

# The Old Hickory Bulletin

## Old Hickory Church of Christ

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## Till Death Do Us Part

Many marriage ceremonies include the statement "till death do us part" as a grand climax to the exchange of marital vows. Sometimes the one officiating will emphasize the same thought in the words "as long as you both shall live." This is both proper and right for God intended for a man and his wife to live together as one flesh until death overtakes one of them. However, a recent TV program in which a marriage ceremony was involved changed the thought considerably when the bride and groom were advised to live together "as long as you both shall love." That idea is most assuredly the philosophy of a good many today but it is foreign to the Word of God. With a seeming loophole as big as that, it is no wonder many do not think of marriage in terms of permanency. Yet **permanency** is the purpose of God in marriage and always has been.

### At the Beginning

In Genesis 2:20-25 God made Adam an help meet or suited to him. Eve was so constituted as to complement or be a suitable counterpart of Adam in every way. Whatever Adam was not, Eve was. Likewise, Adam was everything that Eve was lacking. This being true it is not difficult to see that God had in mind a complete unit. So he brought this wondrous counterpart to Adam and gave her to him and she became his wife. The wedding was simple but with Divine authority. God gave the bride away and performed the ceremony. He did not say much but what he did say became the constitution for all future marriages. "Therefore shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave unto his wife; and they two shall be one flesh." (v. 24). Jesus referred to this statement in Matthew 19:6 and added "What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder." We would do well to remember this.

### Through the Years

Although Biblical history records many departures from the permanency intended in marriage, yet Jesus in answering the Pharisees on the matter of divorce plainly said "but

from the beginning it was not so" (Matthew 19:8). In this statement Christ indicated first of all God's original intention of permanency in marriage and secondly his intention to have a return to this permanency. To this Christ made only one exception and that for the cause of fornication (v. 9). In such cases this is a privilege extended to the non-fornicator but this **right** does not have to be exercised. It **may** be. It is certainly good if a reconciliation can be reached in such a problem which is always loaded with many side-problems. Some can do this and some cannot. The Lord recognizes this and makes the one exception.

### Early New Testament Days

In the New Testament the Holy Spirit revealed Christ's purpose for marriage to be recognized by husband and wife as a life-long proposition. In Romans 7:4 in a comparison relative to the old law, it clearly states that a woman is "bound by the law to her husband as long as he liveth." It is only when her husband is dead that the marriage is over. She may then marry another man without becoming an adulteress.

The permanency of marriage is again referred to by Paul in II Corinthians 11:2 when he said, "for I have espoused you to one husband that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ." Here the apostle calls upon the permanency of marriage to illustrate the required permanent loyalty of a child of God to Christ.

### Contemporary Times

That there is today much corruption and error with regard to marriage and the home is perhaps the understatement of this decade. The solidarity and permanence of marriage is being tested in ways and under such brazen and rebellious circumstances as to shock the sensitivity of even the calloused among us. The "used car" view of marriage seems to be in vogue these days. If he or she does not suit they just "trade in" on a different model. The practice of free love (unrestrained sex) has raised the question with its advocates as to whether marriage has any real function at all. Not a few feel that marriage is in reality a hindrance to what some have erroneously called "a meaningful relationship." Premarital sex is the order of the day and unwanted children can always be legally aborted. More and more the laws of the land seem to be slanted in this regard in favor of the immoral. Wife-swapping and divorce for any cause is the popular thing with many. In view of all of this it is no wonder that the home has been shaken to the roots. Even so-called Christian homes have not escaped this Godless onslaught against marriage and the home. More and more church members have resorted to the world's practice and are shamelessly putting asunder what God has joined together. As a result of these inroads of the devil, not only is the home in jeopardy but also the church and the nation.

## The Solution

Although sex plays an important role in marriage, it is not the whole thing. We suggest this as a reason why many marriages "play out" quite soon. The parties enter into the marriage inflamed with passion which is always unreasonable and they mistake the sex urge and physical attraction for love. When this initial ardor has cooled and they back off for a second look at each other, often there is shock and disappointment for they discover they are really unacquainted and somewhat strangers to each other except on the marriage bed. That is why young people should take the necessary time to look past sex to find Godly traits of character in each other which will outlast the sexual side of marriage. As time goes on sex will wane and the character qualities will predominate. The time to find out about these things is before the love bug bites because then reason jumps out the window. By then they have it all figured out and no one can tell them anything. Parents, when they begin cooing like doves at each other you have lost your opportunity to teach them what they need to know about marriage. Then you can only hope and pray that it will last. While you still have time, parents, teach the young about these matters and by all means set the proper example. Unless this is done it will be most remarkable if they should learn them on their own.

