

THE PROBLEMS OF MARRIAGE

Donald Townsley

Introduction:

- A. Marriage is the living together of one man and one woman. This involves two things: Intention to be married and cohabitation. (Gen. 2:24)
- B. A problem is a question proposed for solution.
- C. In this lesson on THE PROBLEMS OF MARRIAGE, we are talking about situations that arise that bring trouble and unhappiness to married people.
- D. Getting married is not difficult, millions of couples marry every year.
- E. The difficulty is to adjust to this new relationship.
- F. There are many adjustments to be made.
- G. Good husbands and wives are not born, but made.

I. ONE OF THE FIRST PROBLEMS IS THE CLASH OF REALITY WITH ROMANCE.

- A. Romance, rightly interpreted, can play an important role in marriage.
- B. But the exaggerated claims of romance have clashed constantly with reality, and have caused much needless suffering.
- C. Some of the points where these clashes occur:
 - 1. The FAIRY TALE idea of romance. This nation is full of it, it is like Santa Claus.
 - 2. Examples: " They married and lived happily ever after" ; "Love at first sight"; "Only-person-in-the-world".
 - 3. The high divorce rate proves this idea of romance is false.
 - 4. This idea assumes that marriage will be an effortless success when the engagement is terminated by the marriage ceremony.
 - 5. This fairy tale idea of marriage thinks of marriage as the final realization of PERMANENT BLISS.
- D. But reality, on the other hand, looks upon ABIDING LOVE, not as something suddenly born full-grown, but as the product of much thoughtful effort and years of cooperation involving both mutual enjoyment and mutual suffering.

1. PAUL -- Eph. 5: 25, 28 - 29; Tit. 2:4

- E. Successful marriage is FAR from being EFFORTLESS, it requires a great deal of skill and practice.
- F. Men and women are not born good husbands and wives, and they do not become such by the sheer accident of meeting the right person.
- G. They become good husbands and wives only by patience, restraint, and sacrificial devotion to each other and to values they have chosen as most worthwhile for their lives.

II. ONE OF THE PROBLEMS MANY TIMES IS THE FAILURE TO RECOGNIZE THE SCRIPTURAL STATUS OF EACH ONE IN THE MARRIAGE RELATIONSHIP.

- A. God appointed the man the head of the wife -- Eph. 5:23; I Cor. 11:3.
- B. As such he is commanded to make a living -- I Tim. 5:8.
- C. He is to love his wife -- Col. 3:19.
- D. He is to teach the children -- Eph. 6:4.
- E. The wife is to be submissive to her husband -- Eph. 5:22; I Pet. 3:1.
- F. A refusal to do so is blasphemy -- Titus 2:5.
- G. She is to be a keeper of the home -- Titus 2:5.
- H. She is to guide the house and be a mother -- I Tim. 5:14; 2:15.
- I. And, be a companion and help to her husband -- Gen. 2:18; I Cor. 11:9.

III. THE PROBLEM OF PHYSICAL INCOMPATIBILITY.

- A. This will not prove to be a great problem if it is approached with good judgment and mutual love and a willingness to follow the advice of a good doctor and the inspired words of the apostle Paul.
- B. Sometimes the inspired Paul alone can solve this problem -- I Cor. 7: 1 - 5

1. I Cor. 7: 3 - 5 (The New Testament in Modern English by Phillips) " *The husband should give his wife what is due to her as his wife, and the wife should be as fair to her husband. The wife has no longer full rights over her own person, but shares them with her husband. In the same way the husband shares his personal rights with his wife. Do not cheat each other of normal sexual intercourse, unless of course you both decide to abstain temporarily to make special opportunity for fasting and prayer. But afterward you should resume relations as before, or you will expose yourselves to the obvious temptation of the devil.*"

2. I Cor. 7: 3 - 5 (Revised Standard Version) " *The husband should give to his wife her conjugal rights and likewise the wife to her husband. For the wife does not rule over her own body, but the husband does; likewise the husband does not rule his own body, but the wife does. Do not refuse one another except perhaps by agreement for a season, that you may devote yourselves to prayer; but then come together again, lest Satan tempt you through lack of self-control.*

C. Verse two says, "*let every man have (possess) his own wife, and let every woman have (possess) her own husband.*"

1. He means literally what he says --
2. The wife is to permit the husband to have her, to possess, or own her, or to use her.
3. The wife is to own or possess her husband, in the same manner.
4. The husband belongs to the wife and the wife belongs to the husband.
5. The husband is to have his wife when he wants her and the wife is likewise to have her husband when she wants him.
6. Each is to satisfy the other and not himself -- when this attitude is the attitude of both husband and wife, the problem will be solved.
7. One of the fundamental errors held by too many married people is they think their body belongs to themselves.
8. A violation of this scripture has caused multiplied thousands to go off to seek satisfaction in some sort of an adulterous relationship.

IV. THE IN-LAW PROBLEM

- A. One does not lose his relatives when he marries, he merely doubles them.
- B. Many times these in-laws, meaning well, stick their nose in where they have no business and cause trouble between husband and wife.
- C. Two things that will keep this problem from arising:
 1. Never live with your in-laws -- Gen. 2:24
 2. Realize that the relationship between husband and wife takes precedence over all other fleshly relationships -- the father and mother of the bride and groom must take second place -- Matt. 19:6.

V. THE PROBLEM OF MARRYING UNBELIEVERS

- A. The church at Corinth had this problem -- I Cor. 7: 12 - 16.

- B. Paul tells them not to put away their unbelieving companions -- I Cor. 7:13.
- C. The believer is to put the Lord first -- Matt. 10: 36 - 38; 6:33
- D. Paul says if the unbeliever is not pleased to dwell with the believer who puts the Lord first, "*let him depart*" -- I Cor. 7:15; 7:11.
- E. Paul points out there is a possibility that the believer can save the unbeliever -- 7:16.
- F. Peter also deals with the marriage of a believer and unbeliever -- I Pet.3: 1 - 7.

VI. THE PROBLEM OF MONEY MATTERS

- A. Marriage counselors say that two out of five arguments in the home arise over money.
 - 1. Girl from a family with good income -- many times wants the same type life after marriage.
- B. Money is important in marriage because it determines how the family will live.
- C. Sometimes selfishness is at the root of our trouble.
- D. Sometimes the man wants to spend freely on himself, without allowing the wife the same privileges (or the other way around).
- E. Credit-buying and living above one's income will bring about a financial crisis.
- F. A good motto for young couples is "WASTE NOT; WANT NOT".
- G. Most people need a budget.
- H. The New Testament teaches us to be frugal and thrifty -- John 6:12; Eph. 4:28.