relations continue. I don't think this argument passes the sniff test.

We can see it fail according to common sense when we try and apply it broadly, and see if it works. How come we never see Christians justifying their affairs that way, saying – sure it was adultery the first time I seduced Wanda in the back of my car, but it isn't adultery anymore. Our affair is sanctified now. Would that be allowed in the Church? Can this man take both his wife and Wanda to the church and expect to be welcomed? What about the “gay Christian” who might say – maybe our first act of sodomy was a sin, but God sanctifies our homosexual union now? Do you think the Church should apply the same logic there as it does to adulterers? Why don't you ever hear fornicators making that argument too? Or criminals who joined a gang? You don't hear it because it's transparently weak. It is an obvious attempt to justify sin.

The claim that the adultery only happens once – such as on the wedding night – also fails according to the grammar. The word for “commit adultery” in the Greek [*moichao*] is in the present indicative. The present indicative in Greek should more literally be translated in the continuous tense in English, to connote ongoing action. This would be more like “is committing adultery.” It's true there are alternate uses of the present indicative in Greek, but ongoing action is the common one, and alternate uses are usually known by context. Therefore, the adultery of remarriage is ongoing sin.

By far the clearest way to know that the remarried commit adultery in the ongoing sense is that the New Testament gives us the logic behind remarriage being adultery. This is because the marriage covenant lasts until death. (Romans 7:2-3, 1 Corinthians 7:39) One is bound to one's spouse until death. If you are in a covenant for life then every time you have intercourse with a person not your spouse you are committing adultery. Do it once, twice, a thousand times and that doesn't change; it's adultery because you're already married. The Almighty does not call taking a second spouse adultery out of some arbitrary whim. Nor does He point His finger at the act and make it become the sin of adultery with no rhyme or reason. Remarriage is adultery because it breaks God's commandment by being unfaithful to your spouse. You see, you're **ALREADY MARRIED**.

The result of the two exception position – liberalism

Many Christian churches will still tell you that they **ONLY** believe there are two exceptions for divorce and remarriage, but in practice, this is completely false. You need to ask more questions if a pastor tells you this.

Firstly, as I have pointed out already, many churches open up adultery to include emotional relationships and pornography. This already means they would approve of the divorce of the majority of marriages. The claim one can remarry because of being forced into a divorce by an unbeliever is opened up into a divorce from an unbeliever which was NOT forced. They also play fast and loose with whom a believer is, and will consider that this or that doctrinal difference means that your Christian spouse is not Christian. Some pastors refuse to accept any marriages with unbelievers as valid. Both Protestants and Catholics punch wide holes in this alleged exception.

Even worse, nearly all churches which claim “two exceptions” allow many MORE exceptions in practice, as they allow people to be church members even if they have remarried for reasons beyond those two. They often allow them to teach also, and even hold church offices. Church discipline would call for those people to be instructed to repent, and excommunicated from the church if they did not cease their sin. (Matthew 18:15-17, 1 Corinthians 5) However, pastors refuse to do this. That is because the two-exception position in theory is liberalism in practice. People are allowed to continue on in what even their churches’ doctrine considers adultery. Would they do that for same-sex couples? The two-exception position is not really two exceptions. Rather, it normalizes sin.

If you looked at the Body of Christ today, the Church, would you even imagine for a second that Jesus gave the teaching that He gave? Would you imagine that Paul taught that we are bound to our spouse for life, and only after a spouse dies can we remarry? If you had never opened up the Bible, you would naturally assume Christian teaching was that having multiple partners is acceptable. Marriage is a temporary joining. Two are still two and they never become one body in marriage. Sending a partner away and taking another is normal. Perhaps it is painful and requires some pats on the back from your loving Christian friends, but it’s normal. That’s what you would imagine if you looked at the Church and tried to discern doctrine from what you saw. Yet true Christian doctrine is that marriage is for life. True Christian doctrine is that to marry again is to commit adultery. True Christian doctrine is that adultery is a grave moral evil, and that in Christ we are called to repent of our sins. True Christian doctrine is that if one is living in sin, including adultery, he will not inherit the kingdom of heaven. That’s what the Bible teaches. No matter how many times we have been given false teachings on this, we need to obey God before men.

One Being for Life

The truth of this teaching has never been easy. Yet the Christian walk is not easy. It becomes much easier when we learn to rest on our Savior and draw our life from Him, when we learn to know that “*Christ lives in me*” (Galatians 2:20) but it has never been easy. The hearers knew this at the time. The early Church knew this. Husband and wife are joined as one flesh, by a supernatural union, and no piece of paper issued by the state can change that.

Therefore, if your spouse sins against you, you are united with a sinner for life. If your spouse lies to you, you are united with a liar for life. If your spouse abuses drugs, you are united with a drug abuser for life. If your spouse is an angry person, you are united with an angry person for life. If your spouse acts violently, you are united with a violent person for life. If your spouse takes up a life of crime, you are united with a criminal for life. If your spouse ends up in prison, you are united with a prisoner for life. If your spouse procures an abortion and kills your child^{xxiv}, you are united with a murderer for life. That is the nature of being one flesh with another.

You’re one flesh until death

Even when your partner is hooked on meth

Many people will hear what I’ve just said, and they’ll respond – Tom, if what you say is true, who on earth would ever want to get married? Well, I’m glad you asked me that. Because if we remember what the disciples asked Jesus after His teaching, it was pretty much the same question. So you understood correctly. Jesus answered in a nutshell, – there are some who cannot live this way, and these are celibate for the kingdom of God. There is your answer. The teaching really is hard, but if you are able to be celibate, celibacy is a higher calling. That applies to those who are not yet married and it applies to those who have been divorced, and cannot reunite with their spouse. Be celibate.

Ordinary brother

The need for me to tell you this only tells you how far from Christian teaching the churches currently are. The very fact that I put all of this in print, about each of these aspects of marriage, is a direct result of men called pastors refusing to teach the truth. If they did, this whole book would be redundant, and I would have no desire to spend many days writing it and many days editing it. Yet the deceiver is in the Church, and I believe an ordinary brother can tell it to you more truthfully than most pastors. And not just me. If you are spending your time in the Word of God and if you learn from Church history, you will be able to speak much

more truth than the pastors. They are compromised, brother. They lie.

The inability of the churches to teach and to lead extends well beyond the area of marriage. I'm sure many of you reading know this. Not only have mainline denominations gone entirely apostate, but apparently Bible believing churches have fallen into all manner of false teachings and will demand their sheep conform to them. Even within the past year major ministries have caved in to treating sodomy as less than a serious sin, and will likely normalize it without ever having to officially change doctrine. Major churches have also adopted leftist racial politics, inventing specialized rules for supposed victim races that they do not apply to others, blaming whites for the world's problems, without being remotely grateful for their accomplishments. That is part and parcel of Marxism, which uses racial and class conflict to destroy Christian civilization and uplift socialism from the rubble remaining. Most "churches" in my own nation have adopted feminism in part or in whole and naturally silence or kick out ministers that don't flow with that kind of gender bending. They make a ministry philosophy of disregarding doctrine and trying to be popular and entertaining instead. They downgrade the Bible and replace it with their own supposed revelation which they claim comes from God. They have done this and more, shamelessly, and will do some of the worst scripture twisting you will ever hear to convince you they have a justification. They make a mockery of the Word of God.

That in part is why so many children of God have left the churches. That is why so many don't plan to go back. While I do believe that Christ founded ONE Church^{xxv}, and not many, leaving a harlot church is necessary when it departs egregiously from the truth. That is what I encourage you to do. If a church is compromised, you either find a better one to join or you start your own. I spoke in brief about this while discussing the husband's leadership in Chapter 1. It may not be ideal, but the Bible even tells us there are times when division is good, despite its many warnings against it. (2 Corinthians 6:14-17, Revelation 18:3-5) For when division amounts to departing from a false teacher, or demanding they leave you, that division helps reveal what the truth is. It separates the truth from the falsehood. (1 John 2:19) Divisiveness is condemned scripturally, but ultimately it is not the sheep who leave a compromised church that are divisive. It is the false prophet who is divisive. (1 Timothy 6:3-5, Romans 16:17-18) Sadly, he is often the one leading the church. If you are a member of a corrupted church, protest the corruption and leave. If you work for a corrupted ministry, start looking for a new job. Your God is worth more than your job.

The fact is, if your pastor is corrupted then you are more able to be a disciple of Jesus than he is. You are more able to be a shepherd. You are

more able to study the Word and honestly share it with others. The Bereans who heard Apostle Paul teach searched the Scriptures to see if what he said was true, and many believe in Jesus this way. (Acts 17:10-12) They didn't just hear, they checked it with the authoritative Scriptures. I cannot tell you exactly the line at which you should cease to put yourself under the pastor or elders at your church, but I do believe the large majority of churches in the West are spiritually unsafe places to be, if not fully apostate. I recommend staying away from them. As far as marriage goes, it is extremely difficult to find a church which respects the lifelong nature of the marriage covenant. You will find some of the traditional Amish and Mennonites do^{xxvi}. You should check each one individually though. There is also a small denomination called the Protestant Reformed Church which is in line with God's Word on marriage^{xxvii}. There are a few independent churches as well^{xxviii}. That is the damage done. Only a small remnant of the Body of Messiah will be faithful. That is why you need to take your job seriously as a child of God and an ordinary brother, to be faithful to God regardless of what a church teaches. I am trying to do my best in my own small domain to do that. You can too. Learn about what your future marriage means, or what your present marriage means by sitting down with the Holy Bible, not by listening to a pastor or counselor. Be faithful to God before shepherds. The shepherds have normalized all kind of evil in the Church. The Lord Almighty condemns them. (2 Peter 2)

The Benefits of Marriage

It bears mentioning again, that the positive good of marriage is well documented, as is the harm of ending marriages, and of having children out of wedlock. The nourishment marriage provides touches on nearly every aspect of life, as does the injury of going outside of God's path for us. I know, I know, everyone thinks they're the exception to the rule, but that's part of the problem. The measurement has been done, and it's been repeatedly: marriage is good for humanity.

One major paper on the subject – *Why Marriage Matters: 30 Conclusions from the Social Sciences* – compiles the difference we can see between married families and unmarried parents or broken families.^{xxix} The observed differences are many, and often stark. They include:

Marriage increases the likelihood fathers and mothers will have a good relationship with their children

Growing up outside an intact family increases the likelihood that children themselves will divorce or become unwed parents

Married couples seem to build more wealth than unmarried or

cohabitating couples

Parental divorce, or failure to marry, appears to increase children's risk of school failure

Children who live with their own two married parents enjoy better physical health, on average, than do children in other family forms.

Parental marriage is associated with a sharply lower risk of infant mortality

Married women appear to have a lower risk of experiencing domestic violence than do cohabiting or dating women.

Married people, especially married men, have longer life expectancies than do otherwise similar singles.

This isn't the half of it, but please remember the truth I pointed to before when speaking of God's law; God's law brings life. It is good for us. Some people will claim that promoting God's law amounts to forcing your religion on someone, but in actuality, it's about as much forcing religion as is any other useful law in this land, like making sure everyone gets a fair trial, or that buildings are constructed safely. It is simply good law. It benefits humanity. As the Bible teaches:

"Honor your father and mother," which is the first commandment with promise:

"that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth."

Ephesians 6:2-3

This passage specifically remembers the promise of long life for honoring father and mother, which is a part of this book's subject; that of marriage. We cannot honor father and mother if we have no marriages and children. There is also a general principle of having life and blessing in the whole of the law as well.

"Every commandment which I command you today you must be careful to observe, that you may live and multiply, and go in and possess the land of which the LORD swore to your fathers.

Deuteronomy 8:1

This passage promises life, the blessing of children and the blessing of receiving the land God's promised Abraham. Similar to the commandment to honor parents the whole of the law brings a longer life:

"that you may fear the LORD your God, to keep all His statutes and His commandments which I command you, you and your

son and your grandson, all the days of your life, and that your days may be prolonged.

Deuteronomy 6:2

The word for “be prolonged” is ‘*arak*, which means: to be long, to make long, to draw out, to lengthen. This was true for ancient Israel at the time of Moses and it is true today. If you look at lives shortened, ended tragically or in infancy, usually what we are looking at is the results of man breaking God’s law. It is man rejecting the path of life, and choosing the path of death. The sophisticated man of today faces the same choice as men over three thousand years ago.

“I call heaven and earth as witnesses today against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life, that both you and your descendants may live;

Deuteronomy 30:19

Adultery REALLY kills

While we can speak at length of the documented dangers of splitting the family, and the everyday harm caused by disregarding the family, dangers which present grave threat to human life, immorality can kill more directly also. Adultery itself is a source of much killing. Adultery often leads to jealousy, betrayal, rage and even murder, and incurs the wrath of God as well. There is an orthodox Jewish teaching which says that the sin of adultery actually leads people to break all Ten Commandments. It would take a lengthy explanation to draw each of those nine connections, but it’s not too hard to see either. For example, a person committing adultery will need to lie many times, breaking the commandment against bearing false witness. A person committing adultery will often put their personal concerns before God, thus breaking the commandment to have no other gods before Adonai. As is transparently clear, a person committing adultery may inspire others to kill out of jealousy, breaking a commandment most protective of human life. Adultery leads to death. That is not hyperbole.

A Sociable Independent Woman

Back in the 80s there was a case in Australia in which a woman was found strangled in her bed, and her 10-year old daughter was raped and strangled in the next room. It didn’t take much investigation to realize there were more suspects that you could ever wish for. The woman was

having an affair with a married man, and was playing the harlot with many other men. On top of this there were several acquaintances who seemed dangerous. While some articles generously referred to the murder victim as independent and outgoing, the more accurate description was that she was a feminist and a harlot. She was committing adultery and fornication with multiple people, and brought murder upon herself and her little daughter, who was raped by the attacker as well. She was a very wicked woman.

The *Herald Sun* describes the scene, as a friend discovered the bodies in her abode^{xxx}:

He got in through an unlocked sliding door and began looking for Ms. T eventually going into her bedroom.

“I saw the Doona on the bed was raised and crumpled, and I thought M was asleep in bed,” Mr R said in his statement to police.

“I . . . could see her face from the mouth up. I put my hand on the Doona and said, ‘M’.

“At this stage I could see her complexion was quite pallid and I thought she was sick.

“With my left hand I reached over and pulled the Doona away a few inches.

“Her hands were crossed with her right over her left and resting on top of her chest, just covering the lower part of her neck.

“I don’t think I saw blood, but it was blood-coloured.

“I thought M was dead. I then rang police.”

After ringing police, Mr R went into [the daughter’s] bedroom and made the gruesome discovery that she was also dead.

An autopsy later revealed Ms T was bashed and strangled and [the daughter] was sexually assaulted and strangled.^{xxxii}

Oh, and there was another victim. Her teenage son was not at home at the time, but you might say he didn’t really survive the attack either. You see, if you love death, it affects everyone around you. Her son spent much of his life in turmoil, and blaming himself for the attacks that took his mother and baby sister away. He drank his life away, having trouble keeping a job and staying in a relationship. This adulterer’s son died in the 2000’s in London, where he lived alone in an apartment. One lengthy article on the murders says, “no one knows if he deliberately suicided or “accidentally” drank and drugged himself into oblivion”^{xxxiii}

According to crime writer Andrew Rule: “. . . He was slowly poisoned by the horror of what happened to them. He rarely spoke about it but was haunted by the thought that if he’d been at home at the time, maybe it wouldn’t have happened.”^{xxxiii}

These are the consequences when you commit immorality, brothers.

Death will follow you. Judgment will follow you. The evil act of adultery inspires murder.

As Proverbs 7 says of the wicked woman:

*Do not let your heart turn aside to her ways,
Do not stray into her paths
For she has cast down many wounded,
And all who were slain by her were strong men.
Her house is the way to hell,
Descending to the chambers of death.
(vs. 25-27)*

A Date Night

In South Street in Philadelphia a young man and young woman met in a bar with friends. After chatting and having some drinks, they walked out the door, presumably to go to the woman's apartment in New Jersey, and were never seen again. They vanished off the face of the earth. They left not a single sighting, not an article of clothing, not a drop of blood. After several years of investigation, the police announced publically that they were investigating the strange case as a murder for hire. They strongly believed foul play was involved, and likely multiple people and careful planning was needed to make these two disappear. As they say in interviews: two people and a pickup truck simply do not get up and disappear^{xxxiv}.

The reality of the case is that a disappearance should not be surprising. The young man and woman were in the middle of an adulterous affair. The man had previously been married, so even to unite with another woman is what our Lord Jesus calls adultery. (Luke 16:18) The woman he met at the bar was currently married, though she was estranged from her husband. Their meeting and their plans for the night were an act of adultery. Not only that, but the woman's husband, who has always denied involvement, had recently spoken and exchanged angry words with the male victim. Now to be completely fair to the husband, the police have said the estranged husband is not a suspect, and he has a rock-solid alibi for the time of the disappearance. However, it's not hard for us to see how a man, angry and betrayed by his wife's adultery, might feel tempted if faced with the possibility of causing them harm. If someone came to him and said – I can take care of this for you. I can end this the old fashioned way – I can see how an enraged soul would feel tempted to take them up on the offer.

Two people and a 3,000-pound truck wiped off the face of the earth.

Life turned into blackness. This seems almost an appropriate response to man's sin. Our loud cry against God's goodness and life whenever we sin could be immediately replied with being made completely void. It would be just. Were the two really murdered because of adultery? No one can prove it. There is always the possibility they got a wild hare and drove off west in the middle of the night and ended up driving into a lake in the countryside. But that is unlikely. The police believe it is murder for hire.

They've looked long and hard to find the bodies and the truck, by the way. They've dredged the rivers. They've searched the streets, the parking lots. There is not a single sign or believable sighting of the two. These are the costs of adultery, brethren. Men wiped off the face of the earth.

*For they searched the rivers
And they searched the seas
But they could not find them
For it was adultery*

There are people who would respond with anger to hearing what I've just said. I know the parents of the dead don't really want to think about their child's sin bringing death. The male victim's parents still live in the Philly area and run a successful bakery there. I can relate to a grieving parent. However, if you are angered at hearing warnings like this, be much more angered by sin, and labor to lead people out of it. If you are indignant by any of the words I've written, be TEN TIMES more indignant at sin, for the death and pain that it causes. Preaching against sin is not an offense. Sin is an offense. We should hate it with our hearts, and teach sinners righteousness instead. (Psalm 51:12-13) I wish the victims had a chance to do that before they died.

*For they searched the rivers
And they searched the seas
But they could not find them
It was adultery*

A Pro-Life Cause

A well-respected pro-life leader used to be an elder at a traditional Bible believing church, and was married with children. He headed his own pro-life group which was very successful. Soon he started showing inappropriate attention to women at the church. Then the other elders found out he was committing adultery and had an ongoing adulterous relationship. The church did all that they could biblically to call him to repentance, yet this man's response was to refuse to repent, and then actually move in with his adultery partner, and leave his wife in the care

of the church elders. They spent over a year working with him, but finally kicked him out of the church, getting vilified and threatened with a lawsuit in return. No amount of counsel or rebuke would change this man's hardened heart.^{xxxv}

After leaving his wife and children, and getting kicked out of his church, he finally ended up in the Catholic Church. Before becoming a member of course, they had to "take care" of the fact that he was a married man living in adultery, which society called a second marriage. Well, the Catholics waved their magic annulment wand as they do^{xxxvi}. They told him his first marriage was never binding, and he now had a valid covenant with his partner in adultery, so he could be a full member and receive Communion. They told him he and his "partner" were sanctified. At this point, our pro-life friend must have thought he got away with it. He must have thought – sure I did wrong, I know that, but I've said I'm sorry and God has forgiven me. He probably thought something like that, and kept living as he was in sin.

However, the Avenger came down hard and fast on this brazen adulterer. He found out that his son, his only son, was a sodomite^{xxxvii}. His son had been lying to him for years, including having his friends over and committing sodomy in secret in their house. His son now proceeded to use the well-known family name to promote sodomy in the United States, something the other homo-sex supporters must have been gleeful about. Now I cannot imagine the pain and sadness to find out that your son wants to live as a sodomite. Any parent in the world ought to ask themselves what went wrong, or what they could have done. But the Lord was not finished with our sinful Christian friend yet. For just a few years after he found out his son was a sodomite, he also found out that his son had been killed, cut down in a car accident like many thousands each year^{xxxviii}. He would never see him on this earth again. Did he ever ask himself if this was justice for his evil? Did he wonder if he stood in the feet of King David, who had his wives taken away from him and his infant son die because of his sin? Did he say to himself as Joseph's brothers: we are surely locked in this prison because we threw our brother into the pit?

You see adultery brings death not only through the murders of jealousy and lust. It brings death because it is justly punished by our Lord. If the law does not pursue us, Almighty God will pursue us. He pursued Moses when he neglected to circumcise his son, as the Bible tells us – *the LORD met him and sought to kill him.* (Exodus 4:24) It was then that his wife circumcised the boy, ending the pursuit and saving her husband's life. Do not think you can say before the Almighty – I will just sin now and when I'm finished I know God will forgive me. Do not be so foolish. The Almighty brings the Avenger down on every prideful pharaoh

there is, and who is the angel who struck the firstborn of Egypt? It is God Himself. *And it came to pass at midnight that the LORD struck all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh who sat on his throne to the firstborn of the captive who was in the dungeon, and all the firstborn of livestock.* (Exodus 12:29) Do not play around with sin. Do not think being a Christian will mean there is no punishment for you or your people. The warnings in the New Testament alone are enough to chill us to bone and instill the knowledge of the enormity of sin:

Anyone who has rejected Moses' law dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses.

Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace?

For we know Him who said, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord. And again, "The LORD will judge His people."

It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

(Hebrews 10:28-31)

And speaking to a Church awash in sexual immorality and idolatry, Jesus the Savior promises the death of children:

"And I gave her time to repent of her sexual immorality, and she did not repent.

"Indeed I will cast her into a sickbed, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of their deeds.

"I will kill her children with death, and all the churches shall know that I am He who searches the minds and hearts. And I will give to each one of you according to your works.

(Revelation 2:21-23)

If only this man had stopped to understand how deadly sin is. How deadly adultery is. How deadly ripping apart a marriage is. Not only do I believe his son would be alive today, but he would also have a greater witness to Christ, and would show Christ more powerfully to the world as a public figure. He would lead more souls to Jesus. Yet he would not listen, and the Lord pursued him like an attack dog and brought justice on this earth. There's a sign in our neighborhood that says: "Beware of Dog. He can run to the gate in 2.5 seconds. Can you make it to the gate faster?" A lot of people take a warning sign like that seriously. We need to take our God a thousand times more seriously. We must not mock Him

with adultery. He will pursue us.

One Conquest in Life

The truth that marriage unites one man and one woman is intricately and logically tied in with the truth that marriage is for life. If it weren't for life, and you took another husband or wife, then marriage would be one man and two women; one woman and two men. Marriage between a man and woman is by necessity then, and by God's design, for life. To unite with anyone than our beloved is adultery. To practice adultery through remarriage is akin to polygamy, just taking each new partner one after another, rather than all at once. Each of marriage's design elements fit together and we dare not try and remove one.

Back when I was a nonbeliever, and lived like a demon, I thought as most lost men think: that each new woman I joined with in fornication was like one new conquest. It then became very attractive to have many conquests. A conquest feeds our pride, and gives us pleasure. So we want many of them.

Yet the simple fact is, a man only has ONE conquest in his life. And that is his wife. The man who tries to have many conquests has none at all. That's because a conqueror does not only come in and take the land. A conqueror actually stays, and he rules the land and he governs it. That is what a conqueror does. Fornication is not a conquest. It is more like a raid, like what the Comanche or the Magyar or the Vikings did. They charged in, they took what they wanted, they destroyed things and then they left. That is not a conquest. That's a raid. That's theft. A man has only ONE conquest in life and that is his wife, whom he conquers, he governs and he rules. A fornicator gets NO conquests. Only stolen goods. A husband conquers and rules.

That same great truth is also the truth that demands we do not seek another spouse in our life. That we plan for a future with only one man or woman. That we consider our marriage a job to do and we do it. That we forgive whatever horrible wrong we believe has been done to us. We honor the name of Christ through being obedient in our marriage and we bless our children with a stable home and a good moral example. We show the world a witness to salvation. Whatever difficulty you see in that teaching, take it to the Lord God and He will show you the way. There is a simple path to walk. Ask Him to lead you and He will. Jesus says – *I am the way, the truth and the life* (John 14:6) – and He wasn't just speaking about His atonement, but about every minute of life in fellowship with Him. (Matthew 16:24) His life, His character, His Spirit is the way, and that life is shared within you. (1 Corinthians 6:19) Just ask Him in prayer to lead

you. He will. (Matthew 7:8-11)

Stand by Your Man

People naturally ask what to do if they are divorced by their spouse. There a countless variety of this one horrible situation. Yet the answer is not hidden from us. The answer is to wait and pray for that person^{xxxix}. There is no guarantee that God will restore you together, but we have to do the right thing because it is right, not because we've got a guarantee. Make it your life's goal to pray for them, and wait patiently. You can find inspiring testimonies from Christians who have remained celibate in this situation for years, some who have had their marriages restored.^{xl} It doesn't require a special gift. It only requires faithfulness to God.

For some souls that sounds like too hard a torture to imagine. But I want to remind you that often the most empty and painful times are the times we praise God the most and the deepest. Perhaps the most memorable passages of praise in the Bible are from the time of Lamentations. The mourning of the prophet and all Israel during its destruction. A time of scarcity. Of the trauma of war. Of famine. Poverty. Dim memories of something better. The same book that briefly catalogues this time of national suffering is also a book of praise to God. The prophet never stops trusting in God during this desolation, and never stops acknowledging God as righteous. Listen to the prophet as he weeps. This is much worse than any divorce.

*My eyes fail with tears, My heart is troubled;
My bile is poured on the ground
Because of the destruction of the daughter of my people,
Because the children and the infants
Faint in the streets of the city.
They say to their mothers,
"Where is grain and wine?"
As they swoon like the wounded In the streets of the city,
As their life is poured out
In their mothers' bosom.
Lamentations 2:11-12*

He goes on to describe in even more detail the suffering of the children, and the cannibalism that is occurring due to poverty. Yet he does not lose hope and provides some of the most memorable words about trust in God. You may remember some from a popular hymn.

*This I recall to my mind,
Therefore I have hope.*

*Through the LORD's mercies we are not consumed,
Because His compassions fail not.
They are new every morning;
Great is Your faithfulness.
"The LORD is my portion," says my soul,
"Therefore I hope in Him!"
The LORD is good to those who wait for Him,
To the soul who seeks Him.
It is good that one should hope and wait quietly
For the salvation of the LORD.
It is good for a man to bear
The yoke in his youth.
Let him sit alone and keep silent,
Because God has laid it on him;
Let him put his mouth in the dust—
There may yet be hope.
Lamentations 3:21-29*

If the prophet can say this after seeing the brutality of war, and the inhuman suffering of famine and starvation, surely we can find hope in our heart as well, if our marriage is taken from us. Similarly, it is like the loss of a whole kingdom. Or a temple. If we have faith we can say the same words as the prophet, and do what is right. Recognize God is just. There is a purpose for the hardship God gives us. Simply wait on the Lord in faithfulness. The loss of a marriage is no excuse for sinning by taking another partner. We just remain faithful as God is faithful.

