

The Leader and His Wife

by Aaron Hurst

The sermon emphasizes the importance of understanding God's design for marriage, with the husband loving and caring for his wife as Christ loved the church.

Duration: 1:18:03

Scripture: Proverbs 31:30, Ephesians 5:22-33, Colossians 3:18-19

Topics: "Marriage"

Description

In this sermon, Brother Denny addresses the topic of love, leadership, and the relationship between husbands and wives. He emphasizes the importance of having a strong foundation in God's word and the fear of God in order to maintain a healthy and faithful marriage. He warns against the dangers of pornography and the negative impact it can have on a marriage. Brother Denny encourages husbands to cherish, nurture, and honor their wives, recognizing them as a gift from God and treating them with love and respect. He emphasizes the need for husbands to allow their wives to influence and change them, and to pray for their wives so that their prayers may not be hindered.

Transcript

Hello, this is Brother Denny. Welcome to Charity Ministries. Our desire is that your life would be blessed and changed by this message.

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How we thank God for the firm foundation that has been laid for the saints of the Lord. I tremble today the topic that has been given to me to share with you all, the leader and his wife. I've been married 25 years to one wife and I don't have any intention of trading off.

God has been very good to me. I desire today, by God's grace and help, that we could get a clear biblical look from God's point of view. What our place is, our calling for all of us who have a wife.

How many today in this room have a wife? Let me see your hands. Amen. Thank you.

Let's pray. Father in heaven, we come in Jesus Christ's name. Father, we confess, Lord, that without you we can do nothing.

Father, we ask in the name of Jesus that you would come, Lord, and meet with every husband here today. Father, we ask that you would come, Lord, and open up our eyes to behold the wondrous, beautiful things and purposes and plans that you have for us. Father, we pray that you would lay upon our hearts, Lord, the high and the holy and the awesome place as a husband.

Father, we pray that you would open up our eyes to see the plans that you have, Lord, for our husband and wife relationships, for the glory of God, for the defeat of Satan, for the purpose of godly homes and families and godly children. Oh, Lord, today I confess I am not able, Lord, but I look to you, God, and I ask you, Father, that you would come, Lord, and speak to our hearts, Lord, lest it just be some words and a few illustrations and we go home unchanged. Oh, God, please, Lord, have mercy upon us, Lord, and have mercy upon me, Father, and descend in the Spirit of holiness upon every heart, Lord.

Oh, Father, we pray, Father, in Jesus' name for the conviction of the Holy Ghost, Lord, for conviction of sin, Father, and we pray for the Holy Ghost illumination of righteousness, how that we may righteously live and behave ourselves with our wife. And, Father, for righteous judgment, Lord. Oh, God, please come and teach us, Lord.

We sit at your feet, Lord. We open up our hearts. In Jesus' name we pray.

Amen. We want to begin in the beginning. The Bible tells us that in the beginning God created.

In the beginning God created. And it goes on to tell us all the different things that God created. And every time after God created, He said, it was good.

God saw that it was good, and God created, and He saw that it was good. And so goes the account of the creation of God. It was good.

It was good. And, finally, God said, let us make man after our image and after our likeness. So God created man in His image, and in the likeness of God created He Him, and male and female created He them.

And God looked upon all the things that He had created, and He said, behold, it is very good. The Bible tells us how God created man. He formed him out of the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul.

And God saw everything that He had made, and, behold, it was very good. Then we turn to Genesis 2, and we have the first indication that something is not very good. And that is when God says, as He looked upon man, and He saw the man alone there in the garden where He had created, with all of the animals and all of the monsters in the sea and everything that God had created, and the Lord God said, it is not good.

It is not good that the man should be alone. I will make and help meet for him. God said, it is not good that the man should be alone.

The Lord God said, it is not good. He is not sufficient in himself. He is not satisfactory in himself that the man should be alone.

I will make and help her suitable for him. I will make and help meet for him, which means suitable or adapted to him, that will complement him. God created a helper suitable for Adam.

When it came time for God to make a helper suitable for Adam, He did it in a different way. He didn't go and scoop up some dust like He did to make Adam. Now He causes Adam to fall asleep, and He puts Adam into a deep sleep, and He takes one of his ribs, and He closes up the flesh thereof instead, and the rib from which the Lord God had taken out of Adam, from that made He a woman.

