

Rom. 14:19 So then let us follow after things which make for peace, and things whereby we may edify one another.

THE LENEXA EDIFIER

John 8:32

“And ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free”

MAY 24, 2015

GOD'S PLAN FOR MARRIAGE

Jim Stauffer

Our Relationship With God

Matthew 22:37 *And he said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. ³⁸ This is the great and first commandment. ³⁹ And a second like unto it is this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.*

Jesus teaches all mankind the primary reverence and obedience is to be given God Almighty. This has always been the case in the relationship between man and God.

Deuteronomy 10:12 *And now, Israel, what doth Jehovah thy God require of thee, but to fear Jehovah thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve Jehovah thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul.*

Why do I bring this up? Because, we must understand why we make the right decisions in life, in order to make them consistently.

1 John 5:2 *Hereby we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and do his commandments. ³ For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous. ⁴ For whatsoever is begotten of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that hath overcome the world, even our faith. ⁵ And who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?*

We can rationalize all we want but we cannot change this fact. We prove our love for God by obeying His commands. If we are to overcome the world we must love God. Now what does this subject have to do with a young couple about to be married?

It is relevant because it is God who instituted marriage and the principles by which it is governed. If a marriage is to be successful the husband and wife must follow the instruction of God.

What Is Marriage?

Genesis 2:23 *And the man 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. ²⁴*

Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.

When God instituted marriage He chose the Hebrew word for cleave which calls upon the meaning of glue. It means to stick like glue to one another. This is the reason He commands each one to leave their parents. One cannot cleave to his wife or her husband if he or she is unwilling to leave or forsake all others.

Matthew 19:3 *And there came unto him Pharisees, trying him, and saying, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause? ⁴ And he answered and said, Have ye not read, that he who made them from the beginning made them male and female, ⁵ and said, For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and the two shall become one flesh? ⁶ So that they are no more two, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder. ⁷ They say unto him, Why then did Moses command to give a bill of divorcement, and to put her away? ⁸ He saith unto them, Moses for your hardness of heart suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it hath not been so. ⁹ And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and he that marrieth her when she is put away committeth adultery.*

Jesus addresses the issue of divorce in this passage. Teaching them it was never supposed to be, He reminds them of the leaving parents and cleaving to spouse that was the central theme of His instructions for marriage. This, He says, is how they become one flesh. He continues His lesson by saying the only reason one can divorce a spouse and remarry is if that spouse has been unfaithful. If one does divorce and remarry for any reason other than fornication, he commits adultery. That marriage is a lifetime proposition is made clear by the Apostle Paul, **Romans 7:2** *For the woman that hath a husband is bound by law to the husband while he liveth; but if the husband die, she is discharged from the law of the husband.*

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We remind ourselves at this juncture that our love for God demands we obey these teachings.

Husband Wife Relationship

Another aspect of the marriage relationship is the role each is to play. **Ephesians 5:22** *Wives, be in subjection unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord.* ²³ *For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, being himself the saviour of the body.* ²⁴ *But as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives also be to their husbands in everything.* ²⁵ *Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself up for it;* ²⁶ *that he might sanctify it, having cleansed it by the washing of water with the word,* ²⁷ *that he might present the church to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.*

As you can see from this passage, Paul is saying the husband and wife each have a role assigned to them by God. The husband is the head of the wife in the same way Christ is the head of the church. This carries with it the same love Christ had for the church and was willing to die for it. The wife is to submit herself unto her husband as unto the Lord.

These are three major principles that must be understood and committed to by both parties for a successful marriage to follow. Study these and teach others the truth about marriage compared to the practices of the world.

Now is the Time

by Michael Hickox

2 Peter 3:9 says, *"The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance."*

Yet, the next verse points out that God will decide at some point that He has had enough with man's disobedience. God's patience will no longer be extended to mankind. Every person who has ever lived will be judged.

The message for us is that we must take advantage of the time and opportunities that God allows us to have now. If we continually put off God's work for "some other time," there will soon not be "some other time."

The Bible is full of examples of people who realized too late the need to seize the opportunities God gave them.

In **Luke 16:19-31**, we read of a rich man who had opportunities to please God. He could have helped a poor beggar named Lazarus who desired *"to be fed with the crumbs that fell from the rich man's table"* (**verse 21**). Yet he chose not to. The rich man died and found it was too late to seek God's mercy (**verses 24-26**) or help his family (**verses 27-31**). While Lazarus was comforted in Abraham's bosom, the rich man could only wonder "what if?"

