

A Marriage Changed by God

by Zac Poonen

A marriage changed by God requires honest acknowledgement of sin, following the Holy Spirit's guidance, and treating our partners with respect, as outlined in the golden rule.

Duration: 56:56

Scripture: Genesis 1:4, Deuteronomy 22:5, Isaiah 49:15-18, Matthew 7:12, Ephesians 1:18, James 1:26, 1 Peter 3:7

Topics: "Marriage Roles", "Family Values"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of understanding the distinctions and roles within marriage, highlighting the need to recognize and respect the differences between husband and wife, as well as the importance of separating earthly concerns from heavenly priorities. It encourages patience, wisdom, and a focus on building a strong foundation in marriage to raise children who will honor God.

Transcript

When we have children, all of us are excited and we have visions of how those children will grow up and none of us have a vision of their, you know, doing bad things or disappointing us. We have hopes for all of them. When God made Adam and Eve and united them, he also had hopes just like you and I have because God is a father and a mother.

He is mostly referred to as a father but in Isaiah 49, 15 he compares himself to a mother who will not forget even a nursing child. Even if they may forget, I will not forget you, he says. And Jesus compared himself to a mother hen who gathers her chicks under his wings.

So, he had great hopes and expectations when he united Adam and Eve. On the day when God united you, as husband and wife, he also had great expectations. Adam and Eve disappointed him.

Are you a disappointment to God? It's a good question to ask yourself. I am not asking you whether you have failed. We have all failed.

We learn to walk in married life just like a child learns to walk. Not in one day but hopefully in one or two years we learn to overcome irritability and things like that. But if we don't walk according to the promptings of the Holy Spirit but accept what is normal in Christendom around us, we will never come to the type of life God planned for you when he united you together.

Even if your marriage was an arranged marriage, God still considers you husband and wife. God considers a marriage conducted by atheists or non-Christians, they are one flesh. Because marriage was not made for Christians.

Marriage was made for human beings. Adam and Eve were not Christians, they were human beings. And God said to human beings, the two shall be one flesh.

So, marriage is not a Christian sacrament like our Roman Catholic friends would say. I would disagree with them. Marriage is for human beings.

Just like food is for human beings, sex is for human beings, sleep is for human beings, education is for human beings, jobs are for human beings, everything is just like that. But we must, when we become Christians, born again Christians, everything in our life must be done in a Christian way. Our secular work, our married life, the way we bring up our children, our attitude to sex, our attitude to sleep, food, everything becomes Christian.

So, God has ordained many things for human beings, but the whole thing becomes Christian. I mean, we look at everything in a Christian way when we are born again. So, I want to ask you, you know, most people when they are born again, their attitude to these earthly things don't change.

Their attitude to food becomes exactly like the attitude to food of other people. That means they are gluttons like everybody else. They worship food.

They are lazy at work like everybody else is lazy at work. Sleep is one of their gods like people in the world. And they fight and quarrel in marriage just like everybody else in the world.

And what has changed in their life now? In all their life, which is 90% of their earthly part of their life, there is no change with many born again believers. It's only that they now go to a church on a Sunday morning. Before on Sunday morning they did nothing or watched television or went to some temple or mosque.

Now they go to a church. And now they read the Bible a little bit, which they never read before. I mean, that only makes a person religious.

And my feeling is that a lot of born again Christians are only religious. I recently had to write to a sister who claims to be born again and whose husband is not converted. And I told her, sister, if you are just going to be religious, your husband will never be converted.

But I don't think many sisters recognize the difference between being religious and being spiritual. I have seen numerous religious women who are preaching in their husbands, looking down on their husbands. I can almost prophesy that their husbands will never get converted and the reason will be their wives.

And God will turn around to their wives and tell them one day, it's because of you that your husband never got converted. It could be the other way around too. When a person allows the Holy Spirit to grip his life, he not only becomes pure, but he becomes gracious and sweet in his speech towards the people at home, just like he is towards people outside.

See, the culture in the world teaches us to be very gentlemanly and courteous when somebody comes to the door. You know, a stranger comes to the door and if he is properly dressed, you won't be rude to him. You may be rude to a beggar because you don't have any light on Christianity.

