

# Christian Homes

(Genesis 2:21-24)

by Charles B. Hodge, Jr.

---

All brides wish to be well-“groomed” Thus, this lesson involves courtship. It involves marriage. It involves a happy Christian home.

I do not have to tell you of the misery and failure that is happening at home today. I read last week that in our United States our divorce rate now approaches 50 percent. One of two. How tragic! And many of the married people are miserable, disappointed, and warring. Of all the things that man wants, it is a happy home. If there is anything that a man can have, it is a happy home. It is not just for the elite, the rich, or the brilliant. God established the home, and He made it good. God intended for every married person to fulfill his potential in a home.

Eve was made married. If there is anything that every one of you can have today, it is a productive, happy, wonderful home. It can be yours. It can be yours today.

Jesus said in Matthew 19 that He could not improve on Genesis 2:24. So the fundamental origins of man not only have not been altered, but they cannot be improved.

This lesson will emphasize three great truths about the home which are brought out in Genesis 2:24.

## I. SURRENDER

The first truth is surrender. We will make many statements today that will sum up our message, I hope, but one of our mistakes in the world at large and in the church particularly is the fact that we are always trying to get people to commit without prior surrender. It is futile to commit without surrender. The problem in many homes is not the commitment but the fact that the man and the woman never surrendered at the start. I don't care how many vows you take, if there is not a total surrender of the two mates, the home cannot produce. Jesus says a man leaves his father's house. He surrenders. He dies.

He cuts himself asunder. His only obligation now is to this new union, this new home. His new relationship transcends all other earthly relationships.

Brother Cline Paden told us about being partners with God. He said we were not just called en masse, but we were seen, identified, named, known, and loved from eternity. He said God has a plan for our lives, that there is something here for me and me alone to do. This sanctifies marriage. This means that a man and a woman ought to place high priority upon whom they marry.

Marry right. Marry God's choice. You will either marry God's choice or Satan's choice, one of the two. Of all the prayers that parents should pray, they should be praying that the partner their son or daughter seeks will be the one which God Almighty called. We need to pray for that other mate, that other soul. Genesis 1:31 ends that great creation chapter. Every time God made something, He stood back and looked at it. And He said, “It is good.” Having made man and woman and married them in Eden, God stepped back and said, “It is very good.” The greatest creation of God was the home. The greatest matchmaker on earth is God. If it is not God's match, stay out of it.

Parents, teach your kids to marry a Christian. I would like very simply to tell you whom they should marry. It is real simple. I guarantee it. Tell them, “Marry someone who loves God more than you.” Now, if I demand that of my mate, I must first practice this truth myself. I will love God more than I love my mate. Two may love each other as much as a man and a woman physically can, but that dimension of God, heaven, and eternity is not in it. To love God more than a mate does not diminish love between mates. It produces a pure love because of the presence of the love of God. To put God first

and foremost means that I will have the proper love for my mate. Not to love God is to diminish my love for my mate.

This keeps us from marrying outside the Lord, does it not? This keeps us from just marrying a mediocre church member, does it not? This simply means that my allegiance to God is so fundamental, so bedrock that I will only marry the one whom God would select. What else has it done? If my mate loves God more than me, then she will be faithful whether I am or not. This also puts a restraint in our home because my mate is there sanctifying the home in spite of me (1 Corinthians 7). This also means that we will be Bible teachers or church workers. Many people tell me they can't work in the church because of their mates. They must have the wrong mate! Wouldn't it be wonderful if every one of us were to love God even more than we love our mates? That would put a dimension of love in our homes which would lift us from mediocrity into greatness.

True marriage is only found in the love of God. My home belongs to God. Surrender.

## II. COMMITMENT

The second truth is commitment. I don't diminish *commitment* when I tell you to surrender first. Having surrendered, a man now is welcome to commit. A man leaves his father's house and he cleaves, he is glued or committed to his wife.

Marriage does not demand *perfection*. Aren't you glad? It demands *priority*. It must come before jobs, children, in-laws, or anything else. A man surrenders and then commits.

