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XLV. WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS

LESSON FORTY-FIVE

... PRAYER

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this lesson is to learn to appreciate prayer as communication with our Father God, a very special time in our Father's presence, and to learn the how to, of effective, powerful. Holy Spirit energized prayers.

James 5:16 says,

"... The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much."

Prayer lies at the root of all personal godliness. To pray is to change. God uses prayer to transform us. If we are unwilling to change, we will abandon prayer as a noticeable characteristic of our lives. The closer we come to the heartbeat of God the more we see our need and the more we desire to be conformed to the image of Christ. Thus when we pray our Father God graciously reveals to us our hiding places, that we might repent and be set free.

James 4:3 says concerning prayer,

"Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts (passions)."

To ask "rightly" involves transformed passions and renewing of the mind. In prayer we begin to think God's thoughts after Him desiring the things He desires, loving the things He loves. Progressively we begin to see things from His point of view.

All who have walked with God have viewed prayer as the main business of their lives. Mark 1:35, stands as a commentary on the life-style of Jesus.

"And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, He went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed."

David's desire for God broke the self-indulgence of sleeping late: "early will I seek Thee" (Psalms 63:1). Acts 6:4 tells us that when the apostles were tempted to give their energies to other important tasks, instead they determined to give themselves continually to prayer and the ministry of the Word.

We, likewise need to view prayer as the main business of our lives. Like the disciples (Luke 11:1) we need to ask the Lord Jesus, "Lord, teach us to pray."

PRAYER HABITS OF JESUS

Since Jesus is to be the pattern for our life which also includes our prayer life, we need to take a look at the prayer habits of Jesus. According to the following Scriptures, what godly habits of prayer do we see in the life of Jesus?

Mark 1:35

Luke 5:16

Matthew 14:23

Luke 6:12

Luke 9:18

Luke 22:32

Luke 22:41-44

Luke 11:1

THE PRAYER OF FAITH

If prayers are to be effective, powerful, Holy Spirit energized prayers, one must pray the PRAYER OF FAITH. What is the PRAYER OF FAITH?

James 5:15

Mark 11:23-24

John 11:41-42

Romans 10:17

Conclusions: The PRAYER OF FAITH is the prayer that faith prays - FAITH which has its roots/foundation in the Word of God for it is impossible to have faith apart from the Word of God or a Word from God. God's Word is His will and creates faith in which there is no doubt. Thus you are praying the PRAYER OF FAITH, when you know that you have that for which you have prayed because you are praying according to God's will.

FOUNDATION STONES OF THE PRAYER OF FAITH

To consistently pray the PRAYER OF FAITH, there is a FOUNDATION that must be laid in ones life. And like all foundations there are certain Ingredients that must be present if it is to be sure and firm.

According to the following Scriptures, what are the ingredients, foundation stones of the PRAYER OF FAITH?

1. Hebrews 11:6

Luke 1:45

Numbers 23:19

Matthew 6:33

Luke 6:46

2 Corinthians 1:20

Matthew 7:7-11

2. Matthew 6:9-10

I John 5:14-15

John 4:34

John 5:30
John 17:17

3. **John 15:1-8**
1 John 3:21-22
1 Peter 3:7
James 5:16

Conclusions: We would note from the above Scriptures that the FOUNDATION STONES, INGREDIENTS of the PRAYER OF FAITH ARE:

1. Faith in (towards) God - believing and trusting in the integrity of God;
2. Seeking and praying according to the will of God;
3. Looking to Jesus and His Word for life and walk.

FIVE STEPS OF PRAYER

From the following Scriptures what are the five steps of the life changing PRAYER OF FAITH.

1. **Romans 10:11**
Matthew 4:4
Psalm 119:105
2. **John 16:23-24**
Mark 16:17-18
Matthew 28:18
Philippians 2:9-10
Mark 13:34
3. **Psalms 100:4**
Psalm 95:2
Psalm 136:1
Psalm 22:3
Psalm 150:2
4. **Acts 3:19**
Isaiah 59:2
1 John 1:9
Mark 11:25
5. **Matthew 7:7-11**
Luke 11:5-10
Luke 18:1-8
James 4:2

Conclusions: We would note from the above Scriptures that the five steps of prayer are:

1. Being full of the Word of God;
2. Praying in the Name of The Lord Jesus Christ;
3. Coming into God's presence with praise & thanksgiving;
4. Repenting of the sin in one's life;
5. Asking with persistence and unashamed boldness (importunity).

RESPONSE TO THE TRUTH

Our Father God desires that each one of His children have good habits of prayer. Do you have good prayer habits?

Yes _____ No _____

Are the ingredients of the PRAYER OF FAITH a viable part of your life-style?

Yes____ No____

Do you include in your prayer time the word, praise, thanksgiving, confession of sins and repentance?

