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HAPPY HOMES

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by W. CARL KETCHERSIDE

*Sponsored by*

## CHURCHES OF CHRIST

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## BLESSINGS NEAR AT HAND

We look too far for blessings;  
We seek too far for joys;  
We ought to be like children  
Who find their chiefest toys

Ofttimes in nearest attic,  
Or in some dingy lane—  
Their aprons full of weeds and flowers  
Gathered in sun or rain.

Within the plainest cottage  
Unselfish love may grow;  
The sweetest, the divinest gift,  
Which mortals ever know.

We ought to count our joys, not woes;  
Meet care with winsome grace;  
For discontent plows furrows  
Upon the loveliest face.

Hope, freedom, sunlight, knowledge  
Come not to wealth alone;  
He who looks far for blessings  
Will overlook his own.

—*Sarah Knowles Bolton.*

## HAPPY HOMES

A few days ago a troubled young man wanted to talk with me about his problems. We arranged an appointment. When he arrived at the designated place it was very apparent that he was deeply worried. Urged to unburden himself, he told me that his home was in danger of "going on the rocks." For a good many weeks he and his wife had apparently been unable to agree upon anything. They quarrelled every minute they were in each other's presence. Both had quit going to church, because they felt it was no use. When the young man had finished his story of tragic discouragements he added, "Someone ought to give a series of talks warning others from making the same kind of hell on earth that we have made. We have virtually ruined each other's hopes, and are about at the end of our matrimonial rope." When I started questioning him as to the reasons for their conduct, I learned why. But that is confidential and personal. I shall not repeat it. My reason for mentioning the case is to tell you that I am taking the suggestion of this troubled young fellow. I am going to present a series of talks on "Happy Homes and Happy Living."

The value of good homes to this nation cannot be overestimated. It is a trite saying, but true, that the home life of a nation constitutes its foundation. If that foundation is made up of strong cement, adhesive through storms of all kinds, the nation will prosper. But if the foundation crumbles under the attack of adversity or trial, the nation will be weakened and will be a prey to sinister foreign forces which seek its overthrow.

Imperial Rome was once the "mistress of the world." Powerful, alert and strong, she ruled the earth. But Rome went down underneath the feet of barbarian hordes which swept across her land. Why? The answer is found in the pages of history. The rich bought up the small farms, forcing the people to abandon their homes and move into the cities. The land became less fertile, and the once hard-working populace freed from work became an easy mark for those who sought their ruin. Interested only in

amusement and the food doled out to them by a patronizing government, they lost their love for home and country, and there was no common bond to hold them together. They went down with dire consequences. One need not be a "calamity-howler" to say that the United States of America is treading upon the same dangerous ground in these days of peril.

There are too many men who think lightly of the vows which they made to remain true to "one woman" as long as life exists. There are too many women who forsake their children and lounge around at taverns and cocktail lounges. There are too many parents who regret the fact that they are tied down by the little lives which have come to bless their homes. They look upon children as a curse to be endured, rather than a blessing to be treasured. The divorce mills are grinding out a grist of broken homes continually. Promises are esteemed only so long as the promiser thinks them of advantage, and lying has come to be looked upon almost as a virtue if you can secure any personal reward therefrom. And so, we go merrily along the downward road—the road that leads to ruin, the road that leads to oblivion.

It is not to be expected that I can do much to stem the tide. But that does not relieve me from the responsibility of doing what I can. And if you who listen in will join hands with me in seeing that these messages are made available to those who may be awakened and aroused to a sense of our danger, perhaps we can accomplish something toward restoring sanity to an otherwise mad and insane generation.

Happy homes are not the result of accidents. They represent the culmination of good sense and planning which all should employ who want to make something permanent, rather than temporary. How carefully men select the materials which go into a house in which they expect to spend life on earth! They want the best quality timber obtainable. They want the acme of perfection in bricks and structural steel. Yet many of those same men employ the poorest judgment in the selection of the helpmeet who can make that house a home or hell, depending upon her character.

Happy homes do not generally start after marriage—they start before! You cannot select as a life companion the girl you met lolling over the bar at the local tavern, and expect a lot of perma-

ment joy out of home life. The cocktail glass does not contain the ingredients from which constancy and joy are derived. Neither can the girl select as a husband that one who took undue familiarities with her after imbibing too much intoxicating liquor and expect to have a faithful and devoted companion. You don't go to the garbage can to select your food. Then why expect to find that which is worthwhile in the moral slop buckets of the world?

And don't be foolish enough to think that you are going to marry a man to reform him. I've listened to scores of bitter stories of those whose husbands promised to quit drinking after marriage. Sometimes it was a promise to quit gambling; sometimes a promise to cease from running around with a bunch of low-lived companions. If the man you are going with doesn't think enough of you now to give up his ungodly ways in order to win you, don't be silly enough to think he will do it after he already has you.

I never hear such a tale of woe without thinking of the story of the dove and the vulture. The meek and quiet dove, noticing how filthy and obnoxious was the vulture, decided to reform it. She felt that the only way to make the vulture a bird of peaceful and good habits was to marry it. The vulture agreed to cease longing for blood of the flock or herd and to mend his evil ways if the dove would only be his. So, at a moss-covered rock for an altar, and with a bald eagle officiating, they made their mutual vows. The vulture, looking at the sweet, pure dove, declared that he would love and cherish her until death parted them.

But one day the dove was frightened to see the vulture busily tearing away at a stinking carcass. She cried out, "Stop! Did you not promise me you would quit your repulsive habits if I married you?" The vulture, in anger retaliated, "Yes, but if you don't like my way, you can get out," and in a rage he flew at the dove and with one stroke of his beak and claws knocked the life from her frail body. A flock of robins flying past cried to each other and said, "Look there! that's what comes from a dove marrying a vulture to reform him."

It is better to remain unmarried than to be chained to one who has no interest in the things that you love and reverence. If you have refused to become the wife of a drunkard, or declined to marry one who had no control of his temper, or who was a petted, selfish baby, congratulate yourself. The freedom you have

retained is a thousandfold more to be desired than the shackles of slavery which some women have forged about their own hearts. Many a bride who has worn orange blossoms might have more appropriately worn a crown of thorns and nettles; many a one might have selected the "Prisoner's Song" as more suited to the event than "I Love You Truly." Instead of a wedding ring, many times a pair of handcuffs would have been more truly indicative of the future.

"Marriage is honorable in all," says the great apostle Paul. We believe that. But the mere purchase of an engagement ring, the securing of a license, the pledging of vows before a minister, will not guarantee happiness. Look for a companion who will stand by you through "thick and thin." Why investigate the pedigree of a horse before you purchase it, and never investigate the family tree of the man you must live with through the years? Is it good sense to expect a rotten tree to produce good fruit?

It is hard to find the right thing in the wrong place. And the tavern, the theater, the dance hall—none of these is the right place to select a companion. True happiness is based upon a mutual sharing of some great and ennobling ideal. It is the result of some consecration to a high purpose. And there is no greater purpose or ideal than that which the church holds forth. The happiest homes are those with a religious foundation. The chances are manifold greater that the acquaintance you make in the church will be more enduring than that which you make elsewhere. The church is enduring! It stands for enduring principles. Do not forsake it! Let it help you establish and maintain the kind of home which will spell happiness through the years.

## SERIOUS MINDS

Some time back in a bookstore I saw a volume entitled, "Things Which a Young Married Woman Should Know." I thought to myself that a long time before the author of that book was born, God wrote on the same subject. And, moreover, he bound upon the preacher of the gospel the necessity of teaching on these things. Paul, the apostle, wrote to the young preacher, Titus, and

told him to "speak thou the things which become sound doctrine." Among those things which are sound, he enjoined that the aged women should teach the younger, and Paul listed a catalog of things which young wives and mothers need to know. Since happiness in the home depends upon a knowledge of the Word of God, let's consider some of these characteristics.

In Titus 2:4, the Book says, "That they may teach the young women to be sober." The word "sober" as used in this connection must not be limited to abstinence from intoxicating liquors alone. Certainly God would not want young women to be cocktail addicts, or female bar-flies. I feel safe in saying that no woman ever became a better wife because she drank liquor with her husband. Neither has one ever become a better mother. In countless instances, women have wrecked their homes by their indulgence in drink. I was amazed to see the statistics on women drinkers in our daily paper recently. According to the report released, there are multiplied thousands of tipplers and drunken sots among the mothers and wives of our land. How sad to think about it!

A young married woman came to me recently to tell me that she had made a sad mistake in not following my advice as given a few years before. She was endeavoring to live a sincere Christian life when she first consulted with me, but her husband was not a member of the church. When she asked my advice I told her to go to church regularly, regardless of what it cost. She felt that she ought to do that, but she said, too, that she considered herself obligated to drink with her husband's friends when he brought them home, and to play cards with them, even though they gambled. I tried to persuade her that she would gain nothing and would perhaps lose her soul for compromising with evil.

Nevertheless, she pursued her chosen course. She mixed the drinks and served them, and sat down with a cocktail of her own, when her husband had business friends to entertain. Recently she felt that the time was ripe to speak to him about his soul. He only laughed at her. He said that she was a hypocrite. He told her that she was as bad off as he, and that she would go to church on Sunday and then come home and mix drinks and partake of them, and he further informed her that no Christian would act that way. I feel in my heart that even those who drink respect those who do not, and who cling to their convictions regardless.



Wife, if you want to win your husband and have a happy Christian home, do not compromise your faith. Stand firm.

In connection with this, I want to read the advice of the apostle Peter, as found in 1 Peter 3:1,2. "Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conduct of the wives: while they behold your pure lives coupled with reverence." You cannot win a husband to Christ by partaking of that which is evil. A Christian must be sober. Set an example in this regard.

But the word "sober" as used here means to be serious-minded, sound in judgment, using good common sense about all of the affairs of life. A great many homes have been broken up because the wife did not use good judgment. Many there are who have neglected their homes, the while they sat around and listened to radio serials or read the latest fiction. A husband likes to come home to a house that is a home. If the wife spends most of her time gadding around downtown, or at the theater matinee, or reading the gushy magazines filled with immoral and suggestive trash, the while she lets the dishes go unwashed and the floor unswept, her judgment may be called in question.