Repent

If it is a challenge to remain faithful to God through torments in marriage, it is also a challenge to end the adulterous affair that man calls a marriage. Yet if we do not do this, how are we different from any bold sinner? We do not continue our sin, but end it. Many will be outraged at the idea of ending what man calls a marriage because God calls it adultery, but morally and spiritually there is no other choice. We love to hear testimonies of people in the homosexual lifestyle who repented, or of transsexuals who left their aberrant lifestyle behind, but we need to have the same kind of testimonies for remarriages. We leap to praise God to hear the testimonies of drug addicts and drunks, criminals and gangsters who left their sin and took on a whole new life. We believe it glorifies our Creator. Yet we should have the same excitement about those who leave behind what God calls adultery, to lead a whole new life. It should cause us to praise our God.^{xli}

There are several records in the early Church of the remarried being expected to cease physical intimacy and live as brother and sister instead. I have read a testimony of a modern Catholic couple who did the same thing.^{xliii} However, it seems rather incomplete to stop there. To fully end adultery, the couple should formally end their marriage, and cease living together. It will be rather difficult being celibate under the same roof anyway. So while it is an ancient teaching that the remarried only cease their intimacy, it is wiser to go all the way.^{xliii}

Man will cry out – but what if children are involved – but we could ask the same thing about an adulterous affair. What if I commit adultery with a woman and she has a child? Am I then justified in continued cheating on my wife because a child is involved? No one on earth would say so, but this is the logic of those who claim the remarried must stay together since children may be involved. The logic functions terribly both ways. Having children does not justify continuing an affair. Now it is still possible to see the children, and to meet one another sometimes if necessary for helping the children. However, that does not necessitate continuing in adultery, and can be done in a completely celibate way. Problem solved. People only turn this situation into a problem because they want the remarried to continue their sin in comfort. Yet there is no reason to continue in sin, and it is possible to be there for the children while also ending your sin.

Those who refuse to instruct the remarried to either remain celibate or separate claim they are preserving marriage. Yet the opposite is true. They are justifying destroying a covenant marriage, and defending keeping adulterers together. It is they who break up families. If you are in a remarried situation, which the Lord calls adultery, know that you can end your sin without abandoning your children. You can still be there for them. They are still a gift, regardless of the sinful way they were produced. Let God cleanse you of your sins. It is what we would expect from anyone else. God in Christ will make us clean.

The Next Generation

I know the covenant lifelong nature of marriage is a hard teaching. Jesus knew it too, when He gave the teaching. God knows any pain your heart goes through. Yet He knew about that pain when He revealed His will to us, and His will is that man and wife never take another. They reveal salvation by having only one partner for life. The point we've gotten to in the Church, where not only are exceptions to this accepted without shame, but liberal marriage doctrine in practice makes adultery normal in the Church, is not historical either. Know that if you treat marriage as for life, you both respect the Bible's teaching, and are most in line with

historical Christianity of the past 2,000 years. The earliest Christians did not divorce and remarry like today's 20th and 21st century flock. Their leaders led with rigor and did not permit man to simply follow his will because it felt easier. It took many centuries before the Church finally collapsed on marriage. Trust the Word of God on this. Not your pastor. Not your counselor. When you get married, marry with the understanding and full heart commitment that you will never divorce or take another. Marry with the full heart commitment that you will respond to sin with forgiveness, and at the minimum not abandon the other. Get used to living with a sinner. Get used to needing to be cleansed and to repent yourself. You will live with sinners forever in heaven, albeit the repentant ones.

I want to encourage you again that the job is not as hard as people like to say. You do not need to be more hard-working than the next guy to be with your spouse for life. You don't need to have a special gifting. There is no need to be awe struck at long-lasting marriages. Billions of people do it. In fact, not only is it not as hard as you hear, there is immense joy and satisfaction in marriage, on many levels, especially if you walk the path Jesus gave us to walk. Just do things God's way. Trust in His supernatural power in your life, that exists in you every moment through the Holy Spirit. Jesus said He will live in you and you in Him. That's not just a figure of speech.

Your children don't need another generation of parents who abandoned the other. They don't need to spend their youth with one of their parents and not the other, or being passed around by bus to this or that so-called home. They don't need to be a tool in a custody battle. They don't need to be taught morality either by someone who is living in sin. Who does? They need a mother and a father who will raise them and be there for them for life. The future depends on it. God will withdraw His judgment on the Church if we repent and respect marriage. If we do not, expect worse to come upon us. God will not be mocked. He tore Israel to pieces and left only a remnant. He can do the same with us.

For if God did not spare the natural branches, He may not spare you either.

Therefore consider the goodness and severity of God: on those who fell, severity; but toward you, goodness, if you continue in His goodness. Otherwise you also will be cut off.

(Romans 11:21-22)

ⁱ This is a reference to Ephesians 2:15-16 which speaks of Christ putting to death the enmity. There it speaks of ending the enmity between Jew and Gentile, but the principle of peace applies to husband and wife as well. There is no longer any conflict. Interestingly, we can compare Israel and the Church to man and wife. Just as God put Adam to sleep when he made Eve from his flesh, God caused partial blindness to come to Israel while He makes the Church from its seed. Just as Adam awoke later to receive and unite with his wife, Israel will awaken spiritually one day, and join in the same olive tree with the Church. (Romans 11:7-27) God makes two one with Israel and the nations, and He does so with man and wife. He breaks down the wall of separation and puts to death the enmity.

ⁱⁱ *The Effects of Divorce on America*, by Patrick Fagan and Robert Rector; June 5, 2000 at www.heritage.org

ⁱⁱⁱ *After Pregnancy, Many Women Have Bits of Male DNA in their Brains*, by Colin Lecher; September 27, 2012 at www.popsoci.com

^{iv} *The Mind's Mirror*, by Lea Winerman; October 2005, Vol 36, No. 9 at www.apa.org

^v *Bonded in The Brain: New Science Confirms View of Sex*, by APFLI; Dec 1, 2010 at www.physiciansforlife.org

^{vi} *Long-Married Couples Do Look Alike, Study Finds*, by Daniel Goleman, 1987 at www.nytimes.com

^{vii} Here is an excellent article on the subject: *The Trinity in the Resurrection*, by Mike Oppenheimer at www.letusreason.org

^{viii} *Marital status and suicide in the National Longitudinal Mortality Study*, by, Augustine J Kposowa at <https://jech.bmj.com>

This study shows that divorce is associated with the risk of suicide among men more than doubling: "Data analysis revealed that marital status is associated with the risk of suicide, and that divorce and separation have the strongest association. Indeed, when adjustments were made for such potential confounders as age, race, education, income, and region of residence, *divorce/separation was the only status category that showed a significant increased risk of suicide.*" [emphasis mine]

Suicide and Divorce at divorceinfo.com

"A study of 13 European countries by the regional European office of the World Health Organization found that *divorce was the only factor linked with suicide* in every one of the 13 countries." [emphasis mine]

Divorce, Murder and Suicide by DivorceForce; October 15, 2018 at www.divorceforce.com

Although the authors of this article are not against divorce, they acknowledge the

documented fact that most violence and murder in a relationship comes shortly after a divorce or separation:

“From 1993 to 2010, women seeking separation experienced higher rates of intimate partner violence than women who remained married or were already divorced.

And for abusive relationships that turn lethal, there’s a quick timeline—almost half of the killings of women occur within three months after separation and 74 percent occur between two and six months after separation.”

^{ix} Another attempt to avoid Malachi’s teaching that God hates divorce is the modern claim the passage says: “the man who hates and divorces his wife. . . .” Several modern translations use this phraseology. It’s not really a deal breaker either way, as we have strong New Testament teaching to let us know what God wills, but the modern translation is wrong. They say they have to translate it that way because “he hates” is in the third person, therefore it could not be God saying “I hate.” However, the fact that the verb is in the third person simply means that God is saying THAT He hates divorce. In fact, it is “the LORD God of Israel says” which comes first. So it takes shifting the words around much more to come to the version some moderns use. And remember, these people have an agenda. Their own churches have become awash in divorce and remarriage in the modern era. Very likely they or close friends and family members are divorcing and remarrying. They have a heavy compulsion to avoid strong statements against divorce in the Bible. They need their loopholes any way they can get them. Saying that God hates divorce is in harmony with God’s intended creation order as well as with the powerful New Testament teachings. We should respect that translation.

^x *The History of Christian Thought Upon Marriage, Divorce & Remarriage*, by Daniel Jennings at www.danielrjennings.org

^{xi} The idea that a spouse just needs to be “like the dead” or “dead to you” is a nonbiblical piece of voodoo that Christians like to throw out so they can divorce like demons. They just claim the other person is “like the dead.” I once heard a well-known televangelist being asked by a woman if she could divorce her husband since he had dementia. It was getting very hard for her to take care of him. This false teacher answered, with his huckster voice and TV composure, that since her husband was “like the dead” due to his illness, she was justified in divorcing him, and hence in finding another spouse. Can you believe that? It is incredible the twisted thinking Christians will practice to justify their selfish lifestyle. What sick immoral people. Jesus brought in the New Covenant with His ACTUAL death. Not a spiritual one. Romans 7 then is in good harmony with 1 Corinthians 7:39.

^{xii} This Anabaptist article gives a brief explanation of both the view of the early Christian fathers AND the betrothal view showing respect for both, a respect that I share: *What the Bible Says about Marriage, Divorce and Remarriage*, pages 33-38, by John Coblenz at <https://anabaptists.org>

^{xiii} *Except for Fornication*, by Daniel R. Jennings, 2012, CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform

^{xiv} This Jewish article goes over betrothal and marriage both in the Bible and in custom. The Betrothal period – about a year long – was a formal arrangement and required filing for divorce to end. After the betrothal period, there was a final ceremony when the husband and wife moved in together. It cites two passages in which the Bible clearly calls a betrothed woman a “wife.”: *Betrothal*, by Marcus Jastrow and Bernard Drachman at jewishencyclopedia.com

^{xv} Both 1 Corinthians 6:9 and Hebrews 13:4 are good examples, using the person form of the words: fornicators and adulterers. They are two different things. You also see them next to each other in Galatians 5:19. 1 Corinthians 7:2 speaks of having your own spouse in order to avoid fornication, so here it logically refers to avoiding immorality before marriage.

^{xvi} *The Gospel of Matthew, Purpose and Audience* at www.blueletterbible.com

It is quite obvious and widely accepted that Matthew was written to the Jews. For one, he focuses on the fulfillment of the Old Testament, even quoting from it sixty-two times, which is more than any other Gospel writer. Secondly it is interesting that Matthew does not explain Jewish culture like the other evangelists . . . which also adds to the argument that he is writing to Jews. Matthew uses the phrase, “kingdom of heaven,” (the only author, in fact, to use this phrase) which can be considered as a “reverential Jewish expression” a term appropriate to a Jewish audience.

^{xvii} *Divorce*, by Solomon Schechter and David Werner Amram, at jewishencyclopedia.com

“In the Mishnaic period the theory of the law that the husband could divorce his wife at will was challenged by the school of Shammai. It interpreted the text of Deut. xxiv. 1 in such a manner as to reach the conclusion that the husband could not divorce his wife except for cause, and that the cause must be sexual immorality”

^{xviii} *Infidelity Statistics 2017*; February 1, 2017 at www.trustify.info

“According to the Associated Press and the Journal of Marital and Family Therapy, 22% of men say that they’ve cheated on their significant other at least once during their marriage, and 14% of wives admit to straying.”

^{xix} I have said elsewhere that you should be agreed before marriage that you will marry for life and that you stay married through sin. I want to say explicitly here that you should be committed to staying married even if your partner commits adultery against you. You should be prepared and committed to forgiveness. That doesn’t make the sin alright. It makes the marriage strong against it and assures that we do what Lord Jesus commands we do.

I have to add that there is a great weapon to protect against the temptation for this sin, as with any other sin. That is to fill your life and time with good activities. Be so full of good works that even if you desired adultery you would never have the time to do it. I

sometimes scratch my head now and wonder how anyone has the time. Being filled up with good is one of the greatest weapons against Satan that there is.

^{xx} *Ben & Jerry's Hubby Hubby ice cream celebrates same-sex marriage*, by Eric Wahlgren; Sep 1, 2009 at www.aol.com

^{xxi} *Rumble Fish Book Review*, by Monica Wyatt at www.commonsemmedia.org

^{xxii} *Siamese Fighting Fish*, by Shirly Sharpe, updated 6/19/18 at www.thesprucepets.com

^{xxiii} *Homilies of Chrysostom*, 1 Corinthians 7 at <https://biblehub.com>

The exact language is unclear to me, but he seems to suggest an annulment is possible, which would declare void the marriage and allow remarriage: Ver. 15. "Yet if the unbelieving departeth, let him depart," for in this case the matter is no longer fornication. But what is the meaning of, "if the unbelieving departeth?" For instance, if he bid thee sacrifice and take part in his ungodliness on account of thy marriage, or else part company; it were better the marriage were annulled, and no breach made in godliness. Wherefore he adds, "A brother is not under bondage, nor yet a sister, in such cases."

^{xxiv} The Catholic Church has recently added this to their list of reasons to annul your marriage. If a spouse (presumably a woman) procures an abortion, they can make your marriage void. While this obviously goes against the definition of an annulment – a marriage being voided because of something missing before the marriage, not something that happened after the marriage – the Catholic administration tries to get around this by claiming it reflects a previous-to-marriage unwillingness to have children. This is purely imaginative. If one could tie in an evil that occurred after marriage to an alleged deficiency before marriage, we could imaginatively tie in any number of things to presumed deficiencies prior to saying "I do" and claim them as annulments rather than divorces as well. This is clearly a divorce. The Catholic annulment doctors are drunk and need to go home.

^{xxv} The doctrine that there is only one Church and not many local ones, is explicit in the words of Christ when He speaks of His Church in the singular, such as Matthew 16:18. It is moreover implicit elsewhere, such as the New Testament commands to be unified in doctrine and to have church discipline. One cannot have a unity of doctrine when thousands of churches each have their own doctrine, and each can equally excommunicate the others. Similarly, one cannot practice church discipline if every church practices different discipline, and the sheep can get kicked out of one church, and just join the one down the road the following week. Teachings about unity and discipline then, necessitate a Church which is one, in a visible and practical way. That is obviously not the situation currently, but it is clearly Christ's purpose and we should strive to accomplish a practical unity. We are not just a mystical Body.

xxvi *Beliefs, Practices and Doctrines* at www.beachyam.org

[This is part of a larger website describing Beachy Amish-Mennonites and various groups that have branched off from them. This is reflective of many modern Amish Mennonites, but does not include the Old Order ones, most of whom also respect the permanence of marriage. The website is run by Cory Anderson. The paper on marriage is almost midway down the page.]

xxvii *Protestant Reformed Churches* at www.prca.org

Prohibition of the Remarriage of the “Innocent Party,” by David J. Engelsma at www.prca.org

xxviii Just to get you started, a few of the independent churches that respect the covenant of marriage are Transformation Christian Church in Ohio (www.transformationchristianchurch.com), Saint Athanasius Reformed Catholic Church in Fort Collins, Colorado (<https://www.saintathanasiusfc.com/>) and Sunset View Church of Christ in Chapmanville, West Virginia.

xxix *Why Marriage Matters 30 Conclusions from the Social Sciences*, by Family Scholars, 2002, at www.americanvalues.org

Why Marriage Matters 30 Conclusions from the Social Sciences, by Family Scholars, 2002 at <http://irp-cdn.multiscreensite.com>

xxx *Sex tape clue in double murder of Margaret and Seana Tapp in Cold Case Files*, by Keith Moor; October 2, 2014 at www.heraldsun.com.au

xxxi I have removed the names from the text of the article and used initials or titles.

xxxi *If the Shoe Fits*, by Herald Sun; August 10, 2014 at www.pressreader.com

xxxi *Margaret and Seana Tapp murders – more tragedy*, by Emily Webb; August 25, 2014 at truecrimereader.com

xxxi *Was Couple that Mysteriously Vanished 11 Years Ago Killed in Murder-for-Hire Plot?* By Michelle Stigona; March 2, 2016 at crimefeed.com

xxxi *Please Pray for Randall Terry*; February 1, 2000 at www.operationsaveamerica.org

Read these unbelievably sad words: “Cindy (Randall’s wife) and children are still with us. We are offering them as much emotional and spiritual support as we are able, but what they really need is for Randall to repent and return to loving his family.”

xxxi *From Operation Rescue to Operation Convert*, by Tim Drake; May 18, 2006 at www.freerepublic.com

xxxi *Founder of Operation Rescue Randall Terry Responds to Article by His Son in Out Magazine*; April 12, 2004 at www.freerepublic.com

xxxi *Jamiel Terry, Son of National Pro-Life Activist Randall Terry, Dies in Head-On*

Collision, by Janet Shan, December 2, 2011 at <https://hinterlandgazette.com>

xxxix Just recently, as I finished up the editing process on this book, I heard from an old acquaintance who had stood for her marriage for 7 years after her husband left. She had just recently reunited with him. They were now legally married again and living together. That is just what God teaches us, brethren. Remain single or reconcile. Her years of faithfulness and prayer were rewarded. There would be more stories like this if more Christians did the right thing.

xi *Faith Reunited Them*, by Michelle Stewart; May 1, 2005 at www.guideposts.com

xii *Testimonies of Repentance from Remarriage Adultery*, Testimonies at www.cadz.net

xiii *My parents lived as 'brother and sister' for 25 years so they could receive Communion: priest* by Pete Baklinski; November 9, 2015 at www.lifesitenews.com

xliii *Letter 55, Pt. 4*, Jerome

Therefore if your sister, who, as she says, has been forced into a second union, wishes to receive the body of Christ and not to be accounted an adulteress, let her do penance; so far at least as from the time she begins to repent to have no farther intercourse with that second husband who ought to be called not a husband but an adulterer.”



Small lake at Keyuan Garden in Dongguan, Guangdong, China

Chapter 5

BEAR AND RAISE CHILDREN

Then God blessed them, and God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it.

Genesis 1:28

*Behold, children are a heritage from the LORD,
The fruit of the womb is a reward.*

Psalms 127:3

“And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart.

“You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up.

Deuteronomy 6:6-7

*Train up a child in the way he should go,
And when he is old he will not depart from it.*

Proverbs 22:6

In an age when much of the Church wants to hyper-spiritualize its religion and pare everything down to a short Gospel presentation, it gets overlooked that a core reason for marriage is simply to bear and raise children. A marriage by its nature is intended to be fruitful and full of children. Those children must be nurtured, protected, and educated. Although no parent can impart a true and saving faith to a child, a parent can and must teach children the Word of God, bring them into the regular worship of the Church, instill good values and lead by example by living a godly and prayerful life. The family brings new children into the Church and community, even though it takes God to bring their new souls to life. Unless they are called uniquely to celibacy, Christians reproduce.

We know that the family is the right vessel for bearing and raising children from Holy Scripture, because God ordained marriage from the beginning: *Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.* (Genesis 2:24) Jesus confirms the nature of this union as one woman and one man for life, even

though the Old Covenant had tolerated polygamy and divorce. (Mark 10:4-9) Moreover, sexual immorality of all kinds is prohibited in Scripture, whether fornication, adultery, sodomy or incest. Therefore, we do not artificially try to replicate the marital union or the pleasure of the thing outside of God's ordained vessel. To do so is sin. We can even claim good intentions in trying to make something else the vessel for union, but it will never be the right way. Only the marriage bed is pure. (Hebrews 13:5)

Not only is marriage the only right vessel for children, but having children is one of its core purposes. This is all over the Holy Scripture from start to finish. As part of the dominion mandate, God instructs Adam, *"Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth."* (Genesis 1:28) This is a command. It comes hand in hand with God's ordaining Adam to have dominion over the earth. Neither the command to be fruitful nor man's dominion have been revoked. In fact, they go hand in hand, as is apparent in the Scripture. A fruitful people will have dominion too.

God's blessing is always to multiply His people. To provide them much seed. Part of God's covenant with Abraham includes the promise: *"And I will make My covenant between Me and you, and will multiply you exceedingly."* (Genesis 17:2) When Abraham shows his faithfulness by bringing Isaac to the altar, and upon giving the offering of the ram instead, God again promises: *"blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply your descendants as the stars of the heaven and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your descendants shall possess the gate of their enemies."*

"In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice."
(Genesis 22:17-18)

This promises not only many descendants, but that through this multitude all the nations of the earth will receive blessing. The blessing of seed brings blessing to others. Similarly, in remembering the faithfulness of Abraham and of Sarah, who are examples to all Christians, the New Testament points to the result of such faithfulness: *Therefore from one man, and him as good as dead, were born as many as the stars of the sky in multitude—innumerable as the sand which is by the seashore.* (Hebrews 11:12)

If you don't find that passage exciting, I would question the seriousness of your faith. There came from the parents a multitude, not a few. Imagine if one had been held back. Imagine if Isaac or Jacob had

been too much trouble for the parents. Or Jesse or David. Hebrews 11 teaches these great men were “*strangers and pilgrims on the earth,*” (vs. 13) but strangers and pilgrims don’t worry if they’re going to be able to afford a vacation with one more child on the way. Strangers and pilgrims worry about spiritual things, and they serve the coming Kingdom of God. They know a coming child is not a curse, but a blessing.

Children throughout the Bible are always called a blessing. They are a gift. An honor to have. Psalm 128 is almost entirely about the blessing of children:

*Blessed is every one who fears the LORD,
Who walks in His ways.
When you eat the labor of your hands,
You shall be happy, and it shall be well with you.
Your wife shall be like a fruitful vine
In the very heart of your house,
Your children like olive plants.
All around your table.
Behold, thus shall the man be blessed Who fears the LORD.
The LORD bless you out of Zion,
And may you see the good of Jerusalem
All the days of your life.
Yes, may you see your children’s children.
Peace be upon Israel!*

The great blessing this Psalm speaks of includes having food and happiness. More than anything though, it speaks of the blessing of children, praising a fruitful wife, who is compared to a fruitful vine. If you have ever seen a fruiting vine or tree, you will know there aren’t just a few meager fruit hanging down. Unless you’ve been doing something very wrong in your garden, it is literally hanging down with fruit, and puts them forth in abundance. It is a picture of abundance. Children in this Psalm are compared to olive plants, or olive trees as they sit around the table. An olive grove rarely has just a few trees. Having passed through olive groves many times when I lived in Spain, they are practically a forest of small trees, albeit spaced out. The father in this Psalm sitting at the table with his children has more than a few of them.ⁱ These children are a part of his blessing for being faithful to God. They include not just his children but his grandchildren as well, who must be many. This blessing will be a part of the “peace” which is upon Israel, its peace and holiness before God, more than anything else.

Notice what the Psalm does not say. It doesn’t say our wife shall be like a barren vine, or like a very weak unfruitful one. It doesn’t say your wife

shall be busy being a provider and protector and won't have time for bearing fruit. It doesn't say these olive plants around the table cost too much, are too hard to train up, or make the village too full of people. The Word of God COULD have told us those things. Plenty of ancient cultures tried to make their women barren and some succeeded, much to their hurt. People knew about ways of becoming unfruitful back then. Yet God's Word teaches none of those things. It teaches children are a great blessing. Abundant children. Abundant grandchildren. They are a part of our peace before God.

The famous passage from Psalm 127 ends:

*Like arrows in the hand of a warrior,
So are the children of one's youth.
Happy is the man who has his quiver full of them;
They shall not be ashamed,
But shall speak with their enemies in the gate.*
(Psalm 127:4-5)

This is another revealed truth in which children are not just called a blessing or a reward, but are shown to be a blessing in large number. Arrows come in a quiver, and a quiver doesn't just hold one, two or three arrows, if you were a warrior, you'd be ill equipped going into battle with just a few arrows. You'd help cause your nation's defeat, and likely your own death. A hunter wouldn't even want just one or two arrows, and he hasn't got his life on the line or his future. These children, these arrows shot from a warrior, will be the ones to stand against the nation's enemies, hold the cities strong and protect the land from invaders. Imagine the land without them.

The Hebrew word for "happy" in this Psalm is *'eshet*. "*Happy is the man who has a quiver full of them.*" (vs. 5) It can alternately mean happy OR blessed, and is sometimes translated either way throughout the Bible. This is true of Psalm 128, which I went over previously. When it says "*Blessed is every one who fears the LORD.*" (vs. 1) It could also read "Happy is every one who fears the LORD." The opening of Psalm 1, "*Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly*" (vs. 1) is the same word. Being blessed and having a godly form of happiness go together. It is right to say the Bible calls us blessed when we have children, but we can fairly understand that it says we are happy when we have children. Whatever hardship or sacrifice might be required, a godly heart will be happy to receive children.

That includes the children who come as surprises. That includes the ones who are a product of immorality. That includes the ones who come to a younger couple. Youth is an advantage in having children, not a

disadvantage or a wrong. A man or woman, holding their newborn child should be happy. Regardless of the circumstance, the child is a gift.

*Happy are you, O Israel!
Who is like you, a people saved by the LORD,
(Deuteronomy 33:29)*

I relate this use of happy/blessed to the subject of marriage because as we've seen, marriage is a picture of salvation itself. Here God is calling Israel to be happy, because God has chosen them to save out of Egypt and deliver into the land. This deliverance which prefigures salvation in Christ in so many ways, is a cause of happiness. God says so. How much MORE happiness do we have in our eternal salvation in the Lord Yeshua, which our marriages point to. The happiness of the bride who is chosen, made pure, protected by her husband. The happiness of the husband who chooses his bride to be his special one and brings her under his wing. The happiness of the children who were created by their mutual love and will be loved and nourished by them. This is an act of deliverance. It is a picture of salvation. If Israel is called to be happy in its deliverance, we should more so be happy both with our spouse and the children who come into our family. We have saved a people for the LORD.

Bearing children and teaching them is one of the ways in which marriage is sacramental. It brings a physical representation of God's work in salvation. Just as Christ's love for the Church and the Church's love for Christ will bring new souls to hear the Gospel and be born of the Spirit, the love between husband and wife brings forth new children, who will be loved, taught and disciplined in the family. Having children is a part of what it means to represent Christ and the Church. The family fails as a representative of Christ if it does not. A Christian family by its nature bears new life. Similarly, it is in bearing and raising children that that marriage most represents the Holy Trinity. Just as the Father and Son's eternal communion brings forth the Holy Spirit, the man and wife's earthly union brings forth children, new life coming from the very nature of the parents.

When families don't have new life, or intentionally have only few, they are rejecting God's hand in their marriage and rejecting a part of their responsibility to represent Christ. They make marriage about something ELSE than what God gave it to us for. God gave it to bear children, to care for human life, to picture salvation and to aid each other in growing in faith. Many Christians make it about the pleasure of a partnership, the societal rituals families have, the comfort that economic stability can provide and the pursuit of high education and wealth. This is not a family according to God. It is a pale imitation. A sickened shell. God's families

are there to be a spiritual lightning bolt on this earth. To sanctify. To educate. To sacrifice. We need to learn this lesson in the family as we learn it elsewhere:

“No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.

(Matthew 6:24)

Anti-Genesis

One thing that many Christians today don't know about the family and children, is that for virtually all of its history the Church did not accept the practice of contraception. From the earliest documented era until the first part of the 20th century, virtually all of Christendom agreed that it was immoral, and that Christians should not practice itⁱⁱ. Even non-Christians recognized its harm in being a tool to wipe out nations and in facilitating sexual immorality. Contraception was known as a tool for whoredom. Treating contraception as a sin is today known as a Catholic teaching, but the major early Protestant leaders rejected its use as well. No main branch of Christians accepted the use of contraception until 1930, when the Anglican Church at its Lambeth Conference in Lambeth, England came to the official ruling that contraception could be used in marriage under some limited circumstances. The Anglican Church soon broadened those limited circumstances, and other Protestant groups joined into the acceptance.

