***God's Laws are Holy, Fair, and Good  
RO88-02***

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Please turn with me in your Bibles to Romans 7:12-13. Our subject is "The Merit of the Mosaic Law." This is increment number three.

The apostle Paul, as you well know, was a devoted Jew who learned through divine enlightenment that no one can be born again by keeping the Mosaic Law. He once share that mistaken opinion. The apostle Paul, therefore, constantly proclaimed the fact that no one person can be released from his enslavement to his sin nature by keeping the rules of the Law of Moses. The Mosaic Law was, in fact, he discovered, a mirror which God had provided to show him his true moral guilt – his lost condition by God's standard of absolute righteousness.

The more people learned about God's character, and about His standard from the Mosaic Law, however, the more, Paul discovered, that people rebelled against God, and they pursued the very evils that God forbad. They pursued them out of spite. And they resented the fact that God was telling them that there were certain things they could not do.

**The Law is Holy**

The legalists in Paul's day, who did claim that salvation was by means of keeping the Mosaic Law, accused Paul of saying that the law itself was an evil thing. In Romans 7:12, we have seen that Paul categorically has declared that the Mosaic Law was a holy thing. Well, Paul goes from the Mosaic Law as a whole, in verse 12, to the specific rules which make up the Mosaic Law. First, he said, "The law as a whole is holy. You're wrong, he said to these people, "to say that it's an evil thing. And I'm not implying that."

**The Commandments**

Secondly, being more specific, Paul moved to the very principles that the law states, and he calls those "the commandments." He refers to this in the singular because he is thinking here of the commandment that he's been discussing in the context – the tenth commandment relative to coveting. And Paul makes it clear that God has given moral commandments which are unalterable, and which must be obeyed, or the people who violate them must be prepared to experience the punishment consequent to that.

The commandments, however, are attacked by the unbeliever as being evil rules which are unfair to mankind, and which have bad effects on the people who obey them. This was true in Paul day, and it is true in our day. People know that God has said these things, and they say, "Yes, we know that that's what the Bible says. Yes, we know that that's what the moral commandments of the Mosaic Law say. But we, in our enlightened age, and by our experience, can say, and do know, that these rules are not good rules. There are evil. Furthermore, they are unfair to mankind. Furthermore, they have bad effects on people. They interfere with personal happiness and personal fulfillment and personal development. That is exactly precisely what people say about what the Bible teaches – the standards that the Bible sets forth for human beings today.

Well, Paul declares that these attacks on God's commandments are false. In fact, he proceeds, in the latter part of Romans 7:12, to point out that just the opposite is true.

**God's Laws are Holy**

So, having said, in the first part of Romans 7:12 that the law is holy, he proceeds to the individual commandment, and he says, "That commandment, as such, is holy. The Greek word looks like this. It's the word "hagios." The word "hagios" means "separated from evil" and compatible with the standard of absolute righteousness. The commandment against coveting, which is the one he specifically refers to here, and by implication, the same is true of all the commandments. This commandment against coveting, he says, "Is not an evil thing. It is actually a holy thing. It is holy because it is an expression of the character of God. It is not an expression of some phase of the human good ideals of the old sin nature. Anything that comes from the old sin nature is in itself evil. Some things that come from the old sin nature are strong and powerful things. We call those human good. They are permeating in a variety of ways through our society. There is a weak quality to the sin nature which pours out the filth of sin. But whether it is "sins" or whether it is human good coming out of the sin nature, both of those are evil in the sight of God.

Well, the apostle Paul says, "These commandments did not originate with human beings. For then, they would have had to originate out of the context of the sin nature, and how that has affected the facets of the soul. This would have had to be invented by a mind which has been contaminated by the sin nature, and it could not be described as being a holy thing. God's commandments, because they are holy, therefore, and because they have been produced by a holy God, are not open to human evaluation in order to determine their worth, or to decide their validity on the basis of human reason. The commandments, because they are holy, are not optional for mankind, as if on some occasion they become evil, and therefore should not be in force.