He took of Adam's flesh. He took of Adam's bones, and from that He formed and fashioned woman, and brought her to man. And Adam said these famous words, this is now bones of my bone, and flesh of my flesh.

She shall be called woman, because she was taken out of man. I want to, by the grace of God, try to convince you today what a beautiful, perfect gift that God has given to each one of us who have a wife. God created a helper suitable for us.

It's like when we got married, God gave unto us a beautiful, beautiful gift. Most of us, when we got our wife, we got our wife as a very beautiful, perfect gift from God. God gave us a beautiful gift.

He gave us a help suitable for us, made out of our own flesh, and in the image and likeness of God Himself, just like He created man, and God gave unto us this beautiful gift called a wife. And today I want to convince you by the grace of God that none of us would take our wife for granted, or that we would treat her as a light thing, and that we would not understand what God has designed in the Christian marriage. God gave you your wife, and when God gave you your wife, she was made suitable for you.

Do you believe that? God made her suitable for you. He made her an help meet. That means suitable and sufficient in every way.

I wonder sometimes if we believe that. God gave you your wife, a beautiful gift. Most of us, when we received our wife and we took our wife, she came complete in many, many ways.

If she was raised in a godly home by godly parents, she was raised in an atmosphere of purity and blessing and beauty and holiness, and we received her that way. Now sometimes there are distresses in life, and sometimes when we take a wife or we take our wife, there may be some flaws, there may be some areas where she needs to be beautified, and that's just exactly why God brought her to you, that you as her husband can nurture her and can minister to her and make her beautiful in every way as God designed. Jesus confirmed what was confirmed in the beginning.

Jesus 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. Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. Wherefore what God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.

You know, something wonderful happens. When we enter into a covenant relationship with our wife, God takes two. Now this is amazing.

God takes two individuals and God joins them together, so that they are no more two. They are no more twain, but now they are one. Joined together by God Almighty Himself.

Oh, isn't that lovely? Isn't that wonderful? God joins together a husband and a wife, and we begin a journey for life together until death do us part. Never to be severed or put asunder by man. The Bible tells us what God has joined together, let not man put asunder.

And therefore, because of this great institution of marriage by a holy God, He says, A man shall leave his father and his mother, and he shall cleave unto his wife. He shall cling to her. He shall abide fast with her.

He shall pursue after her. He shall stick with her. Beautiful.

He shall be joined together. Now, we have many things we can look at today, and I feel like I would like to at least share just a few things here. If we look at this in the opening here, part of this message here.

God has given to you a wife. The Bible tells us that he that findeth a wife, findeth a good thing, and obtaineth favor of the Lord. Now, my wife isn't a thing.

And I was so glad when I looked this up in the Bible dictionary, thing was a word added by the translators. God never put it there. It was not in the original text.

Glory. You know, those 999s in your concordance. It says, oh, it was inserted by the translators.

So, rather we could say, whoso findeth a wife, findeth good. He findeth good. And good is, now listen, sometimes I know you say, you guys are too mushy in how you describe your wife.

But now just listen. This word good has the meaning right out of Strong's, most beautiful. Whoso findeth a wife, findeth good.

Most beautiful. What do you think Adam's response was that day when God brought Eve unto him? Most beautiful. God himself bringing her down the altar to the marriage that day.

And Adam wondered, what's happening? And here the Lord presents to him his wife. And Adam says, bone of my bone, flesh of my flesh. He knew what happened while he was asleep.

There she was, taken from his very own side, from his very own flesh. Not foreign dust over here somewhere, but out of his very own flesh. So that he should nurture and care for her and cherish her.

Whoso findeth a wife, findeth good. Most beautiful. Pleasant.

Precious. Prosperity. Sweet.

He that findeth a wife, findeth good. He findeth most precious, most pleasant, most beautiful and sweet. I hope that's your testimony today.

And if it's not, it's my desire to convince you by the word of God that it can be. You're not married to the wrong one. You are not married to the wrong one.

When God brought you two together, even if you were sinners and estranged from God, you're not married to the wrong one. A virtuous woman is a crown to her husband. A worthy wife, earnest and strong in character, is a crown to her husband.