There's more to life than giddiness and fun; a wife has to be something besides a pretty doll to hold the love of her husband. There's a practical side to life and it takes serious planning to meet the requirements of an enduring marriage. Are you one of those wives interested only in being a fashion plate? Are you one who cannot say "No" to a beautiful dress, even though you know that you cannot afford it? Will you sacrifice the necessities of life in order to get the latest type hat? Certainly a wife should dress attractively as possible. No one likes to see a slouch. There is no excuse for slovenliness. But all of us should learn to live within our means, and accustom our wants to what we have. Many a home that could have been a paradise has been turned into a Hades of wrangling and strife and quarrelling over money matters. Use good judgment. Be sober! Be a good manager!

Wives need to learn sobriety about dress. It is ridiculous to go in debt to keep up with the latest fashions, which after all are generally silly fads. Fashion makes us do asinine things, actually things that are downright silly. One year it hoists dresses up above the knees, the next, yanks them down below. That makes

all of your old dresses out-of-date, and the fashion planners laugh up their sleeves and get ready for a financial killing. Fashion is a cruel, tyrannical mistress, who makes us submit to all sorts of inconvenient things for her sake. She knocks the heels and toes out of our shoes until the sand gets in and we walk like cripples; she undresses us until we get so sunburnt that we can't lean back or lie down. She makes us spend five dollars to get a pair of hose to make people think that we don't have any on. She makes people visit when they would rather stay home, eat when they are not the least bit hungry, and drink when they are not thirsty.

With some persons a stir is caused every time some movie star comes out with a new style frock. With them the style of a life means nothing compared to the style of a dress. They read the fashion magazines and never look at the Bible; they visit the style shows more than they ever go to church. Such persons can pass by a squalid tenement where the little children are hungry and starving, without ever giving it a glance, but they rave about a spoon or fork being out of place for the serving of one of their courses. They talk about fashion more than they mention the Savior of men who died that we might live.

Happiness consists not in outward dress. It is a quality that comes from within. If your heart is corrupt, following fashions of the day will not save you. Painting the pump will not cure the poison in the well. A lot of dressed-up individuals are like the cinnamon tree, the bark is worth more than the body. Christian women know that true joy comes from following those things that are abiding, permanent and enduring. Listen to this instruction! "Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel, 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 Peter 3:3,4).

Think soberly for a moment! If you married purely because of the physical appeal of your partner, that love will cool. Some day that smooth, creamy skin will be wrinkled with age; the hair will turn gray and fade to white; crow's-feet will go out from the corners of the eyes, hastened by the worries and labors of life. Will you love and be loved then, when beauty has turned to ashes? Will your love be as strong in December when the blasts of old

age sear and wither as it was in May, when the freshness of youth gave it glamour? That depends upon how soberly you selected your companion and how seriously you faced life together in those first few years. If you based your hopes of an enduring future upon outward charms only, there is little hope for a permanent bliss, but if you considered a mutual reverence for God, for purity of life, for the church, and for eternity, you can grow old gracefully and say in the eventide of existence, as you look at your loved one

*"O, my darling, you will be  
Always young and fair to me!"*

Think soberly! Do not surrender the freedom and liberty of Christian living for the chains and shackles of bondage to society, which drives you like a taskmaster from one gay but killing pursuit to another, promising everything but giving nothing. There is more genuine happiness in walking side by side to the little Church of Christ and sitting as husband and wife, to join in the songs of praise, than there is in spending your money for tickets to the most lavish theater production in history. If you want to land safe in the airport of eternal happiness, *Get on the beam!* Turn your minds toward the things which really count!

## TO LOVE THEIR HUSBANDS

A few weeks ago, as you will recall, tests were made in the Pacific Ocean, near Bikini Island, of the atom bomb. The second of those trials consisted of the explosion of one of the missiles under the surface of the water. Reporters permitted to observe the results virtually exhausted their supply of adjectives in an attempt to portray the tremendous repercussion which sent a huge volume of water and spray more than a mile high, and sank ten ships and submarines. Truly the atom bomb is one of the most powerful forces ever unleashed on earth. But there is one thing stronger and more potent. It is "love."

It was love for humanity which caused God to send His Son into this world to die for us; it was love which caused that Son to

endure the agonies of the cross. Force can demand, but love commands! Force can *destroy* happiness, but only love can *bring* happiness. In our investigation of those things which assure the attainment of happy homes, we are not astounded or amazed to find love given first place.

In Titus 2:4, young women are taught to "love their own husbands." All the joy and bliss that comes in marriage proceeds from love. Just as surely as love goes out the window, happiness goes out the door. You may live in a mansion that cost a million dollars, you may be attended by servants and maids who come at your beck and call, you may gaze out of your window upon splendid terraces whose landscaped beauty bespeaks the work of the most skilled artist, but if there is no love in your home, it is a prison rather than a castle, and you are a slave, bound and shackled by discouragement and disgust.

You may arrange lavish entertainments to which the cream of society gravitate like moths about the candle flame; you may have the finest musical instruments produced by the ingenuity of man; you may drive a custom built car which is the envy of all in your neighborhood, but if there is no love in your home, you are poor, neglected, forsaken and accursed with tragedy. No forms of etiquette, no manifestation of courtesy, no exaggerated politeness can be a compensation or atone for the lack of love. All of these are hollow mockeries where genuine, pure, hallowed and unadulterated love do not exist.

I have visited in homes of the wealthy where deep pile rugs absorbed the tread of every step, yet those homes were like refrigerators. There was no warmth, no glow of affection for each other. Then, I have been in the log cabins deep down in the hills, where poverty was written upon all of the surroundings, and where only the bare wood constituted the floor, but there was a feeling of happiness, of home-like comfort and of joy within those whitewashed walls. This was a *home* because of love; the other, a *house* in which reverence was lacking.

There is too much of divorce and the tragedy of broken homes in the news of today. If the Scriptures were heeded, this condition could not exist. What is the trouble? I answer that there are many who have a false idea of marriage. They are educated by the screen to think that marriage is all glamour and glow. The

sex side of life is portrayed so constantly and vividly in literature and on the screen that many are led to believe they need expect only a constant thrill. When the honeymoon is over and they settle down to the routine of daily living, the excitement passes away, and many times with it goes the ardor of first love. Dissatisfied with each other, the partners look elsewhere for gratification, and seek other bodies for thrill. So lives are wrecked, the ship of home tosses upon the stormy waves of passion and is wrecked upon the rocks of dissipation.

It is possible for wives to learn to love their own husbands, or Paul would not have said to teach them to do so: It would be foolish to teach one something which she could not learn. But how is the wife to learn this lesson so essential to happiness? First, she must get a proper sense of values. She must learn what those qualities are which make a good husband. A lot of wives do not know. They think that a good husband is one who will take them to a show every night. When the man they married comes home tired and worn out, and seeks only rest, they leave him and go by themselves. Soon they find another man who tells them that he sympathizes with them. They idealize the newcomer and the husband suffers by comparison. It isn't long until separation occurs, and divorce is the aftermath!

I want to call to your attention that wanting to stay at home at night is no disqualification for a husband. I know of a good many wives who wish their husbands would do that very thing. After all, it may be considered a tribute to you as a wife, that your husband would rather sit at home with you at night than to be out with the gang that others run with. Learn to respect his sober habits, his willingness to work and support you. Study him and determine his good points. Remember that you are perhaps as disappointing to him as he is to you. Maybe if you'll both realize your faults as well as your items of sterling character you'll come to realize that neither is perfect and you can grow to love each other as you are.

Nagging breaks up more homes than anything else on earth. What man wants to come home from the rush and hustle and bustle of the office, to be met at the door by a wife who starts in on him as he hits the porch and never lets him hear the last of her petty aggravations until he drops off into a slumber disturbed by

dreams of women shrieking out complaints? Love is not guilty of such conduct!

I want to read you a few passages which set forth the attitude of the wife who really wants a happy home. In Ephesians 5:22-24, I find this: "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord." Notice that word "Own"—unto your *own* husbands! Not some other person's husband, but your own. "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. Therefore, as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing." That is an unpopular subject these days, but it is a scriptural one!

It is appropriate that the wife should rely upon the decisions and depend upon the counsel of the husband. It is becoming to do that. I read, "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord" (Colossians 3:18). Love is a reciprocal something. We tend to love those most emphatically who love us. If you would be loved, you must love! Proverbs 14:1 declares, "Every wise woman buildeth her house: but the foolish plucketh it down with her own hands." A lot of times you are responsible for conditions by which you are surrounded. Perhaps your own selfishness, your petty littleness have contributed to those conditions. Look at yourself and ask if you may be tearing down your chances for happiness by your actions and conduct!

You may profit by the experience of a wife whom I know. She had been reared in the city, but while on vacation in the country met a young man who dated her several times. After writing to each other for about two years, they were married and started housekeeping on the farm which the young man had purchased. It was vastly different than what the young wife had planned. She secretly rebelled against the chores that she was called upon to perform. Then she started brooding over the fact that she could not attend a lot of the social functions to which she once went in the city. The result was that she decided to return to her former home, leaving her husband, at least for a while. But even while she was making preparations for this step she became seriously ill. Her husband gave her every attention. Her wants were first in his daily schedule. He watched by her bedside and even anticipated her needs. Day by day, he neglected other things in order

that he might care for this one who had been on the verge of leaving him.

While the wife was sick, she had time to think seriously and soberly. She now realized that she had planned an injustice to one she really loved. She knew that she had not fully given herself to her husband from the first, that she had held in reserve a craving for her former life and associates. Now, with the realization that he possessed all of the qualities of manhood which go to make a loyal companion, she changed her mind. They are happily married today and their farm is truly a home.

You cannot divide your affection and still be true to the one whom you promised to love and cherish. Give yourself freely, fully and wholly to the task of creating a home with your loved ones. Learn the great secret of contentment, for the Bible says that "godliness with contentment is great gain." Let us be satisfied with what we have but not with what we are. Let us strive to build more noble characters of our lives and inspire our loved ones to greater heights. That is the secret of our being on earth—to help others!

## TO LOVE THEIR OWN CHILDREN

It has been said that "The hand that rocks the cradle is the hand that rules the world." To a great extent that is true. The mothers of today will mold the ideals of tomorrow as they shape the careers of their children. I am sure history will confirm that it has ever been so. The mother of Samuel dedicated him to the Lord even before he was born, and he became the prophet who influenced the life of all Israel. The mother of Moses nursed him at the request of Pharaoh's daughter, and even as a babe he imbibed with his mother's milk the story of the tragedy of his people which made him the great deliverer from Egyptian bondage. It was the mother of Timothy, with the advice and assistance of her own mother, who made of that young man a true and fervent lover of the Lord.