It was thought, in the 1960s during the Catholic Vatican II stage, that the Pope would end up going the way of the world and accept contraception now that society had. There were inside voices claiming that is what Pope Paul VI would do. However, in 1968, and you should really read this document, Paul VI came out with *Humanae Vitae* [meaning: Of Human Life] which sustained the universal Christian prohibition on contraception which had been with the Church from the earliest era. It plainly rejected it, and listed a number of reasons why. *Humane Vitae* also predicted some of the worldwide effects of using contraception, predictions that turned out to be startlingly correct, such as the popularizing of promiscuity, the cheapening of marriage, the increase of divorce and the attempt by governments to control people's fertility. The Catholic Church acted with consistency and upheld what Christians had believed for millennia.

A fair-minded person really has to ask themselves this question: Did all of Christendom live in darkness for about nineteen centuries only to be

enlightened by brilliant ethical minds in the 20th century? Or could it be some other way? Could it be that all of the Church had the truth for nineteen centuries only to be seduced into a lie because they suddenly had the means to commit easy immorality and trusted much less in God than before? Could the acceptance of contraception among Christians simply have been part of the milieu that saw Christianity crumble in so many other ways? It was the same era in which the truths of the Bible were often dismissed as false. The same era that began to normalize fornication. The same era that would accept divorce and remarriage and then sodomy as normal. The same era that took to rebellion and drugs and left its children unrestrained on the street; that saw violent crime skyrocket. There was without a doubt a great turning away from Christian belief and tradition during this era, one that continues up until the present day. Isn't it always possible that changing the teaching on contraception was just part of that tide of ungodliness? I am convinced that's all it was. A convenient change of doctrine to allow further immoral living, and what appears to be convenience in life. There is no respect for God in it.

Since it is a very big subject, and I don't want to get into much more of the history of that change, I will only challenge you with the main reasons a Christian should not use contraception. I haven't made up a single one. I recommend you investigate that whole subject, as I did, back when I formerly thought differently. The truth is not so hard to see. This practice, which literally means "against the beginning" or "against conception", is an enemy of the Church.

Anything like birth control that appears in the Bible is punished severely. This would include two instances. There is the case of Onan, who refused to bear children with his brother's wife, and spilled his seed on the ground. Onan was struck down dead for this. (Genesis 38:8-10) Many will claim this was only for his refusal to provide his brother with progeny; however, this cannot be as the punishment for that transgression is public shaming. (Deuteronomy 25:7-10) It is not the death penalty. Yet Onan is struck down, so it must be something more serious. Secondly, the Torah deals with the case that a woman might help her husband out in a fight and wound his opponent's genitals. Presumably, this is because she wouldn't be as strong, so she would go for an easy spot to attack. This damage to the genitals is punished by chopping off her hand. (Deuteronomy 25:11-12) This shows the seriousness of damaging human reproduction. These two cases of preventing birth and of damaging sterility are both treated with very harsh punishments. We have to see that God honors and protects the means by which we reproduce.

The Bible condemns *pharmakeia*, a Greek word which literally refers to the use of potions, and would include contraceptive potions of that day. (Galatians 5:21, Revelation 9:21, 18:23, 21:8) The New Testament condemnation of “*sorcery*” literally refers to the use of potions. Many preachers today will point to the fact it covers using drugs to get high, but if we recognize it covers chemical potions, then it clearly covers contraceptives as well, which ancient societies knew about just as we do.

We also see a prohibition of *pharmakeia* in the Didache, an early Christian writing, probably written, or begun in the 1st century AD. It gives instructions to an early congregation. Here *pharmakeia* is prohibited right BESIDE abortion and infanticide.ⁱⁱⁱ In context, this is surely not a prohibition on the use of magic or getting high. In context it is a prohibition on contraception. The Didache prohibits all three. That is also what we see in other early Christian writings, and it is how the Didache prohibition was understood. It refers to contraception.

It was the doctrine of the very early Church. While this may not prove it to be true, if we hold in high regard the leaders of the early Church for their holiness, for being the source of much orthodox doctrine as well as for their nearness to the apostles, we cannot treat their views as merely arbitrary. That’s especially true if we see them in agreement with biblical principles and natural law. Contraception was over and over roundly condemned by the early Church.^{iv} This was the continual teaching through Church history until the 20th century. Past Christian societies also made contraception illegal, as it was before 1965 in the United States. We should be very skeptical of the claim that all these saints were just unenlightened. They were Christian saints.

The Bible always treats children as a blessing and honors having many children. I went over this point earlier in the context of marriage being the right place for childbirth and childbirth being one of its central purposes. It praises having children from start to finish, and treats having abundant children as a blessing. 1 Timothy 2 teaches that bearing children is a part of the woman’s salvation. Children are to be taught in the Lord and can be sanctified by their parents, so beyond being a blessing they are the first mission field. Contraception treats children like a problem. It treats the honor of introducing new souls to the Word of God as not an honor at all. It treats the sanctification of the woman in childbirth as unwanted. It treats the sacrifice of the family as too much trouble. It reverses the biblical attitude. What God calls good, it calls a problem.

Contraception is against natural law, a principle endorsed in Romans 1. Paul derided sodomy, teaching:

even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature.

Likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust for one another, men with men committing what is shameful, and receiving in themselves the penalty of their error which was due.

(Romans 1:26-27)

This teaches specifically that this behavior is against nature. Was Paul only saying that God has an arbitrary hatred of sodomy, or was he pointing to natural laws you and I regularly respect? It's not hard to see it was the latter. Paul says sodomy is against nature because we all recognize natural law, and seek to respect those laws of God's creation, especially as it pertains to our own bodies. Paul was pointing to a principle anyone hearing could understand.

Yet that same natural law that sodomites break is also broken when we practice contraception. This is true on multiple levels. Chemical contraception medicates a healthy person. It takes a healthy woman whose body is functioning normally and gives her powerful chemicals which take away her fertility. This is a radical change in the body. It's not a headache pill or a cup of coffee. It is a powerful drug that removes a major element of her womanhood and correct functioning of her body. It medicates a healthy person and removes the right functioning of her body. Medication is meant to do the opposite. It is meant to heal. Most contraception takes away health by removing fertility. It debilitates the person taking it.

Contraception is also unnatural in the kind of radical debility it causes. In a sense, it makes the woman less like a woman, because it removes one of her major unique traits – her fertility. You might say this is a form of transsexualism. It is true some people are infertile due to disease or injury, but that is not intentional. To intentionally remove a major trait of men or women is akin to transsexualism. Just as it is unnatural to give a man estrogen so that he actually grows a pair of breasts, it is unnatural to give a woman contraceptives, so that she has no fertility. Or worse yet, remove the womb, without serious medical reason to do it. The contracepted female I would call the first transsexual in Christian civilization. I know it doesn't sound very nice. But isn't it accurate?

Contraception, whether chemical or barrier method, is also unnatural in that it separates the unitive property of intimacy – which gives us pleasure – from the procreative property – which gives life. Yet in nature and in God's design they go together. The same act that brings new life is

designed to also bring pleasure and bond the couple emotionally. Contraception makes intimacy only about the latter, functioning against its design. In doing so, it creates a strong link with homosexual behavior, as this behavior also is completely separated from the natural purpose of sex. Interestingly, while Paul ends that section saying the sodomites receive “in themselves the penalty of their error which was due” people using contraception often receive a penalty in their bodies too. That being the STD they caught from their fornication or the harm to the woman’s body from pumping chemicals into it year after year. There is a penalty which is due when we go against nature.

Contraception wipes out the brethren. In doing to it wipes out the future. We should be grieved to even think about the saints simply dying out, yet this is what contraception does. It has destroyed the future for many Christian families. It has also destroyed the future of Christian nations, as well as formerly Christian ones.^v It is clear that those people groups do not have enough children to sustain or grow their economy.^{vi} As a result, their leaders replace the people with new ones, in some cases bring in groups who will destroy the culture, and in the case of Islam, actually establish their own religious law and suppress others. Because Christians wanted to be selfish and have few children, they see a future not only without the culture they know, but also one in which a false religion will be uplifted over the nation. A fair person could call that God’s punishment. It is also the natural consequences of preventing children from being born. There is no future for you.

Contraception is linked to great evil, and facilitates great evil, including abortion, promiscuity, adultery, divorce, the spread of STDs and sodomy. The links between contraception and moral evil were in part predicted before they happened. They were warned about by churchmen and others. Then when Christians decided to bite the forbidden fruit anyway, those predictions came to pass. Naturally, contraception has encouraged promiscuity, and has facilitated adultery, leading to divorce. The divorce rate by couples practicing Natural Family Planning, by the way, is immensely lower than those using contraception.^{vii} Moreover, in encouraging promiscuity it introduced a massive array of never seen before STDs into the country. Some contraception promises to reduce the risk of STDs, but no method has been shown to do that close to perfectly, whereas celibacy and marital monogamy have. They reduce the risk to approximately zero. Both the number of sexual partners and the divorce rate increased geometrically in the middle to late 20th century^{viii}. These two evils come together also, as it has been shown that with more sexual partners before marriage, the chance of divorce increases greatly.^{ix} It seems contraception feeds into mankind’s vilest desires; those to live in a

whorehouse and an orgy, and enough people follow through on that desire that the life-shattering consequences are very easy to measure.

Sadly, speaking of harlots, it has in part been contraception that created the “dating” culture. This is a culture which allows and encourages the female to do for free what the harlot did for money for many centuries. Historically, in the western Christian world, an ordinary woman doing that would simply be called a name that specified the dirty kind of woman she was. In other cultures and religions across the globe, the same has been true for thousands of years. In almost all cases, for an ordinary girl to act like a prostitute would earn her the title of one, if not an official punishment. Christians have been taught for centuries by their fathers about purity. They have been taught about the importance of keeping a woman pure. That the woman should represent holiness, as she represents the Bride of Christ when she gets married. They have been taught the terrible dangers as well. Yet with the introduction of contraception, and the overall lessening of faith, Christians let it be normal for their women to behave like harlots, without even earning an income by doing so. At least the harlot might have been forced into it. At least the harlot might be feeding her children through it. For the Christian to practice harlotry for free is as big a degradation of Jesus’ name as anything in the world. It was contraception that helped normalize this whoredom, and the West has then spread it across the world. A young woman is to be pure. Contraception debilitates her body^x, and then trains her to be a harlot.

The Unavoidable Connection to Baby-killing

Contraception’s links to abortion are many. Firstly using contraception is built on a mentality that a child is a problem, and that mentality does not easily go away. Rather, it often responds to the conception of a new child with a choice to have an abortion. Killing the child is a natural follow-through of the mentality. If the child is a problem, you get rid of the child. In one study, over half the people going in to have an abortion said they were there because of failed contraception.^{xi} Studies have also documented a strong increase in abortions when contraception is introduced or increased in a region.^{xii}

This practice is also linked legally to abortion. In fact the famous *Roe v. Wade* decision which legalized abortion in all U.S. states cited the earlier case which had legalized contraception, *Griswald v. Connecticut*. It drew its idea of a “right to privacy” from *Griswald*’s previous expounding of a right to privacy.^{xiii} Not only that, but when abortion was challenged in 1992, the Supreme Court upheld the right to have an abortion, saying in

part that Americans had come to rely on abortion as a necessity in the cases that their contraception failed.^{xiv} That was a part of their actual legal reasoning. America's dependence on contraception has led to a demand for abortions. This is a part of American legal history here. Sadly, the privacy clause that began with contraception also appeared in the Supreme Court's 2015 Obergefell decision to force same-sex "marriage" upon all 50 states. If intimacy is a matter of privacy, and others cannot interfere with that, then they reasoned it should be true for same-sex couples as well. If you can't tell a man and woman what to do in the bedroom, you can't tell a man and a man either.

Of course the strongest "link" between contraception and abortion isn't even a link, it is a reality. Most of the popular forms of contraception are designed to cause early term abortions.^{xv} Chemical contraceptives – whether pills, patches or shots – are designed to thin the lining of the uterus. This is so that if a child of God happens to be conceived despite all efforts to prevent it, that child will die in what should be a safe and nurturing environment. The uterus which has been depleted of its lining is almost certainly unable to sustain the child's life. The child will die within several days and several weeks of conception.^{xvi} Intrauterine devices, as I mentioned in the chapter on the role of the wife, are entirely abortifacient in their qualities. They do not prevent conception. They prevent the child's life from continuing. Depending on the intentions of the individual then, most contraception amounts to negligent homicide at best, and murder at worst. Even if you do not accept that birth control is always wrong, you should easily see that most of it is. You must refuse to use it, and must preach against it. It not only wipes out the womb of all the women in the Church, it kills babies as well. No pastor should be able to look at his flock and not preach against this evil.

The alternative doctrine has been tested and failed. This is ultimately the point that brought me to accept that contraception is wicked and to stop using it completely. You don't often hear it brought up in articles on the subject, but we have to ask ourselves whether the alternate view has worked out. The idea that contraception is alright in limited circumstances is what allowed the entire collapse on contraception. It took very little time from when the first church said it could sometimes be okay to when almost all Protestants were using it regularly, then teaching their children how to. If good fruit comes from a good tree and bad fruit from a bad tree, then this is a tree which has already been shown to be bad. The fruit of allowing it sometimes, is that it becomes socially accepted, legalized, and popular. That's bad fruit. It comes from a bad tree.

If marriage as we have seen puts the salvation vessel on display for the

world, then to use contraception is a rejection of what marriage is called to be. It rejects the life-giving nature of the salvation vessel. It rejects manifesting Christ's love and life through childbirth. It displays the love of Christ as something which is incomplete, and does not bring life. Since marriage is also a model of the Trinity, the use of contraception degrades this model similarly. It cannot show the springing forth of the Spirit, from the Father through the Son^{xvii}, as it rejects the springing forth of children from the womb. It cannot manifest that third Person of the Trinity who is sent to live in us and guide us into the future. It intentionally, and against our nature, tries to stop it. There have been far reaching consequences for the Church and for the nations. Those nations we are called to bless.

As I have said before in speaking of the role of the Christian wife, it is clear that secular society does not merely promote contraception and abortion because it is obsessively anti-life. That's a part of it. But it's intertwined with something just as big and just as evil. They promote these life-destroying practices because they want the woman to be just like the man. They want her to act like the man. They want her to do the activities of the man. They want her to be wholly independent of her man. They want her to be masculine like a man. They want her to take the jobs that the man needs to support his family. Almost NONE of this would be possible if you didn't keep the woman on contraception and give her the chance to kill her babies. The hatred of life and the promotion of abortion, then, are just some of the tools used by Humanists and Feminists to approach their goals. They are not Christian goals. Nor are they Christian tools being used. One of the greatest ways to be free in Christ is to be liberated from the things of the world, and have our life wholly focused on Him. The Church must liberate itself from these evils as well. It must give its energies fully to the family, or to celibacy if it is for the sake of ministry. Contraception. The "anti-Genesis." And its partner abortion. They enslave us to the world. They prevent us from living for God.

"The light of a lamp shall not shine in you anymore, and the voice of bridegroom and bride shall not be heard in you anymore. For your merchants were the great men of the earth, for by your sorcery all the nations were deceived.
(Revelation 18:23)

The Family is for Teaching Children

God instituted the family to train up children. That is why parents are primarily responsible for teaching the Christian faith and moral virtue to their children, and why they are responsible for educating them. Take

your job seriously. The Church may be essential in corporate worship, and important in serving the poorer members of the community, but even the Church is not primarily responsible for training youth in the Bible or in moral virtue. Parents are. The Church teaches over the whole congregation, leads in worship and is especially capable of helping those members who are in need. Yet it is not your pastor's job to teach Christianity to your children. It is yours. Do not pass your responsibility along to someone else. Similarly, God did not institute the school to educate your children. He did not institute the state for this purpose either. The state encourages the good for society and punishes evil. The state protects against national enemies. The state does not exist to take your children. God instituted parents to teach.

Perhaps the strongest Scripture on the parents' responsibility to teach is from Deuteronomy 6, in a passage called in traditional Judaism the *Sh'ma*. As a Jewish believer, I recite the *Sh'ma* regularly. *Sh'ma* means "hear" or "listen" and comes from the opening line of the passage:

"Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one!
(Deuteronomy 6:4)

Our Lord quotes this passage when asked what the greatest commandment was. He simply recited part of the *Sh'ma* – "*You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength.* – while adding the words "*with all your mind.*" (Mark 12:30)

The same passage, in a fundamental teaching of traditional Judaism, goes on to teach:

"And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart.

"You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up.

"You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes.

"You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

(vss. 6-9)

Here we are instructed to have God's words on our heart, and teach them "*diligently*" to our children. (vs. 7) This simple teaching is a mandate to the family and to any Christian home. It may come from the Mosaic Covenant, but its truth is not limited to temple Judaism, but is eternal. That's why we see similar teachings in the New Testament. It speaks directly to our home life and instructs us to teach our children, to speak of

them in our homes, and to even speak of them throughout the day in our comings and goings. We even put them up in our home. A Christian home should not lack God's words on its walls in holy pictures and scripture verses. We can easily recognize the home as a holy place in this passage. That holiness is passed along from generation to generation through teaching.

This point of passing along God's commandments and the faith through the generations is especially emphasized in Psalm 78, which says the purpose of commanding the fathers to teach God's Word is. . .

*That they should make them known to their children;
That the generation to come might know them,
The children who would be born,
That they may arise and declare them to their children,
That they may set their hope in God,
And not forget the works of God,
But keep His commandments;
(vss. 5, 6-7)*

The continuity of faith and virtue comes down from the teaching of the family, the children will learn from their fathers and then teach their own children. They learn of God^{xviii}. They learn of virtue. They learn not to be like the previous generation of Israelites, which rebelled against God and died in the desert. Continuity of the chosen people does not come from state institutions or godless entertainment, the current behavior of Christians notwithstanding. Christians need to learn that family is how we receive our inheritance. The Bible says so. We must stop looking elsewhere for it. No law says children must be educated and enculturated by a legion of secular methods. It is family first, then church and other close community.

Parents are also called to train up their child in virtue, and discipline them. The Proverbs many times call parents to do this job. Proverbs 22:6 teaches:

*Train up a child in the way he should go,
And when he is old he will not depart from it.*

This is an instruction to train children, especially in virtue, and it promises long-lasting results. He will keep that training until he is old. Ephesians 6:4 teaches:

*And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but
bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord.*

Here the New Testament gives the same truth and instruction as the

Old. It speaks directly to the head of the home, the father, and instructs him not to try to discipline his children in anger, but rather teaching them the way of the Lord. Paul does not write this to the Roman state or to the local Ephesians school board. He writes it to families. Families must teach, train and discipline their children, yet with love and understanding. A father who teaches in anger will make his own child fearful or angry. He must correct his child and discipline him, but it must come with a calm mind and understanding.

Hebrews 12 speaks on the necessity of God's chastening as compared to the necessity of a father's chastening. If we did not receive chastening from our father, we would not be sons. Likewise, if we did not receive chastening from Christ, we would not be sons. Fatherhood and training children are in that sense also sacramental. The father's discipline reflects the discipline of God. The learning of the children reflects the learning of the Church:

And you have forgotten the exhortation which speaks to you as to sons:

*“My son, do not despise the chastening of the LORD,
Nor be discouraged when you are rebuked by Him;
For whom the LORD loves He chastens,
And scourges every son whom He receives.”*

If you endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom a father does not chasten?

But if you are without chastening, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate and not sons.

Furthermore, we have had human fathers who corrected us, and we paid them respect. Shall we not much more readily be in subjection to the Father of spirits and live?

For they indeed for a few days chastened us as seemed best to them, but He for our profit, that we may be partakers of His holiness.

Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.

(vss. 5-11)

It's easy to see in recent generations how the lack of chastening by parents, especially the lack of male leadership, has brought death and despair to this nation. The most obvious result of a lack of fathers has been an onslaught of violent crime. That's come hand in hand with an onslaught of drug use and fornication, both of which bring injury and death. The evidence showing a connection between broken families and

crime is really not in doubt. The connection between lacking a father and being involved in crime and violence is also too robust to question.^{xix} When parents do not do their job, or have been forced out of the picture, it's almost like forcing God out of the picture. Death, violence, sickness and despair overflow. Suicide is a national tragedy and is currently at record levels.^{xx} Drug overdoses kill tens of thousands every year. The loving discipline of the father, the training in virtue, the knowledge of the hope we have in Christ all serve to save a child's life. A parent cannot think they only bring life into the world, and then leave others to raise him. Parents teach and train their children. This is a mandate from God.

When Proverbs 1 teaches:

*My son, hear the instruction of your father,
And do not forsake the law of your mother;
For they will be a graceful ornament on your head,
And chains about your neck.*

(vss. 8-9)

It is not praising the godly instruction of the father and mother for the sake of praising it. It is not comparing that instruction to ornaments and jewelry just to be poetic. The passage is comparing it to treasures because it really is valuable beyond measure. It protects and preserves human life. It passes on wisdom from God. It provides a foundation for society which itself will help and preserve life. This is no fanciful poetry. Godly teachings are wisdom from eternity, and reach into the soul, and shine far out into the world. It is water for a wilting plant.^{xxi} Just as God calls Israel to be happy in the passage from Deuteronomy we looked at, we should be overjoyed to know that children will receive such godly instruction. They are being delivered. So are we all.

Like marriage itself and the relationship between husband and wife, the teaching of children is a manifestation of God's truth. It is a visible and sacramental experience. The parents are God-like in their instruction and training. Just as the Lord teaches trains and disciplines us, so do our mother and father. This is especially true of fathers who – remember – share a title with God Himself, that of being a father^{xxii}. For the children, it is a visible and tangible chance to show obedience to God, yet they show obedience to God through obeying parents. They love the invisible through the visible. Just as God's teaching to us is life-giving, so is the parents', as they instill God's wisdom to their children and admonish them. The children learn God's law from their parents, as well as godly advice, and rules they follow in the home. In following them, they are nourished. When they ignore them, they are corrected, and often suffer as a result. No parent should be without abundant love, and plenty of rules.

Parents are a sign from God. They are a sign of God.

Paul reminds us of the fatherhood of God in teaching us about separation from the world, and that we are a special people. He cites the book of 2 Samuel, with God telling us:

*“I will be a Father to you,
And you shall be My sons and daughters,
Says the LORD Almighty.
2 Corinthians 6:18*

We are HIS special people is the point Paul is making with this reference. So special it is like family to the Almighty. We don't follow the ways of the world. This is something we should be even MORE aware of than Israel was, whom the prophets spoke to. God loves us, protects us, and admonishes us, taking us from harm with both His law and His discipline. If we are a family to God, we have to know the teaching and training that comes from our heavenly Father is good for us. What our own heart desires isn't always good. What the state desires for us isn't always good. But our Father is.

The next time you are tempted to think of God's mandates as arbitrary things that don't suit our lives, or mere rules that constrain us, remind yourself of what has happened without them.^{xxiii} Remind yourself of the children who are left without parents because someone thought the same thing. Remind yourself of the youth out on the street, who will rape, rob, bludgeon and stomp to death an innocent person tonight, because another person had the same thought – that all these rules are so constraining. Let's break them. Think about the child left without encouragement, passed from one grade to the next without learning much at all, ill prepared for the work world, angry at society, who will soon be a parent themselves and don't really want to be. Remember the thousands upon thousands of lives stuck in that intergenerational bondage. That came from breaking God's law. Not from following it. When God gives us mandates they come from His perfect love and His perfect life. When we reject them – ridiculing them as mere rules – we reject God's love and His life. It becomes a curse on this earth. Parents must obey their mandate to teach and discipline their children. God's rules are GOOD. When we break them, we break another life in two.

Parental influence also helps lead children to Jesus Christ.

Apostle Paul writes about another great element of parental teaching; that it provides a knowledge of the faith:

But you must continue in the things which you have learned

*and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them,
and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures,
which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith
which is in Christ Jesus.*
2 Timothy 3:14-15

Much like in ancient Israel, the role of parent can be central in the child receiving faith. Here Paul writes to the young Timothy, reminding him that he learned the Scriptures from childhood. This biblical learning, while not salvation in itself, made him “*wise for salvation through faith.*” (vs. 15) It prepares the mind and soul for salvation in Christ. Paul also calls Timothy to know or remember from whom he received that teaching. As we learn in chapter 1 of the same book, it is his mother and grandmother who prepared him for faith. It was not a pastor. It was not a school.

Paul immediately goes on to give one of the greatest summations of the Scriptures IN the Scriptures: that it is all inspired by God, and is good for doctrine, reproof, correction and instruction in righteousness. (vs. 16) What parent could ask for a greater tool in teaching their children? And what greater reward could there be as a parent than preparing them for salvation in Christ? I have compared a man heading a family to an abbot heading a monastery. This is one of many reasons why. It is a spiritual environment. A child will receive in the Christian home what he cannot receive elsewhere.

In talking to many people who came to faith, I have heard stories from men and women who received the faith young, just as Timothy did. There are those who came to a saving personal faith as small children; from reading the Bible, from hearing their parents teach them the Gospel or warn them about hell, or from listening to a sermon. Others might say their personal faith came a few years later, but to the best of their recollection they had always believed. That is because the truths of the faith, the Christian habits, lifestyle and learning were all naturally ingrained. They simply followed their parents, and much of it was downloaded as it were into their heart. They may have needed to take that personal step of trust in Christ as a young adult, but they were already heading in that direction. Even those souls who rebelled against the faith of their fathers, often came back to faith as adults. Even in coming to faith years later, their knowledge of God’s Word and the basic Christian truths must have played a role. They didn’t have to dig a deep mine all by themselves as adults. The mine had been dug already, and they just had to go pick up the jewels. The way of salvation was not hidden from their

eyes. Their parents had already shown them. Therefore, even in those who reject faith, its influence can last through life, and provide that opportunity to receive Christ later. It is priceless beyond measure.

Does the Bible Prohibit Schools?

There are those who will respond to the many teachings about a parent's responsibility to teach their child by saying – yeah, I get all that, but where in the Bible does it absolutely prohibit me from sending my child to school? What's really wrong with that? Well, there may be no absolute prohibition which makes the act itself evil, but we know enough from God's word to know it is wrong the vast majority of the time.

This is for two reasons. Number one, we already know who has the primary teaching role, and it is the parents. We already have a secondary teaching role in the Church, which teaches the Word of God over the whole congregation. So if we know it's OUR role then we have to ask ourselves what need we have to sublet that job to someone else. God ordained the family. He never ordained the school.

Equally important, we know that the Bible instructs AGAINST the same kind of things that go on in most schools. These principles, while not explicitly preventing us from ever using a school, certainly prevent us from using most of them most of the time. For example, the Bible teaches us to keep good company and that bad company will corrupt us (1 Corinthians 15:33), yet in school behavior of students is often terrible and will bring down a growing child, not build him up.

Proverbs 13:20 teaches:

*He who walks with wise men will be wise,
But the companion of fools will be destroyed.
Psalm 26 also warns against bad company, saying:
I have not sat with idolatrous mortals,
Nor will I go in with hypocrites.
I have hated the assembly of evildoers,
And will not sit with the wicked.
(vss. 4-5)*

1 Corinthians 15:33 tells us bluntly:

Do not be deceived: "Evil company corrupts good habits."

