

Husbands and Wives

Applying Christ in Our Marriage Relationship

I. Marriage is ordained by God:

- A. God's first instruction to man was, "Be fruitful and multiply" (Gen. 1:28).
- B. God's way for man to accomplish this is that a couple be joined in marriage as one flesh (Gen. 2:24).
- C. God considers that the children produced of godly parents are the seed of God (Mal. 2:15).

II. Marriage is a picture of the relationship that God desires to have with His people (Eph. 5:31-32):

- A. Just as it was not good for Adam to be alone and needed a counterpart to match him, so also God desires a counterpart that matches Him (Gen. 2:18).
- B. Just as Adam could not be satisfied with any other creature, but needed his counterpart to share his life and nature, so also God's counterpart must share His life and nature (vv. 21-24).

III. God hates divorce:

- A. When a man and a woman are joined in marriage, God considers this as His own yoking them together (Matt. 19:4-6).
- B. God considers that for a man to divorce His wife is to be treacherous against her (Mal. 2:14-16).

IV. Marriage is used by God for our transformation:

- A. A husband and a wife are different; God made us this way.
- B. The worldly notion of finding someone compatible so that they will just fit into your life without you needing to change is a vain dream; there is no such person.
- C. God wants to use the shortcomings of your spouse to transform you:
 - 1. If we didn't see the shortcomings of our spouse before, we discover them soon after we get married.
 - 2. Naturally we would like them to change to be better; we may pray for God to change them, we may seek help with the hope that the help will be to change our spouse, or we may want to end our marriage; these are some of the ways some try to handle difficult situations.
 - 3. God does not like to see us suffer but if our life was just smooth and easy, we would not gain Him much; our tribulations help us on the way to enter into the kingdom of God (Acts 14:22).
- D. Our spouse is a cross to us, but it is a sin to deliberately make their cross heavier.

V. Healthy relationships with others, especially with our spouse, are crucial if we want to enter into the joy of the Lord in the coming kingdom:

- A. If we consider ourselves superior to our spouse and maybe even begin to despise them, that will poison the marriage relationship.
 - 1. We need to beware of our anger, especially of speaking words of contempt or condemnation; these will make us liable to the Lord's judgement (Matt. 5:22).
 - 2. In ourselves we are not better than our spouse; if we judge our spouse, we not only make it impossible to have a healthy relationship with them, we are storing up wrath for ourselves (Rom. 2:1-6).

3. On the other hand, if we show mercy, we open the way for God to be merciful to us (James 2:13).
- B. If we have offended our spouse, we need to take care of it quickly by confessing to them with a humble, repentant heart; otherwise this also will result in our suffering the Lord's judgment of being thrown into jail (Matt. 5:23-26).
- C. If we have been offended by our spouse, we need to forgive them:
 1. We cannot expect the Lord to forgive our debts if we do not forgive our debtors (6:12).
 2. If we don't forgive our spouse, our Father will deliver us to the torturers at the judgment seat (18:23-35).

VI. God wants to supply us with Himself as grace:

- A. Even when a situation is beyond our capacity to handle, God's grace is sufficient if we choose to take it (2 Cor. 12:9).
- B. The condition for receiving more grace is to humble ourselves more (James 4:6).
 1. We need to humble ourselves, not only before God, but also before others, especially our spouse (1 Pet. 5:5).
 2. Our spouse may have hurt and offended us deeply, but if we confess our attitudes, offenses, and unwillingness to forgive both to the Lord and to our spouse for the Lord's sake, the Lord will give us His grace.
 3. The one who takes the lead to do this first or most thoroughly will gain more grace because this requires that we humble ourselves more.
- C. We need mountaintop experiences to uplift our vision, but the flow of the water of life is in the valleys; that is where we gain the Lord the most.

VII. Even though we cannot avoid some amount of dealings and sufferings in a marriage relationship, a healthy marriage includes a lot of love, respect, support and joy together:

- A. In the chapter *Husband and Wife* in the book *Messages for Building Up New Believers Volume 2*, Watchman Nee lists 12 items to take care of to have a healthy marriage; the first one is in the ministry portions below.
- B. These positive aspects need us to choose to cultivate them.
- C. If our marriage relationship is not healthy, we cannot expect our children to turn out well.