Proverbs 31. Just let me convince you. You can find a virtuous woman.

Her price is far above rubies. Now, I want you to just think about your wife. The heart of her husband does safely trust in her.

So that he shall have no need of spoils, she will do him good and not evil all the days of her life. Now, think about your wife and the value of your wife. She seeketh woe and flex, and she worketh willingly with her hands.

Is that your wife? She worketh willingly with her hands. She seeketh out that which is good and right. She bringeth her food from afar.

She goes out there and she searches out where she can find the best bargains in the groceries. And she shops very carefully with your money that you have earned. She bringeth food from afar.

She rises while it is yet night. She rises up while it is yet night. She giveth meat to her household.

She considereth a field and buyeth it. She planteth a vineyard. She works in the garden.

She plants the garden. She labors there. She girdeth her loins with strength.

She perceiveth that her merchandise is good and her candle goeth not out by night. She layeth her hands to the spindle and her hands to the distaff. She stretches out her hand to the poor.

She is not afraid of the snow. Hallelujah! A little bit of snow, a little bit of cold. She is out there working just like always.

She maketh herself coverings of tapestry. And her clothing is silk and purple. I mean, she is sewing.

She is making the garments. She is making the dresses. Her husband is no one in the gates.

Now, stop. We are what we are, men, a lot of us in this room, because of our godly, virtuous wife that we have. Amen? You see, it was not good for the man to be alone.

He was not complete in himself. Now, give me grace, all you singles. I am preaching to the married men today.

There is a place for singlehood. Brother, if you are married today and you have a wife, you need to understand the value that God has placed on your wife and the relationship between you and your wife. This is very core to godliness and righteousness and holiness.

Don't you just sweep this aside and say, well, this is not that important. Very important. Her husband is no one in the gates.

When he sitteth among the elders, she maketh fine linen and selleth it and delivereth girdles unto the merchants. Strength and honor are her clothing. She openeth her mouth with wisdom.

And in her tongue is the law of kindness. Isn't that your wife? In her tongue is the law of kindness. She looketh well to the ways of her household and she eateth not the bread of idleness.

She is not lazy. Her children rise up and call her blessed. Her husband also, and he praises her.

When was the last time you praised your wife? When was the last time you just sat her down and shared with her how much she means to you? How precious a gift she is from God. How she complements your life. How she makes you complete.

How she blesses your soul. He praises her. Favor is deceitful and beauty is vain.

But a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised. Open your Bibles with me to Ephesians. Ephesians chapter 5. While you are turning there, I will say I was not here yesterday.

I was downstairs with the ministers, so I don't know what you heard yesterday. But if you get it again today, just take it from God as God is trying to get your attention. Ephesians chapter 5. Now, I know you'd like to start in verse 22, but we are not going to.

There is a reason we are not going to start in verse 22. We men are pretty good at seeing needs of others. Especially our wife.

Somebody read that to me from back there. What does it say? Can you read it? I want you to read the next line too. Can you read it? Please men, if we are going to get the mileage what we need to get today, you just can't read that last part.

So many times we look at the Bible with our glasses on and what we should be getting is like this print down here that I can't read. It's just not sinking in. But the part that speaks to my wife, that's jumping off the page in bold.

And we pat ourselves on the back. We are holy men. We got it all together.

Ephesians 5.33 says, Nevertheless, let every one of you in so particular love his wife even as himself. And the fine print that you can't read from back there, let us begin in verse 25 of Ephesians 5. Husbands, love your wives even as Christ also loved the church and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish. So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies.

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. For we are members of his body and of his flesh and of his bones.

For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother and shall be joined unto his wife and they too shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church. Nevertheless, let every one of you in particular, and may I say without exception, so love his wife even as himself.

Now, we men are quick to pick up on Ephesians 5.22. And so we may as well say it here. Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands as unto the Lord. But I would like for us to zero in on verse 25.

Husbands, love your wives even as Christ also loved the church and gave himself for it. Now what does that mean? Husbands, love your wives even as Christ also loved the church and gave himself up for it. Jesus Christ gave himself up for the church.

He laid down his life for the church. He pleased not himself, but he became servant for the church. He surrendered his own will and his own rights for the church.

Oh God, would you please open up our eyes. Don't run off and call me a heretic too quick here. Just listen.

Because the Scriptures say wives are to submit themselves to husband, what about husband mutually submitting in the marriage relationship as head over the wife, but what about submitting my rights? What about laying down my life for my wife? You see, just because, and we men, we get this so wrong so often, just because God says the husband is the head of the wife, that does not mean that the husband has any right to put his wife down there and stand on her. That does not mean that at all. That does not mean that she has to submit to my every whim and desire and that I am in authority around here and you are going to submit to me.

And so your wife, who came to you as a beautiful gift, as a beautiful, free, loving, blossoming, open-hearted, lovely wife, as this bouquet of roses I set before you, she came to you pure, holy, innocent, full of life, with great expectations of what godly man she is marrying and how you will treat her and nurture her and bless her and love her as Christ loved the church. And she has great potential. She has gifts and callings of God in her life also.

And God's design and desire is to bring two people together for the glory of His name so that there might be a completeness, so that we wouldn't be so lopsided all by ourselves, men. But you know, as marriage goes on down the road, all of that beauty, all of that gifting and all of those things that God designed in your wife, God put in there to work a work of completing in us, men. And if we take our position as the head with the wrong attitude of you must submit to me and we will not hear our wife but we will just stand on her, we are not going to be complete in Christ as He has designed for us to be.

Because God is placed in your wife, in your wife, in your wife, not His wife, in your wife the very things that He wants to work out in you to make you a more godly man. Do you believe that? You see, when God made Eve for Adam, He knew what Adam needed. And when God made your wife for you, He knew what you needed.

You are not married to the wrong one. Husbands, I want to introduce to you a thought that may be shocking. If the Bible calls brethren to submit one to another in the fear of the Lord, what about husband and wife? Mutual submission under the headship of God, our Savior, Jesus Christ.

Mutually submitting one to another. But you know what? You can choose today and you have chosen throughout your life what you do with those things that are in your wife that bug you, that irritate you, that rub you the wrong way. And you can just go out and you can just pull out the verse.

Well, the Bible says, Wife, you must submit to Me. So, we're going to do it My way. Because that's what the Bible says.

No, that's not what the Bible says. The Bible says, Husbands, love your wives as Christ loved the church and gave Himself for it. He gave Himself up for it that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of the water by the Word.

Boy, Aaron, you're getting pretty far off here. You're taking away all my authority. All my headship.

I mean, if I started letting my wife have any say in the matter, she'd run me over. You need to get an understanding of the picture that God has given unto us of Jesus Christ, our Savior. The Bible tells us we are to love our wives even as Christ loved the church.

And how did He love her? He laid down His life for her. Amen? He laid down His life for her. Men, there are areas.

Husbands, there are areas where it's righteousness and holiness to lay down our life for our wife. There are areas where God is laying His finger on your heart where you need to lay down your life for your wife. I believe that.

I don't stand before you today as one who is perfect or has attained and learned all these things. I'm in the school of Christ. I'm in the school of learning.

Together, my wife and I are learning and growing together. But you know, especially from a religious background, many times, the men who are so accurately, scripturally correct, pull these verses out. And they don't give their wife any breathing room.

They don't give her any room to be herself. To be what God has called her to be. And what God has called for her to contribute to the marriage relationship.

And so we go on crippled. You know, crippled. Because I won't face my need.

It's my wife bringing it to me. So I can't see it. And I just shut her out.

That's very sad. We are stunted in our spiritual growth and in our walk with God because of those things. Let us turn to a few other texts here today.

We may come back to this a little bit later. I'd like for you to turn with me to Colossians. Colossians 3, verse 19.

Colossians 3 and verse 19. But before you read it from your Bible, I want to just put this up here again. I have someone here to read.

What do you see up here? Colossians 3, 18 and 19. What can you see up here? What can you read? What can you determine? Can you read it? Husbands, love your wives and be not bitter against them. Can we just zero in on that? Or do we get it turned around again? And we see Colossians 3, 18.

Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands. And many times, even forget to quote the rest of the verse. I've heard many men quote this.

Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands. And just stop right there. But the Bible goes on to qualify that submission and says, as is fit in the Lord.

As is fit in the Lord. But He says, Husbands, love your wives and be not bitter against them. Be not bitter against them.

Do not be harsh or bitter or resentful toward them. You see, when those things that God has put in your wife to work a work of death in you and a purifying in your heart, when those things that rub you take place and you begin to become resentful and bitter toward your wife, bitterness creeps in your heart like a poison. Do you know why I believe that marriages are falling apart? Because the devil is shooting at the very foundation of God's design for a godly seed.

The devil is shooting his arrows right at the heart of God's design for a godly seed. And marriages are under attack. And the devil is standing back and taking aim at your marriage.

And he is releasing many of his arrows, shooting them at the very foundation of the essence of the oneness that God has designed should be in marriage. He made two one. Wherefore did he make them one? That he might seek a godly seed, Malachi tells us.

And so marriages are falling apart because of the hardness of men's hearts and the sinfulness of women's hearts too. Marriages are falling apart because of the hardness of men's hearts and the stubbornness and the selfishness. And we say, I'm in charge.

Men, it's time to get down off of our pedestals and kneel at the foot of the cross of Jesus and get a picture of our Lord Jesus Christ dying on the cross, yielding Himself, giving up His life for the church that He might sanctify her, that He might cleanse her. Your wife came to you a beautiful gift from God. Someday you're going to give an answer to God what you have done with the gift that God has given you.

Have you made her more beautiful? Have you nurtured her? Have you cherished her? Have you loved her? Have you washed her with the word of the water of God? And have you prayed for her? And have you been gracious toward her? And have you allowed her to affect your life and to change you more into the image of Christ? 1 Peter tells us, and you don't need to turn there, but it tells us, Husbands, likewise ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honor unto the wife as unto the weaker vessel. As being heirs together of the grace of life, let your prayers be not hindered. Now, I know that probably in this room there would be very few men, I would expect, who would say, I am finished.

I am so irritated at my wife. I am so bitter at her. I'm going to get a divorce and put her away.

But I wonder if today in this room if we will be totally honest with ourselves, is there a spirit of divorce at work between you and your wife that you have allowed in to your relationship? A spirit of divorce. See, the devil is shooting at that oneness that God has designed. And he is shooting at the very core issues.

Now, let's just carry this out a little farther, men. Ye husbands dwell with your wife according to knowledge, giving honor unto the wife as the weaker vessel. As being heirs together of the grace of life, let your prayers be not hindered.

What happens when you and your wife are not one? You've allowed a disagreement, you've allowed a conflict to come into your relationship. What happens when it's time to pray? Can you pray? Can you pray with your wife? No. Your prayers are being hindered.

Your prayers are being stopped. And there are husbands in this room, I would dare say, who your prayers are being hindered. Maybe they've even dried up because of the hardness of your heart and allowing a spirit of divorce in your heart towards your wife.

A spirit of bitterness. A spirit of resentment. Oh, you'd never say it, that I hate you.

But there's a resentment. There's a coolness. There's an aloofness.

And you know how to turn the cold shoulder. You know how to give her the silent treatment and all those things. And so when it's time to pray, we just can't pray too good, can we? Because our wife knows us.

She knows the sin in our life. And so it stops the prayers. The Bible says in 1 Peter there, and I think we should turn there.

Let's do that. Turn to 1 Peter chapter 3 and verse 7. He says that your prayers be not hindered. And then he goes on and he says finally be ye all of one mind having compassion one of another.

Love as brethren. Be pitiful. Be courteous.

Not rendering evil for evil or railing for railing, but contrary wise blessing, knowing that ye are there unto call that you should inherit a blessing. For he that will love life and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil and his lips that they speak no guile. Let him eschew evil and do good and let him seek peace and ensue it.

For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous and his ears are open unto their prayers. But the face of the Lord is against them that do evil. Husbands, dwell with your wife according to knowledge.

Live with her in a considerate way. Considering her. Honoring her.

Realizing that you are joint heirs together of the grace of God. God's unmerited favor. Understand this in order that your prayers be not hindered and cut off.