These verses alone show in principle what is wrong with a school environment for learning, and assure it is rarely or never what Christian parents should choose. The company simply will not lift them to wisdom and virtue or increase their faith. It will lean them toward foolishness and

vice. It will often damage their faith. They often simply become a faithful follower of the trends and a sheep of the media priests. That's not the kind of sheep we raise them to be.

Beyond the evil of bad company is that the school system itself teaches wicked doctrines, such as sexual immorality, godless naturalism, and relativism and furthermore ridicules those who believe the Word of God. If the Bible teaches against falsehood and false teachers, then it teaches against this too. (Psalm 119:163, Proverbs 13:5) The Bible especially teaches against falsehood for leaders of nations and magistrates. (Hosea 11:12, Zephaniah 3:13) A child's behavior, values, language and faith will be worsened by a school environment, not strengthened. Much of the same is true for Christian and Catholic schools. For even if they do not go as far as state schools in secularism, and even if they have less violence, they are often soaking in Humanist values, and not Christian ones, and the company of the children is similar to the company of unbelievers. Many will also teach false doctrine, which we are warned about in Jude 1 and elsewhere. When you are raising a child you do not leave them in such a sickly environment for most of the day every day. You keep them in a good environment and teach them godly things. That environment is the family home.

Homeschooling

The best and most natural way to provide a Christian education and environment is homeschooling. It does what training up should do. That includes the spiritual teaching, the environment and the learning subjects. Obviously, if we ONLY focused on the learning, we could make other choices, even though homeschoolers regularly exceed others^{xxiv}, a case could be made to use good schools. However, when we consider all that goes into raising a child, beyond excelling in specific school topics, then it's the best choice. As I've said, I do not rule our Christian academies; however I am convinced the large majority will fail terribly on one or all of those three points. There are few I believe a Christian should trust.

Not only that, but as this information age advances, and the downloading of tools into the average home advances, I believe homeschooling will become ever more efficient, as well as easier for the parent. Perhaps we will see a drop in costs as well for some of the digital teaching you will use when the child gets older. Some people like to imagine that new technology makes God's ways antiquated, but often the opposite is true. New technology merely gives us better tools to practice God's ways. The home and family life can perhaps be TRUER to God,

rather than considering themselves so enlightened that they abandon His walk. We need to view tools that way in general. They are a possible way to serve Him better. When you think of all the learning programs, professional journals, historical documents and more available online, why pay a team of professional Marxists tons of money to train you? You can just skip the Marxists and the high cost and do it yourself. No highly funded public school can ever replace the role of the real Christian educator, who is ideally a family member, and if not family, then very close community. The secular schools would love to replace them. They would even more love to stomp all over them. But they cannot do either. Christians do not change with the times, when God's ways are timeless.

To tell you a little about our experience with homeschooling, as I have mentioned, we planned this because of my leading from before we were married. My wife has been homeschooling our oldest boy since around 2 (he's getting close to 7 now) and uses Abeka for most of the subjects. He has been doing great with learning, and is usually ahead of where other kids are with math, reading and writing. He also enjoys reading and writing a lot, and has been able to digest readers almost as long as novels for close to a year. He gets extra learning once a week through a local homeschool coop, and does the Bible classes at a weekly church group. Once in a while my wife organizes an informal coop get together with local homeschool mothers, but it requires the right people and some planning. It will get more challenging for my wife to organize as our two young girls get older, and she will have to change her schedule somewhat to balance her time. However, by the time the two girls really get going, our oldest boy could be starting some more independent learning online or through DVDs, which will mean her time teaching him will go down, and she'll be able to spend more time with the girls. So if it sounds overwhelming – and it can be – remember some of it can be done at an older age through digital learning.

I have said that having the mother and father together and married for life is one thing we need for a good home, and a Christian home. However, it is also one thing we need to be able to provide a Christian education. When the family is intact, and together for life, it becomes much easier to provide an education in the household. In a broken home, with only one parent who has to work for financial reasons, it almost always seems necessary to send the kids to receive a totally different training from the secular world. You won't be able to fulfill the Bible's teachings alone. We have marriage for many reasons, remember. All of them are good. All of them can bless our community. Yet if we are to be free of the bondage of secular education, if we are to depart from Egypt as it were, family is essential^{xxv}. So is the lifelong nature of it, and the woman's integral and

priceless role in the home.

I don't think it's hard to answer some of the common objections to homeschooling or to Christian schooling in general. I will do my best to provide answers to a couple of them here. Perhaps the most common is that if you don't send your kids to "school" they won't be properly socialized. Let me say two things here. Number one, if the claim is that they won't be able to meet and interact with other people, that is false. Unless you truly live out in the wilderness (and if you're in the wilderness you're kind of stuck with being isolated either way) then your children certainly will be able to interact with others while doing homeschooling. He may not get a constant barrage of company, or be stuck into age-separated groups, but he will be able to interact with people of all ages. In our own family, our children meet other people at church, at homeschool coops, through extended family (and that's a big important topic for another time), through friends of their parents and through friends in the neighborhood. My boy has had a few unbelieving friends he plays with, and has been able to share about God and Jesus Christ with them. My wife has shared with them also. In one of my independent ministry projects, I was working with a young man in a wheelchair. Our boy got to come out with us and meet this young man a number of times, and have the unique opportunity to learn about the needs of the disabled, even how to help them. So there really is no problem with meeting people unless you mean meeting tons of people every day in groups divided by age. However, I don't see how that is what children need, as part of their growing, either spiritually or intellectually. I definitely understand the desire to avoid being isolated, but there's no need for a flood of people anyway.

If by "socialized" you mean learning the way of the heathen, then of course it is good that homeschooling doesn't provide much socialization. We should not be learning the way of the heathen. (Jeremiah 10:2) If you throw your children into a mob full of worldly young people, the kind of socialization they will get is to learn the attitudes, language, value system, and often the vulgarity and lewdness of the mob. Why should a Christian parent want this? We should want to avoid it. We should not want that kind of socialization, because it trains the soul to worldliness and sin. We are a set apart people. We don't need to know all about the heroes and gods of the pagan world. We don't need to soak in their legends and lore. Worship their man-gods. Be fashionably Marxist. Our familiarity should be with God's Word. In this we should be expert. That doesn't mean we have zero knowledge of how the pagan lives. However, it is not something we need to have more than slight familiarity with. We have better things to do. And it will bring us down. The overall trend in young people in this

nation is toward abandoning the faith, or at least accepting a watered down version of it, depleted of much of its biblical doctrine. The overall trend is that young people accept the ways of the world, not of the children of God. It is hard to imagine that secular education, along with heathen culture, has had nothing to do with it. So forget socialization as a priority, although some basic knowledge can be useful.

Another common reason people reject homeschooling, and even reject private Christian schools, is the claim that their children should be missionaries in a secular world. Therefore, they have to send them to public schools. They make it sound like a good deed, so to speak. Not to sound too condescending, but I don't believe this reasoning for an instant. Rather, I believe that (at least 98% of the time) when Christian parents send their children to public schools, they do so for two reasons: 1) they want to save money and live more comfortably and 2) they want to seem normal and their kids to seem normal. THESE are the primary reasons that believers use those schools. There may be a few people who believe it, but the idea of using young children as missionaries is absurd and anti-biblical. In the Bible, children are never used as missionaries. Rather, those who are sent out, much like those who lead and teach in the Church, are adults, ones who are spiritually mature and lead righteous lives. THOSE are the people who act as missionaries. Your child is no more a missionary than he is a linebacker in the NFL. Children are not built to do that. They are not mature. They commonly are not characterized by righteousness. They do not usually know the faith very well. They have not built up strength and wisdom. Moreover, in a secular school, they will be incredibly outnumbered by unbelievers and worldly Christians. The pressure on them to either abandon their faith or live like a demon will be overwhelming. On top of that, if they do express Christian beliefs, they are often silenced. The more unpopular Christian beliefs will get them sent to a reeducation class and earn them a punishment, such as if they express unpopular elements of biblical morality. They are in a spiritual concentration camp. Do not do it, parents. Many are the story of parents who gave in to cultural pressure, or who gave in to their child's desire, sent their children to the secular schools and saw them lose their soul forever. Or at least for the foreseeable future. They are outnumbered. They are not developed. They are not strong.

If you want to be a missionary to help children, great. But there are other ways to do it. As I've mentioned, one way that we do it is that our boy has a few unbelieving friends, so he can tell them about God, and when they're over at our house, usually my wife can give them a short Bible lesson. I've done the same before also. I can take out an instrument and sing a hymn for them. You might also reach children of unbelievers

through other methods. Your local church may have a youth ministry which picks up children and brings them to services. Unbelieving parents sometimes send their children to those ministries. An Anabaptist church we sometimes attend has a youth ministry that is able to invite them into their homes. You could hand out tracts or do preaching where you know youth will be gathered. You can give speeches in schools. Believe me, if you sincerely have a heart to reach young people, God will show you a way. You do not have to send you child to get brainwashed and assimilated in a secular school. Your home, your church, and your own personal ministry can do a better job of it anyway.

One unique thing we can do with home education is to offer it to children outside of our own home. We open up the home and its blessing to the community. The regulations may vary from state to state, but if you offer your services of homeschooling to children outside of your family, you don't necessarily have to be registered as a school. Even if you do, some states will tolerate you doing it as long as the parents agree, and they fill out a consent form. Our pastor's wife does something just like this. They've had no problems. In our own home, we are just starting to see if we can find a student to offer schooling to as well. We couldn't make it 100% free, but we could make the only charge course materials. When you think of all the children whose parents may really be forced to send their children to public schools, perhaps because the husband passed or is disabled, there may be parents who agree to let you provide the Christian homeschooling for them. Some people only use public schools because they feel they need to. When we think about how many young people the secularists are taking hostage and brainwashing, we should be eager to take some of them back. Think of that opportunity. We need to take these children back. I know it sounds overwhelming, but parents raised five, ten, fifteen children in past generations. The idea of providing a free education for one child in our home should not seem like too much for us. This is one big area where the home can reach out and bless the nations. This is where our simple families can help restore the world.

How Lovely Are Your Tents

You know, as a Jewish Christian I regularly do readings from the Bible that go through the Torah, or the Pentateuch as it's also known. This Sabbath, I was doing a reading I've always loved, about Balaam the wicked prophet, about how he was hired to curse Israel, but God put words of blessing in his mouth and he blessed Israel instead. It struck me how much of Balaam's prophesy speaks to us, and especially the home. Listen to this. In his first prophesy, Balaam says:

*For from the top of the rocks I see him,
And from the hills I behold him;
There! A people dwelling alone,
Not reckoning itself among the nations.
“Who can count the dust of Jacob,
Or number one-fourth of Israel?
Let me die the death of the righteous,
And let my end be like his!”
Numbers 23:9-10*

What strikes me about these words is that he can see how Israel is different. He looks out among them, the whole group of them, and he can tell they are not like other nations. Not like the heathen. This truly should characterize the Church, which is God’s people for this age. Not only should we be different, but a pagan like Balaam could easily see that we are. Not only that, but we see the incredible number of Israel prophesied, and the prophet even desires to die among them, for they are righteous even in death. We should be even more in awe at the many living souls Christ will bring forth through His Church, so many they cannot be numbered. Revelation describes a great multitude of all nations, tribes, peoples and tongues. (Revelation 7:9) This springs forth from the Holy People of God. From that set apart people are blessed all the nations.

In his third blessing, God speaks through Balaam with words that would become the opening of a traditional Sabbath prayer of Judaism, marveling at Israel’s tents:

*“How lovely are your tents, O Jacob!
Your dwellings, O Israel!
Like valleys that stretch out,
Like gardens by the riverside,
Like aloes planted by the LORD,
Like cedars beside the waters.
He shall pour water from his buckets,
And his seed shall be in many waters.
Numbers 24:5-7*

Here the pagan prophet is looking out on Israel’s dwelling places and sees that they are lovely. An ancient Jewish teaching points out that he wasn’t seeing into the tents, but could see the interactions of people in the passages between them and the open spaces and could see the goodness of the community. This speaks to the importance of the home, the tents we dwell in, and how even a pagan can see their beauty. It speaks to how the virtue learned in the tents reaches far beyond its walls, into the streets

and open spaces. They are the tents of a special people. He compares their homes to pleasant sights of nature, the language of the tree by the water echoes the language of the righteous and blessed man in Psalm 1. Then we see what will happen from the beautiful and peaceful homes – water shall come forth, and the seed will be in many waters. We should sense in this language, both the abundance of children to come from a blessed people, and also the promise of new life in Christ, for the seed of Israel prophetically is our Savior, and the water is the Holy Spirit. From our homes as a Church will come this promise. People will come to the Messiah. Those who see our community as well as those raised up within it. Out of our heart shall flow rivers of living water, just as Jesus promised. (John 7:38) The Church will be the light of the world. (Matthew 5:14-16)

The family is not an also ran. It is not an extra helper in society. It is the very fabric of society, and its basic building block. It's not something you do because you feel like it. It's something you do naturally, unless you are committed to celibacy. Tear the family apart and you leave untethered individuals, easy prey for the state and secular institutions to control, and easy prey for the lusts and for the violent. You give the enemy what it wants: souls to eat. There is no underestimating the family, both as a fountain of virtue and of peace in society, as well as a weapon of war against Satan, a great citadel, whose captains are trained for war. Families should come together as communities, which act together. Families come together in local churches and worship and serve mankind together. God didn't found the school. He didn't found the charitable organization either. He established the family, and He tells us how to run it. It carries the power of the Savior.

Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God;
Ephesians 6:14-17

The Great Degree Race

The necessity of schooling in a good environment demands we ask about higher education as well. What about college and the variety of

advanced degrees it can offer? Some of the same principles apply. Most often we will find colleges are hostile to the faith as well, but not in every case. In some instances a degree may be truly necessary to pursue a certain job, although even in these cases, sometimes online study is possible. But before we look at them we need to ask how we evaluate the training, raising and education of our children. We need to ask ourselves how we view success. Sadly many Christians measure Christian education by the same bar the world uses: Are they receiving high degrees? Are they successful in a career? Do they live in a posh neighborhood? Are they living out their dreams? Do their children have advanced education too, and similar promises of big success?

See, these are not the main bars that Christians should use in evaluating education. Ours are different. Here are some questions we need to ask: Are they trained in the Word of God and moral virtue? Do they know what the faith teaches and why, and can they defend it? Are the men able to capably support a family? Are they working in an industry where they can live their faith, or do they promote immorality on the job? Does their job promote Christian virtue, or does it help destroy it? Do the women keep a good home and raise up the children in the Lord? Are their families strong and united for life? Are their families fruitful? Are the children of their children raised in Christ?

Those are the bigger questions Christians need to ask when it comes to raising and educating youth. Our standards are not the world's standards. Our goals should not be its goals. There may be a unique need for certain individuals to have higher education, but it's not necessary for everyone, and it seems unnecessary for women, who are called to bear children and be homemakers. Men can support a family by learning a trade or starting their own business^{xxvi}. They can work their way up in a company even if they don't have the jump start of much higher education. I have a friend who dropped out of college – quite rare for our peers – and went on to work in human resources, doing well enough to support his family. College isn't bad in itself, but it is not as necessary as people make it seem in our society. Moreover, it also leaves millions in incredible debt, and spending literally decades paying back college loans. If there is a choice, it is better to be free from debt, than be a slave to it. (Deuteronomy 15:15, Proverbs 22:7, Romans 13:8)

Women may still benefit from some of the training found in higher education, and can use it in the home, but many women successfully manage the home and raise large families up in Christ without a day of college. In the past, this would have been the norm. College is far from necessary. Not only that, but the young woman is more easily harmed by the lustful and lewd environment at most colleges than men are. Colleges

are almost expected by everyone attending to be places of sexual libertinism, and many act as if they are. Sending a woman to a university environment is typically little better than sending her to a brothel. She will get plenty of training in whoredom. In ancient times, legend has it that one American Indian tribe used to send a virgin over Niagara Falls each year as a sacrifice to the gods^{xxvii}. They fed her to the gods to satisfy them, and the virgin inevitably died. Legends across the world tell of similar sacrifices. One tribe in Argentina used to send a virgin over a great waterfall to satisfy the snake god^{xxviii}. Sound familiar? Sending a young woman raised to be virtuous into a college environment is asking for the same harm. It might be nice and peaceful sliding her canoe onto the ice-still waters, but soon there will be a fall, a great and deadly one. She will be expected to act like a whore.

For that reason, if you sincerely find extra training necessary for your daughters, it is much better to provide it through independent study than from a secular university. There are some good Christian colleges left, but not many. They drift away from the faith and away from emphasizing virtue as they once did. As I have mentioned previously in speaking on the wife's role, virtually all traditional Amish and Mennonite women manage a household and raise many children successfully, and they do it without a day of college education. You've got to question the myth that it's necessary.

Like other teachings in this book, this surely strikes at the modern's sense of autonomy. Yet the teachings of the Bible and the necessities of faithful living themselves strike at that autonomy. We are not completely free individuals. God forbid! We exist in subordination to Almighty God, and we have obligations to our community, and to those above us. The idea that we practice dream fulfillment is found nowhere in the Bible. The idea that women should lead the same lifestyle as men, or be as "free" as they want is nowhere in the Bible either. Rather the Bible thoroughly and boldly refutes it. The woman is not absolutely free. And remember, neither is the man. The same people who claim the woman should not have obligations according to her womanhood, are quite happy to say the man has an obligation to pay child support. We all have obligations to others. I think the bigger question is – what kind of a heart would revolt at the thought of a woman doing what God called her to do? Is it a heart and mind shaped by God's Word and reverence to the authorities He places above us? Or is it a heart shaped by Humanist attitudes, and an Enlightenment view of freedom? If you revolt at hearing that a woman does not have all the opportunities as a man, I believe you are shaped by a different religion, and a false one.

Teach Gender

When it comes to teaching children, one of the most important ways to train them is to learn the roles of men and women. This is in stark contrast to the surrounding society, which either makes men and women near equivalents or denies that the male sex and female sex exist. That's not our way. We respect God and we respect nature. So as Christians we need to help children grow into the role that they will have as men or women.

That can mean choosing girl toys for girls and boy toys for boys. It can include making sure some activities are for the boys and others for the girls. It can also include general encouragement in the right direction. We should no more treat a girl the same way as a boy, than we should treat an infant the same way as a 6-year old. They are different creations of God. Have the boys and young men learn from the husband of the family. Not only should they start learning the Bible from him at a certain age, but also learn manly work, and work that is heavier on the body. Similarly girls and young women can start helping the wife in the kitchen and with other tasks as young as possible. You should speak differently to a boy than a girl, since one is meant to be harder, and the other the gentler nurturing one.

In our house I make sure realistic weapons and war games are only for boys. I do not have boys fighting girls either. That would be absurd. I make sure the kitchen set is for girls, along with a doll house and babies. This would have been automatic for western Christians for centuries, but now it almost has to be explained, especially in light of the cultural denial of sex differences. Labor in our household is somewhat divided as well. While anyone can help out outside, I keep heavier and more dangerous work for men. If a girl wants to help with that, I refuse. The children also see clearly that I am the head of the home. They see me leading Bible study, they see me giving instructions on what needs to be done, they see my wife's overall attitude of respect for me, and deferring to my decision making. There's nothing unclear for them there. That way our children will receive what we pass down, which is wisdom from God and from His beautiful creation.

We need men and women doing what God intended us to do. Doing what they are designed to do. Naturally, we need our boys and girls learning that in the home early. It should be no more normal for parents to encourage their girls to go defend their country^{xxix} than it is to encourage them to have a gender reassignment surgery. They are softer, both physical and emotionally. They bear children in their womb. They are not boys. Women get a blast of feel-good hormones when they even

look at a baby. Men don't. The Christian parent must go against the grain of the secular culture, and be willing to be unpopular for it. We encourage our girls to motherhood and helping a godly man, our boys to providing for the home and Church leadership. To reject this line of thinking is to reject the Bible and biology, which is exactly what the transsexual culture in the West currently does. In contrast, the Christian parent respects God and nature^{xxx}.

Free Your Mind

Training and educating children depends very much of the practice of separation. I spoke at length about how the head of the home can lead a set-apart household in Chapter 1, and I'm not going to repeat myself here, but I want to emphasize what a difference it makes in our responsibility to provide a Christian education that we are at the same time being set apart from ungodly and worldly things. Otherwise, we would merely be providing food, side by side with filth. Feeding the soul light. Then allowing it to feed on darkness. Being set apart is arguably MORE foundational than the rearing of a Christian child. In a sense it is what that rearing depends upon.

I cannot tell you how refreshing it is to be able to hear my child talk about his day, and not hear all about TV characters and movie stars. He can go to the back yard or to the park, and he does what his mind leads him to do, NOT what he hears from TV and wants to imitate. When he writes a story or draws a picture, it is from his imagination, or from what he saw in his family, or from the Bible, or from his friends. It is not a story or picture imitating what the priests of the secular media pumped into his brain. I really thank God for that. The human mind is amazing, but how swift it is to follow after what it sees, especially when we are young. Our children are free to learn from good things. They are not bound to imitate the fashions, the attitudes and the heroes of the secular world. I cannot possibly overstate the importance of being set apart.

On a practical level, that often means just taking that time you'd allot to absorbing secular entertainment, and totally repurposing it. You can spend that time in joyful fellowship. You can use it for study or prayer. You can use it for wholesome play time, such as going outdoors and throwing a ball, or riding a bike. If you've already allowed the secular influences to heavily infiltrate, it will be more of a challenge, but there is nothing to stop you from turning off the tap, even if some may protest. The best part about it is that there are a thousand other better things to be doing, and I'm sure most in their hearts already know that. It's just a matter of making it happen. You need to lay down the law and get

motivated to do it. Do not passively absorb the spells of the media chiefs. Actively do good with your time. Make certain what you do absorb is Christian and virtuous.

Don't think it's as easy as being Christian for part of the day, then trying to be cool the rest of it. The children of the light LOVE the light. They don't desire to spend half their time with the darkness. Reading a dozen Christian books does not make it right to absorb worldly entertainment. Spending an hour in Bible study doesn't justify being trendy by wearing short skirts or listening to rap. Homeschooling your children doesn't mean that mixed dancing suddenly becomes a bright idea. Do not try to walk the line between light and darkness. If we are around the darkness it is not to practice darkness and it is not to fit in with the darkness. Absolutely not. It is to share the Gospel and minister to the needy. That's why we would be around darkness. Yet our home is light. Our food is light. What dwells in us is light and that is what we cast out into the world.

See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil.
Ephesians 5:15-16

Children for Abraham

Today you will find many Christians have given up on marriage and the family. They almost view family as a special calling, when it is anything but. Unless you are committed to celibacy, it is the COMMON calling of all mankind. Without it, the human race would die out in a single generation. Without it, God's kingdom would be robbed of countless children, and the people around us, whom we are called to bless, would lack the blessing of the virtuous young men and women we have raised up. The young worker who is respectful, hard-working and shows up on time. The citizen who does not practice self-destructive behavior, but is an example of virtue for others and helps his neighbor. To reject children is to rob the world.

I referred in the last chapter to the book of Malachi, and how God rebuked Israel for sending away its wives. However, that passage is equally relevant not just to the permanence of marriage, but also to having and raising children. For the same passage gives us one of the main reasons that God brings man and woman together for life. It tells us "*He seeks godly offspring.*" (Malachi 2:15) Your duty to God, and second to the community, is to produce offspring, and to raise them to be virtuous men of faith. When we are united as one, this is much more likely

to happen. When we divorce, or simply do not marry, this is much more likely to fail. All of the elements of marriage are so dependent on each other, and here the one-flesh nature of marriage supports our need to bring children for God into the world. God wants a godly marriage because he wants godly offspring.

The modern western believer treats marriage and children as a rare special feat for people with unique gifts. He does so for two main reasons: One, he is afraid of failure, and has seen terrible failure all around, perhaps very close to home. Two, he finds the lifestyle without children comfortable, and he selfishly seeks after that comfort by rejecting children. We are not called merely to make spiritual children for Christ. We are called to raise up physical ones as well. That is the Word of God. In fact, those two kinds of children are connected, because often the ones we raise up are specially set apart to believe, and often they can lead others to believe too. Moreover, the simple witness of the family is able to attract people, and in attracting them provide a forum to hear the Gospel. Christians have not become more spiritual people by rejecting children. They have become more carnal people. They have rejected God's chisel on their soul as well. The constant sacrifice, patience and love that is required to bear and raise children is good for us. It is MEANT for us. It is a means of God's refinement. It is there to hammer us into shape, and if we reject children how will that happen? It is the natural thing to do and the godly one.

In rejecting children, as well as rejecting everything the home can be, the modern Christian also rejects what is the basis for an entire society^{xxxii}. It is a chance to have a free zone, so to speak, which is not owned by the state, regulated in all its facets by so-called experts, and kept under the dogma and hegemony of the government. Probably hundreds of millions in my country would claim we live in an overly regulated society, and they'd be right, but in rejecting the Christian home, they are rejecting freedom from that tyranny to begin with. They have cast away the safe ground. They are more vulnerable to being in bondage and silenced about their faith. The family, rightly run, is a revolution for the good. That is especially true if you obey God's teaching and use it for raising and educating children. When you miss out on it, others miss out on it too. The whole community needs it. We are waiting for your blessing.

*It now must be said of Jacob
And of Israel, 'Oh, what God has done!'*

*Look, a people rises like a lioness,
And lifts itself up like a lion;
It shall not lie down until it devours the prey,
And drinks the blood of the slain.”*
Numbers 23:23-24

ⁱ Psalm 128 is also sometimes translated “olive shoots.” This would picture little young branches growing forth from the central trunk. Here, we also have an image of an abundant offspring, probably literally closer to the image of children sitting around a table, as the shoots branch off of the trunk.

ⁱⁱ *The Baby War*, by By What Standard? Media at www.thebabywarfilm.com

Author’s Note: There are countless sources that document the Church’s historical rejection of contraception, but I strongly recommend this film, which gives an excellent overview of the modern turn-around by Christians and by the U.S. Government, as well as the terrible consequences of accepting contraceptives.

ⁱⁱⁱ *The Didache, The Lord’s teaching to the heathen by the Twelve Apostles*, Chapter II at www.thedidache.com

“thou shalt not use philtres; thou shalt not procure abortion, nor commit infanticide;”

^{iv} *Contraception: The Bible and the Early Fathers*, by John Salza, at www.catholicnewsagency.com

^v *Europe’s childless leaders symbolize a dying continent soon to be overrun by Muslims*, by Pete Baklinski; August 16, 2017 at www.lifesitenews.com

U.S. fertility rate plummets to new record low, Population Research Institute; October 5, 2017 at www.lifestienews.com

^{vi} *Why Europe needs more migrants*, by The Data Team, July 12, 2017 at www.economist.com

^{vii} *Divorce Rate Comparisons Between Couples Using NFP & Artificial Birth Control*, by Brian Kopp DPM; July 23, 2010 at www.freerepublic.com

“The results presented from the three surveys analyzed revealed that compared to other women in general and to Catholic women of similar age, NFP users:

have a dramatically low (0.2%) divorce rate;

experience happier marriages;
are happier and more satisfied in their everyday lives;
have considerably more marital relations;
share a deeper intimacy with spouse than those who contracept;”

viii *Historical Divorce Rate Statistics*, by Jennifer Betts at <http://divorce.lovetoknow.com>

ix *Report: To Divorce-Proof Yourself, Don't Have Premarital Sex*, by Joy Pullman; June 6, 2016 at thefederalist.com

“In other words, having *any* premarital sex partners is positively correlated with much higher divorce rates (on a magnitude of a more than 300 percent increase, in the 2000 data!).”

x *Surgeon: Birth Control Pill a 'Molotov Cocktail' for Breast Cancer*, by Kathleen Gilbert; December 6, 2010 at www.lifesitenews.com

“This stuff is not new, it's not magic, it's in the literature,” she said, linking pill use to the 660 percent rise in non-invasive breast cancer since 1973.