In the event a couple should not have had the advantage of Godly training then we say that a joint study of the Word of God should be undertaken to learn what the will of the Lord is. Some very stormy marriages have been saved through diligent study and determination to do above all else the will of God.

A happy marriage can be a touch of heaven on earth. On the other hand some marriages can be a literal hell on earth. A happy marriage offers many joys in this life that are rather difficult to describe. How is it that a happy couple growing older together can say and mean it that they love each other more each day. They even find it hard to understand it themselves but they both must admit that it is most certainly the truth. Together, side by side, they have shared life's joys and sorrows, ups and downs, in sickness and in health, as one person though two. They like to be together as much as possible for one without the other is incomplete. Together they mellow into a picture of dignity and serenity that causes the young to marvel. If our younger generation wants to talk about a "meaningful relationship", this is it.

As time goes on and hair turns gray while bodily strength diminishes, it is a beautiful thing to see hearts and hands entwined in a true lover's clasp. They have truly become "heirs together of the grace of life" (I Peter 3:7). Life had much to offer to such a Godly marriage and together they have found it and enjoyed it. Their very prayers are unhindered as

together they daily offer their petitions to God. They have put the will of God first and foremost in their lives.

Yes, marriage is "till death do us part." And this sad separation will most assuredly take place. When the time arrives that one must go on ahead into eternity it will not be difficult for the one remaining to pray to God amidst hot tears of grief and loneliness beyond comparison that they also may be permitted to rejoin them beyond the sunset ere long, for only a half remains. Such can be said of a marriage as God would have it. May His will be done.

- J. Wiley Adams (1925-2020)  
Via *Searching the Scriptures*, July, 1975

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## Lukewarm

The church in Laodicea was neither hot nor cold, but lukewarm (Revelation 3:14-22). It had become a congregation that was of no use to the Lord. Their lukewarm attitude had made the Lord so sick, that He could spit them out of His mouth. What we find in this message to the church is that it was personal. The church at Laodicea was lukewarm because the individual members were lukewarm. But it wasn't just a message to the individuals at Laodicea. The Lord knew that this would be a universal problem within the church, that's why He preserved this letter for us today.

It is easy for us to become complacent religiously. But if we are going to overcome our lukewarm attitudes, we first must look inside ourselves. Have you become lukewarm in your service to the Lord? Are you on fire like you once were? Have you settled for a comfy spot in the pew to keep it warm? If this describes you, it is time to make a change. Don't settle for the spiritually comfortable life, it isn't pleasing to the Lord.

Sometimes it isn't you that is lukewarm but someone else. If that is the case, it is time to reach out, invite them into your home, pray for them, encourage them. Remind them, that they are not alone, and you are here for them. Maybe all they need is a little nudge to get moving, or a little spark to get the fire started again.

- Travis Robertson

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> Ask your preacher where the Bible says men can be saved without being a member of Christ's church. Compare his answer with Acts 2:47.

> "Pride is to character what the attic is to the house — the highest part and generally the most empty!"

- > "Some people are like buzzards; they never go near a church unless someone dies!"
  - > "It is proper to be on the right track, but if you sit down there you'll get run over!"
  - > "The only difference between a grave and a rut is the dimensions!"
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**THIS WEEK'S LESSONS:** Sunday morning: "*Lord, Help Me Learn to Forgive!*" (Part 2, Text: Mark 11:25-26); Sunday evening: Why Believe the Bible? *The Problem of Unbelief*, p. 70.

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## **What Must I Do To Be Saved?**

### **HEAR THE GOSPEL**

(Romans 10:14-17; John 20:30-31; Romans 1:15-17)

### **BELIEVE IN JESUS CHRIST**

(Acts 8:37; John 8:24; Hebrews 11:6)

### **REPENT OF PAST SINS**

(Luke 13:3; Acts 2:38; Acts 17:30)

### **CONFESS CHRIST**

(Romans 10:9-10; Acts 8:37)

### **BE BAPTIZED**

(Romans 6:3-4; Mark 16:15-16; Acts 2:38; Acts 8:36-39; 1 Peter 3:21)

### **LIVE A FAITHFUL LIFE**

(Revelation 2:10; 2 Peter 1:5-11; John 15:1-8; Hebrews 10:23-25)