But, okay, even if you don't have light, you still would be very courteous to someone who comes in a suit and a tie, particularly if he is a white man. You know how these things make a difference? It shouldn't make any difference to a Christian, but it does, unfortunately. I remember a wife telling her husband, if you will only speak to me like you speak to these strangers who come to the door, that will be enough.

Do you speak to your wife like you would to a stranger who comes to the door? Do you speak to your husband like that, to someone whom you respect, whom you meet? Many times, the ones we call loved ones are the ones we are most rude to. You know, there is a proverb in English called familiarity breeds contempt. Familiarity breeds contempt means that the more familiar you become with somebody, the more you treat them in a very despised way.

Ah, that's only my wife, that's only my husband. You didn't do that on the day you were married. But it has become like that and it gets worse and worse every year.

I just want to say, that's the way of the world. If you really follow the way of Jesus, the Holy Spirit will make you a sweet saint. People will long to be with you.

They will long to talk to you, like they long to talk to Jesus. But you know, Jesus was very strict. When he saw people making money in the name of religion in the temple, he was ruthless.

He sat down and made a whip and chased out and sent the money rolling, turned the tables upside down and opened the cages and sent the birds out and chased the sheep out. And he didn't care whether they came and would sue him in the court. He was determined to keep the house of God pure.

He could turn around to his closest co-worker and say, Get behind me, Satan. He was very, very strict. There are very few Christians who know that type of loving strictness.

Because most believers are all wishy-washy. The only way they can be strict is in a hard, human, pericycal way. But Jesus was hard in a God-like, humble way.

He could talk about the Pharisees and pronounce a curse on them, saying, You hypocrites. You know, I noticed that Jesus was very hard on people who treated others badly. But he was very gentle on people who messed up their own lives.

There are two types of people who come to the church. Those who have messed up their own lives, I want to say to you, Jesus will be very tender with you. And I will be very tender with you.

But there's another type who comes to the church who makes life miserable for other people. Maybe you make life miserable for your husband or your wife or other people in the church. Well then, Jesus will be hard on you.

And I assure you, I'll be very hard on you also. Jesus was very hard on people who treated others badly. Or who took advantage of others.

He was very gentle on people who had messed up their lives much more. Now you would think that someone who, you know, keeps on backbiting against another is not as bad as someone who takes drugs. But Jesus would be very tender to a drug addict.

But very hard on someone who backbites. I want to be like Jesus. I want to be tender to a drug addict who comes here.

Or a prostitute. But very hard on someone who backbites and gossips. And puts down others.

That's what Christ is like. We try to portray the real Christ here. So if you're hard on your husband or wife, I want to tell you that Jesus will be very hard on you.

And it will never go well with you when Jesus is hard on you. So the great law in married life is treat your partner the way you want to be treated. What they call the golden rule in the Sermon on the Mount.

It's Matthew chapter 7. Let me begin with that. Matthew chapter 7. In everything therefore. And this is Matthew 7.12. Matthew 7.12. In everything therefore.

Everything means everything. Treat. Let me paraphrase it.

Treat your wife. Treat your husband. The same way you want them to treat you.

For this is the message of the whole Bible. The law in the prophets is just an expression for the whole Bible. In those days it was only the Old Testament.

Did you hear it? In everything. Treat your wife. The way you want to be treated.

Treat your husband the way you want to be treated. For this is the message of the whole Bible. What's the use understanding all the other things if you don't understand the main message of the whole Bible? I want to speak seriously and strongly this morning because some of us have been here for so many years.

And I'm sorry to say that you still don't know how to speak respectfully and kindly to your marriage partner. Well, I want to say to you your Christianity is worth zero. No matter how much you pray.

No matter how religious you think you are. And no matter how much you read the Bible. And my authority for that is James chapter 1 and verse 26.

James 1.26 I want to paraphrase these words again. If anyone thinks he is very religious, very holy, very spiritual, and yet cannot control his own tongue when he speaks to his wife, or cannot control her tongue when she speaks to her husband, he is only deceiving himself. She is only deceiving herself that she is spiritual.

That he is spiritual. His Christianity is worth zero. Her Christianity is worth zero.