Yes____ No____

XLVI. WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS

LESSON FORTY-SIX

. . . ABOUT PRAYER AND FASTING

INTRODUCTION

Fasting adds a new dimension to the prayer life of the child of God. Jesus in Matthew 17:14-21(21) tells us that certain things will not happen without prayer and FASTING. What is the new dimension that fasting adds to your prayer life?

Fasting prepares the heart of the child of God, who desires to walk with God, praying effective, powerful, Holy Spirit energized prayer to pray the life changing PRAYER OF FAITH. Especially, in those instances where satan has a long standing stronghold or where there is a strong resistance and stubbornness in the soul, to the getting rid of bad (evil), ungodly habits and attitudes.

The fact that fasting is to have an important place in our Christian walk is shown by Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 6:1-16) where He places fasting in the same context as giving and praying.

Therefore if giving and praying are an important part of the Christian walk, then fasting must also be an important part of the Christian devotion and walk.

The purpose of this lesson is to develop the proper attitude toward fasting and encourage the regular practice of this important aspect of the Christian walk. So that the enemy (satan and the stubborn flesh) will not be able to hinder the effectiveness of our prayers.

BIBLICAL FASTING

Throughout the Bible fasting refers to the abstaining from food for spiritual purposes. It stands in distinction to the hunger strike, the purpose of which is to gain political power or attract attention for a good cause. It is distinct from health dieting, which stresses abstinence from food, but for physical not spiritual purposes.

The Bible gives examples of at least four different types of fasts. There is the Absolute Fast, the Normal Fast, the Partial or Daniel Fast, and the Supernatural Fast. What are the specifics concerning fasting in the following Scriptures?

Deuteronomy 9:9

I Kings 19:8

Esther 4:16

Acts 9:9

Luke 4:2

Matthew 4:2

Daniel 10:3

Conclusions: We would note from the above Scriptures that:

4. Abstaining from food and water is an ABSOLUTE FAST;
5. Abstaining from food is a NORMAL FAST;
6. Abstaining from meats and deserts is a DANIEL FAST;
7. Abstaining from food and or, food and water for an extended period of time is a SUPERNATURAL FAST. It is a supernatural fast because after 3 days without water and 21 days without food the human body begins to dehydrate without water and starvation sets in without food.

CIRCUMSTANCES AND PURPOSES FOR FASTING

According to the following Scriptures, what are the circumstances of fasting and the purposes which are mentioned?

Joel 2:12-17

Mark 9:29

Zechariah 8:19

Luke 18:12

Matthew 6:16-18

Luke 2:37

Acts 13:2

Zechariah 7:5

Psalms 35:13

1 Corinthians 6:12

1 Corinthians 9:27

Psalms 69:10

Conclusions: We would note from the above Scriptures that the circumstances and purposes for fasting includes, but not necessarily limited to:

4. Circumstances:

1. God's judgment on ones/church's/people's sin;
2. Need for deliverance from demon spirits and or, getting flesh/soul/self under control;
3. Regular scheduled days of fasting;

5. Purposes:

1. Turning back God's judgment on sin;
2. Humble/humiliate the soul through exposure of the areas of reproach (bondages, chains, and strong-holds of shame, disgrace, ungodly emotions, self-indulgences, evil (sin), unclean spirits in the flesh/soul), in-order that, these reproaches may be brought under control or cast out, in the case of unclean spirits;
3. Ministering and serving God;
4. For God's blessings (rewards for faithfulness).

According to Jesus in Matthew 6:16-18, what is to be our appearance and attitude when we are fasting?

Answer: As unto the Lord

JESUS' ATTITUDE TOWARD THE FASTING OF HIS FOLLOWERS

From the following Scriptures determine what Jesus' attitude and expectations were concerning fasting in the lives of His followers.

Matthew 6:16

from context

from statement - "when you fast"

Matthew 9:15 - from the statement "then shall they fast"

In the above Scriptures was Jesus commanding His disciples to fast ____ Yes ____ No?

Conclusions: From the above passages it is clear that Jesus expected His disciples to fast after He was gone. It is, also clear from these Scriptures that Christ both upheld the discipline of fasting and that He anticipated that His followers would do it.

RESPONSE TO THE TRUTH

What is your opinion concerning fasting as an important part discipline of the Christian walk?

Does Fasting have a place in your walk with Jesus? If not, why?

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XLVII. WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS

LESSON FORTY-SEVEN

... STEWARDSHIP

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this lesson is to impress upon each of us that:

all we have (our time, talents, treasures) are gifts from God;

we are stewards, administrators, and not owners of that which we have in our possession;

we need to learn, develop and put into action Biblical principles of good stewardship.

1 Peter 4:10, "As every one hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God."

STEWARDSHIP OF TIME, TALENTS, AND TREASURES

What do the following passages about stewardship?

