

HOW TO MAKE A SUCCESS



OF MARRIAGE



by

Rev. Vernon Turner

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OF MARRIAGE



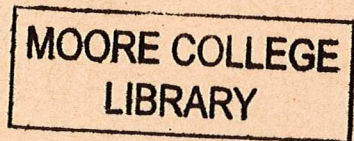
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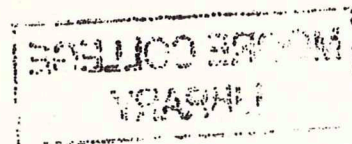
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THE PURPOSE OF MARRIAGE

Marriage is not just a private thing between two people who happen to fall in love; it is a DIVINE INSTITUTION, nothing less.

"So God created man in His own image; in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them. And God blessed them." Gen. 1: 27, 28.

This Divine Institution, Marriage, has three objects and three standards.

THE FIRST OBJECT IS PROCREATION.

"And God said unto them, Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth."

We tend to think of parenthood as a by-product of marriage. But it was not meant to be. Marriage is a by-product of parenthood! Marriage is necessary because the human child could not reach his full development without the co-operation and care of two parents.

Marriage is rooted in the family, and not the family in marriage.

It is right and natural that the love of husband and wife for each other should overflow into a shared love for a child of their own flesh and blood. The first object of marriage is procreation. And marriage is incomplete without it.

THE SECOND OBJECT IS SEXUAL FULFILLMENT.

Unfortunately, the Church has been sadly negative about sex. I believe we all take a more wholesome and sensible view of this wonderful human function than our forebears.

There is no doubt about the fact that sex is a high explosive. Its mis-use can cause terrible trouble and bring disaster upon many lives. Many of the tragedies which fill our newspapers every day stem from the mis-use of the sexual instincts which God has implanted in us all.

We must not think of marriage as a means of secretly disposing of this thing which some call "a regrettable overplus of guilty desire". Marriage was NOT made for that. Sex is something God has given us to

make sure that we become parents of a future race. And it is a part of our nature which is in itself pure and wholesome, something which can be a source of deep fulfillment and rich fruitfulness. It can be used as an instrument of the most tender spiritual love between husband and wife, to refresh and renew and enrich their whole relationship.

Let us thank God for Sex. And let us use it properly within Marriage to strengthen and sanctify marriage.

THE THIRD OBJECT IS COMRADESHIP.

Dean Swift wrote to a bride: "A wise man ... wants a reasonable companion and a true friend through every stage of his life. It must therefore be your business to qualify yourself for those offices. The grand affair of your life will be to gain and preserve the friendship and esteem of your husband."

We all need friends. Loneliness is one of the most dreaded things in life. The third great purpose in marriage is "the lifelong companionship, comfort and help which husband and wife ought to have of each other".

Men and women are not alike. God made them different, that they might be complementary to each other. The very nature of their differences is that they require each other to be truly happy.

The best friends we can have in this world are Husbands and Wives!

THE FIRST STANDARD IS MONOGAMY.

There are laws which must be fulfilled if marriage is to serve its God-appointed ends. Many make shipwreck of their marriages because they don't observe the laws.

The first foundation is ONE MAN, ONE WOMAN. When you hear a man like Edward Carpenter saying this about marriage, you can think of no other possible standard. He says: "That there should exist one other person in the world towards whom all openness of exchange should establish itself, from whom there should be no concealment; whose body should be as dear to one, in every part, as one's own; with whom there should be no sense of Mine or Thine in property or possession; into whose mind one's thoughts should flow naturally; and between whom and oneself there should be a spontaneous rebound of sympathy in all the joys and sorrows and experiences of life. 'Such is perhaps one of the dearest wishes of the soul'".

The Christian concept is that in God's eyes both man and woman are

equally loved and honoured. And so they must be in each other's eyes.

THE SECOND STANDARD IS FIDELITY.

This rises naturally out of the standard of Monogamy. The best, the most stable, the most satisfying kind of marriage is that in which the couple think of their intimate life together as a secluded walled garden where no one else ever comes -- a little private kingdom apart from the rush and roar of the world's life, in which they can enjoy the full and free expression of their mutual love, and be refreshed and renewed.

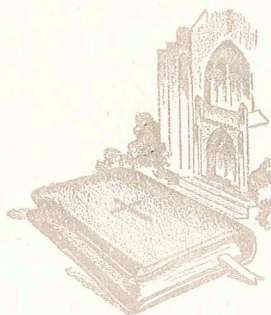
Christian husbands and wives promise to be loyal to each other, in every area of their relationship. If we look after the little things, the big issues look after themselves.

THE THIRD STANDARD IS INDISSOLUBILITY.

Jesus said: "Whom God hath joined together, let not man put asunder" (Mark 10: 9).

Death alone terminates a life-long union in marriage. That is plain. Yet some young people today say, "Let's get married and give it a try; we can always get a divorce!" No sincere Christian can ever enter marriage in this spirit of "hit or miss", "trial and error".

A marriage that is of God, based on loyalty to Him and loyalty to one another can never end in divorce. **DIVORCE IS OUT OF THE QUESTION FOR THE CHRISTIAN**, unless in most unusual circumstances. If we must accept divorce, let us do so with deep regret, and only after all else has failed.



THE FELLOWSHIP OF MARRIAGE

Friends say: "Those two were made for each other". This is not so. They were not necessarily made for each other. But they were **MEANT** for each other. This is quite different.