This principle is as true in profane as in sacred history. Abraham Lincoln, the great emancipator, declared, "All I am or ever

hope to be, I owe to my darling mother." George Washington's mother was a woman of sterling and uncompromising character. It is no wonder that Lord Shaftesbury exclaimed, "Give me a generation of Christian mothers, and I will undertake to change the face of society in twelve months." The responsibility resting upon mothers is indeed a great and noble one.

*Children are what the mothers are.  
No fondest father's fondest care  
Can fashion so the infant heart  
As those creative beams that dart,  
With all their hopes and fears, upon  
The cradle of a sleeping son.*

In view of this, it is a matter of solemn thought and grave deliberation to view the kind of mothers which we are now producing. The future looks dark and bleak indeed unless we are able to cause those to think, and think seriously, who bear children into this world. The value of a child to a nation is greater than that of any other form of wealth. Socrates once said, "Could I climb to the highest place in Athens, I would lift my voice and proclaim—Fellow-citizens, why do ye turn and scrape every stone to gather wealth, and take so little care of your children, to whom one day you must relinquish all?"

It would appear today that children are not wanted. One reads the advertisements of houses to rent, and sees repeatedly the notice, "No children." He sees the placards in the windows, "No children." But often that same sign is written upon the hearts of those who marry. If you could see down inside of those souls you would behold a desire for pleasure, for gratification, for satisfaction with the things of this world, but there would be written the words, "No children wanted." And because of that condition, there are multiplied thousands who become murderers, killing their children who have been conceived, before they can see the light of day. Jealously thinking only of self, greedy, grasping for worldly wealth, mothers take that sinful road of abortion, not realizing that some day they shall stand with the blood of their own children upon their guilty hands, to be judged by the One whose own Son was murdered because of envy and selfish greed.

The happy homes are the homes with the children! Nothing is more pitiful than to see two people grow old together with noth-



ing to look forward to except oblivion of their name, with the grave swallowing up all of their plans and hopes. When you marry, do so with a view to starting a family. You owe it to God, who ordained marriage with this in view. You owe it to the nation which cannot survive unless you meet your responsibility. If for some physical reason beyond your control you cannot have children, then adopt some, and give them the love of a father and mother. Do it for your sakes as well as for theirs. Unless you find an outlet for your mother instinct you can never be fully happy in marriage!

And when you have children—love them! Prepare for their coming by becoming a Christian. It is unfair to your children not to give them as many opportunities as you can provide. Then, why give them the benefit of physical strength, of well-shaped, well-cared for bodies; and of well-developed mental faculties; while at the same time you neglect the thing that really counts—their spiritual development? You owe it to those little lives to live as a Christian. Jesus said in his beautiful prayer uttered for the disciples in John 17:19, "For their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also may be sanctified through the truth." *For their sakes.* Jesus was the Great Teacher of us all. We can safely follow His technique. He knew the power and force of an exemplary life. He knew that actions speak louder than words. He set himself apart that others might do the same. So, as we look upon our children, we may say to those who ask us why we strive to live a Christian, "For their sakes I dedicate my life to God, that they also may be dedicated to Him through the truth." Let us daily dedicate ourselves to God in behalf of our children.

As you look upon a growing child, what do you see? It makes all the difference in the world in shaping your attitude toward these little lives which have been entrusted to your care. Two men were looking at a large rock, when one said to the other, "That thing is an eyesore, and I feel that it should be lifted from its bed and hauled away." The other, who was a sculptor, said, "I see an angel in it." He set to work with hammer and chisel and before long had brought to light the form which he had envisioned. To one, the rock was an encumbrance, just something in the way. But the other saw a vision of that which was beautiful inside and worked to bring it out.

Do your children appear to you only as annoyances, come to disturb what otherwise would be a calm and quiet routine? Do they appear as stumbling stones thrown across your path, blocking the way to enjoyment of a butterfly night life? Or, do you see within that little childish form the greatness which needs only the loving care of an understanding heart and mind to bring it to light where it can bless the world and attain unto heaven?

Love your children! They will be a reflection of you and your life. A mother stood at her door one day while her little girl was playing on the front porch. The mother was astounded to hear the youngster as she suddenly grabbed her doll and shook it, burst forth with the words, "You good-for-nothing little scamp, you come right into the house this minute, or I'll beat all the hide off of your back." The mother broke in, saying, "Here, here, I am surprised to hear my little girl talk that way to her dollie." "Oh," said the little girl, "I was only playing, and he is my little boy, and I am talking to him like you did when you got mad this morning." How many times children are but the echoes of their parents!

When prairie fires start and sweep across the land, those who live on these great expanses start another fire to check the onrushing tides of flame. They fight fire with fire! But you cannot fight with the fire of anger the fire of your child's disposition! You'll only make the flames more destructive. Therefore, you should study your children. God has given you a key to their needs in the temperaments which they possess. Love will find a way to rear those little ones to please God, because love will never stop seeking and searching until that way is opened up.

Love is not pampering. True love consists of stern devotion to the right. It is not always mere tender emotion. There are some who think they are loving their children when they cater to their every whim. The surgeon is not unkind, who, in spite of the resistance of his patient, goes deliberately about the job of removing the gangrene from a wound. Neither is the parent to be deemed unloving who firmly and decisively, in spite of the protests of the child, goes about the task of removing the evil inclinations which might otherwise destroy the whole life of the youngster.

The Bible says, "Chasten thy son while there is hope, and let not thy soul spare for his crying." Discipline is necessary in life.

It must start in the home. If it does not, and the child is left to grow up with the thought that he can always have his way, it will eventually work his ruin and everlasting destruction. All lawmakers are agreed that their laws of restraint will be virtually ineffective unless reverence for those laws is taught in the home. It is your job as a mother, in order to have a happy home, to instill respect for God and the rights of others in the hearts of your little ones. You will heap sorrow upon sorrow if you refuse to chasten your children when they need and require it. Love your children to the extent that you always do for them what is best, regardless of what it may cost you to do it!

## KEEPERS AT HOME

The inspired apostle Paul instructed the young preacher, Titus, that he should teach the older women in order that they might teach the younger. Paul was interested in the formation of Christian homes. Thus one of the things he bound upon Titus to teach was that the younger women who marry are to be "discreet, chaste, keepers at home."

To be discreet means to "possess good judgment." To be chaste means to be pure—in heart and in conduct. No happiness can be found in a home where there is distrust and suspicion. Sometimes a wife will desire to maintain her popularity in society and even with the opposite sex, to the extent that she violates the rules of propriety, and flirts with others. It is evident that such action lays the groundwork for a broken home, if it is not stopped at once. Keep your heart clean and you'll keep your life clean. It is out of the abundance of heart that the mouth speaks. It is from the heart that fornication, adultery and other forms of uncleanness proceed. Most loose conduct is the result of loose speech, and is always preceded by it. Guard your thoughts and your speech and the life will take care of itself!

But we wish today to emphasize especially the quality of a Christian wife expressed by the term, "keepers at home." The home is the wife's domain. There she can reign as queen. She is adapted to it by nature and qualified for the task by intuition.

The average husband has no more judgment as to color schemes than a Kansas jack rabbit. If left up to him, the wallpaper in the living room would probably be yellow, the drapes purple, the rug green, and the upholstery in stripes of blue and pink. The average man does not even know which tie to wear to match his suit and socks—much less anything about tasty arrangement in the home.

For that reason, I suggest that the husbands had better leave those matters up to the wives. I knew of one man whose mind had apparently gone to seed on the thought that he was "the head of the house." His wife was not allowed to think for herself. If she wanted to open a can of tomatoes when company came, she had to send one of the children out to the field and ask permission of her husband. When she changed a picture from one wall to the other, he became highly incensed, and changed it back again. He wasn't a husband—he was a dictator! God certainly never authorized any such highhanded, autocratic ideas. The wife is to be "keeper at home."

I know a lot of women who sit around and sigh about what they might have been if they had married someone else. A lot of them think of the careers which they forsook to become wives. But let me tell you that the greatest career any woman can have is that which comes with being a Christian wife and mother. You may never get your picture in the paper, and may never know the adulation which is heaped upon heroines of the day, but in the sight of God, what you are doing is of great value. And that's what counts!

HOME! Songs have been written about it! Poems have been composed about it! On foreign fields, soldiers have dreamed of it! Wanderers have taken new courage as they drew nearer to that beloved place. It has formed the pattern of our fondest dreams, and been the center of our greatest hopes. And yet, home is the sphere of woman's creation, the crowning achievement of her life and work. Thank God for Christian homes! Thank God for the faithful women who have made them such! They are the keepers at home, and they are the keepers of home. Without them, there could be no home to keep!

The first duty of the wife and mother is to the home. She must be attentive to the domestic concerns of the family above all else.

Why does the religion of Jesus Christ so specifically bind this upon her as a duty? The answer is that the Christian religion depends upon the home for its very existence. God formed the home and ordained the family, just as he did the church. These two divinely-authorized institutions have been made interdependent. If mothers neglect their homes, the church will be weakened to that extent. If they neglect the church, the home will be weakened as well. It is essential that we realize that great truth.

A woman said to me a few days ago, "I would like to go out and preach the gospel. I would like to stand in the pulpit throughout this land and tell people what to do to become Christians!" Now, the Churches of Christ do not believe in women evangelists. The Bible clearly teaches that such is not the sphere of woman's work or influence. We will affirm that anywhere and any time. So I said to this sister in Christ, "If you will follow the teaching of the Word of God as you should, you can do a greater service for the Master as a keeper at home than you ever could do in the public pulpit or on the platform." And I meant that. God knew what He was doing when He dictated the various circles in which we can and should serve Him. Let us be content to stay therein and work together for His glory and Cause.

The regulation set forth by the apostle does not mean that women are not to go forth from their homes on errands of mercy, and to carry out the necessary requirements of their life. But they are not to neglect the home in order to fulfill other arrangements. Some homes are being "clubbed" to death. The mother belongs to this club and that club. Her whole time is taken up with interests outside of the domestic circle. She has to spend a lot of her time primping, fixing and dolling up to go to the meetings. She comes home tired and worn out, nervous and distraught. She is not a wholesome companion for her husband, or a good mother to the children. Now, I am not saying that it is wrong for women with common interests to meet for the purpose of social betterment, but I am saying that when such is given precedence over the home, and usurps the time and energy which should go into formation of the home, it is wrong. You can't save this world by organizing clubs, if at the same time you break up the homes to do it! All of the clubs and social gatherings in the world will not save us if the homes go down!