World Contraception Day sponsors silent about deadly side effects, by Arland Nichols; September 27, 2012 at www.lifesitenews.com

Following publication in the British Medical Journal of two studies in early 2011 that indicated these birth control pills brought their users a two to three times greater risk for venous thromboembolism (blood clots), the FDA announced on May 31, 2011 that it would undergo an investigation into their safety.

Contraception makes women more likely to be clinically depressed: New Study, by Ben Johnson; October 3, 2016 at www.lifesitenews.com

xi *More than half of women who got an abortion last year were using contraception*, by Emma Court; August 11, 2017 at www.marketwatch.com

xii *Studies: Birth Control / Contraception Do Not Cut Abortion Numbers*, by APFLI; Mar 3, 2012 at www.physiciansforlife.org

Contraception Linked to Massive Rise in Abortion Rate, by Patrick Craine; January 5, 2011 at www.lifesitenews.com

xiii *How the Supreme Court's gay 'marriage' ruling is tied to abortion and contraception*, by Ben Johnson; July 9, 2015 at www.lifesitenews.com

“In his 5-4 decision, Justice Kennedy says the newly discovered constitutional right to enter into a homosexual “marriage” is granted, in part, by the “right to privacy.”

That right, first propounded by the court in 1965's *Griswold v. Connecticut* ruling, also conferred a woman's right to abortion-on-demand, according to the 1973 *Roe v. Wade* decision.”

xiv *Nebraska bishop: Contraception laid groundwork for Gosnell's 'House of Horrors'*, by Patrick Craine; May 1, 2013 at www.lifesitenews.com

“The justices wrote that **Roe v. Wade** could not be overturned “without serious

inequity to people who, for two decades of economic and social developments, have organized intimate relationships and made choices that define their views of themselves and their places in society, ***in reliance on the availability of abortion in the event that contraception should fail***” (emphasis added).”

^{xv} *Abortifacients: An Overview*, by Various; Sept. 29, 2014 at www.lifeissues.org

“To make an informed choice, women must know that [emergency contraceptive pills] . . . prevent pregnancy primarily by delaying or inhibiting ovulation and inhibiting fertilization, but may at times inhibit implantation of a fertilized egg in the endometrium,”

^{xvi} *Contraception after Conception*, by Donna Harrison; April 18, 2014 at www.nationalreview.com

“There is a two-week period of uncertainty between the time the embryo is formed by fertilization and the time a pregnancy test turns positive. There is no test to know for certain if a woman is carrying an embryo in these two weeks.”

^{xvii} The Filioque: How the Spirit comes from Father and the Son has been somewhat controversial in Trinitarian history. The Western Church added to the historic Nicene Creed the phrase “and the Son” (called the Filioque) adding to the original Christian dogma so that it said the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father “and the Son.” This has roots in the Bible, as Scripture says that the Son will send the Spirit.

However, the Eastern Church considers it wrong to add to the Nicene Creed, and also viewed the wording as an error, thinking that it placed the Son on the same par as the Father in the procession of the Holy Spirit. The Western Church has affirmed that the Father is always primary, and the Filioque is not meant to suggest that He isn’t. The Eastern Church has said it is fine with the phrase “through the Son” as it emphasizes that the Father is primary and is acting through the Person of the Son in sending the Spirit. However, since the Eastern Church doesn’t believe in changing the Nicene Creed, you won’t be seeing that phrase in their Creed anytime soon. If you ask me, both phrases make good sense, if understood rightly.

^{xviii} Another excellent passage about teaching children is a very brief one in Isaiah 38:19. Here King Hezekiah has just had his life extended by the Lord after facing death. In thanking God, in showing appreciation for his new days of life, he explains what we should do with each day of life. With these new gifts of life he will praise God, he will sing joyfully, he will walk carefully AND the “the father shall make known Your truth to the children.” I love this passage, since in finding again the preciousness of each day, one of his first thoughts about the value of this time is to pass along God’s teaching to the next generation. Got to love Hezekiah.

^{xix} *The Fatherless Generation, Statistics*, at <http://thefatherlessgeneration.wordpress.com>

63% of youth suicides are from fatherless homes (US Dept. Of Health/Census) – 5

times the average.

90% of all homeless and runaway children are from fatherless homes – 32 times the average.

85% of all children who show behavior disorders come from fatherless homes – 20 times the average. (Center for Disease Control)

80% of rapists with anger problems come from fatherless homes –14 times the average. (Justice & Behavior, Vol 14, p. 403-26)

71% of all high school dropouts come from fatherless homes – 9 times the average. (National Principals Association Report)

The Consequences of Fatherlessness, at www.fathers.com

“Data from three waves of the Fragile Families Study (N= 2,111) was used to examine the prevalence and effects of mothers’ relationship changes between birth and age 3 on their children’s well being. Children born to single mothers show higher levels of aggressive behavior than children born to married mothers. Living in a single-mother household is equivalent to experiencing 5.25 partnership transitions.”

xx *Suicide Statistics* at <http://afsp.org>

Suicide Rate Rose 28% in U.S. since 1999; June 8:2018 at www.businessinsider.com

xxi *Study: Religious People More Likely to Reject the Idea that Life Has No Purpose*, by Anna Brown; Sept. 16, 2013 at www.pewresearch.org

Adults who attended religious services once a week or more often were significantly more likely to report feeling “very happy” (36%) than those who attended seldom or never (23%), and less likely to say they were “pretty happy” (46% vs. 55%) or “not too happy” (13% vs. 19%). Those who attend services more than once a week are the most happy of all, with 43% reporting that they are “very happy.”

xxii The first time God is called a father as a title is Deuteronomy 32:6. However, his fatherhood is implicit from the beginning of Scripture, and He is compared to a father earlier than this passage. Deuteronomy 1:31 is a good clear comparison. In Exodus 4:22 the LORD says “Israel is My Son, My firstborn.”

xxiii *Education Expert: Removing Bible, Prayer from Public Schools Has Caused Decline*, by Penny Starr; August 15, 2014 at www.cnsnews.com

xiv *Homeschool Fast Facts*, by Brian D. Ray, Ph.D.; Jan. 13, 2018 at www.nheri.org

The home-educated typically score 15 to 30 percentile points above public-school students on standardized academic achievement tests. (The public school average is the 50th percentile; scores range from 1 to 99.) A 2015 study found Black homeschool students to be scoring 23 to 42 percentile points above Black public school students (Ray, 2015).

Homeschool students score above average on achievement tests regardless of their parents’ level of formal education or their family’s household income.

Whether homeschool parents were ever certified teachers is not related to their children's academic achievement.

^{xxv} Exodus Mandate is a good organization that helps lead families out of the bondage of secular education. I recommend going through all of their resources at www.exodusmandate.org

^{xxvi} *11 High-Paying Six-Figure Jobs Without a College Degree*, by David Quilty at www.moneycrashers.com

43 Trade School Jobs Among the Highest-Paying Trades, at www.trade-schools.net

Author's Note: On the same subject, I have also spoken in some detail with Amish-Mennonites about why their businesses tend to be successful generation after generation. Among various reasons, are these: 1) they have a consistent group of responsible laborers from church, family and community, 2) they tend to pass their business along to their children rather than trying to grow real big, and their children inherit the business after having a lot of experience in it and 3) they have built up an excellent reputation over the years, so people trust Amish and Mennonite businesses for their quality as well as for their ethics. While every Christian may not have access to all these benefits, there is still great opportunity in running small businesses if you do it responsibly and have good workers. Part of the reason many non-college degree work pays less is the high number of irresponsible and even dangerous people these jobs attract. That makes it harder to make money. Have the right people, and the earnings will go up.

^{xxvii} *History of the Great Lakes* at www.maritimehistoryofthegreatlakes.ca

^{xxviii} *The Guarani Legend of Iguazi Falls* at www.buenosairescityguide.com

^{xxix} *Study finds Women Don't Belong in Combat*, by Gil Ronan; November 6, 2014 at www.israelnationalnews.com

^{xxx} One point on respecting gender in our home, and this may seem a side issue, is to avoid the gender neutral Bibles. Modern Bibles take the gender neutral concept to varying degrees, but I would stay away from any of them if you want to be able to communicate about gender clearly. Even the milder versions, which at least describe God with a male pronoun (as the Hebrew does unanimously) will still use terms like human or person or someone where the male term ought to be used. There is a reason we refer to mankind and to man when speaking of the human race and use he to refer to a person who might be of any gender. This is out of respect for the fact that humanity comes from...guess who...man. All people came from Adam, so male terms are appropriate for mixed groups. All people in the new creation come from Jesus of Nazareth, also a man.

When you see Bibles start to use terms which do not specify gender, you can be confident they have an agenda. They are weakening what is a traditional recognition of man's headship, and in doing so, they weaken doctrine on this subject. The worst, which

refuse To call God “He” even though the Bible does, are a reflection of the extraordinary attack on biological gender and gender roles we see in this era. Moreover, there are times when gender neutral terms certainly are misleading. Sometimes the original used a gender specific term and it distorts that to replace it with a gender neutral one. Readers can easily figure out, as they have for millennia that terms like man, mankind or brothers refer to mixed groups. If you go with the agenda of Bibles that erase these terms, you are going with those who have a LOW respect for the Scriptures, and typically do not respect the Bible’s gender teachings to begin with. Using male terms for mixed groups respects the headship that man has.

xxxi I saw a video recently about Hurricane Haiyan which hit the Philippines with incredible force and destruction. One victim of Haiyan – who was a pastor – was speaking about the experience. He was stuck in a flooding room, flood waters coming up to their heads. Normally one would want to run, but outside were the hurricane winds, raging up to 200 miles an hour, with gusts up to 240. Men rarely measure a hurricane so powerful. This pastor, as he recounted the incident, smiled and said – you could say it was kind of like being between the devil and the deep blue sea. Water on one side. Winds on the other side. The devil and the deep blue sea.

The metaphor immediately reminds me of national Israel, stuck the between Pharaoh and the Red Sea. An impossible position to be. Pharaoh’s army on one side, the barrier of the ocean on the other. There is no man-made solution to being stuck in a place like that. It took God’s arm to open up the sea for Israel to pass through, and then close it up over Pharaoh’s army. God took care of the problem for them in little more than an instant.

The people of God today face a similar situation, being stuck between the devil and the deep blue sea. On one side is the devil, the godless machine of secularism which pervades every institution in the West, from governments to independent agencies to countless businesses which have been pressured into promoting secular values, a force of relativism and materialism which is set to assimilate all whom it faces. Yet on the other side, the Church faces the deep blue sea, an ocean of growingly liberal and apostate Christianity. One that has absorbed feminism, immorality, which in some parts normalizes sodomy, which practices fellowship with those who deny the Trinity, which drifts toward universalism and global world religion, an apostate form of Christianity which almost every church feels pressure to fall into, and to join the collapse. Will secularism destroy the Church, or chase it into the deep blue sea? Both would amount to destruction.

We don’t know what miracles the Lord might do. I tend to believe, with so much ongoing sin in the Church, God will allow most of it to be destroyed, and preserve a remnant. However, I believe one path that avoids both Pharaoh’s secular armies and the rising flood of liberal churches starts in the home.



The little falls in at Ringing Rock Park in Pennsylvania

Chapter 6

FREE LOVE

Let the husband render to his wife the affection due her, and likewise also the wife to her husband.

The wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does. And likewise the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does.

Do not deprive one another except with consent for a time, that you may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again so that Satan does not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.

1 Corinthians 7:3-5

I hope no one skips ahead to this chapter just to see what's in it. That's not what you are doing, is it? The reason I say that is because the chapter specifically talks about intimacy in marriage – that's the word I use for s-e-x most of the timeⁱ – and I wouldn't want that to be the main focus of attention when we speak about marriage. Not only that, but this chapter will depend somewhat on earlier chapters, since intimacy is tied in to other elements of marriage. So I think it's better to read the rest, or most of the rest, before coming to this section. While the chapter is about intimacy, I don't intent to spend much time getting into any details of the act, and I will do my best to communicate with the respect the subject deserves. The human mind frequently wants all the prurient details. You're not going to get them here.

There is little Scripture directly instructing on this subject. I don't think the Holy Spirit wanted us to have detailed instructions on what men and women do in bed. I name the chapter loosely on the one New Testament passage that informs us on the nature of marital intimacy: that husband and wife should share freely of their bodies with the other. (1 Corinthians 7:3-5) This is because, essentially, the bodies belong to them anyway. They have “authority” over the body of their spouse. Therefore, it is absurd and wrong to withhold from our spouse what already is theirs in the first place. We only refrain from intimacy with

consent of both partners for the purpose of fasting. Marriage is – to borrow a phrase from the hippies of the 1960s – free love.

In context of 1 Corinthians 7, with the purpose of abating lust, it makes sense that we have access to our spouse as we desire. It will help abate the temptation toward adultery, and give us an outlet for our desire rather than living single and committing fornication. (1 Corinthians 7:2) Yet it also makes good sense in the entire context of Scripture, especially that man and woman become “*one flesh*.” They are no longer two but one. (Genesis 2:24) If this is true in anything but the barest and symbolic sense, then when we are one flesh in marriage we have a natural right to what previously belonged to our spouse. Their body is in a sense our body. We two are one. To speak of “rights” in a legitimate sense, we can recognize a right to affection from the other partner, due to the obligation the other has to share it. In today’s terms, it’s fair to call access to intimacy a human right in marriage.

This beautifully flows from the scriptural teaching that man is to be fruitful and that children are a blessing. This teaching puts no barriers between man and woman physically to limit their fruitfulness, but allows they come together any time they wish. A family in which husband and wife come together at will is going to be a family full of blessings, those children that fill up the home. Intimacy is life giving. Our God is a God of life. A home in which husband and wife come together without refusal is a home where many souls will hear the Word of God, because the family is also the natural place to teach and sanctify children. It’s not the nursery room at your church. It’s the family, and if we do things God’s way, barring injury or illness – there will be much intimacy and there will be many children. It doesn’t take an MD to see how these truths fit together.

There is also the peace and happiness it brings. As a Christian husband, I don’t come home every day wondering if maybe I’ll be able to seduce my wife, or talk her into intimacy. I come home knowing that I will have my desire if I wish to. That is the natural way in marriage. I’m not bragging by the way, but saying something that should be normal among us. We share freely of ourselves in marriage, and that’s a good thing. God says it’s good. In a Christian marriage we don’t have anxiety about whether we’ll be able to “earn it.” We don’t need to think of clever ways to get it. We simply have it because it’s ours. I wouldn’t even want to imagine what it’s like in marriages that are any other way. I think you’ll find that couples who have intimacy freely – as I call it “free love” – are happy and content and have peace in their marriage. I also think you’ll find that when one spouse is refusing the other, and withholding his body, you’ll find a lack of satisfaction, as well as bitterness and resentment over this refusal to give what is rightfully owed. Someone is going to be miserable.

Rightly or wrongly, they are going to have hard feelings as well. That kind of refusal is against God's design for us. Marriage is free love.

What is Authority in this Passage?

There are some Christians who like to twist this teaching around and claim that it teaches a woman "has authority" over a man when it comes to physical intimacy. This is false and a misuse of the text. The Bible teaches that the husband is the head and that the wife submits to him in all things. The man's authority covers this domain as well. The reason why Paul speaks of having authority over the other's body is because it rightfully belongs to the spouse, whether it is the man or the wife. The wife remains in the submissive position, but has every right to enjoy his body because she has a kind of ownership of it. That's how she can have "authority" over his body while still being the submissive partner. To give you an example, I may not be the ruling authority in my country, but when I ask the government for my tax return, I have every right to receive it. It belongs to me anyway. I have authority over it. Do you see what I mean? Likewise, I do not need to be the boss at work to expect to receive my paycheck. It belongs to me, so when I request it, I can expect to receive it. Similarly, a wife does not have command authority in intimacy or in other domains, but she DOES have a right to receive what rightfully belongs to her. She has authority over it in that sense. To think that she suddenly becomes the head of the man in the marriage bed is to grossly twist Scripture. She simply can expect to receive what belongs to her.

Now sadly, I hear about many Christian marriages in which this teaching about sharing one's body is ignored. I hear especially about husbands who are denied intimacy from their wives. However, it happens the other way around too. This is not only a recipe for misery, but is ungodly and disobedient. The woman has two reasons to share her body, the husband has one. Both of those reasons must be respected. The wife should share herself because what is in her possession belongs to her husband – as it taught in 1 Corinthians 7 – and also because she should desire to do her husband's will – as is taught in Ephesians 5 and elsewhere. If it is his will to unite with her physically then she should follow his will. The husband must share his body due to the principle that his wife possesses it – although a Christ-like sense of giving and understanding would point in that direction as well. Here in 1 Corinthians 7 it is plainly taught. If he denies his wife, regardless of his headship position, he is denying her what she has every right to have and what belongs to her. It is unjust. A godly husband does not deny his wife intimacy, and with it satisfaction.

There are various reasons why a spouse might wrongly deny their body to the other. The woman especially learns to use her body as a tool of manipulating men, and if she is unhappy with her man, a tool of hurting men. She learns it naturally as her body is an ever-ready convenient weapon, and she learns it culturally as society often uplifts women who treat their bodies as means to an end or weapons. Historically, using her body has been arguably the woman's easiest way to get what she wants. Get what she wants by giving it. Get what she wants by withholding it. Yet this is wrong. The body is not a weapon in marriage. Rather, the Bible teaches that a woman's body belongs to her husband, and she cannot deny him, except for temporarily with his consent.

It is interesting how God's path for us conflicts with what our flesh desires. For many women that teaching conflicts with what their flesh desires. It makes them feel helpless. It disarms them. It lowers their pride. But notice how the Word of God disarms us. Jesus taught us to love our enemies and to do good to those who do us evil. He taught us to bless those who curse us. (Matthew 5:44) The flesh revolts at these teachings, and yet they are true nonetheless. They disarm the fallen and corrupt man and orient his soul toward the Holy One. We sometimes hate it. Yet it's part of the healing process. The redemptive process.

Though this teaching about sharing bodies is far less difficult than loving our enemies, it can grate against the flesh nonetheless. It takes away from the woman her main historical weapon. A weapon she always has handy. An upper hand she loves to raise. It makes her in her own eyes helpless. It doing so, it helps her. It heals her. It is part of the work of redemption. A woman shares of herself completely and gives of herself fully to her man, according to his desire. She is his. She belongs to him. Her body is no longer a weapon, it is a field full of life, ready to be worked. She does not manipulate with her body, but allows herself to be shaped and led by her husband's hands. This can strike at the ego at first. But that sting is only like the sting of a broken bone going back into place. God's order is being restored.

Men withhold affection as well, even if it is not their main weapon, as with the woman. A husband might withhold himself because he despises his wife, or has grown to despise her. Intimacy with her seems disgusting. So he doesn't want it. The idea either bores or revolts him. He might also find her undesirable because he is committing adultery, and his attention has shifted to another woman. Without getting into the whole subject of why NOT to be revolted, a man in this position still has a responsibility to show affection to his wife. He really does. Granted, it's a little different for a man than a woman physically – because he actually has to perform physically, whereas she can choose to simply humor her husband – but

he must learn to overcome his refusal. We must do our job and not let our feelings dominate us. The fact is, even if you have grown bored with your wife, the Bible teaches you may not withhold affection from her. That means you do your job. A husband should always be willing to have intimacy with his wife, and give her the satisfaction that she desires. A Christian wife is by God's design a satisfied woman. A wife may not have command authority over her husband, but if he is withholding affection continually she has a right to go to an elder at the churchⁱⁱ, and that elder should set things straight. He should tell the man to do his job. Whatever problems are inspiring his refusal may need time to work out, but he should do his job anyway. His body belongs to his wife.

A fair person could point out that the Bible doesn't really demand the spouse give satisfaction during intimacy, yet I do. That's a fair point. However, the emotional closeness and physical satisfaction is intrinsic to the act itself. It is nearly as central to the act as procreation. So it is fair to say that to share your body intimately, but refuse to satisfy your partner, is in part defrauding them, almost as much so as if you refused intimacy entirely. It is removing from the act a natural part of it. It's like if you sold someone a car but removed the doors from it first. Or if you sold them a computer but removed screen. You defraud them. Therefore, you are cheating your spouse out of a part of the act if you don't care about their physical pleasure. Moreover, it's clear that love by its definition is two ways. A spouse who unites physically for his own pleasure, is choosing to be unloving. I realize many people do this, and that it's hard to avoid completely in human behavior. Yet intimacy, as an expression of love, is naturally two ways. You care about the satisfaction of the other.

To define that point a little more closely, I do not refer only to physical satisfaction that most people think of happening in intimacy. I also include emotional satisfaction in what I say. This is clearly one more hungered for by the woman. The man is more fixated on physical pleasure. And that's fine. That's his nature. A woman, very often at least, would not be terribly let down without having peak physical pleasure. Emotional closeness is much more important. That is something that certain men forget, in terms of caring for their partner's needs. A woman needs the caring words of her husband. She needs to be held, not just in the marital act, but afterward, and other times when she wants comfort. A man who wishes to love and satisfy his wife has to remember that. It's not all about being a stallion. It's also about being a safe and warm embrace.

You'll notice that in this culture many people have no problem with the teaching that a man must satisfy his wife. In fact, they'd be happy with it, and they might wink and tell a naughty joke. Yet when they hear the teaching that a wife must give her body to her husband, and that he has

the right as the head of the home to insist, they can't stand it. The current culture is at war with both God's authority and a man's authority. That's why it can accept the first teaching and revolt hysterically at the second. Yet both are true. They will try and compare a man's authority to a violation of a woman's will, such as rape, but this is an absurd comparison. It is merely the use of headship like any other, and is a natural part of a relationship in which authority is both used and respected. Governments use authority, schools use authority, parents use authority, pastors use authority and unless they use it in a fundamentally unjust way, there is no violation at all. A government does not need to "rape" its citizens to collect their taxes. Likewise, when a husband uses his right to enjoy his wife physically, there is no violation. It is a natural part of the relationship. I'm not saying the average night together needs to be based on command authority, far from it, but if a wife is withholding affection, the husband has every right to insist. She has to comply. If you view it very differently, consider you have very secular lenses over your eyes, and are not seeing clearly. You are also practicing great inconsistency, by accepting authority in other domains but rejecting it in this one. When a wife says "I do" she consents to her man's authority. The Christian husband, like the wife, is by God's planning a satisfied man.

That's worth rejoicing over. It's not a subject to scorn. We should be happy to hear how wonderful God's path is for us. As I do often in this book, I have to remind you that God does not call everyone to a hammered flat kind of freedom. Many Christians and unbelievers alike don't like the idea of satisfying a spouse because it is a job to do, but the fact is, we don't always do the right thing in life because we FEEL like it. We often do the right thing because we know we must. That may not be "absolute" freedom. But it's still a choice. God gives us countless instructions, and many of them are clearly mandates. Often, He promises either punishment or earthly suffering if we don't do them. Are you and I not free then? Doing the good out of the perfectly free love of the heart may be an ideal, but that's clearly not how God teaches us all the time. He teaches us with obligations. He chastises us when we do wrong. Even the Gospel comes with the warning of God's wrath if we do not repent and believe. So if you really want to wait and pray for months to see if your spouse will make love to you, go ahead and be my guest. You're free to do that. However, both you and your spouse have a real obligation to share your bodies with each other. Not just when YOU feel like it, but also when the other does. A woman has a real obligation according to her submission to accept her man's will when he desires her body. Biblically speaking that is free, even if it's not the highest ideal. God's grace works through

obligations you know. It doesn't just work invisibly and supernaturally. God's grace is alive in the things He tells us we must do.

Better to Marry than Burn

It is clear from Scripture that both marriage as well as the free giving in the marriage bed is partially practical in its aim. In fact, this simple teaching about having authority over the body of your spouse is preceded by the instruction that each man should have his own wife "*because of sexual immorality.*" (1 Corinthians 7:2) That's pretty blunt. Marriage is a channel that can moderate that strong sexual desire, as well as contain its possible dangers if practiced in fornication. Paul says later that "*it is better to marry than to burn with passion*" (1 Corinthians 7:9) showing that that free giving of our bodies is in part a concession to strong passions and youthful lack of self-control. Multiple times in this chapter alone, Paul lifts up celibacy as the ideal, (1 Corinthians 7:1,7) as Jesus speaks of men becoming eunuchs for the kingdom of God. (Matthew 19:12) Celibacy has less carnal passion. Celibacy has even more potential to moderate sexual desire, and to focus the spirit upon God and His treasures. It allows for devotion that marriage cannot. It allows for free time that marriage cannot. Yet the Almighty has given us marriage not just as a witness and a building block of society, but as a safer vessel for strong passions. The husband and wife shouldn't be burning with lust all the time, yet even if they do, the damage is less than outside of the marriage bed. A husband who objectifies his wife may have taken a step down spiritually. But it's much better than if he objectifies the lady next door. A young married couple that has little self-control may weaken their witness, but a young couple who fornicate not only DESTROY their witness, but they leave disaster in their wake, often illness, emotional pain, and an aborted child.

There is a point here that is equally relevant today as it was 2,000 years ago: those who have difficulty controlling their desires, especially if they are tempted to fornicate, should simply get married. When was the last time someone told you that? Take the time to find a godly woman, and get married. It's that simple. God wants you to find joy in your wife. (Proverbs 5:18) Including physical joy, which He has made truly immense and pleasurable. If you are adamant about physical satisfaction God says this: Go get married. I have met several parents who told me with dismay that their son had left the Church and left Christ because they wanted to go out and "have sex." They had been committed members of the congregation for years until they started getting led by a single organ of their body. One son even admitted that bluntly: He abandoned Christ for

sex. Yet this is not really true, is it? Because if that person only wanted physical intimacy, they would never have left Christ and His Church. They would simply have gotten married and had all the intimacy they wanted. They left Christ not for intimacy, they left Him for sin. For fornication. For the ego-rubbing effect of having random sin partners. No young person leaves their church for physical intimacy. God has already provided the opportunity for intimacy. They leave because they are in rebellion, and they want to sin.

The Cure for the Seductress

*Drink water from your own cistern,
And running water from your own well.
Should your fountains be dispersed abroad,
Streams of water in the streets?
(Proverbs 5:15-16)*

One of the most famous passages about marriage is in Proverbs 5. It's interesting, that the same passage in the Hebrew Scriptures that speaks of the pleasure a man takes in his wife paints a short beautiful portrayal of that intimacy side by side with warnings that he should not seek the same pleasure with an immoral woman. He should not look elsewhere. Marriage then should be a fulfilling vessel for him, in his wife's beauty and in her body.