1 Corinthians 6:19-20

Haggai 2:8

Genesis 2:15

1 Peter 4:10

Ephesians 5:1

John 9:4

Colossians 1:10

1 Thessalonians 1:3

1 Thessalonians 4:11

1 Timothy 5:13

Matthew 25:14-30

2 Corinthians 9:7

1 Corinthians 16:2

Genesis 14:18-20

Hebrews 7:2

Malachi 3:10

1 Corinthians 16:3

2 Corinthians 7:8

Luke 6:38

Conclusions: From the above Scriptures answer the following questions.

6. What is our position (job) as children of God?
7. What are the three areas of our stewardship?
 1. _____
 2. _____
 3. _____
8. Since we are stewards (managers/administrators), who is the owner?
9. How much belongs to Him?

TITHING

From Malachi 3:10,11 answer these questions about tithing.

6. What is the tithe?
7. Where does the tithe go?
8. What is the purpose of the tithe?
9. Are we to give offerings above the tithe?
10. What can we expect if we give or our tithes and offerings?

Note: In the next lesson "about money management" we will talk more about tithing.

RESPONSE TO THE TRUTH

Do you believe:

That you belong to God and that all you have likewise belongs to God?

YES ___ NO ___

That all your time, abilities and treasures (money, goods, possessions) belong to God?

YES ___ NO ___

That you are a caretaker, manager, administrator, steward but not the owner of them?

YES ___ NO ___

If your answer is yes to the above questions, what kind of steward are you over your:

Time

Talents (abilities)

Treasures

If your answer to the above questions is no, are you willing to allow God to change your mind?

YES ___ NO ___

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XLVIII. WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS

LESSON FORTY-EIGHT

. . . ABOUT MONEY MANAGEMENT

INTRODUCTION

In lesson 47, What The Bible says about Stewardship, we concluded that we belong to God and that everything we possess (our abilities, time, material possessions and money) belong to God.

1 Corinthians 6:19-20, "what? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's."

Haggai 2:8 "The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith the Lord of hosts."

1 Chronicles 29:11-12, "Thine, O Lord, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty: for ALL that is in the heaven and in the earth is thine; thine is the kingdom O lord, and thou art exalted as head above all. Both riches and honor come of thee, and thou reignest over all; and in thine hand is power and might; and in thine hand it is to make great, and to give strength unto all."

Ephesians 5:16, "Redeeming the time, because the days are evil."

Matthew 25:15, "And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ABILITIES; and straightway took his journey."

John 9:4, "I must work the works of him that sent me while it is day. the night cometh, when no man can work."

We further concluded, that since, we are not owners, our relationship to that which God has given us is therefore, that of a steward, manager and administrator.

1 Peter 4:10 says,

"As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God."

In this lesson we want to specifically talk about being good stewards of the money which God in His grace has given us to manage.

To be a good steward in finances is to manage the money which God gives us according to God's plan, not according to what we think best, nor are we to manage our finances according to the world's methods, but rather, GOD'S WAY. God has an order for every area of our lives. To be in God's order is to do things God's way and then, receive God's abundant blessings.

In Psalm 81, verses 13 - 16, God says,

"Oh that my people had hearkened unto me, and Israel had walked in My WAYS I should soon have subdued their enemies, and turned my hand against their adversaries. The haters of the Lord should have submitted themselves unto him: but their time should have endured for ever. He should have fed them also with the finest of the wheat: and with honey out of the rock should I have satisfied thee."

GOD'S ORDER FOR THE STEWARDSHIP OF FINANCES

The Bible establish four priorities in money management. What are these priorities and their order?

1. **1 Corinthians 16:2**
 1. Genesis 14:18-20
 2. Hebrews 7:2
 3. Malachi 3:10
2. **Romans 13:7**

1. Matthew 22:21
2. Luke 20:25
3. **Psalms 37:21**
 1. Proverbs 22:7
 2. Proverbs 3:27-28
 3. 2 Kings 4:7
 4. Romans 13:8a
4. **2 Kings 4:7c**
 1. 1 Timothy 5:8

Conclusions We would note from the above Scriptures that the priorities of money management and their order are:

1. First fruits (tithe) to God;
2. Taxes to the government;
3. Taking care of financial obligations (debts);
4. Providing for household needs.

Why this order?

RESPONSE TO THE TRUTH

What is the order of priorities which you are practicing in your money management?

How does it compare to God's order for the managing of money?

From the Scriptures above, what is the goal of God's order of money management?

What would be the reason for getting out of debt and staying out of debt?

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XLIX. WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS

LESSON FORTY-NINE

. . . ABOUT MARRIAGE

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the lesson is to give us the proper perspective of marriage as instituted by our Father God, as to its purpose and functions.

God ordained and instituted marriage as a life long union between a man and a woman. He made woman to complement and complete man (1 Corinthians 11:9), one man to one woman and one woman to one man.

Genesis 2:24 is absolutely clear:

"Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave (adhere/glue/ bond/fuse himself) unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh."

Our Lord Jesus Christ confirmed this Old Testament verse and stated it to be His concept of marriage.

Matthew 19:5 "And (Jesus) said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain (the two of them) shall be one flesh."

