

Godly Marriage

by Erlo Stegen

The sermon emphasizes the importance of prioritizing one's relationship with God above one's relationship with one's spouse, and living a life of godly love and service to one another.

Duration: 29:54

Scripture: Job 1:1, Psalm 37:4, Isaiah 43:11, Matthew 6:24, Luke 14:26, 1 Corinthians 7:29, Ephesians 5:22, Ephesians 5:25, Colossians 3:18-19

Topics: "Christian Marriage", "Christlike Love"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of the relationship between husband and wife reflecting the relationship between Christ and the Church. It discusses the need for husbands to emulate Christ's love for the Church and for wives to embody the Church's submission to Christ. The sermon delves into the potential pitfalls of prioritizing marital relationships over one's relationship with God, highlighting the call to prioritize Christ above all else.

Transcript

Now, this relationship of husband and wife should reflect our relationship between Christ and the Church. The man should be a picture of Christ to the world and to us, and the wife should be a picture of the Church. If I want to see what my relationship with my Lord should be, I can look at you women, how you live with your husbands, and that's how my relationship be with the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now, just imagine the tragedy if a woman and a married wife doesn't live like that. It's a curse. Such a thing must be damned forever.

Every married woman, her relationship to her husband should be a sermon to me that I know how I have got to behave in obedience to the Lord Jesus Christ. Charles Sturte of the Belgian Congo at that time said, when his co-workers were not married, they were on fire, they were aflame, they were sharp for God. But when they got married, they became blunt.

What a terrible thing to hear that a person is aflame to God, burning for God, but when he's married, he becomes blunt. And his service isn't as good as it was before he was married. Why can it be? And why should it be like that? Some way, some thing must have gone wrong.

Did they love their wives too much? Did they spend too much time with their wives? I remember a wife coming to me and I said, I'm in distress. I'm worried about my husband. Because before, every night, he'd

come late.

He'd be busy counseling people, speaking to them about their souls. But nowadays, he comes home quickly and he just spends time with me. And she was right.

In Luke 14, verse 26, Jesus said, if anyone comes to me and does not hate father or mother, wife or children, brothers and sisters, yes, even his own life, such a person can't be my disciple. These are shocking words, or can I say, terrible words. One wouldn't expect such words coming out of the mouth of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Saying, if anyone comes to me and does not hate father and mother. I took the New Testament word and read and I said, the translators are right. They are right in saying, if you don't hate your wife, even your brother, your sister, including your own life.

I usually say, if you love the Lord Jesus more than you love your wife. Well, I think that is included in this hate. If you listen to your father and your mother, your brother, your sister or your wife, more than him, you are not his disciple.

And here he uses even the word hate. That means if you take the love toward your wife and compare it with the love to the Lord Jesus, the love to your wife should be like hate, like hate in comparison. I remember a Russian man of God, speaking in Cape Town, and he said, I love my wife.

I loved her very much. And then he was caught by the KGB and taken to Siberia. And he said, I thought I loved my wife and I did so, and my children as well.

And when I thought maybe it's the last time, we'll never see each other again. He says, my heart broke. But I put my wife on the altar and said, God, you take her, my children as well.

He says, then God took away this carnal love and he gave me his divine love. And I loved my wife more than before. But it wasn't a love that was divine.

It was human. He says, but God gave me after that a love for my wife. And I loved her as never before.

And God was grateful to him. He didn't die there in Siberia. God saved his life.

And as an old man, he went around the world, sharing with people what he went through. After that experience. Now God has a plan and has got a way for every man, how he should live.

A man need only to take Ephesians 5, 32. It's so clear and so plain. The kind of life a man should live concerning his wife.

And he uses the example of Christ. As Christ loved the church and gave herself for the church, that he might sanctify and cleanse her, make her holy. We've got many examples of men in the Bible.

That loved God more than they loved their wives. The Lord said, remember Lot's wife. Lot was going with his wife and two daughters.

When fire and brimstone came down upon Sodom and Gomorrah, all the homosexuals and lesbians, his wife turned around and she turned into a pillow of salt. And Lot, I marvel at that, when he didn't hear his wife anymore, didn't hear her footsteps or her going forward, he couldn't look back. At that time he had to

hate her.

If he would have looked back, he would have turned into a pillow of smoke as well. I don't want to talk about this, why Lot's wife looked back. Would be an interesting topic.

But you hear, dear men and dear wives, if you look back, woe to you. Woe to you. And every Christian can't put his hand to the plow and look back.

Those are words of our Lord Jesus Christ. God has got his blueprint, his plan, his way explained thoroughly into the finest detail. For a man, how he should live with his wife.

And for a wife, how she should live with her husband. I haven't got time now to expand on that. But when you are at home, and you wife, if your husband has gone, you've got so much time, I wish that sometimes I would have a bit of your time.

Don't moan and groan that you've got to sit there without a husband. Spend the time with Jesus. Read the Bible.

You're a woman, read just Ephesians 5. What a woman should be like. And you men, what a man should be like. And then you stop, and ponder for a while, as the Bible teaches us.

You read, and stop, think about that. Ponder over that. And then you ask yourself, do I live, as the Bible says, is my married life, I as a woman, and I as a man, as the Bible says.

It says, wives, submit to your husbands, as to their Lord. As to their Lord. Are you sisters doing that? If you don't live like that, you are failing, and you are in grave danger.

You won't be a blessing to your family, or to your husband, you'll be a curse. And you husbands, for the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ is the head of the church. His body, of which he is the Saviour.

You husbands, have got to be the so-called Saviour for your wife. When you see she's going wrong, and doing the wrong thing. To be a man doesn't just mean that you say yes, yes, yes, to your wife.

Do what you like. You've got to be like the Lord Jesus. The way he, he is with us.

And he said Christ, and the church. We've heard a lot about Christ, and the church, man and wife. But it doesn't end there.

I said, what was it that Charles Studd said, his young workers, co-workers, when they were unmarried, they were sharp. But when they got married, they became blunt. Did they love their wives too much? Did they spend too much time with their wives? You can make a study of that.

Maybe you'd gain quite a lot. If the relationship is not as God requires it to be. We won't be a blessing to our partner.

She'll be nothing more than an idol, than a God to you. And the Bible says, the very first commandment, we mustn't have other gods. So don't make a God of your wife.

Or your husband. Christ has got to be the first in our lives. Christ has got to lead and guide us.

And teach us how we should live with our wives. You know the song, It is well with my soul. I would just like to tell you a bit about the background of this hymn.

It was written after a traumatic event in Stafford's life. The first was the 1871 Great Chicago Fire. Which ruined him financially.

He had been a successful lawyer. And had invested significantly in property in the area of Chicago. And that was all extensively damaged by the Great Fire.

His business interests were further hit by the economic downturn. By the Great Fire. The downturn of 1873.

At which time he had planned to travel to Europe with his family. On a ship. And then, because of circumstances.

He sent his family ahead while he was delayed on business. Concerning zoning problems. After the Great Chicago Fire.

Where he lost everything. While crossing the Atlantic. That is his wife and four children.

Four girls. The ship sank rapidly. After collision with an English vessel.

While crossing the Atlantic. The ship sank rapidly after collision with a sea vessel. And all four of Stafford's daughters died.

His wife, Anna, survived and sent him now the famous telegram. Saved alone. Shortly afterwards, as Stafford traveled to meet his grieving wife.

He was inspired to write these words as his ship passed near where his daughters had died. The Staffords later had three more children. On February 11, 1880, their son died at the age of four.

The Presbyterian Church regarded their tragedy as divine punishment. It's not always easy to be a Christian and go through with the Lord. Yet a whole church turned against them.

And says, this what happened in your life is divine punishment. But that didn't break them. They found and started a new church.

That was called the Overcomers by the American press. And when he heard, he got that message. Saved alone.

And he followed immediately and when he came to the place. When he came to the place where his four children had died. Then he said, when peace like a river attendeth my way.

When sorrows like sea billows roll. You know the waves of the sea. Whatever my lot, thou hast taught me to know.

It is well, it is well with my soul. And the refrain, it is well with my soul. It is well, it is well with my soul.

Though Satan should buffet. Though trial should come. Let this blessed assurance control.

That Christ has regarded my helpless estate. And has shed his own blood for me. And for my soul.

My sin, oh the bliss of this glorious thought. My sin, not in part but the whole. Is nailed to the cross and I hear it no more.

Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, oh my soul. For me in it, be it Christ. Be it Christ, hence to live.

In Jordan above me shall roll. If Jordan should above me roll. No pain shall be mine.

For in death is in life. Thou wilt whisper, thy peace to my soul. But Lord, it is for thee.

For thy coming we wait. The sky, not the grave is our goal. Old trump of the angel.

Voice of the Lord. Blessed hope, blessed rest in my soul. And Lord haste the day.

When my faith shall be sight. The clouds be rolled back as a scroll. The trump shall resound.

And the Lord shall descend. A song in the night, oh my soul. It is well, it is well with my soul.

It is well, it is well with my soul. That's what he wrote down on the way there. And when he got to the place where his children died.

He wrote down this hymn. It is well with my soul. The Christians couldn't understand it.

They said there's something wrong with you. This is punishment. They said that like Job's three friends.

But in all the churches, in all the hymns. There is still that song sung today. And written this very time.

What happened to the others that found fault with him and said it's judgment. They just vanished. But his song is still sung.

And even now mentioned here in this wedding service. It is well with my soul. When God had taken his children.

And just left his wife. It is well with my soul.

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