*For why should you, my son, be enraptured by an immoral
woman,
And be embraced in the arms of a seductress?
(Proverbs 5:20)*

It seems in some respects the blessed well of his wife is the simple antidote to the whore. The same passage that advises him to "let her breasts satisfy you at all times" (vs. 19) is wrapped up with the danger and sin of fornication or adultery. Marriage is the clean vessel and it is best to be satisfied by its pleasures. If not, the passage ends with a warning of his destruction, saying

*His own iniquities entrap the wicked man,
And he is caught in the cords of his sin.
He shall die for lack of instruction,
And in the greatness of his folly he shall go astray.
(vss. 22-23)*

What a contrast between the goodness of the wife and the pit that

immorality leads to. The wife is compared to a fountain which is blessed, and to a well and a cistern full of water. This image is only realistic on one level; in picturing the woman's womb and its life-giving waters. But notice it is also tied in to imagery which the Bible often uses of good and blessing. Rebekah brings up buckets of water from the well for Abraham's servant and his camels. (Genesis 24:15-19) The rock miraculously produces water in the parched desert for an entire nation. (Exodus 17:6) Christ promises the Holy Spirit, which will be like rivers of water from our very heart. (John 4:14) We will drink of the water of life freely in the final Kingdom. (Revelation 21:6) The imagery of water is one of abundance, good and blessing – the life-giving power of water being palpable in a desert climate – even one that points throughout Holy Scripture to eternal life with the Holy and Just. Water is refreshing to the soul. Water gives life. This is what the wife is being compared to. That blessing and life-giving power of course is children.

With such abundance and godliness in marriage, why ruin yourself with the immoral woman, or leave the woman promised to you by God in the hands of other men? Who would throw away a treasure for something so obviously dirty and foul? Moreover, if you run to the seductress and you leave your wife with strangers, who are your children in the hands of? Ask yourself that too. If you want to see how desirable marriage is, imagine all the goodness God has placed in the woman and how freely you can take of that goodness. Who would want to taste anything else? She is refreshment for the soul.

Paul's teachings to us in the New Testament may be more fully informed than Proverbs 5, but the same logic is there: the union of marriage helps abate our lust. The free love between man and wife helps protect against the immoral woman who will destroy. Marriage protects against fornication, if we know its goodness and its pleasures and are faithful to God. No more drinking from a filthy well. Drink from a clean one. The filthy will kill you. (Proverbs 7:25-27)

Love Feast

A lot of single people like to imagine they have more and better intimacy than married couple. I used to think that way as well. Intimacy in marriage sounded like death. I didn't want to die. However, research actually shows that the married make love more often, and are more satisfied with their intimacy in general.ⁱⁱⁱ The married have it better than the single. They also have it free of guilt. This only goes to show what a deception that sin works on the mind. A rational mind, if a person only desired intimacy, would see marriage as the better choice, because there

is intimacy in great abundance. One doesn't need to waste a lot of time or money looking for it either. The intimacy is there for the taking. Sin has to work on the mind, to make fornication look attractive, and marital intimacy look unattractive for anyone to think that's the best choice. One has to be fooled by the so-called adventure of immorality and the ego-enhancing feeling of a new "conquest" to ever imagine that it measures up. It clearly does not. Why choose to have intimacy less often, waste your time and money, be exposed to illness, play emotional games that torment the soul when you know there is a good alternative which promises abundant intimacy. The mind has to be demented to even consider it. Yet this is a continued temptation for man. Fornication is evil, and you get your desire LESS often. Marriage is pure, and has more and better intimacy.

It is good to be able to unite as one flesh without guilt or shame. It is good to have pleasure without guilt. God promises that the marital bed is undefiled, but God will judge fornicators and adulterers. (Hebrews 13:4) By "*the marriage bed*," the passage refers to our physical intimacy. It is the only right and pure place for this physical union to occur. Many Christians misuse this scripture to say that every intimate act that occurs between husband and wife is acceptable, but that is not how it is being used in context. It is speaking of the marriage bed as the only place where physical union is without guilt. That's why it contrasts it with several sins of the body.

I believe everyone can recognize that guilt if they commit sexual immorality. God's law rests on the heart of all men. (Romans 2:14-15) Back when I lived a grossly sinful lifestyle, I may not have had a clear moral sense, but I knew enough that I could recognize the stability and peace that a good marriage had, and see it in contrast to the instability of fornication. I knew enough to sense the pain that comes frequently with immorality. I knew enough, that having been told the truth, and having rejected it, that I really did not have any solid argument to say fornication was acceptable. Often I could sense the aggression of the act as well, as even though fornication is consensual, there is aggression and conflict nonetheless. Furthermore, I could sense how immorality takes us out of our natural relationship with someone, and brings physical intimacy in where it does not belong. In fact this is one big reason for that feeling of instability and lack of safety that partners in fornication have. They are doing wrong to ordinary human relationships. I could sense how selfish desire darkens the understanding and hardens the heart to love. So despite lacking a clear biblical sense of morality, I could still appreciate all the markers of evil that immorality has. And I completely lacked a strong argument for it being right. As I have said, I hear stories about people

turning their backs on Jesus because they desired intimacy outside of marriage. But it was not really intimacy they desired. It was sin. If all they wanted was intimacy they would get married and soon enjoy it.

In marriage we have a feast of love and a feast of pleasure. It is acceptable before the Lord. You would think that everyone would be running out to get married, wouldn't you? Yet the sin mind tells man – people in marriage are boring and they have to eat the same hamburger every day; man needs variety and excitement. This is the big lie. Marital intimacy is not a hamburger eaten every day. It is a regular feast with many delights. Moreover, the true heart of the physical act – the real spiritual and emotional unity – is a meal that can ONLY be eaten in marriage. The fornicator does not have it. They are starving in that regard. Their life is lacking that sublime and unspeakable taste. Fornication serves up the same side dishes over and over, but it lacks the real feast. It lacks the intimacy. For the fornicator, whether they are promiscuous or whether they practice serial monogamy, cannot truly replicate intimacy. Either they don't know the person very much at all, or they claim to know them, but in reality despise them so much they will not commit to marriage with them.^{iv} This is not a love for the soul of your partner. It is to treat them as not worth a commitment. This is not knowledge of your partner, for if you truly knew them you would know they are worth far more than companionship outside of marriage, and you would hate the sin and the harm it causes. Living with someone outside of marriage is not real intimacy, even if it feigns intimacy^v. It rejects the innermost parts of our so-called beloved. The love feast in marriage is abundant, exciting, and suited to your desire. It is rooted in a growing knowledge and caring protection of the soul. It is the only way to love your beloved. Marriage is love in action.

Know. Recognize. Reveal yourself.

We cannot talk about intimacy without mentioning knowledge. The physical intimacy of man and woman is even called knowledge in the Bible. To have intimacy is to “know” someone according to Scripture. Some think this is a mere device to avoid having to use salacious language, but it's much more than that. It speaks the truth of the matter: to unite in bodies is “to know” a person. Adam knew Eve. (Genesis 4:1) Cain “*knew his wife.*” (Genesis 4:17) Elkanah “*knew Hannah his wife.*” (1 Samuel 1:19) The Hebrew word used in these three examples is *yada*. It can mean many different things related to knowledge. These include: to know, to learn to know, to perceive, to find out and discern, to distinguish, to know by experience, to know carnally, to recognize, to

know how, to be skillful in, to reveal oneself.

That's a lot of ways to "know" someone, and it's not even the complete list. You'll notice, as you look over the various meanings, that they all seem appropriate in a way to the marriage bed. They express something about physical intimacy. For the physical intimacy simply expresses a union and intimacy of OTHER kinds. Do you learn about your wife in intimacy? Do you reveal yourself to her? Are you skillful with your wife? Do you find out about her? Do you do all these things in the marriage bed? There's an old joke that when you read a fortune cookie at a Chinese restaurant – and I don't believe in reading fortunes by the way – you finish the cookie's prediction with the words "in bed." It's really comical. And it seems to work. Yet you could do almost the exact same thing with the meanings of the word *yada* – to know. Do you know her. . . in bed?

Some people think intimacy has to get boring with time, or that the marriage bed seems like the same old same old. I know where that is coming from, but if that TRUE knowing is there, if a true spiritual union is there, full of constant knowing, it's very difficult to get bored with the marriage bed. The marriage bed is going to have the excitement and the newness of the constant knowing and revealing and perceiving that is going on. You will get more and more skillful with your partner over the years. It will no more get boring than a good conversation will. Or learning about the world will. Or studying Scripture will. There is always a vital connection to a life there.

I'm not saying you need to be doing it very frequently. If the main motivation is simply to satisfy lust, then it's better to find something else to do. It is also natural, that as one grows old, physical intimacy is not as important anymore. This is natural as we grow spiritually and find serving God as satisfying as it should be, and it is natural as we grow physically, and the energy of the body wanes. A woman has a biological clock for a reason. A man becomes less full of male hormones for a reason. That doesn't mean an older couple can never couple in bed, but it rightfully ought to be less important and less frequent. The 20-year old couple is a different creature than the 70-year old one.

The pleasure and satisfaction that comes with intimacy is something that grows with time. It grows with time because our knowledge of our spouse grows. Our experience with our spouse grows. Remember, one of those meanings of *yada* is "to know by experience." I have known my wife for about nine years. We have been through both life and death together. We have travelled across the globe and moved to new homes. We have ministered in the church together. We have gotten lost on the road together. We have climbed a mountain together. We have managed a garden together. We have cried together. All of these things only make us

closer, and it takes time to do that. Therefore it's natural that whatever excitement the young couple might have about physical intimacy is greater once they have walked the road united for years. It becomes greater with time. The satisfaction grows in the marriage bed as it grows in the other kinds of intimacy. If you find the opposite is true, I would suggest you are missing something in intimacy. I would suggest you seek it out. The love of the younger couple has got more hormones. The love of the older couple has got more soul.

The Importance of Intimacy

It is impossible to neglect the importance of marital intimacy. That is not only for bringing new life into the home but in the closeness and love between husband and wife. Intimacy is one of the well-known secrets when it comes to having a happy home life. This is especially important for women to know, who think about physical union far less often than men. Keeping a man happy is not hard. Men are not complex creatures. Whether he's an astrophysicist, artist or construction worker he will still want the same thing. Giving yourself to him completely is one of the simplest ingredients to a beautiful and peaceful relationship. Your husband should enjoy you, and that means physically. This is why it's hard to complain about friction or boredom in a relationship if you are not giving yourself to him. It's like trying to diagnose a problem with your computer when you haven't even turned it on. You've got to check the on button first. It's pretty basic. Men sometimes think they have a free pass in not showing affection to their wives, since women don't typically push for it and because men are the kings and sometimes forget they owe things to others despite their authority. As I say elsewhere, there is no free pass for men. There are dangers when either spouse won't satisfy the other, but there is a unique danger if the husband doesn't show affection; this is that the wife turns to children or to a hobby or to vain beauty to feel better. Yet none of these things can ever replace the husband. God made the woman for the man. She loses her center of balance, of peace, of strength if she is rejected by her man and looks to a hobby instead. It's like when man turns from God, who is the source of all there is, and finds his truth instead in nature, or books or thrill-seeking. These things aren't necessarily bad, but they are idolatrous when taking the place of God. Likewise, it is dangerous for the woman to seek after other activities and put them in the place of her husband. A neglected woman can easily do this. A husband who takes care of his wife, giving her affection and showing her how he delights in it, will find his wife stays close to her Christ figure. She finds her peace in him. She loves to help him. She

adores him.

There is a reason why men and women feel such satisfaction in the marital act, and such unity and peace between each other afterward. There is a reason it dissipates anxiety, stress and unhappy friction between parties. There is something in the physical unity that touches upon our natures before we were separate. It touches upon what it meant to be one flesh at the creation of mankind. Before Eve was taken from Adam. There is a taste of a togetherness that to us seems supernatural. That is why we feel so much more than physical pleasure, but emotional, psychological and spiritual wellness. We feel so glued together. We are more glued than we could ever imagine. The act expresses not just our existence before the fall, but our existence when we were truly one flesh, a unity we cannot even comprehend right now, more bound as one than a tree and its fruit or the mind and its thoughts. This is why man and wife have peace together in the act of love, and why it is important in marriage, beyond providing the miracle of childbirth. It is also a caution against falling into a cold relationship, or a mere routine with intimacy. It takes us to the time we were literally one. There is an afterglow or remembrance of the act that really is healing. It helps us love one another, and desire one another. It helps us know we are complete. It helps us know we do not need anyone else.

Ain't Nothing but Mammals

Just as the world likes to wrongly portray marital intimacy as boring, it likes to revel in its own poisonous pleasures. It likes to celebrate its own death through fornication. It presents as freedom what is actually an act of slavery. An overall materialistic view of the world fuels it. For if there is nothing but the material, there is nothing morally different about a man mating out of pure instinct than an animal doing the same. It sounds like freedom to some, but we are not animals.

When I was an unbeliever, there was a funny song they used to play in the places of pagan revelries. The chorus went like this – You and me baby, we ain't nothing but mammals, so let's do it like they do on the Discovery Channel.^{vi} Millions of human beings, made in the image of God but fallen, have celebrated depravity to the sound and rhythm of this song. It is a screed, as it were, of a materialistic religion. It is one giant doctrinal statement. You might say – well it's only a joke – but if it were only a joke why do masses of people behave as if it is true. If it's only a joke, why do actual professors teach it?^{vii} This song is no standup comedy, but rather a statement of faith.

If we want to respond to this dogma, one that man finds so tempting in

its promise of freedom, we'd have to say this: There are other things they do in nature besides copulate. For example, primates often wage war, and slaughter each other. Primates show signs of finding pleasure in murder and the suffering of others. Some of them murder their young, and eat their brains. Do you want to do THAT like they do on the Discovery Channel? Some creatures kill and eat their mates too. Is that what you're hoping for the next time you make love? If you're a fornicator, answer the next personals ad and it just might happen to you.

If we merely follow our instincts, and we celebrate the freedom of being uninhibited by restraints, we justify every act of cruelty known to man. If we are nothing but mammals there is nothing wrong with it. Even in the modern era, during warfare there are armies that gather all of the women together and rape every one they can find. They shove them all into a big hall and practice systematic rape so their forces can enjoy this pleasure. Did they show that on the Discovery Channel? One people group gains the upper hand over its enemies, and it gasses them by the millions, or locks them in labor camps and works them to death. One killer takes pleasure in hunting down victims and torturing them to death. These things, in the broad sense of the word, are a part of nature. If we're nothing but animals there's nothing to complain about either. It might hurt. We might scream in pain. Yet there's nothing morally wrong with any of these acts. Mankind doesn't just imitate animals, but does much worse than they do since it is we who know better. We have a moral knowledge for a reason. Remember that the next time you read about a bomb going off in the middle of a school full of children. They're doing it like they do on the Discovery Channel.

Marriage, and God's law in general, protects against that. It protects against injustice and human cruelty. The man becomes the protector, understanding of his wife, treating her as the weaker vessel. The woman becomes the pure and godly woman, who is looked up to for virtue, not for her body. The physical union that man often takes by rape and that the woman has used as a manipulative tool of power becomes a free giving of our intimate self to the other. A tool for life and not for death. The children are provided with sustenance, education, discipline and training in virtue. What animal instincts bring to the dust, God's commandment brings to life. This earthly picture of deliverance, as we have seen, is a heavenly picture of God's salvation in Christ. God's law respects mankind. The law of the jungle does not. It sends young children to be drug mules and calls them expendable.^{viii} God's law uplifts all mankind. It calls him not to live in unrighteousness, but to stand against it.

Only for this Earth

This Church era in modernity seems to try and view physical intimacy as entirely good, and avoid any negative portrayal of it. Popular evangelists act embarrassed by the early Church's view of it. However, we can't gloss over certain facts, and we should avoid merely celebrating the act. The man and the woman's act of unity is only for this earth, just as marriage is. When we reach heaven, we know there will be no more marriage and giving in marriage. (Matthew 22:30) The intimacy we have will be of a different kind as well as much greater. Perhaps this is because it will be overwhelmed by the spiritual unity we experience with Christ. Perhaps merely because it was ordained as the procreative act only for this earth. It is a temporary thing. Many of the ancients, both Catholic and Orthodox, theorized that reproducing by physical intimacy was only an accommodation to the fall of man. That if we had never fallen, Adam and Eve would have had a different means of intimacy and reproduction.^{ix} Either way, when we are restored fully in the world to come, we know this act is behind us. Other acts will remain.

It also can't be ignored what the early Church understood; that the physical act, in reproducing man, also brought one more soul under the curse of sin. That new soul would be a part of the family of Adam, suffer death, have a nature bent toward sin and be in need of redemption.^x The act brings new life into the world, it also brings new death. It passes along what orthodox language calls Original Sin. That doesn't make the act itself wrong, but it helps us to know what it is lower than, and perhaps why the act is so commonly tied into lust and sin. So easily connected to shame. We seem hardwired to recognize something sleazy in the act as well as a dark and lurking danger. A reminder of our sin. The sin of the generation after us. Our naked and guilty state.

For this reason and others, I'd urge you to be suspicious of the modern Church trend to do nothing but celebrate the pleasures of intimacy and even more to separate them from the purpose of marriage, which is bearing children. The union of marriage is more than just the promise of sensual pleasure. It is the promise of children; the many shoots that come up of the olive tree, the many seats around the table. When contemporary Christians try and be "cool" and make marital union into simply a promise of pleasure, they attack marriage as much as any sodomite does. The pleasure is there, and the desire for it is usually great, but the pleasure simply comes as an effect of its true purpose: spiritual union and procreation. It is not an end in itself. Marriage is to be full of children, not overflowing with sensual pleasures.

The desire for this act itself needs to be under control of the spirit and

the mind, as arguably the most powerful of passions^{xi}. When Romans 1 portrays the fall into sin, the first thing to follow man's idolatry is his sexual desire, being twisted into homosexual desires. (Romans 1:20-27) This passion, you might say, being the tallest falls the hardest. This great pillar reaching to the sky, being responsible for new life, brings so much else crashing down when it falls. The Christian should have a full life in Christ so that he is not desiring this pleasure all day. He should throw himself into the Word and into worship and into service. He should fast regularly. Then he will not be controlled by the power of this force, but rather control it. Just as Paul teaches in the same chapter, it is good to spend some time in fasting from intimacy, so that Satan does not gain control. (1 Corinthians 7:5) That fasting, like from food, can be purposed to God in prayer for a spiritual goal, and like any other fast helps us learn our dependency on the Almighty.

Scripture teaches that it's good to get married if you are burning with desire. However, we have to understand that doesn't mean the marital union should be all about lust. We should not make love only to satisfy a temporary desire. We learn control of our desire, and physical intimacy should be purposed for the union of souls and procreation. I don't think that's an easy lesson for anyone to learn. This is especially true of those with great lust. Being driven by passions in marriage may be less harmful than fornication outside of marriage, yet it will weaken the union, and it darkens the heart as well. Sinful attitudes always do. It is simply that marriage can help transform that, both by channeling the intimacy itself into bonding and childbirth, and also in transforming the desire for mere temporary pleasure into a deeper desire to know our beloved one. Just as the desire to fight can be channeled by a good coach into a desire to be a victorious boxer, the desire to fornicate can be channeled by God into a desire to fully know our partner. It takes time. Men are more likely to struggle with this than women. The best way to keep powerful urges from taking over is always prayer and much time serving our Savior. It brings the inner self where it needs to be. This is humble before the Lord.

Song of Songs

The Bible gives us one intricate picture of the joy and pleasure of marriage. That beautiful intricate expression of marital love comes in Song of Songs, a book it took traditional Judaism centuries to decide to include in the text of Scripture. The work is not obviously religious. It is more sensual than nearly all the rest of the Hebrew Scriptures.^{xii} It was also viewed as so erotic in language that some Orthodox Jews were not permitted to study it until they turned 30 or got married.

It is hard to compare Song of Songs to anything else in the Bible. It does not give us ethical commands for our life, or a clear history, but it does give us a powerful example of intimate desire between man and wife. Historically, Jews have viewed it also as an allegory for the love of God and Israel, this perhaps being a reason it is sung ever Passover, in remembrance of deliverance from Egypt.^{xiii} Christians have seen it as allegory of Messiah's love for His people the Church. One can doubtless see allegory in the book, as one can see almost anywhere in the Hebrew Scriptures, but I believe it is first above anything a marriage manual, and a collection of songs celebrating marriage. We can see it also as a picture of Messiah and His Bride, since we know earthly marriage only foreshadows this union, both present and future. Above all, it is a book for spouses.

I don't mean to analyze much of it here, yet I recommend that you read it together with your spouse regularly. That doesn't have to be every week, but perhaps once a year or more. Read it to each other. Know that the excitement and joy present in the betrothed and her beloved are an example for us. So is the excitement it richly details of the sight of the other's beauty and magnificence. The form of both man and woman are portrayed in piece by piece detail. We are given a good slow look. The desire of the betrothed for the other is heated and bubbling over. This kind of portrayal is extremely rare in the Bible, and I know of no other such long and detailed passages showing desire. It is a book for a purpose. Yet for all its intimate language that lays the figure bare, the book is wrapped up in love and marriage and the innocence and unwavering purpose of youthful desire. The excitement of waiting to even hold hands with your beloved. The worry of being apart. The celebration of a marriage, with family, guests from afar. Memories of the bride as a child, her brothers defending her honor, with the whole community celebrating the young couple that will marry. This portrayal of marriage is passionate and wholesome all at once.

We are told not to "*stir up or awaken love*" before it so desires. (2:7, 3:5, 8:4) For this love is not its own wish fulfillment. No. The gravity of two souls drawn together fuels and tightly bonds a couple in marriage. This love would be disaster as mere wish fulfillment. This love comes together with the joy, the longing, the celebration, the marriage and remains uniting them until death. Johnny Cash famously sang – I fell into a burning ring of fire, I went down, down, down and the flames went higher.^{xiv} He gave a romantic warning of the burning pains of a love which is out of control. Yet that same fire, when placed in the hearth keeps a house warm, and protects a family from the freezing night. The sparks of the same fire fuel the ignition in a car, and propel a powerful vehicle,

taking it on its course. This love that Song of Songs portrays is the same that could destroy: *For love is as strong as death. . . Its flames are flames of fire* (8:6,7) It is not a mere diversion to arouse for fun. Yet when joined together with its full purpose in God's plan, love brings us lifelong peace and new life. Together with this, speaks to the world of salvation.

That's something to remember in running over its romantic words, many of which are purely erotic. This delight and enthusiasm we see should reflect our delight for our Savior. God is not a man, but we do share intimacy with Him in a way that is even greater than the kind the two partners in Song of Songs take pleasure in. He abides in our being. We abide in Him. We should long for His goodness and His might. We should delight in His wonders. God has no body to gaze at, but He did take on flesh and show us God walking with us, to be our guide and give us the image to conform to. Should we not have the same wonder and excitement at our Savior's life and miracles, power and mercy? Should we not fill our thoughts with His majesty, beauty, mystery and unchanging light? If we can yearn for our own spouse, we can more greatly yearn for Him. As I said, the book is a marriage manual. Yet it is one that points in every element above. It is the most sensual book in the Bible. Yet it points to heaven.

As I recommend reading Song of Songs with your spouse regularly, I also have to add the passages from Isaiah 60, 61 and 62, some of which I have cited in this book. The portions about the restoration of God's people Israel, about the joy, the return to the Land, the celebration, the righteousness and the great wedding. The glory of the Lord made known. All of these passages are not out of place with the Song of Songs. The truth of marriage, from Genesis to Revelation, passes throughout the Bible and is richly tied into Christ's work. It is there in Creation, the Fall and Redemption. Keep these passages as a special reading alone together with your spouse. It will build intimacy, as well as remind you the purpose of your life together. Even the most intimate and sensual moments are pointing toward our redemption.

An expression of strength

The act of intimacy is a living expression of the invisible. It expresses many truths we cannot often touch and brings them into the actual. Most men like to think of intimacy as a chance to show their strength and manhood, to express their manhood by taking their wife. However, if the marriage itself does not show the man's leadership throughout, then this expression of strength in intimacy is nothing but theater. It is a game. For if the man does not have headship over his wife and show his strength by

leading her, then any expression of firmness in bed is an act which signifies. . . absolutely nothing. It is mere physical brute force. It is not real strength.

Likewise, if a woman is not softly submitting to her man in marriage, she is nothing but an actress when she responds submissively in lovemaking. It becomes a farce. Rather, the woman should be letting the man lead her, shape her, open her up intimately throughout the entire marriage, so that her submissive response in bed only brings this to life in the physical. The “yes” that she gives to her man on a daily basis becomes the yes she gives to him in giving her body. There is no separating the life in marriage from the marriage bed.

Perhaps the clearest picture of a man with his wife is given in Proverbs 30:19

*The way of an eagle in the air,
The way of a serpent on a rock,
The way of a ship in the midst of the sea,
And the way of a man with a virgin.*

We can see an image here of the majesty and fierceness of the bird, the warm, blissful pleasure of the snake in the sun and the ship working up and down on the sea, ploughing through its waters. The man’s strength and mastery is seen in each of these pictures. So is the domain he is to be master of, the air, the flat ground (a rock) and the sea. They picture the man’s mastery over the domain of his woman.

I don’t know how publically this is advertised today. It’s not wrong at all, and is often hated by this culture, but a woman desires the strength and fierceness of her man. She wants to be mastered. She wants to be taken, held firmly, controlled. She wants her man in charge and to be the one that he’s in charge of. The air the eagle masters. The rock the serpent basks on. The sea. In a culture which preaches abstract equality of men and women, and portrays male strength as dangerous aggression, you might be led to believe she wants a boring man who will sit next to her and be equal with her. She might occasionally think so herself. Enough time in an unrealistic fantasy world of equality, and any woman will be begging for a pack of Huns at the door. She will want them to come and shake some sense into her. And men, if you ever wondered why she always calls you “Hun,” it might not be for the reason you think.

The Christian man may not be a murdering pillager as the Huns often were, but he is possessing of not just the same strength, but greater. His is rooted in the eternal fire of God. His is controlled, guided by the Holy Spirit. His is for God’s glory. His begins on His knees in submission to the Almighty, and His service to the King is the goal of His life. The Christian

warrior is righteous. He executes good judgment, not genocide. He uses strength to protect the innocent. He calls out fools and false teachers. His voice is firm, with the strength of God, not coolness of hatred or the fuel of rage. A woman who submits to the Christian man does not submit to be pillaged. She submits to be taken, held firm and ruled.

Being a strong man does not begin with being very large or cussing freely. In some eyes that might help, but I don't think so. Often those men are weaker than you think. A strong man needs neither to yell much nor to grow preposterously large. Not long ago there was the big news story that a series of old murders had been solved. One of the detectives, who'd played a part in the capture, appeared in many interviews, and was a ridiculous hit with the ladies. Some of them were actually falling over the guy to the extent I think it was embarrassing. This detective just melted them. Yet if you see him carry himself, he's not the tattooed biker type. He's slender. He speaks with slow, calm, firm confidence. He looks you sharp in the eye as he speaks. Some men believe manliness comes with a brute enthusiasm for the simplest of things, but this man spoke with a thoughtfulness and sense of understanding that made it clear he was a man of the mind. He searched for truth. He spoke with a keen desire of trying to grasp the truth. Yet all the while had calm and peace on his face. It was this man, hardly the biker type, that electrocuted every single woman. He was a man of the mind. They must have admired his drive to search for the truth in dark places. They must have wondered if he could investigate THEM sometime, and see what his relentless unwavering mind could uncover. Investigation is hard work. With enough careful study, he would surely get to the bottom of things.