In **Matthew 25:1-13**, we read a parable of ten virgins who wanted to meet the bridegroom. Five of them did not take oil for their lamps and slept while the bridegroom was away. When they heard the bridegroom was coming, the five foolish virgins had to go find oil for their lamps. By the time they returned, the door to the wedding was shut and they could not meet the bridegroom. They begged to be let in, but were told *"Assuredly, I say to you, I do not know you"* (**verse 12**).

Their efforts to make things right were too late. When the Israelites were led out of Egyptian bondage in the latter part of Exodus and first part of Numbers, they had a golden opportunity to enter the land of Canaan. Instead, they were continually unfaithful and, with the exception of Joshua and Caleb, decided they would rather go back to Egypt than continue following God. God decided He'd had enough of their disobedience.

Numbers 14:11: *Then the Lord said to Moses: "How long will these people reject me? And how long will they not believe me, with all the signs which I have performed among them?"*

After Moses told the Israelites of God's plan to render vengeance on their disobedience, they mourned greatly (**Numbers 14:39**). **Verse 40** says they tried to seek God's mercy.

Moses told them their efforts to make things right would not succeed. God was no longer with them. Like the rich man and the foolish virgins, their efforts to seek God were too late.

On the Day of Judgment, many will be as the five foolish virgins were. They *"will seek to enter and will not be able"* (**Luke 13:24**). They will desire to be with God but it will be too late to find favor with Him.

The good news is that this does not have to be us. We can choose now to seize the God-given opportunities we have to serve Him.

Each of us has a golden present that will not recur. We each have opportunities now that we will not have again. Let us choose now to seize these opportunities and live each moment like it is our last. As Paul exhorted the church at Corinth, *"Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation"* (**2 Corinthians 6:2**).

Now is the time to live for God. Now is the time to obey His will for us. Waiting any longer will soon be too late.

"IN THE MIDST OF A CROOKED AND PERVERSE GENERATION"

(by Bill Hall)

"Do all things without murmurings and questions; that ye may become blameless and harmless, children of God without rebuke in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom ye are seen as lights in the world" (Phil. 2:14-15).

The Philippian Christians had to serve God in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation. They were neither the first nor the last to find themselves under such

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circumstances. In fact, every person who ever served God did so *"in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation,"* and so must we.

Surely no-one would question the perverseness of the generation in which we live. We are surrounded by indecency. Moral filth lines the shelves of the neighborhood store and video shop. Drug scandals rock the sports and entertainment worlds. Christians working in factories are exposed to bad language, filthy stories, and rumors of immorality among their fellow employees. Our children attend schools that are filled with wickedness. We are not overstating the case - this is the world as it really is, a crooked and perverse generation indeed.

We face two possible choices as Christians: (1) try to clean up the society in which we live, so that we and our children can serve God without the pressures and evil influences that presently exist. We would not discourage reasonable effort on the part of individual Christians along these lines, but success in any such efforts will be on a small scale. It matters not how hard we work at it, by and large, the world will still be a corrupt world when we die: evil will still exist on TV and in the movies; pornography will still be a problem; corruption will still exist in government; and schools will still have their ungodly influences. Our purpose as Christians is to call people out of darkness through the gospel and into light. We can do that, but efforts to eradicate darkness will for the most part be futile. Fortunately, we have another choice: (2) make up our minds to serve God faithfully in whatever environment we find ourselves. This is the only viable choice for the Christian.

It can be done. Consider Noah's generation when *"every imagination of the thoughts of (man's) heart was only evil continually"* (**Gen. 6:5**); or Lot's generation when ten righteous souls could not be found in all of Sodom; or Elijah's generation when wicked Ahab served as king in the wicked nation of Israel; or Daniel's generation when as a young man he found himself in a foreign land facing pressures to eat the king's meats and drink his wines (**Dan. 1:8**); or the apostles' generation when Rome ruled the world and the hypocritical scribes and Pharisees dominated the religious scene. What were these men doing in such crooked and perverse circumstances? They were serving God! That's what they were doing!

The point is this: if these could serve God in the midst of the crooked and perverse circumstances in which they found themselves, and if the Philippians could shine *"as lights in the world"* in the midst of their crooked and perverse generation, so can we. Our eternal destiny is not determined by the environment in which we live, but by our own determination to be what we ought to be in whatever environment we find ourselves. We must lay aside our excuses, both for ourselves and our children, and make up our minds to say with Joshua, *"As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord"* (**Josh. 24:15**). This we shall do, and with God's help we shall overcome.