Being meant for each other means that their fellowship rests on a firm foundation of faith in each other. Problems are solved in the realisation that their lives are inter-twined; they must stay together through it all, because they were meant for each other.

Dr. Henry Wilson, Bishop of Chelmsford, described marriage as "A Sanctified Friendship".

It has its foundation in a shared life. The fellowship of married couples is not all passion and ecstasy; it is mostly made up of the daily round and the common task. The only way to make the most of this is to share everything together. Joys are doubled and sorrows halved when they can be shared with such a close companion as a husband or a wife.

How wonderful in this troubled world to be loved, known and understood by at least one person who is nearer to us than any other, the one with whom we share our life! "

Marriage is a Partnership of Equals.

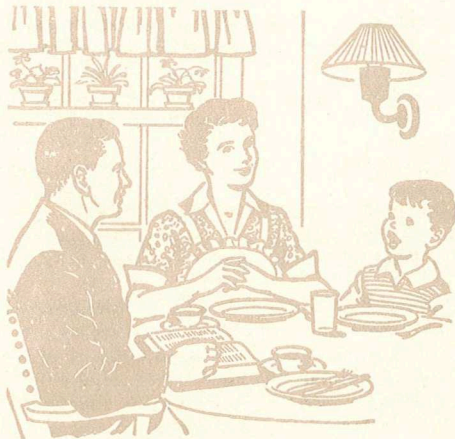
Dr. Peter Marshall, late Chaplain of the United States Senate, said: "Marriage is not a federation of two sovereign states. It is a union -- domestic, social, spiritual, physical. It is a fusion of two hearts, the union of two lives, the coming together of two tributaries, which, after being joined in marriage, will flow in the same channel, in the same direction carrying the same burdens of responsibility and obligation".

A true fellowship in marriage is only possible where husband and wife respect each other as individuals and treat each other as equals.

St. Paul says: "There is neither male nor female; for ye are all one in Christ Jesus." (Gal. 3).

A relationship between a tyrant and a slave is less complicated than a partnership of equals. The price which has to be paid for a truly Christian and democratic marriage is that each of the two partners must be ready at all times to take into consideration the opinions and wishes of the other.

And, whilst recognising the equality, we must also respect each other's individuality. The closeness and intimacy in marriage must not give way to unreasonable demands and the invasion of the other person's privacy. It must be the partnership of equals.



THE WIDER IMPLICATIONS OF MARRIAGE

One of the major problems in modern life concerns THE IN-LAWS. The matter is the subject of a standing joke; we all laugh at it. But perhaps we laugh because we are trying to hide our defeat. We know we cannot handle this new situation properly.

The marriage of a son or daughter means the surrender of a loved one. Lifelong ties have to be broken. The beloved child has to be passed over into the care of another, and to a large extent the door is closed in the faces of the parents who for more than twenty years have loved and guarded their child. Hence the strains and stresses between married couples and their in-laws.

Possessive parents, disapproving parents, build up inner frustrations which can be released in many unpleasant ways upon the heads of the young couple.

Let's face it: For young couples to spend their early married life with in-laws is tempting providence! Almost any other arrangement is to be preferred.

Love and understanding on both sides is absolutely necessary. Complete and absolute frankness. Forgiveness. In the spirit of Christian love, doing many little things in unexpected ways, without intrusion, can all help.

Marriages that succeed are marriages blessed with **LOYALTY TO THEIR CHURCH.**

It is natural for young married people to want to join in the worship and work of their own Church. The continuing life of the Christian Church is made possible only because it is a fellowship of Christian families.

We belong to the Christian Church because we believe it has the only Gospel which will bless us and our marriage. We want the Church as a home for our children, and we sincerely desire to take a full part in its life that our own lives may be filled with blessings.

Regular attendance at Church is the ideal way to assure a successful marriage. Such a decision makes it clear to your friends how you feel; it makes a standard for your children.

When married couples cannot worship together, they deny themselves one of life's most satisfying experiences, and they present their children with a dilemma. It is worth a great deal to belong to and attend the same Church!

And Joshua said: "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord. And the people answered and said, God forbid that we should forsake the Lord, for it is He that brought us and our fathers up out of the land of Egypt, and preserved us in all the way wherein we went" (Joshua 24: 15-17).

One of the most important of the wider implications of marriage is THE CHRISTIAN HOME.

It is only in terms of the Christian virtues that family living can be successful at all. A home which calls itself Christian will acknowledge its allegiance to Christ,

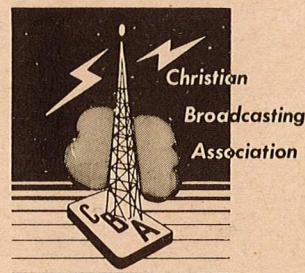
First by regular Church Worship,
Then by FAMILY WORSHIP.

The Christian home will be a serving home; a place where the members love and serve each other because they love and serve the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Christian home is the most powerful evangelizing force in the world today. It does not tell others what they should be; it shows them what they could be. But Christian homes are homes where the husband and the wife and each boy and girl individually gives his or her heart to the Lord Jesus Christ.

SUCCESSFUL MARRIAGES are Christ-centred, Christ-upheld, Christ-honouring.

"CHRIST is the Head of this house,
The unseen Guest at every meal,
The Silent Listener to every conversation."



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