In the Old Testament we read that many kings took to themselves many wives, but this was not with the consent of God, but rather in spite of His prohibition.

Deuteronomy 17:17a, "Neither shall he multiply wives to himself, that his heart turn not away"

WHY DID GOD INSTITUTE MARRIAGE

We see the answer in the following Scriptures.

1. **Genesis 1:27,28**

Conclusions: The **pro-creation** of children is the first reason given by God for the institution of marriage. Not one man with just any woman or women, but one man with one woman, his wife. The union of a man and his wife is the only divinely approved context for pro-creation. Any sexual relationship outside of marriage is SIN. Paul says 1 Corinthians 7:2: **"to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife. and let every woman have her own husband."**

2. **Genesis 2:18**

Conclusions: The second function of marriage as instituted by God is seen in that God put man and women together to provide each other with a unique **companionship**.

Question: Is this a companionship between two equals?

Yes ___ No ___ Yes & No ___

(**NOTE** - unequal does not mean inferior)

Refer to the following Scriptures for conclusions:

Galatians 3:26-29

Ephesians 5:22

1 Peter 3:7

1 Corinthians 4:7

1 Corinthians 11:9

1 Corinthians 11:11

Conclusions: We would note from the above Scriptures that the man and woman are equal as far as their position/place in the Kingdom of God and in their importance to the marriage relationship. However, in the creation, God in His wisdom did not create man and woman equal [no man is equal to any woman, nor is any woman equal to any man] God made/created them different, with each having a specific role in life and work. In the marriage union they are not to be regarded as co-equal partners. The one complements and completes the other simply *because they are not equal*.

The subjection of the wife to the husband, Ephesians 5:22:

"wives. Submit yourselves unto your own husbands..."

literally meaning ,"find your place under"), was founded upon the original purpose and decree of God in creation, which could not be annulled. Woman's constitution was modeled upon that of man. It was not like his. The woman was created to complement and complete man, not to compete with him.

Man and woman are created to fully complement each other. This means that in the Lord a man needs a woman just as much as a woman needs a man. This unique relationship where the man and women complete each other is found only in marriage.

IS MARRIAGE FOR ALL MEN AND WOMEN?

What do the following Scriptures say about marriage for all?

Hebrews 13:4

1 Timothy 4:1-3

1 Corinthians 7:6-9

1 Corinthians 7:39

2 Corinthians 6:14

Matthew 19:11-12

Deuteronomy 24:1-2

Conclusions: We would note from the above Scriptures that "Yes" with one exception marriage is for all men and women who have not previously been married or whose spouse has died, and for some who are divorced (refer to lesson fifty "Divorce and Re-marriage") . The exception being in the case of the one who is physically a eunuch.

DUTIES OF HUSBAND AND WIVES IN MARRIAGE

Old Testament:

The duties of the husband in the Old Testament were generally recognized to include all that is involved in the support of the home. Exodus 21:10 enumerates as the minimum obligation the provision of food, clothing and cohabitation .

The practice of sexual morality for men fell far short of the standard of equality of treatment. The chastity of the wife was jealously guarded by the heaviest penalties, but custom and law recognized no parallel obligation of faithfulness as resting on the husband - provided he respected the rights of other men. However, the prophetic conscience was possessed by a deep sense of the abomination of whoredome; and finally, a principle which was included in the Six Commandment, "Thou shalt not commit adultery", claiming absolute marital fidelity, was spelled out in Malachi 2:14,15.

Yet ye say, Wherefore? Because the LORD hath been witness between thee and the wife of thy youth, against whom thou hast dealt treacherously (*been unfaithful*): yet *is* she thy companion, and the wife of thy covenant. And did not he make one? Yet had he the residue of the spirit. And wherefore one? That he might seek a godly seed. Therefore take heed to your spirit, and let none deal treacherously (*be unfaithful*) against the wife of his youth. For the LORD, the God of Israel, saith that he hateth putting away: for *one* covereth violence with his garment, saith the LORD of hosts: therefore take heed to your spirit, that ye deal not treacherously (*be not unfaithful*).

The duties of the wife were not so specifically stated. The fundamental ones were chastity and submission - Genesis 3:16, with devotion to the husband's family and interests. And by general consent, the standard maintained by Hebrew wives was high.

New Testament (Marriage in Christianity)

Christianity began a new chapter in the history of marriage. The changes which it introduced were due primarily to the obvious implications of the fundamental Christian principles, which are seen in the following Scriptures

Matthew 19:4-6

Matthew 20:25-28

Galatians 5:13

Duties of Husbands under Christianity

According to the following Scriptures, what is the duty of the husband in the marriage relationship?

Ephesians 5:23

Ephesians 5:25

Ephesians 5:28-31,33

Colossians 3:19

1 Peter 3:7

1 Corinthians 7:3-5

1 Timothy 5:8

Conclusions: The duties/responsibilities of the husband to his wife are irrevocably (that is to say, that cannot be revoked, recalled, undone or altered) bound up the Greek word translated love, agape. A love which is a selfless, self-sacrificing love, which meets the needs of the wife (love, companionship, co-habitation, covering, protection, security, honor, respect, food, clothing and etc.), when exercised by the husband as God created him so to do.