Too often, women neglect their own affairs to become busybodies in the affairs of others. Most of us will have a full-time job in regulating our own homes without at the same time regulating those of everyone else in the community. Have you heard of the woman who went from house to house visiting all of the neighbors, telling them how she would arrange the furniture if she lived in their homes, pointing out this and that which she felt needed changing? You will recall, that one day coming home, she slipped on her back doorstep and broke her leg. The doorstep was greasy! The moral is that you'll no doubt have enough to do to keep your own doorstep clean!

The wife who is a true keeper at home has no time to spend in vain gossip and harmful talk about others. She cannot while away precious hours hanging on the telephone merely to exchange all of the latest juicy morsels of scandal. She knows that the job of being a Christian is a twenty-four-hour per day proposition, and she will not suspend the work to labor for the devil in backbiting and common idleness.

I care not, then, how much may be achieved by anything you do abroad, it will not in the long run be helpful to the Cause of the Lord Jesus, if in doing it you neglect your home. You may manifest such zeal for the church that you spend all of your time in going and coming, but if in that you neglect your home, it is evident that the church has been hurt rather than helped. Your every duty as a Christian wife will be best performed as you meet the requirement of a "keeper at home." And don't think that this means merely a "housekeeper." There are thousands of women who have kept house that never kept a *home*. There's infinitely more to keeping a home than merely keeping house.

Keeping house may actually interfere with keeping a home! What about the mother who spends so much time dusting and sweeping and washing and scrubbing, that she does not have time to sit down and talk to her little ones about life, or tell them stories from the Bible? What about the mother who turns her youngsters out to play in the street because she does not want them playing in the house for fear they might disturb it slightly? Martha was a housekeeper—Mary was a homemaker. Jesus said she had chosen the good part. Let's have more wives who are willing to be "keepers at home."

## OBEDIENCE TO HUSBANDS

The world today is in a state of unrest. Confusion abounds upon every side. Mankind is groping for a solution to multitudinous problems, all of which are staggering in their implications. But to me, it appears that the reason for our conflicting concepts and the resulting chaos is simply that we have departed from the teachings and principles set forth by a wise and beneficent Creator. Certainly God should know what is best for man. And when man considers himself wiser than God, and forsakes the philosophy of life ordained by the Heavenly Father, to follow the dictates of his own pleasure, he brings ruin upon himself. Of the ancient heathen, it was affirmed by the great apostle, "Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools." That just about sums up our condition today.

We have made words such as "liberty" and "freedom" our catchwords and mottoes. We no doubt inspired a great deal of patriotism and may have won the great war so recently culminated by our emphasis upon "The Four Freedoms." But much of what we call "freedom" in these days is merely "license." We use the word to cover up our philandering with the truth of heaven, and our departures from God's plan. Thus when someone contradicts our false scheme of life, we can scream that he is interfering with our liberty and tampering with our freedom.

Once a colored minister was asked to define the term "status quo." He scratched his head a moment, and gave the best answer that could possibly be given. "Bredern," he said, "that's the Latin term for the mess we's in." I want to tell you one thing, then, that has produced our present moral "status quo." Society is based upon the home! All other relations, local, national and international, are based upon the recognition of this foundation. But in our insane desire for what we call "freedom," but which is in reality nothing but "license" to do as we please, we have broken up God's system of authority. Now, all authority in the world stems from this foundation. When it is overturned, there will be no way of checking the tide of delinquency.

Let me explain what I mean! And before I do, let me say you're not going to like it! If some of you had your way, you'd howl me down. Others would prefer riding me out of town on a

rail. But you listen to what I say, for it is the truth, whether you like it or not. And it's about time someone told you the plain truth in an unvarnished fashion.

When God made man out of the dust of the ground, he breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul. But God saw that it was not good for man to be alone. Man could not, by himself, accomplish that which God desired or had ordained for him to do. So God took from man's body the substance from which He formed his companion. He brought her to man as his perfect counterpart, and when he looked upon this beautiful creature, he declared, "She is bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh, therefore shall she be called woman." This of course to signify that she was taken from man. Then God ordained that sacred institution, the home, when he said, "For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother and shall cleave unto his wife, and they twain shall be one flesh." This was the divine origin of that solemn, intimate, loving relationship which was to perpetuate mankind and to act as a restraint upon vice and immoral lust, which would wreck the world that had been created.

After man had sinned, God spoke to the woman, saying, "Thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee" (Genesis 3:16). Unto the man he spoke thus, "Cursed is the ground for thy sake. . . . Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth unto thee. . . . In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground" (Genesis 3:17-19). Thus, we find that in the establishment of the family relationship, the woman was to be the mother, and she was to occupy a subordinate position insofar as authority is concerned. Man, the father of the race, was to be the breadwinner.

That constituted arrangement has been changed just about as far as man has any ability to change it. The man, by reason of his physical qualification, is still the father of the race, as the woman is the mother; but the rest of God's regulations have been thrown overboard, and in many cases we have things exactly in reverse. In many instances the mother gets up in the morning, takes her dinner bucket and goes to work at the factory. The father washes the breakfast dishes, cleans up the house and prepares for the weekly wash. In the evening the mother comes home and picks up the newspaper to see what's going on in the world, while the husband



dons the apron, to cook the meal. In some places a man can't get a job. Only women are hired. Thus the wives have become the breadwinners, and the husbands the homemakers. And neither of them is qualified by temperament to do those things.

It has been thought smart for women to rebel against what they have called "injustice." They have cried out for freedom, and have demanded what they have termed "equality." And in securing those things, they have lost something of far greater value. In many instances they have forfeited modesty and in most instances have lost the respect of men in general.

They have forced man out of the barber shop and usurped it in order to get a "mannish haircut." They have borrowed his best white shirt and worn it on the outside of his blue jeans, and made out of themselves such sloppy, careless, silly, asinine-looking specimens that the average male laughs up his sleeve at the simple-minded freaks. They have discarded their dresses and bought pants so they could dress like men, but unfortunately nature did not shape them for the wearing of pants, and what the world laughingly calls slacks are everything else but "slack." They now stand around at the bar and tell dirty jokes, or light up a cigarette in public and blow smoke through their noses, which thus have been made chimneys for tobacco and nicotine fumes. I suppose a lot of you women who listen today are gritting your teeth. That may help you to get the tobacco stain off of them, so grit away. You may be biting your nails. Better be careful, though, for you may get poisoned with some of the polish which has been borrowed from savages who have always streaked themselves with war paint.

A few years ago when women entered a public conveyance and there were no unoccupied seats, the men arose and offered them a place to sit down. But not any more! And why not? Well, you asked for it—now you're getting it! You wanted to act like men, dress like men, perform like men, and now you can stand like men. You've gained what you felt was freedom, and you have destroyed modesty and love—you've forfeited the things that really count. You've run the score up in divorce courts until it almost equals the marriages; you've dragged your own children down to hell; you've placed the nation on the skids. And you've paid for it in the loss of your sons, and in the disrespect of your

own daughters. And you're not through paying for it yet. Don't forget that I said that!

The Bible cannot be ignored! You can laugh at it, scoff at it, ridicule it, and deride it! But God is behind it—and His Word will surely come to pass. Here are some of the things that the Bible teaches as essential to make a happy home. "Wives submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord" (Ephesians 5:22). That simply means that God has enjoined such submission, and you cannot do otherwise and please the Lord. That degree of subject is specified in this teaching, "As the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything."

Hear the apostle Paul. "But I would have ye know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God" (1 Corinthians 11:3). That is the order of authority in the universe. God is supreme. Christ is under Him. Man is under Christ. The woman is subject to man. Just as God rules through love, so Christ rules through love. And just as Christ exercises His headship by love, so the husband should do the same. There must be no arrogant assertion of authority. God would not require Christ to do anything that is wrong. Christ would not require man to do anything that was wrong. And man has no right to command his wife to do that which violates conscience or the obedience of God.

The wife should act as to deserve the love of the husband, and the husband should act so as to deserve the respect of his wife. Then, by mutual regard, the home will be a place of joy and happiness!

## THE FAITHFUL WIFE

In dealing with the problem of forming Christian homes, I pointed out in my last talk the position that both the husband and wife should occupy. I set forth the teaching of God's Word to the effect that the wife was to be in subjection and submit to the righteous wishes of the husband as the head of the divine organi-

zation—the home. I shall continue that discussion in this talk, and then in my next, take up the teaching of the Bible on what it requires to be a scriptural husband.

I do not expect in these discussions to be of any assistance to those who stubbornly refuse to be guided by God's dictates. There are some who are so determined to have their own way that they will wilfully ignore the teaching of the Bible. But I do believe that those of us who want to be Christians can gain much benefit by again evaluating our lives and examining our hearts to see wherein we have failed to meet the requirements of heaven. We can benefit by these bits of research if we are honest, humble and sincere.

The Bible positively teaches that man is to be the head of his family. The apostle Peter says, "Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands . . . even as Sarah obeyed Abraham" (1 Peter 3:1,6). The apostle Paul says, "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord" (Colossians 3:18). Again, "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord" (Ephesians 5:22).

Upon what is this position based? Let us examine the word again on the matter. "But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man . . . for Adam was first formed, then Eve" (1 Timothy 2:12,13). The prior creation of man is thus urged by the inspired writer as indicating God's purpose that he should be first in authority. Once more, "For the man is not of the woman, but the woman of the man. Neither was the man created for the woman, but the woman for the man" (1 Corinthians 11:8,9). The fact that the woman was taken from man not only shows his previous existence but his right to respect by the one taken from him.

This in no sense implies degradation. Rather it signifies the opposite. Since the woman was made of the man, it stands to reason that man cannot degrade her in origin, without degrading himself from whom she was taken. Nor does this imply that the man is to look down upon his wife. Far from it. I ask your attention again. "Nevertheless, neither is the man without the woman, neither the woman without the man, in the Lord. For as the woman is of the man, even so is the man also by the woman; but all things of God" (1 Corinthians 11:11,12).

Woman is called the "weaker vessel" in the Bible. This does not mean that she is weaker when it comes to intelligence. Often she knows more than her husband ever will. Nor does it mean that she is weaker in courage, for it must be admitted that through the years, women have shown a bravery and fortitude equal to that of the other sex. But physically she is not by nature qualified to take her place by the side of man. And while there are exceptions to this rule, yet we believe it will be generally conceded that she is often more emotional and of higher, more sensitive temperament than man.

For these and other reasons, God has designated man to be the head of that organization known as the home. It is expected that he shall make the final decisions for the welfare of those who depend upon him, but that he will take into consideration the sensitive natures and divinely-given rights of the family. Respect for the husband places a woman in position to teach her children respect for authority. I verily believe that one reason why we have so many boys and girls today who grow up indifferent to, and even antagonistic to, authority is because there has been no recognition of the same in the homes which have produced them. You cannot tamper with God's laws and not have to pay the consequences. We shall reap what we sow!

There are many ways in which woman is the equal of man. Too, there are many in which she is far superior. In delicate loveliness and charm, in grace and beauty of person, in tenderness of heart and gentleness of manner, in the social niceties of companionship, he can never equal her at all. There are inherent dainty characteristics which are feminine and set woman apart and above man. He cannot attain unto these, and if he attempted to do so he would become the butt of ridicule, for "there is one glory of the feminine and another glory of the masculine," and the one differs from the other. But all of the qualities we have mentioned are not adapted to government. In some instances they are opposed to it, because in governing and disciplining a home there are certain times when a stern disposition is needed. This is the opposite of the spirit of compassion which is so ingrained in the fairer sex.

No organization can long exist unless there is some authority. And that authority must be known and recognized. If everyone

is free to do as he desires without consulting the rights of others, anarchy will result. That is as true in a home as in a nation. Now, it has pleased God to vest the right of headship in the home in the husband and father. If for no other reason, we should respect God's wishes and be obedient thereto. And I venture to say that no home can prosper where there is an utter disregard of this principle. Certainly it cannot be a scriptural home.

We are sometimes asked just how far the wife is to submit to the husband and his wishes. The answer to that is found in the statement, "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord." A wife must not violate God's Word even to please the husband, for the man has no right to ask anything of the wife which will jeopardize her soul. Certainly the husband has a right to direct the way the money shall be budgeted for the purchase of the necessities of life. He has a right to curtail any extravagances upon the part of the family. Often this is resented by those who want to arbitrarily set a standard of living which the father knows he cannot maintain. The members of the family should recognize that place or position in the social world is not nearly so important as peace and unity in the home, and they should be willing to submit to the head. In turn, he should be willing to make reasonable allowances in these matters.

Too, the father has a right to specify the regulations which will govern the family. When it comes to matters of educating the children and providing for their future, if a question arises, his judgment ought to be permitted to prevail. The same holds true with reference to business matters. The husband may and should counsel with his wife, so that if anything happens to remove him from this life, she may not be left in total ignorance of her financial status, but the subject of making the living and providing for the welfare of the family is his to decide.

But the husband's authority ceases when it comes to matters pertaining to conscience or religion. There, God designates His right to govern to no one, but deals with us all as individuals. We are definitely informed by the apostles that we must obey God rather than man. And that means any man in any relationship upon this earth. If a Christian woman is married to a man who is not a Christian, he has no right to ask her to go to a place of amusement which she knows is wrong. If he does ask her to do

that, she can only politely but firmly refuse to accompany him. She must not become impatient or lose her temper about the matter. To do so would be to undo all of the good which would otherwise accrue from her firm stand for truth. But she must in such a case resist her husband, for he transcends his rights.

Neither does the husband have the right to forbid his wife attending church at the regular services. She owes to God a higher obligation than the one which she owes to man. She has a right to fulfill that responsibility without interference. Sometimes an arrogant, contentious, bull-headed husband will tell his wife that if she continues to go to church and worship God, he will leave home. Under those circumstances the wife should go on to church and do her duty to God. If the unbelieving depart, let him depart. God has called us unto peace, and there are some persons who are so stubborn that there can be no peace in their presence. But in all things, let the wife be sincere and humble. Who knows but what in this way she may win her husband to Christ, and obtain the happy home for which every Christian woman prays?

## THE CHRISTIAN HUSBAND

We come today to a consideration of those qualities which make a man a Christian husband, and thus help to provide for a happy home. I want all of you men who are listening to me to give close attention to what I am saying, for it is scriptural and right.

In the New Testament, the responsibility of the wife can be summed up by one word, "submission." Likewise, the responsibility of the husband can be reduced to one word, "love." I should like to read for you from the fifth chapter of Paul's letter to the church at Ephesus. "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ loved the church and gave Himself for it" (verse 25). This not only sets forth the command to "love" but likewise shows the degree of that love—it is to be as Christ loved the church.

The church was precious unto Christ. He showed His deep

affection for it by purchasing it with His own blood. It was thus dearer to him than even life itself. As you look at your companion today, do you recall the tender words of your wooing and courtship days? Do you recall the sweet sentiments you uttered? Do you remember the day you stood beside each other to make your mutual vows and you promised to "love, honor and cherish" her as long as you lived? I should like to ask you if you have fulfilled that promise. Has your love become mere routine? Is home just a place to eat and sleep, or are you still enjoying the pleasure of being in the company of each other after all the years that have gone by?

I am not so foolish or ignorant as to think that true love is manifest always in the thrill that comes with contemplation of approaching marriage. After the honeymoon days are past, we settle down to the task of living, and that requires effort and concentration upon such matters as making the pay check cover all of the cost of housekeeping. But I still insist that if we husbands would recognize just a few simple facts, we could make life much better for ourselves and those with whom we live.

Christ didn't love the church for just a few days or a few minutes. He still loves it. And we should follow the example which He has set with regard to our domestic and conjugal love. When you were courting the girl who has since become your wife, you drove up to the door and escorted her out to the car, and drove to the park, or took a joyride, simply because you wanted to be in her presence. How long has it been since you said to your wife, "Listen, dear, I want you to forget all about cooking a meal tonight. You be ready and when I get home we'll go for a little ride and drop in to some nice place for a bite to eat. That way you'll not have to stand over the hot stove or do the dishes afterwards." Better go a little easy on that, men, unless you want your wife to faint!

Have you brought home a box of chocolates lately? You used to do that when you called! Remember? And don't forget that wife of yours is living a pretty humdrum existence. Life must be fairly monotonous. You are out and gone during the day. She has the same routine, sees the same faces, goes over the same rooms with the same dustcloth, cooks on the same stove with the same utensils, serves luncheon on the same table with the same

dishes, and sees the same four walls every day. I'd like to suggest that you have a date with your wife to take her out to dinner some evening. It might help to make your home a happy home!

The Bible teaches plainly that men ought to love their wives enough to die for them. I believe most of the men I know would do that. I feel confident that if a marauding enemy came and threatened the life of your dear ones you'd go to any length to protect them. You'd not stand around and see your wife suffer at the hand of some fiend without doing your best to save and protect her. That would be big! It would be heroic, and you would carry through with it because of the dramatic effect.

But there are very few opportunities in life to do something courageous, such as we've outlined. Most marriages do not suffer from attempts of others to kill our wives. They suffer from the little petty misunderstandings, the careless indifference, the devil-may-care attitudes which creep into our lives. Thus we would die to save our wives in a crisis, and turn right around and kill them—shortening their lives by our own neglect. We were talking not long ago about the degree of love which the Bible stipulates, and one woman in the group said that she wouldn't care if her husband protected her life or not, if he would just notice when she had on a new dress or new pair of shoes. How many homes have been filled with gloom because a husband who never bragged upon the good apple pie which his wife labored to make for him, came home and filled the air with praises about the good meal enjoyed at a friend's home? How long has it been since you said, "Honey, this is really delicious eating, and I'm lucky to have a good cook like you." Here's a hint! Even from a personal standpoint, that's good psychology, for after all you may eat at home again, you know.

The Bible says, "So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies." And why not? Again we read, "For this cause shall a man leave father and mother and cleave to his wife, and they twain shall be one flesh." If I am one with my wife, I cannot mistreat her without mistreating myself. Did you note that the Bible says, "leave father and mother"? I know that in these days of housing shortages that isn't always possible, but it should be the goal of every couple getting married to establish a home of their own. I don't care how humble it may be, and you may have



no rugs on the floor, be forced to use a packing box for a dining table, and smaller boxes for chairs, but in most cases it will be a happier home if you'll get out to yourself. Too many in-laws turn out to be out-laws when you have to live with them. It isn't fair to the young couple, and it isn't fair to the old couple, to live together in the same apartment when each couple could live separately. God knew what was best and I think you'll be better off to do what He recommends.

I read again, "He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church." That gives us an idea of our responsibility toward our companions; we are to nourish them and cherish them. To nourish one means to provide for his temporal welfare. That includes food, clothing, shelter and all that goes to make this life worthwhile. To cherish one signifies the possession of deep affection for that person. Thus, externally and internally, I must show my love for my wife. I must manifest care for her daily existence, and in my heart my inmost thought must be directed to making her life with me as pleasant and cheerful and happy as possible.

The apostle sums up this whole relationship by saying, "Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband" (Ephesians 5:33). In order to accomplish this, the wife should conduct herself so that she deserves and merits the love of a good husband. It is impossible to love that which is unlovely. If a wife ceases to keep herself attractive, if she becomes careless about her person, if she is slovenly, sloppy and indifferent, she will gradually kill the respect of her husband. She should seek to be as neat, tidy, kind and gracious as possible. She may not have good furniture, the rugs may be threadbare and the clothing limited, but she can at least keep clean. My mother used to say in the days when we were poverty-stricken and hard run, "We have to wear patched clothes, children, but we can at least be clean. Clothes cost money, but soap and water are cheap."

And the wife can only reverence a husband who deserves reverence! I sometimes wonder why and how women can show as deep respect as they do for some men. They are forced to breathe the odor of foul tobacco breath which is sickening. Many men

who are polite enough away from home to ask if smoking is offensive, do not hesitate at home to strew tobacco ashes all over the house. And the wife has to go about, cleaning up the mess which is made. Some men come home with the nauseating odor of liquor pervading the pure atmosphere of the home, and they expect a wife who was reared in a dainty atmosphere to respect someone who smells like a sour grog shop or polluted distillery. In the name of common sense, men, act like MEN, and then you can begin to deserve and we believe you'll receive the reverence of those who love you.

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## LOVE YOUR WIVES

It would seem to me that all married men ought to read for their own benefit and profit the Book of Proverbs. In these nuggets of wisdom set down for us by the wisest monarch who ever sat upon an earthly throne, you will find practical lessons which will help you in every department of life on earth. The observations with reference to the establishment and maintenance of homes are well worth your perusal and diligent study.

We can all agree with the sage saying found in chapter 18:22, "Whoso findeth a wife findeth a good thing, and obtaineth favor of the Lord." This forever sets aside the idea that marriage is an institution entered into only by those who have lost their reasoning ability. Instead of saying when a man announces his impending marriage, "Another good man gone wrong," we ought to say, "Another good man gone right!" Paul says, "Marriage is honorable in all." God said in the beginning, "It is not good for man that he should be alone." If it wasn't good then, it's not good now. I hold no brief for those who make jokes about marriage and imply that it is a bondage. It's a good thing, the Bible says, and I agree with that. But it's a good thing only if we make it a good thing. Even good things by being abused can become evil.

Fortunate indeed are those men who have selected as their life companions those who are prudent and wise. The record says, "A prudent wife is from the Lord." Perhaps the other kind are from the devil. But in any event I think that most of us could

make our marriages a great deal happier and derive manifold more blessings therefrom if we considered the part that we should play in order to bring about that state of gladness which should encircle the home.

A philosopher once said, "A good wife is heaven's last best gift to man; his angel of mercy; minister of graces innumerable; his gem of many virtues; his casket of jewels. Her voice his sweetest music; her smiles his brightest days; her kiss the guardian of innocence; her arms the pale of his safety, the balm of his health, the balsam of his life; her industry his surest wealth; her economy his safest steward; her lips his faithful counselor; her bosom the softest pillow of his cares; and her prayers the ablest advocates of heaven's blessings on his head." This being true, certainly we should heed the instruction of God's Truth, which says, "Love your wives."

Husbands, you are all that your wives have to depend upon for joy and comfort, for love and affection. If you disappoint them, if you permit that feeling of warmth to grow cold, if you bestow your love for another, then your wife has no place else to go. She gave up all for you. She sacrificed everything that was dear to her in the past, and risked it all upon your promise of the future. To a woman, marriage is a paradox. The wedding is at one and the same time the happiest and saddest experience through which she can go in life. It constitutes the promise of a future enjoyment and bliss raised like a beautiful monument above the depth of all past and present life of pleasure.

The wife quits the home where she grew up, and says goodbye to all of the familiar scenes which he has loved. She forsakes her parents, relinquishes all of her companions, leaves her occupation and turns her back upon everything which formerly gave her pleasure, and provided her with joy. She has to leave the father and mother whose kind advice has guided her through the years, and whose loving arms have shielded her from the pitfalls and dangers on the road of youth. The sister whose room she has shared and to whom she has confided her inmost thoughts now must become almost a stranger, for those intimate thoughts will be given to another. Every tie that has been so close is now broken and severed at one time, and yet the one who breaks them does so with joy as she begins the journey along an untrodden pathway.

Certainly the man is an ungrateful wretch who will destroy the illusions which he has himself created and which have won to himself this one who so freely gives herself and all she has and is. From the standpoint of fairness and justice, if from no other, the command to "love your wives" is good. I am certain that you will all admit the justice of what I say.

It is not expected that two persons can live in the close relationship of marriage without ever viewing things from a contrary standpoint. In a lot of cases there are actual differences of opinion, and sometimes these lead to discussions. But the Christian husband and wife will not permit themselves to be aggravated to the point where bitterness arises. As a matter-of-fact the Bible says, "Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them" (Colossians 3:19). If your wife takes an opposite view to the one you take, there is no excuse for you becoming bitter over it. Remember that your view also opposes hers. Bitterness leads to the saying of hurtful things. It creates greater tension, and stirs up anger within us. Before long, we find ourselves in the position of harboring evil thoughts. And, since happiness is a state of mind, we banish it from our hearts and homes.

I like the admonition of the apostle Peter. "Likewise ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honor unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered" (1 Peter 3:7). There are three reasons given in this passage as to why I should study my wife, learn her moods, her temperament and her inclinations, that I might dwell with her according to knowledge. Let us consider them.

First, it is affirmed that the wife is the weaker vessel. The term "vessel" has reference to "body" and "bodily structure." A wife might be superior to the husband in mental attainment; and she might far exceed his ability in a great many fields of accomplishment. That is true, even though a lot of husbands are too stubborn to acknowledge the fact. But in the matter of physical strength, the man under most circumstances is superior. He should take this into consideration, and govern his life accordingly. The feminine temperament is different than the masculine, and the wife not able to stand as much as the husband.

Second, I must remember that my wife and I are heirs together of the grace of life. The word "heir" conveys the thought of an inheritance, and in this case it refers to eternal life. I am happy at the thought that in our family we are all striving together for that home over there. We know that some time our home here will be broken up by the hand of death. We do not know who will be called first, nor do we know who will linger to the last and shed tears of sorrow over all of the rest. But we are happy in spite of the fact that death will separate us, because we know that "here we have no continuing city, but we seek one to come." We acknowledge that "this earth is not our home and that we seek one to come." In view of the mutual promises and the mutual inheritance awaiting us, we should treat each other as God's Word directs. Otherwise, one might become discouraged and lose the inheritance. Of all things promised, I want most to know that my family will inherit the everlasting bliss and joy of heaven.

Third, we should live in peace so that our prayers be not hindered. The indication is that contention, quarrelling and anger will hinder our prayers. That certainly is true. Have you ever tried to pray when you and your wife had just engaged in an argument, and you were so angry that you refused to speak to her? It's a hard job to get into the mood to take your petition to God's Throne, isn't it? Now, anything which hinders prayer, hinders our union with God. It renders us incapable of living a Christian to that extent. I ask you, therefore, to remember when you hate your wife and loved ones, that you also hate God. You place a wall and erect a barrier between yourself and heaven.

Listen, husbands, have you really tried to make a Christian home for your wife and children? Did you promise before you were married that you would give up certain habits? Have you dispensed with them? Did you promise yourself that you were going to make your home as much of a heaven as can be constructed on earth? Have you fulfilled that promise? If not, then why not start today? With the help of God's Word, and with the grace of heaven sustaining you, turn from your hateful ways, and get back on the spiritual beam of truth and right living. Others are depending upon you. Can you afford to disappoint them and break their hearts?

# HAPPY HOMES ARE CHRISTIAN HOMES

Recently I talked with a father who told me that his entire life was a wreck. He had reared four children to adolescence. One of the girls had been seduced into a life of immorality and at the age of sixteen had left home. No trace of her had been found. One of the boys, at the age of fourteen, had been convicted of leading a bunch of juvenile gangsters on a stealing expedition and had been confined to a state penal institution. As I listened to this sad tale of woe from the distraught man, I wondered within my mind what had been the cause. I questioned him closely.

I learned that while the children were small there had been difference of opinion over the rearing of them. When the father wanted to correct them, the mother shielded them; then when the mother felt they needed chastising, the father opposed her and gave the children refuge. There had been nagging and quarrelling all through the years. I learned that they had never eaten a meal in peace. Either some of the children were angry, or else the parents were. In some instances, they had refused to speak to each other, and had gulped their food down and hastened from the house.

Then I also learned that the parents had never taken the children to church. Occasionally when the boys and girls were small, they had attended a few times with children in the neighborhood who had asked them, but ordinarily the parents had taken the position that the youngsters ought to sleep on Sunday morning, and had refused to get them ready. And now those parents were growing old. One daughter was ruined, one son was in the state reform school, and the other two children would stand up and curse the parents to their face. What a home! What a dark future! What a sad picture!

God's Word says, "Be not deceived. God is not mocked. For whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to the flesh shall of the flesh, reap corruption; and he that soweth to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit, reap life everlasting" (Galatians 6:7,8). You need not think that you must wait until you reach the next world before you start your reaping. The

parents I mentioned had already found the harvest of sorrow; they had thrust in the painful sickle of life and had gathered in the sheaves of anguish and broken hopes. Their tears represented only the vintage from their hearts where the ripened clusters of their own neglect were being trampled by the feet of destiny. You can't do wrong and get by!

The happy homes are Christian homes. Let me read you one of the most precious promises ever made. Listen to it! "Blessed is every one that feareth the Lord; that walketh in His ways. For thou shalt eat the labor of thy hands: happy shalt thou be, and it shall be well with thee. Thy wife shall be as a fruitful vine by the sides of thy house: thy children like olive plants round about thy table. Behold, that thus shall the man be blessed that feareth the Lord" (Psalm 128). Did you ever hear a more gracious promise? Remember, that this is the Word of the Lord.

In view of what the Bible teaches, I say this day, that those who spend their time gallivanting around upon the Lord's Day, seeking only for pleasure, who bundle their children up and take them upon vain jaunts around the country, the while they neglect the worship of God, are only preparing themselves for a harvest of sadness in the future. I know that there are some of you who scoff at the church. I know you deride those who arise earlier upon the Lord's Day, that they might get the family ready and be at the service when it begins. But one of these days you'll learn that there was something to it all. For many of you, the lesson will come too late! It pays to serve God!

I talked to a wonderful mother not long ago. Her husband is not a member of the church. He is interested only in the things of the world. It has been a hard old struggle for this faithful soul, who loves her children, and would like to see them live faithful to God. Many times after working hard to help support them, she has gone without necessary sleep and rest to bring her brood to the House of God. Some of them are now at the age where they are interested in other things. It is discouraging to the mother. She sheds tears over it many times. But I told her to remain faithful. Come as long as God gives her strength to do His bidding. I believe that she will some day know the joy of reward. The Bible says, "And be not weary in well doing, for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not." There's no place to give

up! Again I read, "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord" (1 Corinthians 15:58).

The Scripture says "Train up a child in the way that he should go and when he is old, he will not depart from it." This does not imply that there will not be temporary lapses from the right way in the life of that child, but it certainly assures that when that one becomes old, he will be impressed with the lessons of youth, and remain therewith. The churches in St. Louis with which I am affiliated in radio work have noted that very thing. Upon a number of occasions we have had young men in the armed services come and express the wish of making an acknowledgment for their laxity in life. They have said that under the impact of war, and through the influence of their unbelieving companions they have been led astray, but after careful thought and memory of the life of Christian parents, they desired to return to the "straight and narrow way" and walk therein.

In the Psalm which I read, there is brought out the thought of the happiness of the man who "fears the Lord and walks in His ways." I like especially the expression, "Thy wife shall be as a fruitful vine by the sides of thine house: thy children like olive-plants round about thy table." The olive trees meant much to the ancients. They were very precious. From them was received the oil which gave light to the home. They provided food for the household and nourishment for those who dwelt therein. Too, beneath the spreading boughs rest and shade and protection from the storms abode. Isn't that a welcome picture of Christian children?

They, too, bring light and joy to the home. How sad those homes which have never known the tread of childish feet or the laughter of childish lips. How dark the prospect of those who grow old without ever having known the gay freedom of youth, the spontaneous gladness, the overwhelming joy of those who are free from cares of life. But our children also serve as nourishers of the home. They join with us in making it a happy place in which to exist, but they also share the burdens of the hour. Of all those with whom I have ever worked, none provide me quite the satisfaction as my own son. I cherish the hours we spend



together in worthwhile attempt, and regret that the day must come when such association will be broken up.

Our children provide for us, also, the protection against the storms of age and doubt. They give us something to work for, something for which to labor, and pray and serve. Truly, "children are an heritage of the Lord." Let us then rear them to serve Him who permitted us to have them. Let us not rob God of the lives of those who belong to Him as much as to us. To do so will bring sorrow and suffering, heartache and anguish, to ourselves and to those whom we love.

And I would speak a word now to the children. You may think that your father and mother are cranks. You may think that the church is too narrow in its concepts. You may rebel and kick against the goads which urge you forward in the right path. But if you continue in arrogant rebellion, you will pay the penalty. I've known young people to refuse to obey their parents, and I've seen them forsake the church because it would not tolerate their evil companionships. And I've watched them get paid back in their own coin. I've seen them establish homes with some of the irresponsible, unconverted ones, which the parents have opposed, and then I've watched them as they came creeping back home to those parents, admitting that they had made a mistake in refusing to listen.

The way of happiness is the way of obedience. "This is the right way: walk ye in it." There's no short cut to happiness; no royal road by which you can go as in the fairy tales of old. You must work, labor and serve, for in these things you shape a career which is solid and substantial. Bring happiness to the home of your parents by being obedient to them. It will pay you to do it!

## PLANTS AND CORNERSTONES

Have you ever thought how barren this world would be if there were no plants or trees? Think how much brighter life has been made by the fragrance of the rose, the stately dignity of the lily, the rich beauty of the tulip. What rest and repose there is amidst the huge trees of the Sequoia National Park! What strength is to

be gleaned from the forest aisles of our own Missouri Ozarks! Science has discovered in recent times that the most restful color is green. Hospitals often have their walls finished in this color. So do railroad stations and other waiting-rooms. And of all the colors God has lavished upon the earth, green predominates. It is the color of living plants which would be so sadly missed if the vegetable kingdom were to be suddenly taken from us.

It was my lot to ride across a desert recently. We traveled through lonely stretches of brown, and gray, and distant purple all day. There is a majestic lonesomeness about such boundless areas stretching to the horizon in unbroken awe. And how welcome is the sight of an occasional little oasis looming out of the awesome distance. One knows how the real desert traveler must feel as he beholds the swaying palms bending above blue water.

But I want to change the subject temporarily. Have you ever watched the laying of a cornerstone? I'm sure that you have at least seen pictures of such an event. Recently I beheld a large crowd gathered about a piece of construction work. I edged my way into the group to see what might be the center of attraction. When I was close enough, I beheld a man with a trowel, daubing mortar upon a well-prepared foundation. Then a large revolving crane picked up a polished cornerstone and swung the beautiful piece of marble into place. There was something graceful about the stone, and its beauty was noticeable and noteworthy. One felt that surely this would be an imposing structure which would have such a stone as the connecting link.

And that introduces my subject for today. I want to read for you from Psalm 144, verse 12, "That our sons may be as plants grown up in their youth; that our daughters may be as cornerstones, polished after the similitude of a palace." This passage is written in all of the glorious imagery of Oriental expression. It utters a prayer that the children of God's parents may be an ornament to the nation. And I am sincerely hoping that our homes of today may produce the same kind of young people.

Homes dedicated to God are to bring forth sons as "plants grown up in their youth," that is, young men who have developed courage, stability and vigor, and who will decorate the country with their nobility of character even as the stately trees do the countryside. They are to produce daughters as cornerstones, beau-

tiful and also useful. Just as cornerstones attract attention to the building which they support, so our children should be living examples of the greatness of the Christian life.

What things are necessary to develop such characters in our offspring? I offer first of all the thought that discipline is one of the greatest essentials. It has been said that "soft-hearted mothers rear soft-headed children." So many are afraid of hurting their children when they are young that they hurt them for their entire lives. After all, children need to know the nature of restraint. They must come to respect authority. One of the signs of apostasy in the last days is "disobedience to parents" (2 Timothy 3:2). In Romans 1:30 this is catalogued with a number of other terrible sins. And the chapter concludes by saying, "Who knoweth the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them." Will this not include the parents, who, with a mistaken sense of humor, laugh at the disobedience of their children, and restrain them not in their wicked deeds?

Children without chastisement are like fields without cultivation. The potential power for fruit bearing is there, but because the field is not plowed, it does not develop. Such a field becomes burdened with briars and overgrown with thorns and thistles. Many a young life produces thorns and briars that could just as easily produce fruit worthwhile if someone took an interest in it. It hurts me to see a neglected field. It hurts me to see a neglected son or daughter. I know that the field is lost so far as any good is concerned, and I know that the same holds true with the boy or girl.

Little children may give their mother a headache, but if she leaves them to others, and neglects to discipline them, when they grow up they will give her a heartache. A child may have too much of its mother's love, and then in the long run when it grows up it may turn out that it really had too little. Love is not, as some mistakenly think, merely a tender emotion. It is also a stern devotion. And devotion to our children demands that we guide them in the way that is best for their childish feet. It was Napoleon Bonaparte who said, "Let France have good mothers, and she will have good sons." If you want your children to be an ornament to the home and nation, train them while they are young.

Another thing which is very essential is the creation of a sense of responsibility upon the part of those who are young. Fathers should be careful in this. The Bible says, "Fathers, provoke not your children to wrath but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord" (Ephesians 6:4). This does not imply that you should wait until they are brought up, then try to get them into God's system of obedience, but bring them up in it. This requires a study of each child, so that we may be able to accomplish this without provoking him to wrath. The Bible does not mean that you should not force your children to do certain things which they dislike. That is a part of discipline. But it does mean that you should not wilfully provoke them. This may be done by assigning them tasks greater than their capabilities. When they cannot get the job done they may grow discouraged.

This is in line with the teaching of the apostle in Colossians 3:21, in which we find him saying, "Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged." There is nothing which lends greater strength than the thought that one can accomplish an assigned task. Neither is there anything more discouraging than the thought of battering away at a task which you know is impossible of success. It was once the case in school that children were sort of lumped together and it was expected that each one would come out with the same ability as every other. Now we know that children differ in their natural talents and capabilities, and they cannot all be poured into one intellectual mold and come out exactly alike, insofar as technical knowledge or skill is concerned. Many children have become discouraged because a brighter pupil was held up before them, and they were ridiculed because they could not meet the standard of that pupil.

We find many parents today who are fearful of their ability when it comes to rearing a family in the way of the Lord. There has been so much emphasis on child psychology that some feel they must be graduate psychiatrists before they can rear their little ones. Now, I am a believer in practical psychology, and I would not underrate its benefits for a minute. But I want to tell you that all of the psychology in the world cannot take the place of a little old-fashioned mother love. After all, when children are away from home in later years, they do not think of the psychology which you employed, but they think of the little things you

said and did as a mother or father, which made home a happy place in which to live.

We need sons today who are strong plants; we need daughters who are as cornerstones, holding up the great citadel of truth. But children of that kind are only produced in homes that are dedicated to the Lord and His Word. For that reason we ask you to give attention to His truth and bring your family up to reverence their Creator. According to the Bible, a virtuous woman is one "who looketh well to the ways of her own household, and eateth not the bread of idleness. Her children arise up and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her. . . . Favor is deceitful, and beauty is vain: but a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised" (Proverbs 31:27-30). That is true, and as the French conqueror said of France, I say of this nation, "Let America have good mothers, and she will have good sons."

## THE OLD FOLKS AT HOME

I want to speak this day to the grandfathers and grandmothers who listen to these messages of truth. I want to attempt to set forth my firm belief in the blessed influence of a devoted old age, and tell you what you have meant to the world and what you still mean to all of us, if you are living a consecrated life for the Master.

Many of those who are aged sit in their rooms today with a feeling of loneliness at the thought that the busy world has thrust them aside. Many have the idea that life is of little account. They are waiting, rather anxiously, for the time when the angel of death shall silently and swiftly enter to kiss the wrinkled brow and whisper sweet peace. They feel that they are only in the way. To all such I bring a message of enduring love! I want you to realize the value of your life to humanity and the world, and thus to soothe your cares.

I know that you are often given a headache from the laughter and noise of the grandchildren downstairs. I know that your step is not as sure as it once was, and that you must cling to the banister for support when you walk downstairs. I know that your

heart has been softened and tendered by advancing years until in the mellowness of late autumn, you cannot stand to see the grandchildren punished, and it breaks your heart to have them chastised. But I know also your value in times of sickness, and when a crisis arises.

One of my grandmothers lived not far from where we lived when I was a little youngster. As surely as one of us was ill, that surely would she come. I am not certain that the old remedies she suggested were of much assistance. I do know that at her instigation I was forced to drink copiously of catnip and dog fennel tea. And I cannot forget that she always kept a supply of dried mullein leaves for treating certain conditions, and a hoard of slippery elm bark for making poultices. All of that may be laughed at in these modern days of skill in medicine, but there's one thing that did help, and that was the soft hand of grandmother laid upon a feverish brow. There was about the tenderness of such ministrations more than all the physicians of the world could do to ease pain.

Grandparents have had a tremendous influence over the spiritual life of the world also. I want to read in this connection a statement of Paul to the young preacher, Timothy. "I have remembrance of these in my prayers night and day; greatly desiring to see thee, being mindful of thy tears, that I may be filled with joy; when I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice, and I am persuaded that in thee also" (2 Timothy 1:3-5). Three generations are mentioned in this verse, and the third is said to have been influenced by the first of the trio. Timothy's godly grandmother had much to do with his becoming a faithful preacher of the gospel.

I recall reading about a minister of the word in the last generation. He was motivated to that work by an impression of devotion to the Lord on the part of his grandmother. As a little boy, he was visiting in her home. They had only the glow of a fireplace for warmth. It was early morning, and the lad was standing in front of the glowing embers on the warm stones of the hearth. Being barefoot, he would raise one foot and then the other to cool them from the flame. Meanwhile the aged grandmother was sweeping back the ashes with a turkey wing kept for that purpose.

She stooped down and picked up a small bit of paper, and after bringing it close to her failing eyes, she carefully put it on the mantel above. The little boy, moved by curiosity, asked her why she had saved this small bit of paper. The aged one replied that it had the name of Jesus on it, and she could not stand to sweep His sacred name into the consuming embers in the fireplace. The youngster recalled this reverence in the years of his after-life, and he was motivated to a love for that Master of us all, and took up his cross to follow the Lord.

It would be hard to estimate how many men are this day proclaiming the unsearchable riches of the cross because some faithful grandparent helped them to know the Lord and the power of His Word. I know that I personally owe a great deal to those dear souls who now have crossed on over the river and gone to their eternal reward. My debt to them can never be paid directly. The only way I can discharge it is by faithfulness to my trust and by my respect for the aged disciples who still remain. I recall that once when I visited my grandmother, she gave me an old McGuffey's Sixth Reader. In it I found a poem which aptly expresses my feeling concerning her, as well as my grandfather.

*"I know thou art gone to the land of rest:  
Then why should my soul be so sad?  
I know thou art gone where the weary are blest,  
And the mourner looks up and is glad:  
Where Love has put off in the land of its birth,  
The stain it had gathered in this,  
And Hope, the sweet singer that gladdened the earth,  
Lies asleep in the bosom of bliss."*

Now, there is some time a tendency upon the part of those who grow older to retire from service to God even as they do from other occupations. I want this day to tell you that you are greatly needed in the vineyard of the Master. The reward is not until the twelfth hour—the sunset of life. We cannot reap if we faint. Be steadfast, unmovable in the toil of the Lord and rest will come when sleep is yours. There are so many who are depending upon you yet. Do not let your influence die. Keep your lamp trimmed and burning, so that you may light the way to others in your declining years.

Who knows how much the shepherd lad, David, was influenced

by his great-grandmother Ruth? The blood of this faithful, consecrated soul flowed through the veins of the sweet singer, and he was "a man after God's own heart." On the other hand, consider the influence of the wicked Jezebel, the wife of Ahab, and how as mother and grandmother she caused others to sin. It is said of her son who succeeded the father, "And he did evil in the sight of the Lord, and walked in the way of his father, and in the way of his mother . . . who made Israel to sin." Isn't there a lot in that statement, "in the way of his father, and in the way of his mother?" Even after their death, the wicked lives which they had lived continued to lead God's people astray. I plead with you who hear me this day to know that you are holding in your hands the destiny of your children, and your children's children. You are influencing lives that are yet unborn. Will you be a blessing or a curse to them? Only you can decide that.

A great many grandchildren must answer in the last day because they have been unwilling to permit a grandparent to come into the rest and solace of their homes. Don't close the door of your home or the door of your heart against these dear old souls. Make the last mile they walk in life an easy one. Remove the obstacles from the path so that the sunshine of happiness will warm their hearts on the final journey. If they become ill, call the best doctor to minister to their needs. Give them the easiest chair in the house. Tread lightly when they are sleeping, speak softly when they are resting. Help them down the steps when they are going with you. Guide them across the street and through the traffic. Let them lean upon you for support in their helplessness, as you clung to them in yours.

Don't be ashamed of your grandmother. If she prefers styles that are a little old-fashioned, that's all right. She is living in the yesterday of life and has a right to do so. Never imply that she is in the way. Don't look upon her as a burden; she is a blessing. Don't forget the old folks at home! Don't be so busy with life, so burdened with care, so troubled and worried, that you forget to write, or better yet, to go home! They'll not be with you much longer at the very best. Give them their flowers while they are here. Light up those dim old eyes with a sparkle of renewed joy. You'll live to see that day that you'll rejoice at the little extra kindnesses you gave to those whom you loved.

God bless all of the faithful and devoted grandparents whose



lives have paved the way for us to follow. They have hewn down the wilderness and given us homes. Their sacrifices have made for us the highways that we travel, and their love has given to us the right to live. May their influence for good continue long after the storms of life have washed away the last name upon the marble markers in the cities of the dead. And may they some day stand before Him who died for us, and hear the glad welcome of the angels' song, and the sweet voice saying, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant." That is our prayer for those who grow old in the Lord Jesus Christ.

## THE CONCLUSION

It is wise judgment for one to take time out occasionally to summarize the things which he has spoken, and to draw from them a justifiable conclusion. In view of that, I want this day to speak about the ingredient, which properly mixed, in the right proportions, make for happy homes on earth and hold forth the promise of a like home eternally. There are certain things which make for Christian homes, and Christian homes are happy homes. If a home isn't happy, it isn't Christian; if it isn't Christian, it isn't happy. Now, that which is Christian is based upon God's Word.

Therefore, I affirm that the happy homes are the *Bible-reading* homes. No home can truthfully be said to be a happy one if the essentials for happiness are missing from it. Listen, then, to Psalm 1. "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in His law doth he meditate day and night." The word "blessed" is the word for "happy." So, happiness consists of an interest in God's law.

I read once more from Deuteronomy 6:5-7, "And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul and with all thy might. And these words which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart, and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up."

I feel sorry for those who this day are seeking for happy homes and leaving Jesus outside the door. No wonder He declares, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If any man open unto Me, I will come in unto him, and will sup with him, and he with Me." But he will not force himself into your home. Jesus will not stay where He is not wanted. You can have Him as a constant unseen guest and share the blessings which He alone can give, but you must invite Him by your interest in the things which He has said. Do you ever spend an hour reading His blessed truth?

Happy homes are Bible-believing homes. It is altogether possible for men to read the Bible, and yet not believe in it or the saving grace which sets it forth. Some are "ever learning, and never able to come to a knowledge of the truth." They may have "a form of godliness but deny the power thereof." If you do not actually believe in the resurrection of Jesus, for instance, then you cannot actually believe in a coming resurrection of yourself. "And if we in this life only have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." There is no happiness in unbelief. Only misery!

If, therefore, one of your loved ones is removed from the family circle, you cannot know the "peace that passeth all understanding" and you see only the vacant chair, the marble marker, the heaped-up mound. The believer looks beyond these things, and sees the eternal purpose of God, and his spirit is renewed. "While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen, for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen, are eternal."

Remember that "without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him" (Hebrews 11:6). With such assurance and comfort, we will more diligently labor for the Lord, and in such labor we will know the reward is certain, for the "Lord is not slack concerning His promises, as some men count slackness."

If you believe that God is able to know your every word, then you will be careful of the words you speak. If you believe that He is able to know your every thought, then you'll guard against unkind thoughts. If you believe that He is aware of your every action, then you'll watch your conduct, and if you guard against unkind thoughts, harsh words and unbecoming acts, it is certain that you'll find happiness and joy in Christian service as a family.

Even if sorrow comes, it will not disturb your peace, for it cannot ruffle your faith. "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." Make yours a home of faith, and you'll make it a home of joy.

My third affirmation is that happy homes are *Bible-obeying* homes. I ask you to listen to these scriptures. "Ye shall observe to do therefore as the Lord your God hath commanded you: ye shall not turn aside to the right hand or the left. Ye shall walk in all the ways which the Lord your God hath commanded you, that ye may live, and that it may be well with you" (Deuteronomy 5:32,33). "Wherefore it shall come to pass, if ye hearken to these judgments, and keep, and do them, that the Lord thy God shall keep unto thee the mercy which he sware unto thy fathers; and He will love thee, and bless thee, and multiply thee . . . thou shalt be blessed above all people" (Deuteronomy 7:12-14). We call attention here to the fact that happiness is definitely said to be conditioned upon absolute obedience to God's Word. There is no happiness in getting sidetracked, for we must neither "turn to the right hand or to the left" if we would be blessed.

If you would have life serve you well, obey God. Listen to His words once more. "O that there were such an heart in them, that they would fear Me, and keep all My commandments always, that it might be well with them and with their children forever" (Deuteronomy 5:29). If yours is an obedient home you can say as did the ancient Psalmist, "I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and fortress: my God, in Him will I trust. Surely He shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisome pestilence. He shall cover thee with His feathers, and under His wings shalt thou trust: His truth shall be thy shield and buckler. Thou shalt not be afraid of the terror by night; nor for the arrow that flieth by day; nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness; nor for the destruction that wasteth at noonday. A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee. . . . Because thou hast made the Lord, which is my refuge, even the Most High, thy habitation; there shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling."

A Bible-obeying home would have to be a happy one, for there would be no friction to make it otherwise. It would consist of a loving husband, a submissive wife and obedient children. Within its walls there would be respect for parental authority, natural

love for each other, and hospitality for the stranger. Under its friendly roof would be mutual understanding, heart-warming fellowship and tender devotion. No storm could batter down the faith of the hearts of its occupants, no wind could chill their regard for each other.

*My house is little, but warm enough  
When the skies of Sorrow are snowing;  
It holds me safe from the tempest rough,  
When the winds of Despair are blowing.*

*Its rafters come from the woods of Praise,  
Its walls from the quarry of prayer,  
And not one echo, on stormy days,  
Can trouble the stillness there.*

*The floor is bare, but the joists are strong  
With faith from the heavenly hill;  
My lamp is love, and the whole year long  
It burns unquenchable still.*

*With sweet Content is my hearth well lit,  
And there, in the darkest weather,  
Hope and I by the fire can sit,  
And sing, and keep house together.*

Why not know that happiness in your home this day which comes from a true obedience to God's Word? Are you not a Christian father? Then become one and lead your children in the paths of righteousness. Are you not a Christian mother? Then obey the Lord before it is too late and bring your affectionate little ones into the fold. Are you an unbelieving husband? Make the heart of your companion rejoice before God by yielding to the Lord. Are you an indifferent wife with a Christian companion? Batter down that stubborn will and take your stand with the one who loves you. The way has been marked by the blood drops from the feet of the Man of Calvary. Walk in that way this day. Do not linger longer. Tomorrow may not come. Now is the day of salvation!

"And now, let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep His commandments for this is the whole duty of man." That is the way of happiness! Walk ye in it!