**Situation Ethics**

Of course, that's exactly what certain theological lines (certain theological schools) teach today – that the commandments of God are not always holy. Sometimes if you apply the commandments of God, then it becomes an evil thing. That has been referred to as a situation type of morality. "Situation ethics" was the term applied to that – that the situation determines whether the application of a moral law of God would be a holy thing or an evil thing to do.

The commandments very clearly reflect the character of God Himself. And when we deal with the commandments of Scripture, we are like Moses in the wilderness, walking on hallowed ground. In Exodus 3:5, the situation of Moses is described in this way. He said, "Do not draw near here. Put up your shoes from off your feet, for the place where you stand is holy ground." Why was it holy ground? Because God was there. It wasn't because the dirt had something special. That particular spot became holy because of the presence of God. And when we walk in the presence of the teachings of this God, we are on holy ground. And these commandments are holy.

The condemnation of coveting simply expresses to us the attitude of God toward coveting. God cannot have fellowship with those who will not obey His personal standards against coveting. That is in conflict with His character.

So, the Bible commands us basically to be holy. For what reason? Because our God is holy. And the commandments that come from the Holy God are likewise holy. 1 Peter 1:15-16 say this: "But as He who has called you is holy, so be holy in all manner of life, because it is written 'Be holy for I am holy,'" quoting that Old Testament injunction.

We may also add Ephesians 5:26-27: "That He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word; that He might present it to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish." Someday, in experience, we who constitute the church, the royal family of God, will be holy in our experience. Now we are not always holy, but that is the objective. We are to pursue obedience to the commandments of God. Because they are holy, when we obey them, we are holy. By implication, of course, each individual commandment of God is holy.

**God's Laws are Fair**

Then the apostle Paul says, "There is a second thing that is true about the individual commandments. Not only are they holy, but Roman 7:12 also says that the commandment is just." The word "just" in the Greek looks like this: "dikaios." "Dikaios" means "without partiality" or "fair" – fair by a standard of absolute righteousness. This word is sometimes translated as "righteous." So, what this statement is telling us is that God's moral rules are not unfair to mankind, as if they were hindering human happiness. . . .

Sometimes I've heard people enjoy something. They may be eating something they particularly enjoy, and they say, "This is so good, it must be sinful." Or they're enjoying something (some experience they're having), and they say, "This is so good, and this is so pleasant, it must be sinful." What are they saying? Well, the idea is that if it's unrighteous, then it will be pleasant. But the Word of God says, "No, if it's righteous (if it's fair by God's absolute standard), then it will be pleasant.

Hugh Hefner was motivated to begin the pornographic Playboy magazine as the result of wanting to live out his fantasies. People have asked him, "Why did you start? What motivated you?" He said, "I wanted to put down together in a visual way, and to promote people living out their personal inner mental fantasies." Well, he viewed these fantasies as happiness. And the thing that he promotes and demonstrates is very clearly in contrast to the principles of the Word of God. The sexual style is a violation of the moral code of God. Therefore, the Bible says, "That is an unrighteous quality or an unfair (unjust quality). And it will not be fair to man. It will not produce personal happiness. It goes in the opposite direction.

The human viewpoint of the old sin nature sees it as eminently unfair that God rules for His creation: limit sex to one's partner in marriage. Most Americans think that's eminently unfair – that that rule concerning sexual relationships made by God is unfair. But the Bible says, "God's commandments are not unfair. God's commandments are absolutely fair. They are just; they are wise; they are reasonable; and, that includes all of them. That includes the rules about lying. It is fair to have rules against not telling the truth. That includes the rules about stealing. It is fair to have rules against stealing; against cursing; against coveting; against idolatry; against murder; and, against dishonor to your parents. All those are fair rules. All those commandments are classified as being just.

God's moral laws are also fair in the consequences of their violations. Don't forget that. They are also fair in the consequences of their obedience. If you obey the moral laws of God related to sexual matters, there will be blessing and prosperity. If you disobey them, you can expect to find yourself exposed to personal breakdowns and diseases that are frightful to contemplate. God is fair. He's fair in dealing the consequences when you break His rules as He is fair in blessing when you obey them. No one is going to ever be able to accuse God of being unfair of the punishments that He imposes in eternity for the violations of His commandments.