IS JESUS THE ONLY WAY TO HEAVEN?

We could answer this question by saying: "Well, if you believe the Bible, then, yes, Jesus is the only way to heaven." Peter declared: *"Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved"* (**Acts 4:12**). But what about all of the millions of people who do not believe what **Acts 4:12** says? While their lack of faith does not mitigate against the truth of Jesus' claim to be *"the way, the truth, and the life,"* it is still true that just quoting a Bible passage does not always convince people that Jesus is the only way to heaven. A religiously pluralistic society says there are many ways to heaven, there is no such thing as absolute truth, and if you judge someone to be wrong in their faith, then you are simply a religious bigot. Let us start with a few statements of scripture that speak to who Jesus is and to what He did for us.

First, Christ was conceived by the Holy Spirit of God and was born of a virgin. *"Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel"* (**Isaiah 7:14**). This passage is quoted by **Matthew (1:18-25)** and applied to the birth of Christ. Who else in the history of the world can make this same claim? Jesus alone qualifies to be our Savior.

Second, Christ alone is God incarnate. *"And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth"* (**John 1:14**). While Jesus was fully God, He was also fully man. The sacrifice of a mere man would not save anyone from sin. Yet, the humanity of Christ identifies Him with all of those for whom He died—the entire world (**Hebrews 2:14-16; 4:14-16**). But who in the world can say that he was/is both God and man? Christ alone qualifies to be our Savior.

Thirdly, Jesus understands us. *"For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin"* (**Hebrews 4:15**). Christ alone lived a sinless life. The blood of animals could not atone for sin. But the perfect sacrifice of Christ did what the millions and millions of animal sacrifices could not do—His blood makes forgiveness possible. He alone can be our Savior.

Fourth, Jesus is our sacrifice. *"For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him"* (**2 Corinthians 5:21**). Christ died for you and me. He did not sin; He died as though He had sinned. He bore our sins on the cross. He paid the price for sin we could not pay—death! He alone can be our Savior.

The only acceptable conclusion is that Jesus is the only acceptable Savior. We honor Him and what He did with our faith and commitment.

Randy Harshbarger

Eph. 2:19 So then ye are no more strangers and sojourners, but ye are fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God, 20 being built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the chief corner stone; 21 in whom each several building, fitly framed together, groweth into a holy temple in the Lord;

1Pet. 2:9 But ye are an elect race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, that ye may show forth the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:

Psa. 1:1 Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the wicked, Nor standeth in the way of sinners, Nor sitteth in the seat of scoffers: 2 But his delight is in the law of Jehovah; And on his law doth he meditate day and night. 3 And he shall be like a tree planted by the streams of water, That bringeth forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also doth not wither; And whatsoever he doeth shall prosper. 4 The wicked are not so, But are like the chaff which the wind driveth away. 5 Therefore the wicked shall not stand in the judgment, Nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. 6 For Jehovah knoweth the way of the righteous; But the way of the wicked shall perish.

HOURS OF WORSHIP

Sunday A.M. 9:30 Bible Study

Sunday A.M. 10:20 Assembled Worship

Sunday P.M. 5:00 Assembled Worship

Wednesday P.M. 7:00 Bible Study and Worship

Visitors welcome

We conduct in home Bible Studies

We offer Correspondence Courses

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NEWS AND NOTES:

SICK IN NEED OF PRAYERS:

IRENE HURD, MARY CZIRR, JAN PATRICK. GRANT CLOTHIER IS AT HOME WHILE HIS WIFE, PAT CLOTHIER WILL BEGIN TREATMENTS FOR ESOPHAGEAL CANCER THAT HAS RETURNED. JESSIE GIBSON IS AT HOME RECUPERATING AS IS J.R. DANIEL.

OUR GOSPEL MEETING CONCLUDED WEDNESDAY EVENING AND THE AUDIO OF THE LESSONS WILL BE ON OUR WEBSITE:
LENEXACHURCHOFCHRIST.ORG



What Must I Do To Be Saved?

Hear the gospel - Romans 10:17

Believe in Jesus Christ - Hebrews 11:6

Repent of sins - Acts 17:30

Confess Christ as Lord - Romans 10:9,10

Be Baptized for remission of sins

Acts 2:38

Be Faithful unto death - Revelation 2:10