You won't hear it so plainly in other churches, but you'll hear it plainly here. Because our scan machine is pretty good. Our scan machine is the Bible itself.

We don't modify it. We don't rub out certain parts of the scan to make you look good. So don't be fooled.

The way you speak at home is a pretty good indication of your Christianity. If you want to know whether my Christianity is genuine or not, come and live with me. Watch me for 365 days without my knowledge.

You can't live with me without my knowledge. Maybe some other way, if you could peep in through the window or come by surprise without knocking at the door, without ringing the bell, listen to what's happening. Come now and then and listen and see how I speak to my wife.

Then you'll find out whether what I'm preaching here is true or just a lot of rubbish like a lot of other preachers preach. I want to say to you, my brothers and sisters, there is a life in Christ which is way above

anything you have experienced. I wanted it desperately in my life.

I cried out. I'd weep on my bed at night and say, Lord, I want the life that you've described in the New Testament. God gave it to me.

He'll give it to you. Because there's a law with God. If you seek me with all your heart, you will find me.

And I have found him. He's a rewarder of those who diligently seek him and he's rewarded me. I don't take one bit of credit for it.

If grace departs from my life today, I know I will be like that fruitful branch cut off from the tree. It's just a matter of time before I dry up. I am what I am by the grace of God, not 99%, 100%.

Because you don't know. I know what I am apart from the grace of God. And I know that if God could do something in me, he can do it in you.

Because I don't consider myself as a man better than any of you. You may not believe it, but I'm telling you the truth. If God can do it in me, he can do it in you.

The grace of God is almighty. It's the greatest force greater than nuclear power and anything there is in the world. But you've got to allow it to work in you.

Good things can come forth from your life that you did not even know existed. When you looked at that earth in Genesis chapter 1, empty, dark, without shape, do you think there was anything good in that? But you look at it at the end of chapter 1. Even God says it's very good. Something came forth from that which you didn't even think existed there.

Trees. Fruitful trees. A beautiful sky.

I mean look at the sunset. Can you imagine what the sunset was like before sin came? It must have been absolutely fantastic. I mean the sunset is so good even with sin.

I cannot even imagine what it was like before sin came. You couldn't believe something so beautiful could come out of such a rotten earth described in Genesis 1-2 as shapeless, empty, dark. And I want to say to you in Jesus' name, your marriage may be shapeless, empty and dark.

But you're too ashamed to let other people here know about it. When you read Genesis chapter 1, that God took that shapeless, empty, dark earth. His Holy Spirit worked on it, submitted it to the Word of God and by the end of that chapter, it was a beautiful earth that God said, very good.

Think that your marriage can become like that. Beautiful. Very good.

But you must believe. If you turn to Genesis chapter 1, you see there, I want to see this as a picture of marriage. And I want to read this as a paraphrase to you.

In the beginning, Genesis 1, remember I'm paraphrasing it spiritually. Applying it to your life. In the beginning, God created Adam and Eve and they were perfect.

But sin came and messed up their life and Adam and Eve became shapeless, empty and dark. They lost the image of God. They're full of darkness.

They're criticizing each other, accusing one another, blaming God. And they're empty of all that goodness. Instead of the spirit of love, they had the spirit of accusation.

This woman is the cause of the problem. It started. Darkness, empty, deep, over the deep.

But God didn't give up on Adam and Eve. The Holy Spirit began to move on that human race. And God said, let there be light.

You know, that's the first thing. Always. Always God's first move is light.

Let there be light in this darkness. What are some of the marks of darkness? One preeminent mark of darkness is that you don't see your own need. And when you don't see your own need, you think the problem is with other people.

Are you like that? Have you ever blamed your wife for something which afterwards you discovered that you were the cause of it yourself? Did you accuse her of misplacing the house keys and later on discovered you yourself had misplaced it? Or something else like that? Or did you blame your husband for something which later on you discovered you did yourself? That is darkness. I mean, I don't blame you. You're just in darkness.

When light comes, you see it. Hey, look at my shirt. Look at my blouse or sari.

It's so filthy. You can't see that in the dark. A person who is in pitch darkness whose sari or shirt may be filthy with mud and dirt and black marks, you don't blame him if he thinks his clothes are clean.