Using the mind relentlessly is a masculine thing to do. Seeking out the truth is too. However, many young men are ruining their lives because of an artificial branch of masculinity. They are ruining themselves because of a masculinity which has kept only the aggression and the danger and the sports but has disregarded the mind and spirit. This is deadly. The man's goal is to glorify God. This cannot be done in a false man-made strength, but must be done in a God-made strength. A God-forged strength. It uses the training of the spirit. It educates the mind and puts it to a purpose. When I was growing up there was an amusing pop song. It contained the ridiculous line, sung by a woman, saying: I like 'em big and stupid. I like 'em big and real dumb.^{xv} Now if this had been said about a woman and by a man a lot of people would have been upset. But it was said about a man, so it was mostly viewed as innocent comedy. Sadly, it portrays reality more accurately than we'd like. Many men have created that brand of masculinity – big and real dumb. Yet it was men almost entirely who built civilization as we know it. It was man's white-knuckle

grasp on the truth that brought us from using witch doctors to using computers and going into space. Today, even the bright ones with strong minds become under achievers because they think they have to be hip or have an ego or that school work is not important work. You either see an excellent mind become a pretty good student, or an excellent mind self-destruct in sin and criminal behavior, and begin to fail. They are trying to live up to the devil's idea of a man. The devil's idea of strength. They're not putting their heart into being a man. They give the appearance of dumb. They're not dumb.

This is perpetuated by the fact society including many Christians has taken away the rights and responsibilities of being a man. It has taken away the leadership in the home. It has taken away the leadership in the Church. That's right, Christians. You did that. It has said you are no longer needed as a provider for the home. Let the woman do it. Let the government do it. It has told them if they get married their woman can treat them with evil, leave them when they like and almost all the time will be able to legally take their children. So a man considering being a man might ask – what's it for? That question is part of the intention of this book. It is part of the intention of every chapter of this book and every word. It is for God's Kingdom. It is for honoring the name of Christ. It is for righteousness sake. A man and woman can live as God wills us to live if we get on our knees and obey Him. Yes we can. That is the man's strength. On His knees before God.

That's something that a woman must value. Many don't, but that's to their own destruction. If that is not in the core of your power, your strength then if a woman wants you to be her captain you will wreck her. That's not a ship in the sea, it's a ship on the rocks. Yet if you are letting God purge you of iniquity, build your soul through discipline, cleanse you by the Holy Spirit you will be like the eagle of the air, as he surveys his land, and has mastery over his wife. It is majestic, like the eagle in flight. A woman wants and needs that majestic creature. She doesn't need a player. Anyone can do that. And she will turn to a good man and know the peace that comes from rightly used power and mind. Unless she is a deeply disturbed woman, she will get down on her knees in awe of her king.

I have to remind you right now, as I point out a woman's longing for the man's strength, a man's marriage with his bride is a picture of the Christ King taking His Bride. He took His Bride in betrothal when He had His Passover with the disciples and offered up His soul. He will come and live with His Bride when he comes on a white horse at His return. The trumpet will sound. The armies of heaven will follow Him. He will be proclaimed King of Kings and Lord of Lords. There's another example of strength for

us.

You see Proverbs 30:19, which tells us so much of the mastery of a man over his domain, must be filled with the Spirit of Christ also. On the surface it has a physical meaning. It speaks of a man with a virgin. Yet ALL of Scripture is filled with the Spirit of life. All Scripture on a certain level is prophetic. If this passage tells us of the passion of a man, what does it tell us of the passion of the Christ?

I see the eagle in the air as the Son of God in the heavens, in His rule of the universe. (Colossians 1:15-17) In His wings are great power and speed, yet He also uses them to protect His children. (Deuteronomy 32:11) I see the serpent on the rock as the Son coming to this earth, and as a serpent, He is in the appearance of sinful flesh. (Romans 8:3) He comes as a man. It is that picture of a serpent we must understand as He is lifted in the air, crucified for us, bearing our sins. (John 3:14) Jesus is a man, but judgment is on Him like the devil. He gives His life for us here on earth, even though by right He rules above us in the air. I see the ship in the sea as the ark that the Son becomes for us when we receive Him in faith. (1 Peter 3:20-21) He becomes our captain, navigator, protector through the waters of sin and death, taking us safely through them.

How does a man love a virgin then? What is the way of a man with his wife? He rightly rules her, he gives his life for her, he guides her and protects her through any danger until the end. That is the way of a man with his wife. It is the way of Christ and His people.

God is Right

The physical expression of love is often what people hold in less regard to other main aspects of marriage. I have included it last only because people like to get titillated by it. I don't want anyone to open the book for that reason. I also have avoided putting much more material into this chapter since there is relatively little direct Scripture about how we must share ourselves intimately. However, the unity of bodies is an expression of divine truth, as well as earthly truth. The joyful sharing of ourselves is an expression of the complete giving between Christ and the Church. The eternal communion of Father and Son. It expresses our own intimate and always growing knowledge of our partner. It makes knowledge physical. It is an act of knowing.

Yet it is also something that, uniquely tied to childbirth and new life, is not designed to be constant through old age. Rather, it is normal that this pleasure decrease as we come close to our death with age. The desire wanes. So does the ability to raise and care for new children. I have titled the chapter – Free Love – because that is what God promises in marriage.

The hippies could only dream of that. They never accomplished it. Their version of freedom came at a great cost, and enslaves the soul to its own passions.

Like every element of marriage I have discussed, intimacy is deeply related to each other element, in a truly living way. When we give freely in the marriage bed, the man regularly expresses his headship and the woman regularly manifests her submission to him. When we unite, we also bring about new life, become honored with children to train up and set apart for Jesus, and grandchildren who will inherit the faith and teach others. The husband and wife's unity for their life will ensure both the faithful continuance of the faith, and the care and protection of the children. The house, full of God's miracle of new life will need the woman's loving and caring work, to keep the home, help the husband and nurture the children that intimacy produces. That knowing one another produces. From a unity that reflects the triune God.

The Almighty causes us to give freely in marriage, because it brings about His purposes and uplifts man in who he is. Ephesians 5 says a man who hates his wife hates his own flesh. (vs.29) It is not speaking about physical union, but the same principle applies. To reject intimacy with the spouse God has given us is hatred of self. Hatred of our own flesh. To reject this physical union is to reject our spiritual one. It is to hate our marriage and what it represents. I truly sympathize with the many partners I've heard about who are refused intimacy in marriage. Such a refusal is an attack on marriage, and it makes Christians look like unhappy and selfish people. It has likely been the cause of much adultery as well. God's path is to give freely. His path is always right.

ⁱI borrowed this idea from Orthodox Jews, who typically refuse the word s-e-x and use intimacy instead. I believe intimacy is a superior word, as "sex" often carries a pornographic overtone and also has too closely a biological meaning, and the uniting of man and wife is more than biological. Granted using the word intimacy can be confusing, as there are other forms of intimacy besides the physical, but I will do my best to distinguish them. Marriage is all about intimacy, from a spiritual union, emotional closeness, to physical intimacy. Marriage is two becoming one.

ⁱⁱI have to qualify any recommendation to turn to an elder with the fact that it should be

one who believes the Bible and at a church that does the same. Many ministers do NOT respect what God says about marriage or many other things. So God's Word needs to come above any minister. However, in an ideal situation, a wife should have someone to turn to who can give her husband godly instructions.

iii *Poll Shows Sex within Marriage is More Fulfilling*, by Walt Larimore at www.imom.com
Who Has the Busier Bedroom: Single People or Married Couples, by Dr. Justin Lehmler; August 18, 2011 at www.scienceofrelationships.com

A Cross-National Study of Subjective Sexual Well-Being among Older Women and Men: Findings from the Global Study of Sexual Attitudes and Behaviors, by Laumann et al, www.npr.org

iv I remember once when I was an unbeliever spending time with my partner in fornication. We were also spending time with another young couple living in sin. All of us were on hallucinogenic drugs. It struck me, as the drug powerfully affected my mind and heart, that the natural thing to do would be for me and my partner to stay together, and naturally children would be produced from this union. I could see it was the nature of things. I could also see powerfully how violent and unnatural it would be to separate us apart. I could see there was no reason to do this. Now I never acted on that profound feeling, yet it goes to show that people on drugs actually think more clearly than people on sin. Sin distorts the mind incredibly. More so than drugs. I don't say that to justify drugs of any kind, only to point out the depravity of sin and what it does to the human mind. A man on drugs sees the world more clearly than a man on sin.

v *Cohabitation Increases Chance for Divorce*; December 30, 2015 at <http://marriagetoday.com>

vi *Bloodhound Gang Lyrics*, "The Bad Touch," at www.azlyrics.com

vii *Richard Dawkins Quotes About Evil*, at www.azquotes.com

He contradicts himself here though, as he claims there is no good or evil in some statements, but then affirms their existence in others. That is the constant contradiction of the unbeliever.

About Us, Speaker Bios at www.sexualityeducation.com

While these are not actually professors as far as I can tell, they are alleged educators who speak to college age students and train them in fornication and sodomy. It is spiritually sick reading. I don't recommend it.

viii *Mexican Drug Cartels Woo Texas Kids*, by Sarah Childress; October 17, 2011, at www.pri.org

A Texas law enforcement official said that Mexican drug cartels have lured young children into the drug business.

Cartels call the kids "the expendables," Reuters reported.

ix *Sexual Relations*, by Father Josiah Trenham; November 16, 2005 at

Mankind was not created for sex. Sexual relations as we know them today did not exist in Paradise. Adam and Eve lived without sex, and did so in unutterable bliss. Sexual relations began only after mankind fell into sin, and was stripped of its pristine glory and the Holy Spirit. [I highly recommend reading this entire article!]

× Original Sin – We live in a Church environment in which many churches either doctrinally deny man’s sin nature, deny his inherited guilt, or water it down so much that one cannot see clearly man’s fallenness and need for supernatural grace in redemption. One must be clear on this doctrine. We are all outside of the life of God from the womb. Mankind is alienated by being mankind, by being in the family of Adam which chose death. Children, like adults, need God’s hand to wash them clean and make peace.

A lot of folks immediately think that is not fair. Yet this assumes you and I decide what fair is. You and I didn’t make the universe and ordain how it will be governed. God did. So if sin is something that affects a whole family, then sin is something that affects a whole family because He said so. As a creature, I have no more business calling that unjust than calling gravity unjust. It’s simply the working of things.

Remember also, if you think inheriting fallenness is unfair, that the perfect redemption offered in Christ is unfair by the very same standard. For as Romans 5 states, all fall in Adam, and all rise in Christ. It is a parallel principle. God does not have to show mercy on us. He does not have to redeem millions and millions of sinners as He does. He does not have to declare that simply taking the step of faith into His Son washes us clean and brings us safely into the family of God. But it does. So be careful before you call God unfair. Our redemption is an act of mercy, not an act of perfect fairness as man would define it. Salvation is leaving the family of death and coming into the family of life.

If you accept Scripture at face value, remember that it tells us all the key components of Original Sin, and then some. It tells us we are born in sin, conceived in iniquity, that the sinner is estranged “from the womb,” that the imagination of our heart is evil from our youth, that no one born of a woman is pure, that we are children of wrath “by nature,” that mankind is condemned in Adam, under judgment in Adam, that no one does good, not one of us, and even our righteousness is like filthy rags before God. I realize those who deny Original Sin will claim we are grossly misreading all these Scriptures, but that itself would be too much to believe. The Bible is not ambiguous about our morally corrupted state.

xi Interestingly, but not surprisingly, polls of Catholic priests have shown that in confession men are much more likely to confess sins of lust; women to confess sins of vanity. *Do Women Sin Differently than Men?* By Christine B. Whalen; March 8, 2009 at <http://bustedhalo.com>

“The most commonly confessed sin for women is pride, while for men, lust and gluttony rule the confessional. Men’s desire for food is surpassed only by the urge for sex.”

^{xii} *Song of Songs, The (A. V. The Song of Solomon)*, by: Emil G. Hirsch, Crawford Howell Toy at www.jewishencyclopedia.com

^{xiii} *Why do we sing the Song of Songs on Passover?* by Benjamin Edidin Scolnic at www.rabbinicalassembly.org

^{xiv} *Johnny Cash – Ring of Fire Lyrics*, at www.metrolyrics.com

^{xv} *ARTIST: Julie Brown TITLE: I Like Them Big and Stupid*, Lyrics at www.gunthernaderson.com



White flowers on Hailing Island, Guangdong, China

YOU HAVE TO BE PERFECT

I have spoken a great deal in this book about shooting for the mark. We need to do things God's way and reach His aims. We need to practice obedience and repentance. As Paul said, we should do this like running a race, and seeking the crown that comes with victory. Much in the Christian life is indeed exactly that. We aim for the mark and we shoot. We start the race and run to the finish line.

However, this is not all that our life, or marriage rests on. Our life rests only on Christ and there is no spiritual life outside of Him. Even our physical lives depend on His mercy. We would die instantaneously if God ceased nourishing our bodies, and holding them together. Our spiritual life which goes on forever in the presence of God is only possible through the death and resurrection of the Savior. If we had no Savior, marriage would be a witness to nothing. It would have no salvation vessel to manifest and no Trinity to follow in love. Our salvation can never depend upon our shooting for the mark. Rather we do it, and we manifest Christ, for the very fact we have been brought from death unto life. We do it because we have been saved.

The world likes to call Christians self-righteous, because they do not like our belief system at all. They are revolted by it. However, it is most often the world which is self-righteous, at least in the biblical sense of the word. Because it is unbelievers who claim they are pretty good people at heart, so why would they need a cross, and a bloody man on it? Why would they need a sacrifice? They ridicule the idea. God knows in their heart they're basically good, so even if they do a few bad things, God is going to understand. God will forgive them. See, THAT is self-righteous. It claims that goodness before God can be found in the human being alone. It denies the real need for the Redeemer. In doing this, it damns the soul.

The corruption of humanity can be questioned by no one. One would simply have to ignore all the evidence. The evidence of a self-centered creature, of one who willingly watches others suffer so that they can gain, a creature who places his personal satisfaction before what is good, one who sees evil done and does nothing, one who will cheat, lie, steal, insult, blaspheme, do violence, commit rape and end innocent human life all for the perceived benefit or the pleasure. Mankind, from the best to the worst is stained in evil. Not only does he do these things, but he laughs about them afterward, and even when he doesn't laugh about them later, he

makes excuses for them just to do evil again. At the same time he points the finger at another evil doer, one perceived to be worse than him, and declares THAT evil doer deserves great punishment, but me, not me, I'm a pretty good person. He fornicates and aborts helpless little babies and then wishes that the pedophile gets raped in prison. That is fallen man. He accuses a handful of criminals of being hell-worthy and ignores the rest of our evil deeds, however corrupt and destructive they are. In doing so, he shoves the beast of our guilt back into the closet, yet knowing all the time it is there in the darkness. Growling. Hungry. Waiting to tear us into pieces. He denies man's guilt. But he knows it is there.

Look at the strategy for a moment of whitewashing our sins. Look how man minimalizes them. We like to think the murderer is wicked, yet the liar is pretty much a good person. Yet this is plainly not so. God says no liar will enter the kingdom of heaven. God says the devil is the father of lies. Look at the actual effects of this evil as well. Lies destroy trust. Lies destroy relationships. Lies corrupt systems, including businesses, governments and religious institutions. People think their lies aren't a big deal, but they suddenly ARE a big deal when a superintendent is covering up sexual abuse. They become a big deal when a computer hacker gains entry to our bank. How about lying in the business field? Some contractors lie about the materials they use. Then they can save money through buying cheaper materials. The results are that the building is more likely to crash down, or the tunnel to collapse, crushing innocent people to death, leaving our loved ones suddenly and violently gone. How is that a tiny sin? Lies rob people of their money. Lies rob people of justice. How dare mankind claim to be pretty good people at heart when they deceive their fellow man. Apparently those Nigerian scammers would be happy to get that news.

You might even think of it this way: Imagine how a computer program is built on truth, the truth of its programming, and that truth is what makes it function and function well. Now think of how the computer virus, or even a simple mistake in the programming, can harm the program or make it not work at all. Now imagine all the truth that goes into the programming of the universe. The whole cosmos. Biology. Chemistry. The human organism. If untruth came into any of those systems it would become sickly, or be totally destroyed. If one component had been changed in the creation of this world it most likely would not even be able to sustain life. At this very moment you are able to read this, to breath, to contemplate it in your mind, but what if the lie came into that system like a computer virus does? Would you even be able to see that page? This world is built on truth. God is truth above all other things. To lie is to be at open war with all that is good and true. It proclaims

death. It denies God. How dare a liar claim to be innocent. We are all corrupt creatures, every last one of us. You may say the child killer deserves to suffer forever, but he is not the only one. You and I deserve it too, as mankind has rejected God.

There is every effort to escape this situation. There is every effort to return to the place where we can say we're basically good. Self-righteous people try and replace our guilt and need for a Savior with virtue. Somehow, even if we acknowledge that we do evil, practicing virtue will balance things out. Then we won't need to humbly accept Jesus Christ, or admit that we need the great work He has done for us. Yet no one is condemned to hell for their virtue. They are condemned to hell for their vice. Are you completely free of sin? The very best of man is in rebellion against God.

It is hard for the mind to wrap itself around the fact that no man does good. This is hard for believers also. It is hard for us to understand how even our righteous deeds are filthy before the Holy One who made us. That man, apart from Christ, simply CANNOT please God. Yet this is what the Bible teaches. Over and over. Apart from faith, we cannot please Him.

One way to understand this is the model of a rebellion. When a rebel leader attempts to knock over the government, that rebel leader certainly does SOME good deeds in his life. Yet the government isn't really impressed by this, are they? They will send their armies to crush him. Not because he never does anything ethically good. Rather because he is in a state of rebellion. In the 1850s and 60s in China, there was a rebellion led by a Confucian scholar from a provincial town in the south. His name was Hong. Not many people outside China know this, but it is a fascinating and terrible event in history. Hong actually claimed to be the brother of Jesus Christ, and he led a rebellion of "God-worshippers," one that claimed a territory about the size of a large province, and which could have knocked over the ruling Qing dynasty. Now this rebel leader had done many ethical reforms. He was known as a reformer. He passed laws against polygamy. He passed laws against judicial torture. Most of us would call them "good." Not only that, but he had associates who had lived in British territory, and learned a great deal of how their more advanced administration worked. Therefore he began to institute more efficient systems of administration, such as postal services and the like. So basically, the rebel did some GOOD THINGS. He increased ethics and efficiency.

Yet do you think that Hong's moral laws impressed the emperor of China? Did it please him? Did the emperor say – well that rebel sure is a good man, I'm going to let his armies march across my domain and take the capital right now? Did he say – This genius sure has some good

administrative systems, let's make him our next king instead of me? No, of course not. You see, even the rebel's righteous deeds were like filthy rags before the emperor. Nothing he could do would please the king. He could pass all the just laws in the book, and he would STILL be condemned. That's because he was in a state of rebellion, and the emperor sent his armies down south, fought battle after battle, and crushed his rebellion forever. Hong was living in a state of rebellion. Similarly, we are in a state of sin.

You see, what the rebel leader needed to do before the emperor was not pass just laws in his stolen land. It wasn't to create efficient administration in his stolen land. Rather, it was to surrender, make peace with the emperor, and live submissively in his kingdom. THAT is what he needed to do to please the king. No righteous laws would ever do that. He'd still be under the emperor's wrath. Only surrender. Submission. Peace. That would please the king. That's what you and I need to do too. Not pat ourselves on the back for some good deeds. We just need to surrender to the King, accept the peace offering of His Son, and live obediently in the kingdom of God. The rebellion has to end. Then we'll talk about our deeds possibly being good before God. Not while we are still in rebellion.

Years ago there was a very successful sports god named Babe Ruth. He was given many titles. He was called the Bambino. The Sultan of Swat. Or just the Babe. His baseball playing was so incredible and so record setting, that when this man-god finally died his team put his cold body in a glass case in their stadium for two days. Yes, they really did. Fans and reporters came to see his corpse there and could even see his face, so peaceful in death. Well, he was in the case for two days. God never raised him up. There was no resurrection miracle. But let's imagine that He had. What if God had desired to raise up Babe Ruth from that glass case for all the baseball fans out there? What would he have done? Well, likely he would have risen up, gone out to the ballpark, and knocked a few homeruns over the fence to the cheers of many fans. Then he would have gotten into a fancy car with a woman other than his wife, and gone out to a nightclub somewhere. That's what this idol of billions would have done. And that's man's solution. That's man's power and might. And it doesn't save a single soul. It doesn't save anyone.

All of our best efforts do not right us with God. They are either good deeds stained with evil intentions in the midst of our rebellion, or they are outright, bold sin, evil done for the sake of evil and which will destroy the creation. Our strength is not enough. Our ethics is not enough. All men know this is true in their hearts. The Bible says so much in Romans 1 and 2. Observation and experience tell us the same thing: We know the moral

law, and we know we are guilty. It might seem strange then that so many reject God and reject Jesus Christ. Yet billions do and billions will. Mankind does not like to admit his own weakness or sin. He does not like to acknowledge he NEEDS a higher power. It sounds demeaning. Insulting. I remember when I was an unbeliever, the idea of believing in Jesus sounded like giving up. It sounded like giving up on who I was and what I believed in. And this is true, in a way. We need to give up on the rebellion. We need to give up on doing things the wrong way. We need to confess our sin and put it on the power of Christ to put our sin to death.

Yet while this seems like giving up all we believe in, it also amounts to discovering who we are, in our true nature and God's true intention for us. It is knowing the image of God we were given inside. It is knowing the goodness and peace we were meant to have from the beginning. So in a sense it is giving up. In another sense it is rediscovering what our nature really is and what human nature really can do. The moment Jesus Christ took on flesh, He showed us how human nature could be good. He walked out human nature and gave it rebirth. He used human nature rightly. So when we accept Christ we accept our nature for what it was always meant to be. But we have to come humbly. We have to repent and believe, not on our self, but on the Christ, the Son of the living God. We need to throw ourselves on our face and say – save me, take me from the darkness, and bring me to your light. Take me out of death. Bring me to life. Forgive me. You are my Lord forever. It is making peace with the emperor we have rebelled against. Giving up on the rebellion. Then we become a citizen of the kingdom we were at war with. Not just becoming a citizen, but also a son, and an heir. Eventually we will rule together with Christ. We will be lifted up even higher than from where we fell. That is the supreme mercy of God. He does not only forgive, he gives abundantly of His life to all who come to His Son.

Then we can talk about shooting for the mark and running the race. Then we can talk about pleasing God. For if it seems strange that fallen man, even in doing good is a reproach to God, it is also amazing that restored man, even if he sins, is not out of grace with God, but has the power of repentance. Even if we sin in Christ, we will be able to see that sin for what it is and to repent of it. We do not simply lose citizenship. We do not blink out of sonship forever. Part of our sonship to God is that ability to repent and be restored fully. Just as the good deed of the rebel will not make peace with the king, the sin of the citizen can be repented of and washed away, as a loving son does not wish to offend the father, and a loving father forgives.

In Christ we should strive for righteousness and for justice in all things. In everything we do. God's kingdom is about righteousness. The

new heart hungers for righteousness. The prophets prophesied a kingdom of righteousness, goodness, joy and peace. This is what the son of God works for. Therefore, good deeds do not save mankind from his corrupt state, but once we are reborn, it is what we live for, to have the mind of Christ, to love the good and to hate evil. To serve man and God.

There is a scene in a movie about the Rwandan genocide. In the movie, members of the Rwandan tribe being massacred were being protected temporarily by U.N. troops. They had formed a barrier between the enemy and the innocent, who were hiding at present in a hotel. Then the worst happens. Those troops standing guard are ordered to go away, and they leave the innocent men, women and children there when night falls. There is no protection for them. The enemy can walk in and massacre them freely. So I have to ask anyone a single question: Who do you want there to protect those innocent people? Many would answer – I want men with guns there. I'd like to say the same thing too. However, men with guns will go away. Men with guns will miss. Men with guns will not show up for work. Not only that, but after the tribal genocide, the “innocent” victims got their hands on some guns, and they went right ahead and slaughtered innocent people themselves. That's what men with guns will do. So to put guns in the gap there is a very temporary solution.

What we want in the gap is something else. We want someone to stand there who will change the very hearts of the murderers. We want someone who will restore the victims as well, not just to bring them peace, but to bring them a peace that does not willingly get vengeful or retaliate against hatred with more hatred. To know their value and to live their lives for the good. To not respond to their pain with cruelty or with turning to drunkenness or drugs. We want the heart of man to be changed. The only person to stand in the gap, on that dark night, when evil prowls freely among the unprotected, is Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ makes the soul new. He restores the nature. Man does not murderously cut down his historical enemies or tribal enemies. Man feeds the hungry. He helps the weak. He knows joy even in suffering. Jesus said – *if I am lifted up, I will draw all men to me.* (John 12:32) Then He was lifted up in the cross. Up above the earth. As Jesus paid our price for sin, He also perfected human nature and walked every step of His life for God. Christ said – *blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness* (Matthew 5:6) – and He hungered for God with every breath of His life. THAT is what human nature can do. That is what the image of God does. Which you and I have, and which needs to be restored. You cannot do that with human ethics or effort. It takes coming over to His side. Joining forces. Placing your trust in Him as King and submitting to His rule. He is the Lord of glory, and we have to come to Him. There is simply nowhere else to go.

You see, you have to be perfect. To come into God's eternal kingdom you have to be perfect. God is true love. He is goodness and truth eternally. He will reject anything evil from His kingdom. Are you without corruption? In the Torah God says – *'You shall be holy, for I the LORD your God am holy.* (Leviticus 19:2) Jesus likewise called men to have the character God:

"But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you. . . " *Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect.*
(Matthew 5:44-48)

The only perfect man we have is the one who gave His life on the cross. Who was without stain and deserved no condemnation, yet He took our condemnation for our sake. While we were still sinners, He died for us.

*But He was wounded for our transgressions,
He was bruised for our iniquities;
The chastisement for our peace was upon Him,
And by His stripes we are healed
All we like sheep have gone astray;
We have turned, every one, to his own way;
And the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.*
Isaiah 53:5-6

In dying for our sake Jesus Christ also gave the example of perfect love, and gave us the power to live in love as His children. He gave us supernatural grace to be his disciples, his students if you will, the ambassadors of His kingdom:

*In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him.
In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.
Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.*
1 John 4:9-11

That is the perfection we inherit when we accept Christ. It is HIS perfect work, and the character that led Him to sacrifice for all humanity. To walk in truth. To proclaim the good news in a world that rejected and hated Him. In doing that He was received into heaven, without a stain or blemish on Him. You and I cannot do that. Yet we can receive Jesus into

our souls, not a mere covering for our sin, but perfection. That is what He came down from eternity to do. He defeated the devil and set us free.

Remember this when you read that the man and the wife in marriage represent Christ and His chosen people. Remember that when you think of the wedding. There is a man saying “I do” to lifting his bride up from anything common or wicked and protecting her from the devil; protecting her from impurity and from being simply one of the crowd. There is a people saying “I do” to receiving the protection, and sacrifice and guidance of a redeemer, one who lives and speaks and walks the truth. There is an “I do” to mankind being lifted up from the mire of the relentless violence and fornication, the pursuit of money, vanity and fame that characterizes the mass of our flesh. Behind both the man and wife, I see a great crowd of people, not just the extended families being joined through their marriage, but all of humanity, which will be blessed by the power of their union, and which follows with unions of their own.