The Duties of Wives under Christianity

Even though Christianity brought improvement in to the status of women. however, the duties of the wife continued to be developed from the presupposition of her subordination to her husband and were summed up, not in love, but in what according to the following Scriptures:

Ephesians 5:22

Colossians 3:18

Ephesians 5:23

1 Corinthians 11:10

1 Peter 3:1

Ephesians 5:33

Conclusions: The duties/responsibilities of the wife as seen in the above Scriptures are summed up in submission* to and reverence** for her husband.

* **Note**: The Greek word in the above scriptures for "submit yourselves" is hypotassas which has the meaning of "find your proper place (category) under?."

** **Note**: that the Greek word for reverence is "phobeo" fear/reverential fear or fear of disrespecting/displeasing her husband because of who he is, as her head and covering. (Reverence/submission as unto the Lord, Ephesians 5:22.)

*** **Note**: Although submission and reverence on the part of the woman to her husband is not contingent upon her husband fulfilling his responsibilities toward her, however, men need to take into account that women were created by God to respond/answer to their husbands, therefore, if the wife is having a problem with submission and reverence for her husband, then the husband needs to examine his relationship with his wife, to see whether he is loving her by providing her headship, covering and honor (love, companionship, respect, consideration for her physical needs, food, clothing, etc.). Men as these basic needs of your wife are provided, she will then in return respond to you with love, companionship, tenderness, respect, honor, and reverence as your true help-mate; and then she will then in return receive your response of love, tenderness, companionship, attention, honor, respect and etc.

RESPONSE TO THE TRUTH

Since God instituted marriage. He only can be the cohesive power binding a man and a woman into one flesh and unity of life, it also follows that if the marriage is to be a blessed union, then the instructions of the One who invented it must be followed.

Does your attitude and understanding toward marriage match that of the instructions giving in the Bible?

Yes ___ No ___

Are you willing to submit yourself to those instructions?

Yes ___ No ___

L. WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS

LESSON FIFTY

... ABOUT DIVORCE AND REMARRIAGE

INTRODUCTION

There is hardly an issue in our day as devastating and perplexing to the Christian and non-Christian alike as that of divorce and possible remarriage.

There are those who believe and teach, there is no divorce in the eyes of God, therefore, there is no remarriage. On the other extreme some believe and teach if two people for some reason become incompatible that its alright with God and therefore not a sin to get a divorce and marry someone more compatible.

The purpose of this lesson is to find out what the Word of God has to say about divorce and remarriage so that, we might have a right concept of this important subject, based on God's Word.

God hates divorce! There absolutely is no doubt about it.

Malachi 2:14-16, ". . .The Lord hath been witness between thee and the wife of thy youth, against whom thou hast dealt treacherously yet is she thy companion, and the wife of the covenant. And did not he make one? Yet had he the residue of The spirit. And wherefore one? That he might seek a godly seed. Therefore take heed to your spirit. and let none deal treacherously against the wife of his youth. For the Lord, the God of Israel, saith that he HATETH PUTTING AWAY: for one covereth violence with his garment. saith the Lord of hosts: therefore take heed to your spirit, that ye deal not treacherously."

Surely this leaves no doubt as to God's attitude regarding adultery and divorce.

Marriage is not a man-made institution that either the husband or wife can break at will.

Marriage was instituted by God.

What therefore God hath joined together, let no man put asunder." (Matthew 19:6)

IS DIVORCE PERMITTED BY GOD?

The answer is yes, if you mean by permit, that God allows divorce. But God in His Word does NOT GIVE APPROVAL under any circumstance for the putting away of a marriage partner. The one who puts asunder what God has joined together sins against God.

Why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement, and put her away? (Matthew 19:7)

This Old Testament Scripture (Deut. 24:1-2) was quoted by the Pharisees in such a way as to seemingly set Moses against Christ. However, Moses in Deuteronomy 24:1-2, did not say what the Pharisees accused him of saying. Rather, Moses gives three regulations governing divorce.

8. He must write her a bill of divorcement;
9. He must give it, the bill (certificate) of divorcement to her;
10. He must send her out of his house. He could not divorce his wife and still keep her in his house, so that, she may go and be another man's wife.

This clearly was not permission by God or Moses for one to divorce his wife. But, rather, was a law protecting the innocent wife, unjustly and unjustifiably dismissed, necessitating the issuance of a divorce certificate (a certificate of innocence) enabling her to remarry.

God in the Old Testament nor Jesus Christ in the New Testament in any way condoned the practice of men of putting away their wives for reason other than the wife's infidelity, no more than He condoned murder just because He made laws governing its punishment. It was man's choice in his sinful state. You see, God never violates man's free choice to sin. However, that sinful state had to be regulated for the protection of the innocent woman who was dismissed (divorced) unjustly by her husband. At least, the law said, give her a bill of divorcement, which would allow her to remarry.