Do you? No. He's sincere. He's honest.

He's absolutely convinced his shirt is clean or his sari is clean. They're in darkness. Just turn on the light and immediately they see it.

The first thing required in this progression from emptiness to fullness, from darkness to light and shapelessness to the image of Christ. The first step always is honest acknowledgement of your condition. I have discovered that through 48 years of being a believer and 48 years of studying the Bible that the first thing God requires is honest acknowledgement of your sin.

That's all he wanted from Adam. When Adam messed up his life, all that God asked him was, did you eat of this tree? What did God want? Honest acknowledgement. Yes.

Lord, I did it. I'm sorry. He didn't say, Adam, come on, find some solution for this now.

God could find the solution. He would send Jesus. Adam didn't have to find any solution.

I want to tell you something. You don't have to find a solution for the mess in your marriage. But you have to be honest and acknowledge it.

How did the miracles of Jesus begin? First miracle was in a marriage. Right? In which place? Cana. And what did he want from them? Honest acknowledgement.

What is it? We have no wine. We had. On the day we got married, boy, we thought we were full of wine.

We used such sweet words to each other. All the wonderful words, particularly in the English language. There's so many.

I don't have time to tell you all of them right now. You know, sweetheart, honey, darling, and what all there is. But it's all gone.

Now it is, eh? What? You again? The wine is gone. It's finished. Be honest.

Lord, the wine is dry. He can produce better wine than you had in the days when you used those beautiful words in the English language. He can give you a beautiful attitude as well.

Not empty words from your mouth. Only he can do it. You can't produce wine supernaturally.

You can go and buy it from the market with a lot of labor and produce it yourself or pay for it. But this wine from heaven only Jesus can give. And people will come into your house and like those guests at the wedding will say, Where did this come from? How did your marriage become like this? And then you'll have an opportunity to witness to what Jesus can do.

I'm telling you the truth, my brother, sister. I am an extremely happy husband, father, father-in-law, grandfather. Jesus has made me like that.

It's the absolute truth. I'm not a salesman trying to sell Christianity. No.

I'm not trying to convince you about something that's not true. That's my honest testimony because I have found the narrow way that leads to life. It's a narrow way.

No doubt. You have to walk very carefully. It's like, I can't take my wife with me.

I can't take my children with me. I have to walk alone. Each person has to make that choice.

It's a very narrow way and one has to be very cautious. You can't walk two steps at a time. It's one step.

Then you walk the other step. It's a one brick type of wall. Have you tried walking on a one brick type of wall? Four and a half inches wide.

It can be done. You've got to be very careful. But it becomes easy when somebody is holding you.

You know, like a child walking on that wall and the father is holding it and says, My child, don't fear. You won't fall. I'm here to hold you at each step.

Otherwise it would be difficult because it's actually thinner than a one step wall. It's more like tightrope walking. Someone is holding me and he can hold you too.

It is God's will. But begin with light. I want light to come in my life.

First, the light that brings acknowledgement of myself. And when you take that first step, like going from first standard to second standard, God will give you more light and that light is to show you what Christ can do for you. That's also light.

You know, light is different from understanding. Many of you hear me and you understand something in your heads but you can't say that you got light. Because if you did get light, your lives would have been

changed long ago.

Your marriages would have been changed long ago. But it's clear that you understood. And if somebody were to ask you, did you understand what Brother Zack said, you'd say yes.

But did you have light on it? No. For that you've got to go to God. I'll tell you, I can't create light.

I can give you understanding but I can't give you light. I can help you to understand scripture but I can't give you light. Even the Apostle Paul, he couldn't give light to the Ephesians.

He told them in Ephesians chapter 1, I'm praying that your eyes will be enlightened. That your eyes will get light. That's what he said in Ephesians 5. That your heart will be enlightened, get light.

He didn't say, you know, listen, read this Ephesians 10 times and you'll understand it. So I'm not going to tell you, listen to this CD 10 times and you'll understand it. No, you won't.

I pray that you'll get light in your heart, that God shows you what Christ can do for you. And then you'll say, boy, that's amazing what he can do for me. So that's the second area where you need to get light.