Romans 3:19-20 make that eminently clear: "Now we know that whatever things the Law said, it said to them who are under the Law, that every month may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. Therefore, by the deeds of the Law, there shall no flesh be justified in His sight. For by the Law is the knowledge of sin." God is so fair that He never brings judgment without first exercising grace. And that grace includes information to know what you should be doing. So, God brings the information, and God restrains judgment while He's informing, and then he brings down the hatchet. So, in eternity, no one is ever going to be able to say, "Your rules were unfair, and the way You applied them was unfair.”

**Adam and Eve**

The classic case, of course, is Adam and Eve. They knew the consequences of breaking God's Law. It was very clearly spelled out to them, but they went ahead anyhow. And sure enough, they lost their garden paradise, and sure enough, they died. They knew immediately that the consequences were there, because they died spiritually. And that glow of glory that surrounded them as clothing snapped off, and they knew that something drastic had happened in their relationship to that holy God. They found out that there is a consequence for breaking God's Law. He is fair in applying it when you break it; and, He is fair in applying it when you keep it.

**God's Laws are Good**

Then the apostle Paul says that there is one other thing about the individual commandments of God. They are not only holy (compatible with absolute righteousness – the character of God), and they are not only eminently fair to mankind, but they are also good. That's this word "agathos." This is the word for good that has a specific kind of meaning – a specific kind of good. It's a good that is beneficial in its effect. This one has to do with effect. It's good in its consequences.

There's another Greek word looks like this: "kalos." The word "kalos" means good in the sense that a thing is suited for its purpose. It has an intrinsic worth, or it has a right attitude. "Kalos" has to do with purpose. The thing is suited to its purpose. And it's important that you distinguish, when you read the English word, which meaning that the Holy Spirit is using. He is using in this place this one right here ("agathos") – that the commandments of God are good in their effect.

Let me show you how these words work. If you'll turn to Luke 8:15, we can illustrate a very important difference between these two words: "But that on the good ground are they who, in an honest and good heart, having heard the Word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience." Here is the parable of the Sower and the Seed. He's describing the effects of the various ground.

Verse 15: "But that seed on the good ground are they who, in an honest and good heart." "An honest and good heart" means "an honest and good mind." The words "honest" and "good" are these two words: "agathos;" and, "kalos." The word "honest" is "kalos." It says that: "The seed of the Word of God falls on a good ground" is the type of person who has first an honest mind. That means a mind which is suited to its purpose – a right mental attitude toward the Word of God. That's what he means. First of all, who responds to salvation? The person who has a right mental attitude toward the Word of God (positive volition). What Christian moves forward in spiritual development through the Word of God? The one who has a right mental attitude. He has a "kalos" purpose. He is right in his purpose (for his purpose). It is fitting. He has a mind which is geared to the purpose for which it is being used.

The second word "good" is the word "agathos." And that is that the mind is also one which produces beneficial effects upon others in the divine good fruit which it bears from the Word of God. So, the people who respond to the Word of God are those who first have a "kalos" mind; that is, one that is open to the truth. It is suited to the purpose. Secondly, they have a good mind – one that is beneficial in the effects that are produced as the result of the Word of God that is received.

Let's look at a couple of other quick places. In the book of 1 Thessalonians, these two are in close proximity. 1 Thessalonians 5:15 says, "See that none render evil for evil unto any man, but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves and to all men." That word "good," in 1 Thessalonians 5:15 is this word "agathos" – the good which is beneficial to people because it is divine good production: "See that you don't turn evil to anybody for the evil they do to you, but always seek to provide divine good production, among yourselves as believers, and to the population of humanity in general." 1 Thessalonians 5:15 uses "agathos."

Now drop down to 1 Thessalonians 5:21. It says, "Prove all things, and hold fast to that which is good." That uses the second one – the word "kalos." This is the good which has intrinsic value. Why does it have intrinsic value? Because it is divine viewpoint truth, and not human good truth.

So, Paul says in 1 Thessalonians 5:21, "Check out what people want you to do. Check out what people are promoting. Check out what people are seeking to have you invest your life and your treasure in. And hold fast that which is good in its intrinsic value, because it has the value of divine viewpoint. Avoid that which is a human viewpoint. So, these words give us a great bit of illumination.