God through Moses did not order the dismissing of one's wife; but rather required the granting of a certificate of divorce by the one who dismissed his wife. The divorce was contrary to God's will, but the provisions of the bill of divorcement by the one who decides to put away his wife was a requirement of God. There is a tremendous difference between this and God commanding divorce. He commanded what man must do to mitigate somewhat the evil perpetrated upon his wife by putting her away.

The granting of a divorce in no way affected God's attitude toward this sin. However, it did affect the attitude of society toward those who are put away. Without a bill of divorcement (certificate of innocence) the one put away was stigmatized/considered/declared to be an adulteress and anyone marrying her would be declared an adulterer.

This is seen in the correct rendering of Matthew 5:32b.

Matthew 5:32b, "...causeth *her* to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery."

In this passage, since the verb causeth, in the Textus Receptus and other Greek texts is in the passive tense, the correct rendering of this verb should be "to cause, or makes. The action of the verb is against her. She has done nothing wrong. Therefore the action of the husband in putting away his wife unjustly makes her/causes adultery against her - that is, to cause her, to be stigmatized/ declared an adulteress by his action against her. Likewise without her having a bill of divorcement (certificate of innocence) the one marrying her is, also, made to/caused to bare that stigma of an adulterer.

WHAT CONSTITUTES DIVORCE?

From the following Scriptures determine what constitutes divorce and requires a written bill of divorcement to be given to the one perpetrated/sinned against and put away.

Deuteronomy 24:1 with Matthew 19:8

Matthew 5:32

Matthew 19:9

1 Corinthians 7:15

Conclusions: When one of the marriage partners commits an act of fornication (fornication being defined as any sexual immorality, including adultery) ; or deserts their spouse by either physically leaving or making the decision in their heart that they will no longer be responsible to uphold their end of the marriage; or makes the decision in their heart that something about their spouse is undesirable to the extent of not being able to live with that person, usually expressed by the statement, "I don't love you any more", they by their actions have put away their spouse, which then, constitutes the breaking of the marriage.

The getting of a divorce, or really, the bill of divorcement is simply the giving of the legal document which states that the marriage bond has been broken by one of the above actions on the part of one or both of the marriage partners.

IS REMARRIAGE PERMITTED BY GOD?

According to the Word of God is the one who puts away his/her spouse. permitted to remarry?

Matthew 19:9

1 Corinthians 7:10-12

What about the one who has been sinned against/put away?

Matthew 19:9

Deuteronomy 24:2

1 Corinthians 7:15

1 Corinthians 7:27-28

Conclusions: The one who sins against his or her spouse by putting him or her away DOES NOT HAVE THE PRIVILEGE OF RE-MARRIAGE. The only recourse they have is to be reunited with their spouse, or remain unmarried. If both the husband and the wife are guilty in the breaking of the marriage bond, then, they both are to remain unmarried or be reunited in marriage.

However, the marriage spouse who has been sinned against is set free from the marriage bond by the action of their spouse and being FREE THEY HAVE THE RIGHT AND PRIVILEGE OF REMARRIAGE IF THEY SO CHOOSE.

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LI. WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS

LESSON 51

... ABOUT GOD'S EXAMPLE AND ORDER FOR PARENTS

INTRODUCTION

Children are very special and dear to God's Father Heart. We see this is Matthew 18:2,6 where we read,

"And Jesus called a little child unto Him, and set him in the midst of them, and said, . . . whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea."

Psalms 127:3-5 puts it this way:

"Children are an heritage of the Lord: and the fruit of the womb is his reward. As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man, so are children of the youth. Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them; they shall not be ashamed, but they shall speak with the enemies in the gate."

As we understand just how special and dear to God's Father heart children are, so, we will see what a great privilege and responsibility it is to be parents. You will never have a more privileged or greater ministry than being a parent.

Because parenting is so important, God in His Word has given us ample instructions on parenting, as well as His own example and order for parents. The purpose of this lesson is to see God's established and proven order for parents that we might begin to put these principles into action in our families.

GOD'S PERFECT EXAMPLE FOR PARENTS

Before our Father God gave life to Adam, His first earthly son He prepared a place for him, light, air, solid ground, herbs, fruit tree, sun, moon, stars, birds, beasts, fish and cattle. Then he planted a special garden home for his son and filled it with all good things to eat and things pleasant to the eyes.

We can learn from this example of God, THE PROPER PREPARATION IN THE HOME FOR OUR CHILDREN.

A home, with God's love as its life; the light of God's Word for beauty and purity; the water of God's Word for cleansing and refreshing; Christ, the Tree of Life for food, its beauty and peace; and Christ, the Word, the solid foundation upon which to stand.