*You shall no longer be termed Forsaken,
Nor shall your land any more be termed Desolate. . .
For as a young man marries a virgin,
So shall your sons marry you.
(Isaiah 62:4-5)*

There is an incredible power in that. A power as the supernatural redemption of humanity touches on the physical realm. The world just sees two people making a pact so they can copulate together, in a culturally accepted ritual that comes with benefits. God sees two redeemed souls becoming one. The Christian sees Christ and the Church. The world says that evolution lifts humanity up and makes us better. But evolution doesn't do that. God does. God lifts us up, and He makes us whole. He makes us one. One with Him. With each other. With our beloved. Just as the glorious redemption of the world, the marriage of man and wife brings peace.



A small boat off of Hailing Island, Guangdong, China

AFTERWARD

Children of God, We are going to have to accept change in our life if we intend to obey God in marriage. If we want to reveal Christ to each other. Reveal Christ to the nations. As a chosen people, we will have to drop our worship of personal freedom and of autonomy. We will replace it with submission to God, and a limited freedom within the obligations He gives us. We will have to drop our societally enforced egalitarianism, that unnatural worldview which seeks to make the woman just like the man. We will replace it with a recognition that the woman is different, and plainly has different role and purpose from the man. We highly honor her as the weaker vessel, and the submissive partner which she actually is. We will have to stop treating the middle class to wealthy lifestyle as our expectation, a symbol of success and our deep desire. We will replace it with moderation, contentment, and asking God what our calling is. We will have to stop making so-called great accomplishments the goal for our children, but rather faith, righteousness and service to the Church. We will take care of our own, even if it means sharing our resources, and having fewer comforts. Obedience calls for that. Carrying a cross requires it.

People will see the difference. You see the Christian home is and will be visibly different from others. It is something remarkable. That almost gets a chuckle from people today, with the broken state of the Church and marriage within it. Yet I say this confidently. If we humble ourselves and do what God commands in marriage, our homes will be visibly different, and MANY certainly will take note. It will open the minds of literally millions if not more to the possibility that God might be true and that Christ might really be the Savior. That's how good the family is. Godly behavior never caused anyone to be born again, but godly behavior has caused many souls to consider Christ, open the Bible, and later come to faith.

How do we learn to live this way that I speak of? This faithful and pure way? Brethren, we learn from Christ and from the Word of God. We learn from the better part of our tradition and heritage as well, which has come down to us for 2,000 years, and is much older than the latest evangelist who goes viral. In contrast, we do NOT learn from the example of the contemporary churches. We don't learn from compromised shepherds

and worldly Christians. When you want to learn a task, you learn from successes. You do not learn from failures. No one in their right mind takes advice from a failure. When you want to learn physics, you ask for help from an A student, not a C or D student. When you want to learn to drive, you learn from a good driver, not a drunk or a reckless driver. Likewise, when we want help in learning to be a family, we learn from the Word of God and from the saints who actually obey the Lord. We don't learn from churches that have torn marriage asunder, left their children without mother or father, and left the entire western world to be replaced by Muslims and without a future. Those churches don't know anything about the family. Maybe they're fit to teach Hebrew. They're not fit to teach the family. So you go find the rare godly example today to follow. Find good examples from history. They will give you encouragement, support and correction in building the home. They will provide a pure example to learn from.

The Christian home is a stable loving family. Christian marriage is for life, and is an unbreakable bond. Marriage is by its design an interknitting of two different people in two different roles, the man as the priest and the head of the home, the woman as the helper who submits to him. She bears the children and takes care of the house. People with secular values call that statement an insult to women. A Christian calls it an honor. Marriage brings forth life, which is an expression of God's eternal nature and of His salvation. It does not hinder life. Rather it brings forth children in abundance to be loved and trained by their parents. It blesses the future and the nations.

Unbelievers will see the unbreakable nature of the Christian home, the life of children within it, and the illustration of salvation it gives. That union will stand out in the world, next to those homes that are broken, loveless, cruel or sterile of life. People will come to that light because it is good. They will come because it offers hope. It always takes God's supernatural leading to cause them to do that, but we also do our job, which is obedience and uplifting Christ. That's what we have been told to do. Do not ever become discouraged by the state of the Church in marriage. God's people can repent and turn around in one single generation. God's people can be known to be an example. It can happen in sincere repentance on our knees before God, and making righteousness our goal. Christ's reign is a reign of righteousness.

Men will come from afar to seek it out.

*For Zion's sake I will not hold My peace,
And for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest,
Until her righteousness goes forth as brightness,*

*And her salvation as a lamp that burns.
The Gentiles shall see your righteousness,
And all kings your glory.
You shall be called by a new name,
Which the mouth of the LORD will name.
You shall also be a crown of glory
In the hand of the LORD,
And a royal diadem
In the hand of your God.
Isaiah 62:1-3*



Valley of Fire, Nevada

SAVE THE WORLD

Imagine someone you know who has died. Most of us know someone. If you don't, then imagine a friend of a friend, or someone in history. Or Christ. Imagine someone who died.

I have known a few. A musician friend in Spain who killed himself with drugs, who was terribly addicted. No more. I will never see him again, unless he came to know Christ before he died. I also know my cousin, who drowned in a swimming pool at about the same age as I. No one expects to lose someone to drowning in a swimming pool, but one day someone we love is here, and the next day they are not. I lost a baby boy to heart illness, at just 15 days. You can almost call it a privilege to be able to love someone so much who dies. To see someone pass is almost a supernatural experience. It is beyond everything we understand just as a new life is. Just as the conception of a child seems supernatural.

Loving someone who dies is a gift. It is a love that should overflow onto other souls besides our loved one. It should be a well of water that we can gift to others. It should enlighten all relationships. Seeing death personally teaches us to care for and protect our fellow man, to see the importance of his nourishment, his strength, his mind and all he can do in this universe. It makes us want him never to be degraded.

If you feel the same way, you should also know the sacredness of God's family. Of marriage and childbearing. It is how God cares for, protects, nourishes, educates and blesses the earth around us. We often say to ourselves, I wish society would care for the poor better. But we ARE society, and when we have a family, we ourselves care for the poor. We often say, why doesn't someone educate the children better. But in the family we have our own chance to do that without turning to anyone. People complain, why don't parents discipline their children, why are they out committing crimes all night. Well, we can answer that complaint ourselves, by raising our own children and disciplining them so they know right from wrong, so that they respect God and respect the law. We complain about all the children without homes, but we are the ones to give them a home ourselves, and make sure it's a safe one. So who are we complaining about? If you want to love God and man, have a family and save the world. It's in your hands.

Forget about the years acquiring the highest financial platform in life.

Forget about the decades of hedonism which you think are your birthright as a westerner. Forget about the drink, the parties, the sports and your travel plans. Get married. Have a family. Save the world.



Path at Keyuan Garden, Dongguan, Guangdong, China

Appendix 1

A BIBLICAL OUTLINE OF THE ELEMENTS OF MARRIAGE

Scriptural Teachings

This scriptural outline is meant to provide the main instructional teachings on each chapter subject. I will not provide every teaching that possibly offers insight into the subject or all that I used in the chapter. It is simply for the main teaching scriptures, to show the framework of the elements of marriage I have discussed.

Marital Headship

But I want you to know that the head of every man is Christ, the head of woman is man, and the head of Christ is God.

1 Corinthians 11:3

Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.

So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself.

For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord does the church. For we are members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones.

“For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.”

This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church.

(Ephesians 5:25-32)

Marital Submission

*Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord.
For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of
the church; and He is the Savior of the body.
Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the
wives be to their own husbands in everything.*
Ephesians 5:22-24

Wives, submit to your own husbands, as is fitting in the Lord.
Colossians 3:18

*Wives, likewise, be submissive to your own husbands, that
even if some do not obey the word, they, without a word, may
be won by the conduct of their wives,
when they observe your chaste conduct accompanied by fear.
Do not let your adornment be merely outward—arranging the
hair, wearing gold, or putting on fine apparel—
rather let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the
incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very
precious in the sight of God.
For in this manner, in former times, the holy women who
trusted in God also adorned themselves, being submissive to
their own husbands,
as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, whose daughters
you are if you do good and are not afraid with any terror.*
1 Peter 3:1-6

The Role of Homemaker

*the older women likewise, that they be reverent in behavior,
not slanderers, not given to much wine, teachers of good
things—
that they admonish the young women to love their husbands,
to love their children,
to be discreet, chaste, homemakers, good, obedient to their
own husbands, that the word of God may not be blasphemed.*
Titus 2:3-5

*Therefore I desire that the younger widows marry, bear
children, manage the house, give no opportunity to the
adversary to speak reproachfully.*
1 Timothy 5:14

And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression.

Nevertheless she will be saved in childbearing if they continue in faith, love, and holiness, with self-control.

1 Timothy 2:14-15

A Lifelong Union

The Pharisees came and asked Him, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife?" testing Him. And He answered and said to them, "What did Moses command you?"

They said, "Moses permitted a man to write a certificate of divorce, and to dismiss her."

And Jesus answered and said to them, "Because of the hardness of your heart he wrote you this precept.

"But from the beginning of the creation, God 'made them male and female.'

'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife,

'and the two shall become one flesh'; so then they are no longer two, but one flesh.

"Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate."

In the house His disciples also asked Him again about the same matter.

So He said to them,

"Whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery against her.

"And if a woman divorces her husband and marries another, she commits adultery."

Mark 10:2-12

The Pharisees also came to Him, testing Him, and saying to Him, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for just any reason?"

And He answered and said to them, "Have you not read that He who made them at the beginning 'made them male and female,'

"and said, 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'?"

"So then, they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore what

God has joined together, let not man separate.”

They said to Him, “Why then did Moses command to give a certificate of divorce, and to put her away?”

He said to them, “Moses, because of the hardness of your hearts, permitted you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it was not so.

“And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another, commits adultery; and whoever marries her who is divorced commits adultery.”

His disciples said to Him, “If such is the case of the man with his wife, it is better not to marry.”

But He said to them, “All cannot accept this saying, but only those to whom it has been given:

“For there are eunuchs who were born thus from their mother’s womb, and there are eunuchs who were made eunuchs by men, and there are eunuchs who have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven’s sake. He who is able to accept it, let him accept it.”

Matthew 19:3-12 “Whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery; and whoever marries her who is divorced from her husband commits adultery.”

Luke 16:18

Or do you not know, brethren (for I speak to those who know the law), that the law has dominion over a man as long as he lives?

For the woman who has a husband is bound by the law to her husband as long as he lives. But if the husband dies, she is released from the law of her husband.

So then if, while her husband lives, she marries another man, she will be called an adulteress; but if her husband dies, she is free from that law, so that she is no adulteress, though she has married another man.

Therefore, my brethren, you also have become dead to the law through the body of Christ, that you may be married to another—to Him who was raised from the dead, that we should bear fruit to God.

Romans 7:1-4

Now to the married I command, yet not I but the Lord: A wife is not to depart from her husband.

But even if she does depart, let her remain unmarried or be

reconciled to her husband. And a husband is not to divorce his wife.

1 Corinthians 7:10-11

A wife is bound by law as long as her husband lives; but if her husband dies, she is at liberty to be married to whom she wishes, only in the Lord.

1 Corinthians 7:39

Vessel for Bearing and Raising Children

Then God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth."

Genesis 1:28

*Behold, children are a heritage from the LORD,
The fruit of the womb is a reward.
Like arrows in the hand of a warrior,
So are the children of one's youth.
Happy is the man who has his quiver full of them;
They shall not be ashamed,
But shall speak with their enemies in the gate.*

Psalms 127:3-5

*Your wife shall be like a fruitful vine
In the very heart of your house,
Your children like olive plants
All around your table.
Behold, thus shall the man be blessed
Who fears the LORD.*

Psalms 128:3-4

And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression.

Nevertheless she will be saved in childbearing if they continue in faith, love, and holiness, with self-control.

1 Timothy 2:14-15

"And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart.

"You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by

the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up.
Deuteronomy 6:6-7

*For He established a testimony in Jacob,
And appointed a law in Israel,
Which He commanded our fathers,
That they should make them known to their children;
That the generation to come might know them,
The children who would be born,
That they may arise and declare them to their children,
That they may set their hope in God,
And not forget the works of God,
But keep His commandments;*
Psalm 78:5-7

*For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the
unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband; otherwise your
children would be unclean, but now they are holy.*
1 Corinthians 7:14

*“Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be
long upon the land which the LORD your God is giving you.*
Exodus 20:12

*But you must continue in the things which you have learned
and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned
them,
and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures,
which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith
which is in Christ Jesus.*
2 Timothy 3:14-15

*Train up a child in the way he should go,
And when he is old he will not depart from it.*
Proverbs 22:6

*And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but
bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord.*
Ephesians 6:4

*And you have forgotten the exhortation which speaks to you
as to sons:
“My son, do not despise the chastening of the LORD,
Nor be discouraged when you are rebuked by Him;
For whom the LORD loves He chastens,*

And scourges every son whom He receives.”

If you endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom a father does not chasten?

But if you are without chastening, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate and not sons.

Furthermore, we have had human fathers who corrected us, and we paid them respect. Shall we not much more readily be in subjection to the Father of spirits and live?

For they indeed for a few days chastened us as seemed best to them, but He for our profit, that we may be partakers of His holiness.

Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.

Hebrews 12:5-11

Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right.

“Honor your father and mother,” which is the first commandment with promise:

“that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth.”

Ephesians 6:1-3

Correct your son, and he will give you rest;

Yes, he will give delight to your soul.

Proverbs 29:17

My son, hear the instruction of your father,

And do not forsake the law of your mother;

For they will be a graceful ornament on your head,

And chains about your neck.

Proverbs 1:8-9

Free Love

Let the husband render to his wife the affection due her, and likewise also the wife to her husband.

The wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does. And likewise the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does.

Do not deprive one another except with consent for a time, that you may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again so that Satan does not tempt you because of

your lack of self-control.
1 Corinthians 7:3-5

Appendix 2

TEACHERS I FOLLOW REGULARLY

Agologia Radio – Jeff Durbin

Let Us Reason Ministries – Mike Oppenheimer

Alpha and Omega Ministries – James White

CARM – Matt Slick

Weavertown Amish-Mennonite Church in Bird in Hand, PA

Cadz.net – Stephen Wilcox

Grace to You – John MacArthur

Matthew Henry

Robert Sungenis (Catholic)

Early Christian Fathers at newadvent.org (Catholic)

Denny Kenaston, on The Godly Home

Acts 17 Ministries – David Wood

Sword of the Lord Ministries

Appendix 3

TEN MINISTRIES I SUPPORT

Christian Credit Unions
Medi-Share, Christian Health Care
A Beka Homeschool Curriculum
The Transformed Wife Blog
Katie's Mercantile modest clothing
40 Days for Life
Blueletterbible.com
Christianbook
IBLP
Faith Builders Educational Programs

Appendix 4

BOOKS AND PAPERS ON MARRIAGE PERMANENCE

Except for Fornication, by Daniel Jennings

Contra Mundum Swagger, by Jack Shannon

Dear Pastor, A Plea for Honesty About Divorce and Remarriage, by Roger Hertzler

Have You Not Read, by Casey Whitaker

Until Death Do Us Part, by David J. Engelsma

The Hosea Project, *Letter to Pastors*, by Stephen Wilcox et al

Remarriage is Adultery Unless. . ., by David Pawson

Restoration of Christian Marriage, by Stephen W. Wilcox

What God Hath Joined, by Charles Hamilton

Jesus' Doctrine of Marriage, Divorce, Remarriage, by John D. Keller

Other Books I recommend to Change the World:

For Women:

The Way Home, by Mary Pride

The Power of the Transformed Wife, by Lori Alexander

Far Above Rubies, by Lynette G. Clark

Created to be His Helpmeet, by Debbi Pearl

For All:

The Benedict Option, by Rod Dreher

Appendix 5

DEFEATING SATAN THROUGH THE HOME

*And I will put enmity
Between you and the woman,
And between your seed and her Seed;
He shall bruise your head,
And you shall bruise His heel.”*
Genesis 3:15

Bear and raise the next generation in the teaching and admonition of Jesus
Provide Christian environment and education
Bring outside community into the home for free education
Foster and adopt, including informally for friends, family or neighbors who need help
Teach your children's friends about God and His Son
Be a regular place of worship and fellowship
Make things by hand
Grow your own produce
Start a home business that is morally clean

Remember: If we actually did our best to live as the Bible teaches, and especially to live in the New Covenant commands, it wouldn't just be obedience to God. It would be the foundation for a New Society.

Appendix 6

CHRISTIAN HOMESCHOOLING

Homeschooling_Support_Group:

<http://www.homeschoolingfamilytofamily.org/>

Considering_Homeschooling:

<http://www.consideringhomeschooling.org/>

Homeschool Curriculum: <https://www.abeka.com/homeschool/>

Science and Bible Curriculum: <https://www.apologia.com/>

Classical Christian Homeschooling: <https://www.veritaspres.com/>

Pennsylvania's Homeschool Association: <https://chaponline.com/>

South Carolina's Homeschool Association: <https://www.chasc.net/>

Forum_and_Help_for_Homeschooling:

<http://www.homeschoolchristian.com/>

HQ for Leaving the Pagan Schools: <https://exodusmandate.org/>

Appendix 7

HOW TO BE
BEAUTIFUL FOR YOUR HUSBAND

Your Nature

+ the Holy Spirit

~~+ makeup~~

~~+ jewelry~~

~~+ hair dye~~

~~+ razors~~

~~+ wax~~

~~+ stylists~~

~~+ silicon~~

~~+ facelifts~~

~~+ smoke and mirrors~~

= Beauty

FAITH STATEMENT

Without attempting to get into every doctrine, I include this statement of faith to let you know I accept orthodox Christian theology, from the Protestant arena

The Bible is the word of the living God, and is infallible and inerrant in its autographs

God is by nature spirit, is omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, immutable and infinite in glory

God has made all creation ex nihilo, and is distinct from His creation

God is perfectly one in His nature and exists eternally in three Persons, the Father, Son and Spirit. They coexist and commune eternally and are equal in glory.

Mankind through his fall is alienated from God, suffering death, the moral corruption of his nature and being under condemnation of the Almighty

God became incarnate in the womb of the virgin Mary through the Holy Spirit

Jesus the Messiah is fully human and fully God

Jesus lived a sinless life and died on the cross as an atoning death for man's sin

Jesus rose from the dead on the third day, appeared to His disciples and to the multitudes and ascended into heaven

We receive salvation by grace through faith in Christ, and not by works

Jesus is the only way to the Father, not one of many ways

The Holy Spirit dwells in the believer in Christ, leading him in truth and sanctifying him

Repentance from sin must come together with faith in Jesus

The dead will be raised, both the just and the unjust, before the final judgment of mankind

The Lord Jesus will return again in glory to judge both the living and the dead

The soul will reside eternally either in heaven or in hell

Moreover, the moral law has not changed, either in the prohibition of sodomy or the nature of marriage being one man and one woman for life.

While I respect other historical views, my understanding of the working of God's grace is from the Reformed tradition

AN ANSWER TO THE ANARCHIST CROWD

The common knee-jerk reaction from Christians today when you preach about how we must live our lives is this: I'm saved by faith, not by works, so I don't need no stinkin' rules. Or something like that. It's a very unspiritual attitude. It tries to portray what are actually biblical calls to obedience as ANTI-biblical, because they don't like it and it interferes with their lifestyle. Yet obedience is what the Bible calls us to.

Jesus commands obedience and repentance. The book of Acts commands obedience and repentance. The Epistles command obedience and repentance. Revelation commands obedience and repentance. The fact that a single act is not the source of our justification is irrelevant. Good works are a necessary part of our life in Christ, and we fool ourselves if we think we do not need to do them. The Christian must live a holy life. He must live the way God has called him to live. The idea that one can sin freely as a Christian, and without repentance, is as anti-biblical and anti-Gospel as you could imagine. A Christian who sins without shame refutes his own faith. He denies his faith. He denies that Christ does what He says He does. A born again soul must live like one born again. If not, then no one in the world has a real reason to believe he is actually a Christian.

Some churches today like to teach that you can be born again, then end up sinning shamelessly for many years, and choose to dedicate your life to Christ later one day. This is a complete lie. A person who is born again is ALSO dedicated to Christ. That is the nature of the new birth. We are a new creation and God will be our God and we will be His people. (2 Corinthians 5:17, Jeremiah 31:33) We live in the newness of Christ's life. It may be true there is a learning process, but that learning process is actually uphill. It involves actively seeking the good we should desire on our heart. It means hating and staying away from the sins and temptations which could rob us of our goal. It means sorrow and repentance when we sin. That's an upward climb. The idea that a born again soul can flat-line for years is in great conflict with Scripture. For the Bible teaches that good fruit comes from a good tree. Bad fruit comes from a bad tree. A good tree cannot put forth bad fruit. A bad tree cannot put

forth good fruit. (Matthew 7:16-20) The Christian who thinks he can flat-line and sin without repentance for years is not a Christian. His fruit is not Christian. His fruit is the fruit of the damned. The lost. It is bad fruit from a bad tree. The REAL Christian is already dedicated to the Savior, even if it takes some time to learn and grow. He is already doing that.

For those Christians who like to imagine their own sins as very small things, not like murder and rape, remember that is a false and overly convenient categorizing of sin. It is not just murderers who die and end up for eternity in hell. The Bible says that liars do not enter the kingdom of heaven. It says that fornicators and adulterers and sodomites do not enter. It says those practicing idolatry, drunkenness and other sins are not going where Christians end up going. There is no rest for the wicked. The Christian life should not just be free of murder. God forbid. It should be as stainless as our persistence and hard work can make it. Paul spoke about how he pressed into perfection, although he had not attained it. (Philippians 3:12) So should we. Don't forget, the same arguments the Christian makes about how he can be saved and sin freely can likewise be made by the murderer, rapist or pedophile. Anyone can play that game. I'll just do evil for now, and I'll dedicate my life to Christ later. Well, you could die tomorrow. How about that? And God says if you do, you are not entering into His kingdom. To believe in God is also to obey God. Any Christian who doesn't know that needs to pick up his Bible again and read it through. You're not going to miss it.

It is also apparent that even if a deed is not the source of our salvation, that deed has consequences, and as Christians we should care to bring about the good consequences, and hate the evil ones. Building a building safely may not get you into heaven, but if you don't you may have many lives lost on your hands. You will be responsible. As a Christian you should hate the idea that your actions should offend God or cause harm to man. As a Christian you should care that your actions obey God and help man. The claim it won't "get us into heaven" doesn't change that. If our heart is new, we care about doing God's will. Like the Psalmist, we meditate of God's law and we love to do it. We know in our heart and mind God's law is good. We don't need the promise of eternal salvation for each and every act. We already have that in Christ. We need to do it rather because it is God's will and because it is good.

What a shameful, immature attitude in the Church that has declared deeds are some minor thing. Truthfully, deeds are great things. We should long to do them. Read any of the passages prophesying the reign of Messiah, and see how often they speak of a great reign, where people will just say Messiah's name over and over and over and over and talk about how great He is. Where are those verses? It is true we will proclaim

Messiah's name, but most verses of prophecy about it do not say how much talk we will be doing. Rather, they prophesy a great reign of righteousness. (Isaiah 26) A time of faith, joy and obedience to God. Evil and injustice will be put down. God's law will be uplifted. Messiah's reign is a reign of righteousness, not of talk. Similarly, you can read through the entire New Testament and see how many passages teach us to TALK about Jesus. Some certainly do. We need people to share the Gospel. However, you will find many more that tell us to do good, repent of evil, and obey God. It speaks more about our righteousness than it does about how we need to talk about Jesus. I am not trying to downgrade sharing the Gospel at all. I am only trying to point out that our obedience cannot itself be downgraded as a minor thing. It is not minor. It is major. It is a central part of our lives every day. A Christian repents, and believes in the Savior. He works to be a living example of His goodness. He is diligent. He studies the Word. He obeys God. The James Dean rebel-without-a-cause attitude in the Church has to stop. It is deadly. We need submission to God and obedience. If we don't have that, maybe we don't have faith either.

"But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.

Jeremiah 31:33

*"I will betroth you to Me forever;
Yes, I will betroth you to Me
In righteousness and justice,
In lovingkindness and mercy;
I will betroth you to Me in faithfulness,
And you shall know the LORD*

Hosea 2:19-20



Three clamdiggers at sunset on Hailing Island, Guangdong, China

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

My name is Tom Ackerman. I used the pen name Ordinary Brother not to hide my identity, but to emphasize the point that ordinary brothers will need to preach the Word of God, when the churches largely refuse to do it. I'm an ordinary child of God. I am not an ordained minister of any kind nor have I attended a seminary. I think the average man needs to take his job seriously as a shepherd in times like these. I don't consider it ideal to stand alone. Yet it is clearly necessary.

I began to believe in Jesus at 31 years of age by reading the New Testament over and over. It probably wasn't a doctrinal kosher faith until perhaps four years later, but it was belief, and I knew that God was and that Jesus was His Son and that I wanted to be with Him forever. I still believe that, but with an understanding that is rooted in Scripture and traditional from mostly the Protestant view of theology. I attend Baptist and Anabaptist churches. As a part of learning more about community and religious discipline, I have also stayed several times with both Orthodox and Catholic monks, and have been deeply rewarded by it, along with visiting the communal Anabaptist group, the Bruderhof.

I began work toward holiness and reform when I founded Holiness of the Bride in 2013, to inspire and organize people toward restoration. The spark for that project, and for what I continue to do today, was simple and powerful; I was working in ministry and could tell how intractable the problems were there. Not only is Scripture and tradition ignored, but the leaders simply refuse to try and solve the problem. They refuse to lead. They have their bread and butter, and they could care less about God's Word and faithfully pursuing holiness. Obedience would interrupt their routines. It became readily apparent that working outside of the system is the only reliable way to communicate the truth. If you communicate the truth from inside the system, you will almost always be threatened, silenced or terminated. That's just the way. It's that way with many ministries.

I am committed to what I do. I am consecrated to reform in the Church. I pray nearly every day for the restoration of the Bride of Messiah, and I fast every 2 weeks for the same purpose. I will continue to give the message I give no matter how many Christians hate it. I hope this book both inspires you and helps you work to restore the Church too.

Currently I live in southwestern Pennsylvania with my wife and our three children. I have been blessed immensely with family, with a godly virtuous wife and three children that make me very happy and bless our home. Lord willing we will have more children in the future. I consider my family my little sacred community.

You are welcome to write me at: kodeshkallah@yahoo.com

[I am especially happy to talk with couples who are considering marriage, or who are having trouble and need help with their current marriage. If she has the time, I can also have my wife speak with any women who want guidance. She is a godly example to learn from.]



The author at Lake Nockamixon, with litter in the background



My wife Jenny Xinwen Ackerman, at St. Vincent's Monastery, Latrobe, PA



Daddy, Elijah and Esther at Lake Nockamixon



Esther at 1 year old in the back yard



Jenny, Elijah, Esther and Bethany



Elijah and Iree the tortoise



Elijah and Esther at Lake Erie



Elijah and Bethany



Bethany at about 1 year old



Eli and I at the Christian open mic in Morgantown, Pennsylvania



Immanuel Lukas, November 26-December 11, 2013



In a grave they laid Thee, O my Life and my Christ
Yet behold now by Thy death, death is stricken down
And Thou pourest forth life's streams
For all the world.

*—from **Lamentations, an Orthodox hymn***