Now back in Romans 7:12, God's moral commandments are said to be good in the sense of "agathos." They are good in the sense that they benefit mankind. These are commandments which produce divine good blessings for the obedient one. It benefits him. The moral laws of God, therefore, are not designed to lead people into physical disease. The moral laws of God are beneficial to you if you obey them. They protect you from physical disease. They lead you away from death. They lead you away from personal grief. They lead you away from poverty. That's why the moral commandments of God are "agathos." They are beneficial in their effects. They are not a source of unhappiness. They are a source of great joy; a source of satisfaction; and, a source of great personal fulfillment. Hugh Hefner is wrong concerning the commandments of God, and their infringement upon personal happiness. This is good because they preserve man's humanity, which was made in the image of God, and they protect man from descending to an animal-like degradation because of violating the moral code.

So, the moral rules of God are invaluable clues to us as to what is best for us on earth: as individuals; as families; and, as nations. That is our problem today. When we as individuals do not understand that keeping the moral code of God has benefits beyond our fondest dreams to us; that it has benefits to our families to maintain (that code); and, that it has benefits to our nation, then we pay enormous consequences. And we refer to a little of that relative to the AIDS problem which faces the country today, because of the simple, basic idea that the moral code of God is not beneficial. So, we are tolerating things which that code condemns.

Psalm 119 is a tremendous song. It ties it all up in this way in Psalm 119:97-104. The commandments of God are holy; they are fair; and, they are beneficial. Here's what they will do for you. The psalmist says, "Oh, how I love Your Law (the commandments of God). It is my meditation all the day. (I operate in my mental frame of reference on those commandments.) You, through Your commandments, have made me wiser than my enemies." Now that's great information to have. Whatever realm of life you're dealing in, you want to be smarter than your opposition. Steep your thinking in the commandments of the Word of God and act upon them.

"You have made me wiser than my enemies, for they are ever with me. I have more understanding than my teachers." When you are a Christian young person, and you are in a secular school where that teacher is operating from that humanistic, secular frame of reference, it doesn't take very long for you to discover that you are a lot smarter than that teacher. It is very difficult for you to sit in a classroom and know how to conduct yourself in a respectful way toward somebody who is putting out moral garbage and moral insanity to you.

"I have more understanding than my teachers, for Your testimonies are my meditations. I understand more than the ancients because I keep Your precepts." Now that is pretty bold. You know what the ancients are. That's Aristotle. That's Socrates. That's all the great philosophers. That's all the ancient learning. "I have more understanding than the ancients because I keep Your precepts" (the commandments of God). That's exactly true. You are smarter than the greatest intellects that have ever lived, who did not have access to a definitive statement of God's thinking in these specific respects.

Psalm 119:101, "I have restrained my feet from every evil, that I might keep Your Word. I have not departed from Your ordinances, for You have taught me. How sweet are Your Words unto my taste. Yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth. Through Your precepts I get understanding. Therefore, I hate every false way." That's why you're smarter than the average person. Because it is the principles of the Word of God (His precepts) that give you smarts, and that give you discernment. Therefore, you hate the way which is false, and you're able to spot the way which is false. "How sweet are Your Words unto my taste."

A few years ago, there was a famous comedian on television. And every time he would come out on the stage, people would burst into a tremendous applause, and he would stand there in the spotlight: glowing; absorbing; and, enjoying that applause. And when it died down, he would say. "How sweet it is." But the applause has already stopped. He doesn't get that anymore. One of these days soon, he himself is going to check out. And the only sweet thing that he's going to have is whatever Word of God he has that he's been positive to, beginning with salvation. The Bible tells you what really is sweet in life. It is the Word of God – not the words of men, or the exultation and the applause of men.

This description of the moral commandments of God that the apostle Paul sets forth before us in Romans 7:12 is setting the groundwork for showing how a law from God, which is good in itself, can have evil consequences for a person. He has to deal with that problem. How can knowing what is right turn me into a beast that refuses to do what is right, and does exactly what is wrong? How can knowing what is right turn me into a degenerate? And he's going to deal with that problem that exists with us to give us God's experiential solution. That's what we're headed for – God's experiential solution for the old sin nature. We've already seen how God has dealt with the sin nature judicially, as God. Now we're going to see how he deals with it in our experience. Of course, then we get into the glories of Romans 8 and the spiritual life. But this is laying the groundwork.