God's preparation for His son, Adam, was a 7 fold preparation. From the following Scriptures in Genesis 2 list those things God felt were necessary for His son, and therefore, a pattern **of parental duties**.

1. Genesis 2:9
2. Genesis 2:10
3. Genesis 2:11
4. Genesis 2:12
5. Genesis 2:13
6. Genesis 2:14
7. Genesis 2:15

Conclusions: We would note from the above scriptures in Genesis, chapter two, God provided:

6. pleasant atmosphere/surroundings;

7. food;
8. work;
9. guidelines of behavior;
10. specific punishment for disobedience;
11. companionship;
12. opportunity to express himself.

Throughout the above pattern of parental duties we see the wonderful love of God. Love that provides, love that employs both body and soul, love that gives, love that commands, love that punishes disobedience, love that wins.

GOD'S ESTABLISHED ORDER FOR PARENTING

1. TEACHING THE WORD

Do first things first. Having an understanding of the parental duties established by God in His Word, Where do you begin in parenting your children? From the following passages we see where God began with His son, Adam, and also, with His children Israel.

Genesis 2:16-17

Deuteronomy 6:4-1

Deuteronomy 8:3

Psalms 119:11

Psalms 119:105

2 Timothy 3:16-17

Conclusion: We would note from the above Scriptures that before a child can be expected to behave properly he must be diligently taught proper behavior according to God's Word, with heavy, repetitious emphasis on the "Thou shalt nots." The word diligently means carefully and STEADILY. He needs to be instructed in the ways of God. Proper behavior comes through planting the Word of God in the heart of the child.

"...fathers. bring them up in the nurture and admonition (*thou shalt nots*) of the Lord. (Ephesians 6:4)

This has to do with instructing them in righteousness, admonishing, and correcting disobedience.

How soon should we begin to instruct our children in the ways of godliness from the Word of God?

Isaiah 28:9

Who has the primary responsibility for instructing the children in the ways of God?

Ephesians 6:4

Isaiah 38:19

These Scriptures seem to bear witness that the responsibility for the teaching of the children is laid upon the father. This is true because he is the head of the house. HOWEVER, this does not mean the mother is relieved of her responsibility as her husband's helper in the instruction of their children in the ways of God.

Genesis 2:18

1 Timothy 5:14

2 Timothy 1:5

So while the father is responsible and must bear the burden of the teaching of his children, the mother undergirds his efforts with suitable help.

How important is the responsibility to teach your children in the Word of God?

Deuteronomy 11:18-21

1 Samuel 3:11-14

Jeremiah 35:5-19

Conclusions: we would note from the above Scriptures that God will PUNISH the parents who do not obey his Word concerning the teaching, training and controlling of their children, even as He did Eli. However, He will BLESS the parents who obey his Word and bring their children up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, even as he blessed the Rechabites.

2. ADMINISTRATING PUNISHMENT (correction)

What is the proper punishment for disobedience?

Genesis 2:17

Proverbs 13:24

Proverbs 10:13

Proverbs 22:15

Proverbs 19:18

Proverbs 23:12-14

Ephesians 6:4a

Note: The word "beat" in Proverbs 23:12-14 means to overcome or a stroke or blow applied many times not with brutality but with persistence until the child is overcome and conquered.

Conclusions: We would note from the above Scriptures that proper punishment/correction for disobedience includes:

10. setting boundaries for behavior;
11. specifying that for disobedience the rod of correction will be applied to the child's rear until there is evidence of repentance;
12. immediate punishment/correction.

What does correct punishment accomplish?

Proverbs 22:15

Proverbs 19:18

Proverbs 23:14

Proverbs 29:15

Psalms 119:67

Proverbs 29:17

Conclusions: We would note from the above Scriptures that proper punishment/correction:

11. Drives the foolishness out of the child;
12. Keeps hope alive by bringing child back under control;
13. Delivers/rescues child's soul from death;
14. Gives wisdom to the child; and
15. Restores rest and delight to parents.

3. PROVIDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR AND TEACHING THE JOY OF WORK AND RESPONSIBILITY

Except a child be taught to work and to assume responsibility at the earliest possible age and to continue in it, he will not walk in that way when he is grown.

Proverbs 22:6

Consequently, children who are not taught to work and assume responsibility become rebellious and demand what they have been raised to expect: SOMETHING FOR NOTHING. They become bitterly unhappy and insecure, knowing in their heart that their parents are directly responsible for this dilemma. As a result they turn to rioting, rebellion, sedition, disloyalty, drugs etc and etc. They are worthless to themselves, their home, their country and to their God.

God did not intend for children to grow up in this manner for he repeatedly exhorts man to work and labor and not be idle.

What does work accomplish?

Proverbs 19:25

1 Timothy 5:13

Ecclesiastes 10:181

Thessalonians 4:11-12

Psalms 128:1-2

Proverbs 13:11

Psalms 104:23-24

Proverbs 12:11

Ecclesiastes 2:24

Proverbs 10:4

Ecclesiastes 3:13

Proverbs 14:23

Ezekiel 16:49

Conclusions: We would note from the above Scriptures that work:

5. provides ones food;
6. gives wealth and riches;
7. keeps one busy (idleness is the devil's workshop)
8. makes a person happy.