Because if you're not dwelling with your wife in oneness and in unity, you cannot pray effectively. Your prayers are hindered. And so getting back to Malachi, when mom and dad aren't on praying ground, what happens to those little children in your home? When mom and dad aren't in unity and they've allowed a spirit of division to come in, what is coming into the home? My brothers, this is very serious.

This is not a little matter. Like we might think, God's eyes are upon you today. God's eyes are upon your marriage.

God is very interested in your marriage. God is very jealous over your relationship with your wife. The Bible tells us what God has joined together, let not man put asunder.

How about this man? You know, we put that off out there somewhere. Oh, we wouldn't divorce. How about this man putting asunder and breaking that oneness and that unity of spirit and heart in your marriage relationship? Holding a grudge against your wife.

Holding out against her till she comes around and trying to change her. Are we guilty of that? Are you bitter against your wife? And out of that bitterness comes all kinds of things. Are you putting the squeeze on your wife? Are you putting pressure on her to conform to my way? Does she see in you Christlikeness? Does she see in you the Christlikeness of submitting yourself to God in the areas of your marriage relationship? Do you got the squeeze on your wife and you're putting her in such a tight corner that that lovely, beautiful, open face before God is beginning to get cloudy and downcast? And the joy isn't there like it was when you got married.

Your expectations of her, she's not measuring up. So you set out to change her and you put the squeeze on her instead of allowing God to work in your heart and change you. Instead of giving up and laying down my life, I want my way.

And so I put the squeeze on my wife and she feels the pain of the squeeze that I'm putting her under. The pressure. The expectations.

Mom never did it that way. Why can't you ever learn? You made that same mistake again and we put the squeeze on her. We want to fit her into our mold because, you see, we have our box in the way we think it ought to be.

And so we put the squeeze on her. And you know what we're doing? We're being rebellious and stubborn rather than submitting for the sake of oneness. And so we turn it a little tighter and your wife is no longer that beaming, happy, joyful person she was when you married her.

She was full of vitality and life when you married her. But today she looks wore out and dejected and maybe even depressed. Men, this is sin.

It's serious. So she doesn't measure up. So we do the unthinkable.

That beautiful, lovely bride I married, I start shooting at her. Taking aim and saying, if you would only be in submission to me, everything would be all right. It's your fault that we're having this problem.

Instead of humbling ourselves and coming to the foot of the cross, instead of doing that, we start getting out the knife and we stab her with words. That wound. That beautiful, precious gift that God has given.

And oh, maybe we realize we've done it and we repent and we're sorry, but not deep enough. We haven't really repented. Our heart hasn't really seen what we're doing.

And so the next time we get another knife. It's a little bigger this time. She still doesn't learn her lesson, we think.

So we've got to change her. We've got to get her to see it our way. After all, I'm the head.

And so we stab her again. And she's becoming wounded. And the next time it's a little bigger knife.

And that beautiful, precious, lovely, created in the image of God, help me, for me, is being wounded and stabbed over and over. Harsh words. Angry words.

I would have never dreamt I'd do those things the day I got married. Now I'm furious. I'm mad.

And so we stab her again. These things are terrible sins. And then we come to church and act like everything's okay.

They're awful sins. They mar the beautiful character and person and soul of our life. It's going to be my way.

And we get out the big stick and the big knife. And we stab her again. It is awful what takes place.

And if she still won't conform, we get out the saw. And we may chuckle. But you know, it's not funny.

It is not funny. When God gave you your wife, He gave you the wife that you needed because He knew the hardness of your heart. He knew the weaknesses of your life.

He knew the flat spots in your life. And He knew where you needed your wife to complete you and to work a work of grace in your heart that wouldn't happen any other way. But if we're stubborn and we're rebellious and we are wrongly interpreting and using the Scriptures, we'll get out the saw.

And we'll do the unthinkable. And we'll go to work on that thing. And if it doesn't want to cooperate, we need to get serious about it.

And it's really, really sad. I should not have to talk about this today, but I do need to. If that doesn't work, she still won't conform, we'll get more serious about this thing.

That beautiful wife that God gave me, that lovely, beautiful, created in the image of God for my help need. And now we're desperate. We have fallen so low into the clutches of the lies of the devil.

It all started with letting a little bitterness come in. It all started with some resentment toward what God was wanting to work in our hearts. And we just stiffened ourselves and we set out to change her.

After all, she's under my authority. She needs to change and conform her life into my life. And we never see what we're doing.

Our eyes are so blinded. All we can see is those verses that speak to her. We don't see those.

We are blinded. We have deceived ourselves. And we say it's her fault.

And so people have done horrible things to their wives. They have gone out in rebellion and wickedness against their wife and they have taken that beautiful, pure wife of theirs and they have marred them. They have stabbed them.

And then they have cut them in a way that has cut so deep into the heart that only God can give them grace to be healed. They've cut them. They've ruined them.

They've marred them. And they've gone out and they've committed horrible sins against the one that they love. They have committed adultery.

They have committed all manner of wickedness against the wife whom they loved. You say, Brother Aaron, you're way off the mark. There's no one here like that.

I hope you're right. I hope there's no one here like that. We have been amazed to discover the sins under cloaks of religion.

Now their wife is so crushed and so wrecked that only God can pick up the broken pieces and make her whole. Purity in marriage. I must talk about it.

The Bible tells us marriage is honorable in all and the bed undefiled, but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge. Let your marriage be held in honor and esteemed, worthy and precious and of great price and especially dear. Thus, let the marriage bed be undefiled, kept dishonored, for God will judge and punish the unchaste, all of those guilty of sexual vice and adultery.

Know this, that no whoremonger nor unclean person, no person in that kind of sin, no person practicing sexual vice and impurity in thought or in this life indeed, has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. Let no one delude and deceive you with empty excuses or groundless arguments for these sins. For because of these sins cometh the wrath of God upon the rebellious and the disobedient.

Today it's shocking. I believe it was Brother Denny who mentioned in the beginning of the week here that according to polls taken, the divorce rate is no different in the church than it is in the world. Is that right? Is

that what he said? There are also polls taken that show that the matter of moral purity is not really a lot different in the professed church than it is in the world.

In polls taken of those who have been hooked by pornography, in the church or out of the church, there is an alarming thing happening. And that is that moral purity is declining. And it's declining in the church just like it is outside of the church.

Where is your heart? The Bible says that whoso looketh on a woman to lust after her has committed adultery with her already in his heart. Are you a one-woman man? Let me ask that again. Are you a one-woman man? You have eyes for none other but your wife.

Or are you like that one with roving eyes that whenever you're out in society, your eyes are roving about, looking to see what you can see. Pornography is a terrible sin against God and against your wife. And the oneness that God has desired and designed should be between you and your wife.

It's a destroyer. It's a killer. It's a robber.

It's a lie. It's deceiving. It's damning.

Today, with the Internet, you don't have to go out and buy it. It's only a click away. Men, we must have the law of God written upon our hearts.

It's not going to be enough to have a doctrinal statement. We must have the law of God written upon our hearts and the fear of God dwelling in our hearts. And today, my dear sinner friend, if you're caught in pornography, I would to God that you would repent and turn and confess and be cleansed and washed.

Then you drag that into your chaste, holy wife. That defilement, that sin, that iniquity into your marriage bed. Are you a one-woman man? Malachi tells us an interesting thing.

He says in Malachi 2 and verse 13, He says, You have done this again in covering the altar of the Lord with tears and weeping and with crying out insomuch that He regardeth not the offering any more or receiveth it with goodwill at your hand. And ye say, Wherefore, Lord, why don't you hear our cryings and our weepings? Wherefore? Amen? Stop and let this sink in. Because the Lord hath been witness between thee and the wife of thy youth against whom thou hast dealt treacherously.

You know, it would be a very sad thing if we went through this week with covering the altar with tears, but not dealing with the sin between us and our wife, our spouse. God says, You can cover the altar with tears and weeping and crying, but He doesn't regard it. And the people say, Well, why, Lord? Why haven't you regarded it? And the answer comes back, because the Lord has been witness between thee and the wife of thy youth against whom thou hast dealt treacherously.

Take heed to thy spirit that none deal treacherously against the wife of his youth. Take heed to thy spirit that none deal treacherously against the wife of his youth. For the Lord God of Israel saith, He hateth putting away.