VIII. The parents are responsible to bring the Lord's grace into their home:

- A. If both marriage partners seek together to give the Lord first place into their relationship and home, very good.
- B. But if one is not willing, the Lord's grace is sufficient even for that situation; if you choose to take His grace, that will still give the Lord a way in your home and family.
- C. The Lord will not take the excuse that you couldn't overcome because of your spouse.

IX. If we take the Lord's way, He will fill us with His joy enabling us to rejoice in Him always and enjoy His love and peace (Phil. 4:4; 2 Cor. 13:11).

Further Reading:

1. *Spending Time to Learn To Be a Husband or a Wife* from *CWWN, Set Three, vol. 49, "Messages for Building Up New Believers (2)"*, pp. 499-501
2. *The New Complementing Law—Not to Be Angry with the Brother, Not to Contemn the Brother, and Not to Condemn the Brother* from *Life-study of Matthew, vol. 1, Message 17*, pp. 206-208
3. *Punished by the Lord for Our Unwillingness to Forgive* from *Life-study of Matthew, vol. 3, Message 52*, pp. 589-591

DEAR LORD JESUS, PRECIOUS JESUS

(Hymn 1158)

- 1 Dear Lord Jesus, precious Jesus,
Thou hast won each love from me;
Who like Thee—so fair and comely?
Who like Thee—so sweet and lovely?
Matchless One, unrivaled beauty,
None can e'er compete with Thee!
- 2 Dear Lord Jesus, precious Jesus,
Gladly will I hear Thy call;
Since Thy voice my heart hath entered,
I from all things could but sever;
Void are all my other seekings,
Every pride hath disappeared.
- 3 Dear Lord Jesus, precious Jesus,
How can I still stubborn be?
At Thy feet cast all my hard'nings,
And return with songs and singings;
'Tis my love to be Thy bondslave,
'Tis my joy to Thee obey.
- 4 Dear Lord Jesus, precious Jesus,
Thy way only will I choose;
Though in tears while I'm obeying,
Yet I would not change my standing;
All I long for is Thy pleasure,
And the peace Thy love would bring.
- 5 Dear Lord Jesus, precious Jesus,
When Thy presence does depart,
Seems the dawn has lost its traces,
Hidden are my smiling faces;
All I yearn for is Thy coming
And Thy presence' sweet embrace.
- 6 Dear Lord Jesus, precious Jesus,
Can I tell it all to Thee?
Thou my love and satisfaction,
Thou my everlasting portion;
Thou art all that I desire,
Nothing else I would pursue.
- 7 Dear Lord Jesus, precious Jesus,
All I have I give to Thee;
Who like Thee—so fair and comely?
Who like Thee—so sweet and lovely?
Matchless One, unrivaled beauty,
None can e'er compete with Thee!

OH SEÑOR JESÚS AMADO

- 1 Oh Señor Jesús Amado,
Tu amor me cautivó;
Eres dulce y codiciable,
¡Tan hermoso y muy amable!
De belleza incomparable
¡Sobre todo superior!
- 2 Oh Señor Jesús Amado,
Me atraes con Tu voz;
Cuando me hablas dulcemente,
Me dispones a apartarme
De las ansias de la carne,
Del pecado y su aguijón.
- 3 Oh Señor Jesús Amado,
¿Cómo ser tan contumaz?
A Tus pies todo lo dejo,
Y me vuelvo satisfecho;
Como esclavo a Ti sujeto,
Obediente, estoy en paz.
- 4 Oh Señor Jesús Amado,
Tu camino quiero andar
Aunque duela obedecerte,
No resisto a rendirme;
Mi intención es agradarte,
Y Tu amor en paz gozar.
- 5 Oh Señor Jesús Amado,
Si me escondes hoy Tu faz
La aurora desvanece,
Mi sonrisa se adormece;
¡Cuánto anhelo que regreses!
Tu abrazo es mi paz.
- 6 Oh Señor Jesús Amado,
¿Cómo te describiré?
Eres mi amor y gozo,
Arra, eterna, muy precioso
Todo lo que necesito,
Nada más procuraré.
- 7 Oh Señor Jesús Amado,
Lo que es mio yo te doy;
¡Eres dulce y codiciable!
Tan hermoso y muy amable
De belleza incomparable,
Sobre todo superior.