I don't know too much about the laws in Texas. I know more about the laws in California. But for many years in California, many divorces were granted simply because of incompatibility. The Bible says a man and a woman get married. A male and a female, right? Thus, you start out incompatible. Right? There has to be some kind of a difference. The very fact of marriage is based upon, not two women or two men, but two incompatible people, a male and a female. Adam and Eve were not the same, were they? Here is my point! We have to learn how to "compat." I don't know if that is a good word or not, but it works well here. We don't start out compatible and get incompatible. We start out

incompatible and work to compatibility. The two become one.

If a man is not compatible with himself, he will not be compatible with a mate. I don't care who that mate is. If a man cannot handle life, he cannot handle marriage. I am not against seminars, marital encounters, or retreats. I am not against some of these "how-to" books. But some of it is just downright amusing. We are trying to attack the problem of marriage, and marriage isn't a problem. It never has been and it never will be. Marriage is not the issue. The issue is people. People with bad character can't have holy marriages. People who are weak, unstable, wishy-washy, who will not work, who cannot make decisions, who are emotional cripples, and who can't cut it in an adult world cannot build a successful home. The failure at home is a failure in life. The attitude that we can build a marriage or save a marriage without reconstructing the people is utter absurdity.

I don't know why we think that if we get to be good Christians we won't have any problems. Adam and Eve had problems. They may have been fussing that day that Eve went out alone. Have you ever wondered why Adam and Eve weren't together that day? Good people have problems. Good marriages have problems. Some of the best marriages on earth have problems. It is not *perfection*, it is *priority*. Two people are joined together to fight life's problems. So God doesn't exempt us; He doesn't remove our problems. He allows us to yoke ourselves together that we might use our problems, that we might profit from them, that we might mature through them.

## III. FIDELITY

The third truth is fidelity. A man leaves his father's house—surrender. He cleaves to his wife—commitment. The two become one—fidelity. Sociologists report that the one trait that is wanted in marriage is fidelity. Somebody says, "Brother Hodge, I thought it would be love." Talk to any marriage counselor on earth and he will tell you that the one commodity that all married people want, when you boil it all down, is fidelity. Faithfulness! Trust! That is the reason why when there is a scandal, people are shattered. Fidelity and trust have been blown to smithereens. People demand fidelity.

Marriages are made in heaven, but the maintenance is on earth. Marriage is not finding the right person so much as being the right person. How can I expect my mate to be what I am not? 1 Corinthians 13 says that love is faithful. Love believes all things. Love is trustworthy. Love is the covenant of trust. It is the covenant of fidelity. Love cannot be unfaithful. Love never fails. So a man can have faith without love but he cannot have love without faith. But to pinpoint the need of fidelity we usually say in the marriage vow "Until death do us part." Jesus said, "What God joins together, let no man put asunder." People do not divorce *prematurely*. They married with immaturity.

One man said the cause of divorce is marriage. In one sense that is amusing. But in another way it is profound. To marry wrong is to be headed for disaster. In Psalms 57:7 David said, "My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed: . . ." Another translation says, "My heart is fixed on thee, my Lord." But I like to give the King James translation, "My heart is fixed, . . ." That is fidelity. That is commitment. Not wishy-washy, not like a roller coaster, but "fixed." When a couple marries, their hearts need to be fixed.

In Ephesians 5 and Titus 2 the Bible repeatedly tells husbands and wives to love and respect each other. A husband is here to make his wife successful. A wife is here to make her husband successful. Parents are here to make their

children successful. Children are here to make their parents successful. Christians are here to make other people successful. Who are you making successful?

Fidelity means I am not here to push my rights. I am here to accept my responsibilities. Individual rights are always sacrificed before the altar of social responsibilities. This is what is wrong with America today. I don't quibble when somebody says, "I have a right to do this or that." I don't argue about it. But the rights and the responsibilities of society overrule any one man's rights. We had better wake up to that truth.

## CONCLUSION

People often talk about how bad the old world is and what a sorry mother-in-law they have. But I would just like to remind us today that most of us are not too great of a catch ourselves. Sometimes when we leave a home we say, "I sure am glad I don't have to live with him." But if we would just get up every day and look into the mirror and say, "You know, you aren't too great a catch yourself," it would kind of make the inequities, injustices, and disappointments a little more understandable.

Surrender, commitment, and fidelity—God's original plan for marriage cannot be improved. God said a man will leave his father's house and shall cleave unto his wife and the two shall be one flesh.