He hateth divorce. But He also hateth the spirit of divorce. If Jesus said to look on a woman to lust after her is committing adultery, what about the spirit of divorce? Is it not just as damaging? In Malachi 2.16 He says, One covereth violence with his garment, saith the Lord of hosts.

He covereth violence with his garment. You men are all here, many of you without your wife. If I were able, or we were able to ask your wife today, Is he a godly man? Is he a Christ-like man in his relationship with you? What would your wife say? You know, it's possible for you to be here and to cover, to cover your sin against your wife as with a garment and hide behind it and go into the prayer room and pray ever so nicely.

But let me ask you a question. Can you pray with your wife in the same manner as you pray with the brethren? Can you? And if the answer is no, why not? See, your wife knows you. My wife knows me.

She knows when there's something between us. She knows when my attitude wasn't right. But you know, you could sit here all week long and you could cover your sin with a garment of pretense and hypocrisy.

You could sit here having the spirit of adultery in your heart, lusting after other women. You could sit here that way. You could sit here with a critical attitude toward your wife.

You could sit here with an authoritative, un-Christlike spirit trampling your wife, stepping on her, standing on her, reducing her down to nothing, where she's just your slave. The gleam isn't in her eye anymore. But she's a godly woman, so she's submitting to you.

She's crying out to the Lord that God would get a hold of you this week. Like the testimony, was it last night? His wife was praying. Oh, Lord! Something's not right with my husband.

I don't know what it is. I can't put my finger on it, but I know there's something not right. Oh, God! If this is really so, please let me see it.

But if it's not, if it's just my imagination, then take the burden away. I wonder if there's any wives praying that this weekend. Saying, Oh, God! Would you get a hold of my husband? Please don't let him come back.

Saying how wonderful it was. And get up in church on Sunday morning and testify how God did a work in his heart. But never deal with the sin in his relationship with his wife.

I would just like to, in the few moments as we're closing here, ask a few questions. Let's bow our heads and close our eyes. Father in heaven, would you please speak to every heart of every husband here today.

And let us not put up any smoke screen or any defense, Lord. And say, yeah, but you don't know my wife. No, it's not your wife.

Husband, it's you. Oh, God, I pray. Have mercy upon us husbands, Lord.

God, today I ask in Jesus' name that as we are seated before you, with our heads bowed and our eyes closed, Father, you show us our sin. Am I a servant of Jesus Christ to my wife? Do I lay down my life or do I always get the last word? It always goes my way. Do I listen to my wife? Do I listen to her heart? To her concerns? To her burdens? Or do I just not hear them and push on? Do I indicate, whether by word or action or just my spirit, that she's the problem? It's her fault.

And I say she's got the beam in her eye. I'm okay. Oh, God.

Do I trample my wife? Do I step upon her very soul, essence and being and put her down and belittle her? Then turn around and stab her with unkind words, angry words. Do I give her the cold shoulder treatment and hold out on her? Am I guilty of adultery? Physical adultery or lustful, emotional adultery? Those magazines. Why do I look at those magazines? Is it to get information about the truck or is it to see the near naked women? Is it to see and lust after women? Oh, but it's not pornography.

It's just sports illustrated or it's just something else. Oh, God. Please do not let any man deceive his own heart here today, but go deeply in the heart of every man.

And Father, as we just close the meeting, we do say thank You, Lord, that there is a cleansing fountain open for sin and uncleanness. And the Bible says, such were some of you. But ye are washed.

Oh, glory. Father, I pray, would You strengthen every marriage relationship here that it may be nurturing and growing in oneness, that there be not a single area for the devil to get a foothold. Oh, that love would abound between husband and wife.

And then when love is abounding in husband and wife relationship, then love will abound to our children. And when love is abounding in our homes, then love will abound in our churches. And when love is abounding in our churches, love will abound in the community and they will see that we are different.

And they will give glory to God. Oh, Father, this is our prayer today. I pray that You would just take now and let Your Holy Spirit settle down upon our hearts.

Put Your finger deeply upon the very need of our hearts. And may we go home from here with a greater love and appreciation and honor for our wife than we've had before because we met with Jesus. Not just a man up there telling something or preaching, but because we met with Jesus.

This is our prayer. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

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