

LESSON 10



RULES FOR CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE

Scripture Texts: Genesis 2:18-24; 1 Timothy 3:12; 2 Corinthians 6:14-16; Hebrews 13:4; 1 Corinthians 6:19

When two Christian people are truly in love, know one another well, have prayed together, and know that it is the will God for them to marry, then, and only then, will God be pleased to sanction their union in marriage.

With this foundation laid, they can build a Christian home. They build a Christian home as they establish Christian principles and practices by which to carry on its daily activities.

MEMORY VERSE: *What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder. Mark 10:9*

One Man, One Women for Life

God's original plan was that men and women should marry. Therefore, marriage is good if carried out in God's way. This was the rule. His way includes as a basic principle that husband and wife cleave to one another. The word "cleave" means to hold fast and is the exact opposite idea of separation. In marrying, one separates from all others and holds fast to husband or wife. Many marriages are not joined together by God and therefore cannot be considered as a sacred or heavenly union. After this sacred union is entered, one can never go back and be entirely outside of it. Divorce may divide man and wife, but can never erase completely the ties that made them one. Any effort to separate a man and wife or any act tending to damage their union is a sin, whether coming from one of them or from an outside party. Let not man put asunder.

Marriage Is Honorable to God

Marriage was instituted by God at Creation before man sinned, as we read in Genesis 1:27-28. Therefore, it was made to fit good people in a good society. It is not a concession to man's sinful tendencies, as was divorce temporarily, as in Matthew 19:8. Marriage is honorable, but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge, because they are going contrary to God's established plan. They are sinning. Society, in a large part, has changed its attitude of the modern lifestyle, so called, but God's attitude is still the same. It is still sin. All living in sin reap the same wages. How can the modern philosophy on single parents ever lead to a happy marriage or healthy home life for children? Children need both mother and father.

In 1 Timothy 3:12 we are taught that a leader in the Church of God must be a fit example in all ways. He is not under any different rules than every other one, for God has one standard for all. One point of that standard is that a man must have but one wife, and a woman but one husband. Another point is that he rule his children and house well.

God's way is one husband and one wife bound together for life. The only thing that can break this tie and give either freedom to marry another is the death of one of them. God sets a limitation on all saved persons who are free to marry again. Every marriage is subject to this limitation—ONLY IN THE LORD, only a person who is saved and

who is free to marry. God gives no one a right to marry an unsaved person. This would show dishonor to God. It is saved men and women whose purified personality, qualities, and capabilities will complement each other in God's perfect plan. Only when a partner breaks the marriage union by committing fornication is the other partner permitted a divorce, as in Matthew 19:9.

Lean Not to Your Own Understanding

Since the companion that you choose will be your companion for life, it is most important that you get help from One who knows all about each of us. Outward beauty fades in just a little while, but inner beauty becomes more beautiful with the passing years. A beautiful woman is not always good, but a good woman is always beautiful. The same is true with the handsome man. The fleshly mind has difficulty seeing that beauty that fadeth not. Ask God and have faith in His wisdom. He has never made a bad match. We read in Proverbs 31:30 that beauty is vain.

As the woman is of the man, even so is the man also by the woman, as we read in 1 Corinthians 11:11. As pertains to marriage, these words teach us the basic equality and the mutual dependence of the sexes. Since this is true, each should honor and respect the other in the Lord. We all owe our being entirely to God. Proverbs 31:10-31 shows us the picture of the model woman. Ask God to help you to find her.

JUST A THOUGHT

Some wives meet their husbands with a kiss, others with orders to wipe their feet.

This lesson is adapted from a lesson by Mary Lehmann.
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