RESPONSE TO THE TRUTH

God our Father has given us His perfect example parenthood in His Word and in His acts toward us.

Therefore, "BE YE DOERS OF THE WORD AND NOT HEARERS ONLY DECEIVING YOUR OWN SELVES."

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LII. WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS

LESSON 52

... ABOUT DIVINE GUIDANCE

INTRODUCTION

Why do we need help/guidance in directing our lives? The answer is clearly seen in following two Scriptures.

Jeremiah 10:23, "O lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to DIRECT his steps."

Judges 21:25, "In those days there was no king in Israel: every man did that which was right in his own eyes."

Conclusions: Man as created by God does not have a built in guidance system whereby his life may be guided in an orderly manner in righteousness. The epitaph over man who attempts to direct his own life, according to what seems right in his own eyes, or according to his abilities is seen in the Book of Judges.

Since man is not capable of directing his own life, where does he go for that direction? When this question is fully analyzed, we have to conclude there are only two sources from which a person may get direction and guidance.

From the following Scriptures determine those two sources of guidance and the results derived from each source.

I Corinthians 3:18-20

Isaiah 45:11-13

Isaiah 58:11

Conclusions: There is the wisdom of the world/man's wisdom, which is foolishness and vain (empty); then, there is the wisdom of God, which when followed continually will bring the good things of life.

Now, since, according to 1 Corinthians 6:19-20, we who have received Jesus Christ as our Savior belong to God, whose wisdom/direction/guidance are we to follow; God's or the world's?

Conclusion: God's

God desires to guide and direct His children. However, as we see from Proverbs 3:5-6 this is conditional.

Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths.

Conclusions: We would note from the above scripture that the conditions for God's guidance are:

5. Trusting in God with all your heart;
6. Not depending on your own understanding, wisdom, knowledge, intelligence, education, training, abilities;
7. Giving all the credit and glory to God.

The purpose of this lesson is to learn to recognize God's guidance. How does God guide you? Being God, He can give direction and guidance any way He sees fit. But from the overall understanding that we have of the Bible, of history, and of human experience, we can point out certain ways in which God may most likely express Himself.

Both the Old and New Testament record super-natural visitations of God. The Apostle Paul saw a vision which showed Him God's will (Acts 9:1-9). So, also, did Peter in Acts 10:9-20.

One of the most extreme cases of God's guidance is recorded in Numbers 22:28-30, where God through a donkey spoke to Balaam, when Balaam was going against God's will.

An example of circumstantial guidance is seen in the case of Jonah. Jonah had been given specific instructions by God, but instead of following God's directions, he found a ship which was going in another direction and concluded that the ship was a providential circumstance enabling him to get out of an unpleasant assignment. This was false guidance, or presumption on the part of Jonah, since God promptly used a great fish to bring Jonah back to his original assignment, (Jonah 1:1-17).

GOD'S GUIDANCE

Numbers 12:4-8 reveals five ways in which God may speak/ give direction to His children.

Numbers 12:4-8

Conclusions: We would note from the above Scripture that God:

3. Speaks audibly;
4. Speaks in visions (day or when awake);
5. Speaks in dreams (night or when asleep);
6. Direct to ones spirit; and
7. Speaks/guides through figurative language/parables.

Although God has/does speak/guide/direct His children in the above mentioned ways, there are four (4) other ways in which God reveals His will, which are PRIMARY. These four primary sources of guidance are seen in the following Scriptures.

1. Psalms 119:105

Psalm 119:24
 Psalm 119:11
 2 Timothy 3:16
 2 Peter 1:20-21
 Matthew 4:4
 John 17:17
 Romans 10:17 (Hebrews 11:6)

2. John 16:13

Isaiah 30:21
 1 Kings 19:11-13
 2 Corinthians 3:6
 I John 2:20,27
 2 Corinthians 1:22; Mark 1:8

3. Proverbs 9:10

1 Corinthians 1:30
 Ephesians 5:1-2
 Galatians 5:13
 Romans 13:8-10

4. 1 Peter 2:25

Isaiah 9:6
 Proverbs 15:22
 1 Peter 5:1-3
 Hebrew 13:17
 Titus 1:5-9
 1 Thessalonians 5:12

Conclusions: The primary ways in which God guides us are:

1. The infallible Word of God, the complete revelation of His will as in Scripture, the Bible;
2. The indwelling Spirit of God, always leading to and never contrary to the Word He inspired;
3. Through knowledge of God, if we know Him, we will also know what He wants for and of us;

4. Submission to the Oversight Ministry of Jesus, which ministry in the local Church is invested in the Elders.

RESPONSE TO THE TRUTH

Proverbs 3:5-6, Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths."