

SECRET OF A HAPPY HOME

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Scripture Reading: Eph. 5: 22,28; 6:17 1 Pet. 3: 1-7

In these verses from Ephesians and 1 Peter, Apostles Paul and Peter reveal the great secret of a very happy home for those who are joined by God. If God's Word is followed as it is, then all those who are joined by Him can enjoy God's favor in fullness. Many people want to marry only for the sake of happiness and honor. They have no real interest in the Word of God. They are more concerned about their own ideas than God's Word. In many cases marriages are a failure, because they depend upon their cleverness, wisdom, family or property. Howsoever clever one may be, one can be blessed only by obeying the Word of God. God knows the end from the beginning. "Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure" (Isa.46: 10). That is why we are given God's Word for instruction, inspiration and guidance. Knowing beforehand all the problems, which we have to face upon the earth, God has given His Word to us. He knows us from the very beginning of our lives. He knows us before we were conceived. "Before I formed thee in the belly, I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations" (Jer.1: 5). He knows all about us. He knows our past and He knows our future. He knows our name and He knows exactly what we are. Our safety is in being governed by Him by His Spirit and by His Word. We will never know what will happen tomorrow. But He knows exactly what will happen tomorrow. That is why we are given the Word of God to guide us day by day and help us in every situation.

Marriages are arranged by God from the beginning of the creation. That is why to God marriages are very sacred. "And the LORD God said, it is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him"(Gen.2: 18). God gave to the first man dominion, power and authority over the whole creation and also gave him a very healthy body. At that time, there was no sin, sickness or curse. Though God had given health, wisdom, strength and all things, yet there was something lacking in Adam's life. His joy was not full. So God wanted to give him help meet for companionship, friendship and fellowship. God had planned that whatsoever He had given to Adam he might enjoy it through his companion and through his life-partner. That is why we find; to God marriage is a very sacred relationship. Those who want a happy married life must be governed by the Word of God, and not by their own wisdom or cleverness or talents or qualification. We are given this wonderful Book to solve all our problems, and meet all our needs. The Holy Spirit helps us to understand the Word of God. We need heavenly wisdom to understand heavenly things, not worldly wisdom. Before we can understand the Word of God we must have the Spirit of God. See 1Cor.2: 14. "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned". That means, by our natural wisdom we cannot understand or enjoy the Word of God. Though we may be very highly qualified in worldly knowledge, yet we can be a failure.

I met a man some years ago who had traveled round the world seven times. He wrote about 32 books. He built a nice house with every kind of high-class furniture. Going by his testimony, his marriage was a failure. Anyone could see from

his face that he and his wife were not happy. With all the knowledge of 32 books he never knew how to have a happy home. The same thing happens with others also. With all their knowledge and fame, their home is an unhappy one. They may be clever in earning money and multiplying it, but we find that their homes are unhappy. There is no oneness between husband and wife and no real happiness between them. We see this in many parts of the world.

We see from God's Word that He is a living God and wants us to have full joy and happiness. That is the purpose of God and that is why the Lord Jesus came into this world. See John 16:24 and 15:7. "Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full". "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you". God's desire is to make our joy full. We know clearly from God's Word that our loving and living God wants us to have full joy, abundant joy and great joy. That is the very same message, which was brought to the earth at the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ. "And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people"(Luke 2:10). That goes to show that God wants us all, whoso ever we are to have great joy all the time. "Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice". Even in poverty and in our earthly trials we can have joy. To make Adam's joy full, the Lord gave him a wife who was his companion, friend, and partner.

We find from the verses quoted above, the secret of a very happy married life. First of all, we read in Eph, 5:17, "Be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is".

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The first secret of a happy married life is given in Eph. 5:17. "...Be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is". That is a simple Scripture verse, which can be remembered or learned by experience. If you want success in your home, job, business, or any other activity, that verse should be remembered; understand what God's will is. If anyone questions you, "Do you know how to find God's will?" what will you say? Can you prove that you have found God's will? Just saying, "Let Thy will be done" is not sufficient. God's Word says, you have to understand what God's will is. That is why we should have the gift of the Holy Spirit to help us to find God's will; otherwise, we will be wasting our money and energy on things of naught.

In 1932 many times I wasted my time, energy and money on shameful things. But thank God, one day He taught me that I am not my own and He taught me also to find His perfect will in every matter. We are told in Rom. 8:14, how we can find God's will. "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God". We must be indwelt by the Holy Spirit. To be indwelt by the Holy Spirit we must be pure and holy. God is holy. He says, "Be ye holy; for I am holy"(1 Pet.1: 16). That is why we have to have our sins forgiven before we can receive into us the Holy Spirit. To those who come to us and ask us to help them in arranging their marriages, our first question is, "Are your sins forgiven"? We are not concerned about their family, wealth, property or education. We are only concerned about their experience of new birth and whether they have received the gift of eternal life. Then we ask them, "Do you know how to find God's will? Did you pray to find God's will before consenting to this marriage?" That is the first foundational condition to be

fulfilled for a happy home. We thank God, He is willing to forgive any sinner and give him the gift of eternal life.

The second condition for a happy home is given in Eph.5: 18, "...be filled with the Spirit". For a happy home, you should be willing to be led by the Spirit not only for the marriage but also for every step of your life. In all things you should be led by the Spirit. "The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD: and he delighteth in his way"(Psa.37: 23). Every step you take before going anywhere, taking up any business or making any plan for building a house, you should find God's will, and do all things in accordance with God's will. That is the result of being filled with the Spirit. As believers we have the privilege of going to the Lord Jesus to find everything from Him. He is the living God Who rose again and we as believers in Him have the right to go to Him, to be led by Him every day for every matter. We have the great joy of going to Him because He is our Creator.

Thirdly, "Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord"(Eph.5: 19). The third condition for a happy home is to express your thanksgiving by songs. But some people are filled with murmurings and complaints. If you are really happy, there will be a song in your heart throughout the day; whether you are walking, sitting, or working, your heart will be filled with songs of praise and songs of thanksgiving. According to Psa.40: 3 we have a new song of thanks giving which enables us to thank God for all that we receive from Him. Some people thank God for lunch but not for breakfast or tea. Some thank Him only for good things but not for all things. If you know God by experience, you will praise Him for everything, for His love, mercy, kindness, favor, gifts and guidance. Thank Him for the way He sought you and saved you. Thank Him for every thing. Usually we say "Thank you" to people for every thing. In one hour we say "Thank you" forty five times. For everything we say, "Thank you, thank you". Some parents before giving anything to their children tell them to say, "Thank you" and if they do not say "Thank you", they are beaten. Such a "Thank you" has no value. It is not from the heart. Those who have received God's grace will have a song of praise in their hearts all the time. We can thank God even for every trial and temptation. It is only the song of praise and thanksgiving, which will give you heavenly joy. "Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ"(Eph.5: 20). Note the words, "always for all things". Begin the day with thanksgiving. Before you have your tea or coffee or anything else, spend some time in thanksgiving, and end your day with thanksgiving. Remember what you have received from God's loving hands in so many ways and thank Him from the very depth of your heart.

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The fourth Condition for a happy home is given in Eph.5: 21. "Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God". Maintain divine order in your home. Those who should be respected must be respected. Those who should be honored must be honored. Elders must be honored. That is God's order. If you do not respect elders, you will not enjoy divine favor. Wife should be in subjection to her husband. "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord" (Eph.5: 22). It is a simple thing but many wives find it hard to obey their husbands. We cannot change God's order. Your husband may be P.U.C. failed or B.A. failed, yet he is your husband. You must obey him, whether he is rich or poor, educated or illiterate, you must obey him in the Lord. You cannot go against the Word of God. But if the

husband asks you to go with him to cinema you should not obey him. Obedience is only in the Lord. This is a simple lesson to learn. We cannot twist the Word of God. Some wives change God's order and His Word. That is why, they are unhappy in their married lives. "Therefore as the Church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing"(Eph.5: 24). Wives, be in subjection. Divine order must be maintained. In some homes wives earn As.700/- while the husband earns only As.120/-. So the wife may say, "You have to obey me, because you are earning only As.120/-. You wash the baby's napkins and I will go to the office". That is not divine order. Husband must be given the right place. He is responsible for the family. He must bear the family burden as a man. In these days many young men marry workingwomen for the sake of money. They want to be in the house to wash vessels and napkins. That is not divine order; it is man's order. They change God's order. Husband must bear the burden of the family. Then, there will be subjection and divine order.

The fifth condition is, "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it" (Eph.5: 25). This is a very important principle for a happy home. It is repeated four times in these few verses (Eph.5: 25,28,33). God knows beforehand that many husbands are selfish. They want good food, every comfort, every convenience and especially they want obedience from the wife but no love. They say, "You must obey, you must obey". That is all they want. They are hard-hearted husbands. They only demand certain things. Again and again Scripture says, "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ loved the church". How did He love us? Not because we deserved it. We had no virtue in us. We were totally ruined by sin and defilement, yet He loved us. By grace we are saved. As we came to Him, He loved us. When we humbled ourselves, He forgave all our sins and goes on loving us. His love will never change as it says in Jer.31: 3. "The LORD hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee". Many husbands regard lust as love. They call it love. Do not be deceived. Do not let your lustful desires deceive you. God wants pure love coming from heaven. It does not depend upon physical beauty or qualification or position or property. It is the gift of God. The Lord Jesus Christ loved me and gave Himself for me. I can feel His presence. When I go to Him He receives me. Such a love is necessary. But I am sad to say; very few husbands have such a love. They regard lust as love. They live for lustful pleasures. That is why they do not know the meaning of companionship and friendship. "So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies"(Eph.5: 28). We take much care of our bodies, especially when we are sick or have some pain in the body. Also we spend much time and take much care to keep the body clean and healthy. Even so, husband must be equally concerned about his wife. Then there will be oneness.

The sixth condition is, "For we are members of his body, of his flesh and of his bones" (Eph.5: 30). Do all things with one mind. True spiritual oneness must be maintained by the husband and wife to enjoy divine favor in married life. There is no need to argue about anything. By praying together, you can come to one mind for all family problems. No need to waste your time in arguments for hours together. Go upon your knees and find God's will for all your family matters and problems. "That he might present it to himself a glorious church"(v.26). The Lord Jesus Christ sought us and saved us, to make us glorious like Himself. We were ruined by sin with no virtue in us. But by coming to Him and receiving Him, we receive His life for eternity. One day we shall be like Him, having glorious, immortal and heavenly bodies. The Lord Jesus Christ Himself transfers all His virtues into us. His glory and

beauty will be given to us, in the same way; in married life you can transfer all your virtues to your life -partner. By such a fellowship you can come to one mind.

The seventh condition for a happy home is given in Eph.5: 31. "For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh". This is a very, very important principle.

When you are married, live separately from your parents, whosoever you are, otherwise there will be quarrels between daughter-in-Law and mother-in-law. Before marriage, the mother-in-law said, "That girl is the best girl in the whole world". But after marriage it is different. Now the mother-in-law says, "She is the worst girl". They quarrel with each other. The mother-in-law waits till her son comes home. When he comes home, she takes him aside, and tells him that his wife said this or that and so many things. The same thing happens the next day. Then the husband takes action against his wife. Live separately whosoever you are, if you want a happy home. Even though you have to live in a small room, it will avoid quarrels between the mother-in-law and the daughter-in-Law. Otherwise, there is bound to be quarrels. The mother-in-law is bound to be jealous. If her son brings a large mango to his wife and a small mango to her, she will feel jealous. Divine law cannot be changed. Live separately. You will be happy. Then you will be saved from all unhappiness.

Many wives depend upon gold, silver and expensive garments to look beautiful. All these things cannot give true beauty. It cannot bring true satisfaction. But learning to serve others with all humility and love, gives more beauty. "But let it be the hidden man 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"(1 Pet.3: 4). Do not use worldly means to look more beautiful, in the same way, according to 1 Pet.3: 6, all the burdens must be borne by the husband. That is how they can show love and respect to each other and thus become true joint- heirs of the grace of life. Then they can share together all their spiritual experiences. That makes a happy home. May the Lord make it so to all those who are joined by Him.