The evil consequences which are imposed by the revealed Word of God are due to man's treating the Word of God as being evil, and as being unfair, and as being bad for people. Whatever is wrong in the world today is because of this people – treating the Word of God as being evil; as being unfair; and, as being bad – not being beneficial.

The explicit commandments of Scripture are actually seen as barriers to human happiness and personal fulfillment. The explicit commandments of Scripture – those commandments that you can just read even in the English language, and you know what it's saying, and you cannot debate it. Those are the things that are being resisted mostly today. The Bible's commandments, therefore, must be viewed by those who want to resist them, and those who want to dispense with them – they have to be viewed as not meaning what they say, or as commandments which must be readjusted to modern, more enlightened times. That's how the average person treats the Bible – a book that you can't take for what it says; you can't understand it for its face meaning; or, you have to readjust it to our modern times.

Today, therefore, there are whole religious denominations which have succumbed to the habit of processing the commandments of God through the grid of the fallen human reason of man, and they have become religious institutions of evil. They are so evil that they are churches (great respected denominations), but they are leading people away from eternal life, and they are legitimatizing the violations of God's biblical regulations. They are belittling the commandments of God. They actually engage their memberships in vast human good production projects. And they do this, of course, from that strong side of the old sin nature, and they call it the work of God. They conform to the human viewpoint ideals of the satanic movements of our day. And they consider that the enlightened role of the Christian church today. The distinction between Satan's world system and these denominations, and the distinction between evil and biblical revelation of God's holy laws is totally lost.

Let me give you an illustration and share an opinion. I don't like to give illustrations or share opinions, but I think this one might be informative. It's the case of the young organist. Recently, I had a wedding ceremony to perform. It was in a lovely chapel of a major denomination. This denomination once held the Bible as the Word of God. Today it says that the Bible, here and there, *contains* the Word of God. It once held the Bible as the Word of God. And they were zealous in evangelism for the lost, and zealous for godly living among believers. The impact of that denomination in earlier generations in our country was enormous for divine good.

The wedding chapel was in charge of a young man who serves as the organist. During the rehearsal, the practice for the wedding, the organist was very cordial. He was very helpful in working out the details of the wedding in that particular location. After the ceremony was over, I thanked the audience for his helpfulness, and for his musical services. His response to me was a wordless look of antagonism, averting his eyes, and communicating the message: "Drop dead."

Now, I had, in that moment, been clearly cooled and creamed. And while I was crushed and wounded, I could not help but wonder why the sudden change of attitude in someone who had been so cordial and so helpful. I have an opinion that I think is the answer – an opinion which isn't out of the blue. But because of past wedding experiences that have drawn forth similar responses, the rebuff was a clue to me that something had been heard during that ceremony that caused the change of attitude in that young man.

That ceremony consisted of a basic series of biblical responsibilities for a husband and a wife, which were pointed out one by one. These responsibilities were established by reading the various Scriptures in which they were found. As biblical responsibilities for those entering marriage, they were therefore not presented as merely optional for a husband and wife, but as something which was binding upon those who wanted to enter the institution of marriage.

**Biblical Requirements for Husbands**

1. **Rejoice in the Wife**

These biblical requirements included, for example, these: Speaking to the husband, he was told that he is to rejoice in his own wife; that is, finding new facets of character and personality to captivate his heart. The reason that he was told that is because God's book of wisdom, in Proverbs 5:18 says that: "Let your fountain be blessed, and rejoice with the wife of your youth.

1. **Love the Wife with "Agape" (Mental Attitude) Love**

Secondly, the husband was told that he is to love his wife with an impersonal mental attitude ("agape") love that is free, therefore, from all mental bitterness. That is the clear declaration of Ephesians 5:25: "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself for it.

1. **Honor the Wife as the Weaker Vessel**

Third, he was told to give honor to his wife as the one who is the weaker vessel in their union. So, there would be no personal conflicts of will to mar their access to God in prayer. That is precisely what 1 Peter 3:7 says, "In like manner, you husbands dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honor unto the wife as they enter the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers be not hindered."

You would be surprised how often I've been asked to remove that term "weaker vessel." It is offensive in our day. And I always have to respond: "If you can clear it with the front office to remove it from the Bible, I'll skip it in the ceremony."

1. **Render Sexual Love to the Wife**

Then the husband was told to render sexual love to his wife as a physical expression of affection. That's precisely what 1 Corinthians 7:3-4 direct to a husband: "Let the husband render unto the wife her due; and, likewise, also the wife unto the husband. The wife has not power of her own body, but the husband; and, likewise also the husband has not power of his own body, but the wife.

1. **Be the Head of the Wife (the Final Authority)**

Then he was told to be the head of the wife so that there is a final authority leading in the marriage union. This is what Ephesians 5:23 tells him to do: "For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church. And He is the Savior of the body."

1. **Be the Spiritual Teacher of the Wife**

Then he was told to be the spiritual teacher of his wife as the leader in the home so that her soul has the means to mature to the super grace level. 1 Corinthians 14 very explicitly commands this as a duty and responsibility of a husband in the institution of marriage. 1 Corinthians 14:34-35: "Let your women keep silence in the churches, for it is not permitted unto them to speak. But they are commanded to be under obedience as also the Law says. And if they will learn anything, let them ask their husbands at home, for it is a shame for women to speak in the church.

1. **Provide for the Material Needs of the Wife**

Finally, the husband was told that he is expected to provide for the material needs of his wife by working at a job, and earning the support and the care that they. This is precisely the commandment of 1 Timothy 5:8: "But if any provide not for his own, and especially for those of his own house, he has denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel."

**Biblical Requirements for Wives**

1. **Be in Submission to her own Husband**

On the other hand, there were certain biblical requirements pointed out for the wife. First of all, she was told to be in submission to her own husband, who is God's authorized head in the union of marriage and in the home. This is stated for us in Ephesians 5:22-23: "Wives submit yourselves unto your own husbands as unto the Lord, for the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church. And He is the Savior of the body." In other words, they are to form a complete union. They are to have to have a head and a body. That are not to have a marriage with two heads floating around with no body. That's a monstrosity. It'll earned you a lot of money at a circus.

1. **Be Faithful to her own Husband**

Secondly, the potential wife (the bride) was told that she is to be faithful to her own husband as the focus of her loyalty. 1 Timothy 3:11 says, "Even so, must the wives be great, not slanders, sober-minded, faithful in all things.

1. **Love her Husband and her Children**

Thirdly, she was told to love her husband and her children with a personal, emotional, "philos" love which expresses itself in the home in self-control; in purity; in being a homemaker; in kindness; and, in subjection to the authority of her husband, so that God's Word is not exposed to being maligned. Titus 2:4-5 precisely declare this: "That they may teach the young women to be sober-minded; to love their husbands; to love their children (and this is the word for emotional, personal affection); to be discreet, chaste keepers at home; good; and, obedient to their own husbands that the Word of God be not blasphemed.

1. **Render Sexual Love to her own Husband**

The bride was also told that she is to render sexual love to her own husband as an expression of physical affection. And that is contained in the same passage we already read, in 1 Corinthians 7:3-4.

You understand that I'm giving more details than in the marriage ceremony. Some of you are getting uncomfortable about the ceremony, but that is behind these cryptic little statements that we read to them and say, "This is what you're agreeing to." These statements have enormous content. I'm not ready to revise the ceremony and to expand it. However, you can have the old ceremony. That'll be the $2.50. But the $4.95 will be much more worthwhile. It'll be expanded, and it will be much clearer.

1. **Respect your Husband**

However, in any case, the next thing we tell a potential wife is to reverence (or the word means to respect) your husband as the one who bears the burden of caring for the spiritual and material needs of the home. Ephesians 5:33 explicitly says that, "Nevertheless, let every one of you in particular so love his wife, even as himself, and the wife – see that she respects her husband.

1. **A Gentle and Quiet Spirit of Subjection to her Husband**

Then she was to pursue a gentle and a quiet spirit, reflecting thereby a spirit of subjection to her husband, forming the basis of a feminine beauty which the Bible says that God greatly esteems. God is greatly attracted to the type of feminine beauty which is not constructed on externals, but on the person of the internal soul of the heart. 1 Peter 3:4-5 says, "But let it be the hidden person of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is, in the sight of God, of great price. For after this manner, in the old time, the holy women also who trusted in God adorn themselves, being in subjection under their own husbands.

1. **Be a Good Mother and Homemaker**

Finally, the bride was told, be a good mother and a homemaker for your husband, so that Satan cannot have occasion to slander you as a child of God. 1 Timothy 5:14 prescribes this condition: "I will therefore that the younger women marry; their children; rule the house; and, give no occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully."

Now, what I suspect, after hearing all that, and from the flak that I have received from quoting those Scriptures in previous marriage ceremonies – almost every ceremony (every wedding) I do get flak from people. Many times they'll come through and say, "Beautiful ceremony, but I don't agree with all that you said about the role of women." And I say, "Well, I can be sympathetic with you." I usually say something like this: "Because if it were up to me, I wouldn't go that way either. But that was God's opinion. And I would suggest you refer it back to Him, and see if you can advise him." They just don't seem to connect that the Bible is speaking here, and that we are dealing with commandments which are holy, and which are just, and which are beneficial in their affects.

Well, I suspect that in the liberal denomination that the young organist was a part of, which had long-since abandoned concepts that deal with Christian marriage in these kinds of specific terms, was offended by what he heard. From his frame of reference, and his denominational background, the Bible is viewed as a humanly produced book – one which contains errors, and one which expresses the concept of religious evolution of their writers up to the point of time. Therefore, those writers must be seen as having evolved only to a certain point. But they haven't come as far as we have today. This group views the Bible, therefore, as not binding in its expressions if they conflict with modern, scientific, socially enlightened 20th century America. The Bible, therefore, is not the Words of God the Holy Spirit, to be understood as the meaning of those words, but they are to be applied in a different way. They're not to be understood in their normal meaning, and applied accordingly.

This denomination teaches, in many of its areas, a social gospel; that is, that people gain eternal life through humanitarian good that they produce – providing for the needs of mankind, rather than by the vicarious atonement by the God-Man Jesus Christ. It's a denomination which is in the forefront of human viewpoint causes of our day. It sponsors the ERA. It is in favor of working mothers, and homemaking fathers, and day-care centers to make all that possible. It promotes children's rights against parents. It is anti-corporal punishment of children as child abuse. It is for a nuclear freeze. It promotes the concepts of socialism. It is in favor of welfarism. It is part of the World Council of Churches, and the National Council of Churches. It gives the religions of the world equal value with God. It is in favor of abortion on demand, and on and on.

Now, it is not surprising, therefore, that it comes as a shock to listen to a marriage ceremony that places the male and female role in such explicit, clear-cut relief distinction from one another as the Word of God does. And it is very difficult to counter something like that when you've had the bad taste of quoting the Scriptures when you say those things. It wouldn't be so bad if you just say those things. But when you quote the Bible verses to substantiate it, now that is really bad taste. That is because it makes it very difficult to argue. It makes it very difficult to dispense with it. It makes it really hard because you have to undercut the Bible. You have to say, "It can't mean that. It doesn't mean that. It may have meant that, but it's not up to date." So, the Word of God does not have to be submitted to.

That's just a little example of how people think, and the loathing response (and that's the only word I can use) – the loathing response that is evident against treating the Word of God as the authority that we must submit ourselves to. The sin nature of man rises up in angry indignation, simply because it does not understand that the commandments of God are holy. They are compatible with God's character. They are right. They are fair to mankind. They do not call upon things that are unfair, and that are an undermining of our personal fulfillment. And they are beneficial. These commandments are the road to maximum happiness. Those were three tremendous words of Paul used concerning the revelation of the Word of God. When we learn that, we're on our way to being super grace Christians, and super happy people, and super, divine-good producers. And that's going to make a big difference in the kind of eternity that you will enjoy as a believer.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1977

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