God's word, enlightened by Christ, that he can save you from the mess of your life. Just to believe that he can bring wine into that situation. Just do as he says.

That's what Mary told the servants at Cana. Just do what he says, even if you can't understand it. Don't question.

When he tells you to pour water, pour the water. He'll do the rest. Just do what he says.

And he'll help you even in that. If you have difficulty picking up one bucket and pouring it into that water pot, say, Lord, can you just help me with this? He'll help you even there to pour the water. That's the Jesus I have.

That's my friend. He not only turns the water into wine, he'll help me with that bucket of water to pour it into the water pot. It's wonderful.

The Christian life is really, in a sense, easy. His yoke is easy. His burden is light.

I can honestly say that. I have not found the yoke of Jesus heavy. I've served the Lord full time for 41 years.

And that brings me to pretty close contact with him because I have to be serving him 7 days a week, something or the other. Dealing with some church problem, answering somebody's problem by email or writing something or preparing for some ministry or going somewhere. And it brings me pretty close contact with the Lord.

And I'll tell you this. His yoke is easy. It's exciting to serve him.

It's exciting to live the Christian life. Have you found that excitement? Your marriage can be exciting if you let Jesus be Lord. Just do what he says.

Okay. The other thing it says here is that God made a separation between the light and the darkness. And that's important, verse 4. That in your marriage also, you need to distinguish what is light and what is

darkness.

And allow God to separate that. If you find yourself difficult to do it, say, let Lord you separate the light and the darkness in that first earth and do it in our life. You know, if you allow things which bring a little darkness into your home.

And then you say, why isn't there enough light here? Well, you're bringing the darkness in. God puts switches on the light and you go and switch it off. Or maybe there are 10 switches and God switches all 10 on and you turn 5 of them off.

Well, there's a little darkness in your home. God doesn't turn off the switch. You may be turning it off by something you bring into your home which is not pleasing to Christ.

It could be a movie that you're watching. It could be a television program which is so interesting. I tell you the devil can make television programs so interesting with 5 seconds of sex in it that pollutes you and that's all you remember at the end 5 years later.

5 years later somebody asks you, do you remember that movie you saw and all you remember, if you're honest, is that 5 seconds of sex. You don't know the rest of the plot. The devil knows that.

Haven't you learned it after polluting yourself so much? You still haven't learned it? Are you fooled still by these R-rated movies? And nowadays even the PG-13 movies are pretty bad, I hear. Don't be fooled by the devil. Don't be fooled by a lot of these television programs that appear to help you.

Don't bring darkness into your home. Don't switch off the light which God is turning on. You got some light in the church meeting? You got some light through reading the Bible? Wonderful! Now don't go and switch off some of those switches.

And bring darkness. Separate the light from the darkness. The way you spend your money, the way you spend your time.

Let everything be in the light. It's very easy to earn money dishonestly, cheat somebody, make money in the world today. I'll tell you this.

It'll never bless you or your children. I have lived long enough in this world to see the curse that comes through unrighteously earned money. I even prayed like this, Lord, to the Lord once.

Lord, if by my ignorance I have cheated someone of money or the government of money, please make sure that it goes out of my account in some way. If you pray seriously, God will take you at your word. I'll tell you that.

Don't pray it unless you mean it. Because you'll suddenly find money going out of your bank account or something. And you know how God did it? This is some years ago.

One day I was making an international phone call. Those were the days when international phone calls were really expensive. Not like today.

Then when I finished the call, I put the phone down. It didn't cut off. Boy! I pick it up.

It's still on. Bang, bang, bang, bang, bang. I said, what to do now? In the middle of the night I have to go somewhere, find some other phone to call up the telephone exchange to tell them to turn off this thing.

I don't know after how many minutes. It finally got turned off. But it came in my bill.

The Lord said, I'm just answering your prayer. Somewhere along the line, maybe I owed the government something. It went to the government.

I'm determined on that. I pray that even today. I tell you, if you're serious with God, God will be serious with you.

You worship God or you worship money? I worship God. I remember once. You know, little things can upset life in a home.

One of these poor, poor, poor villagers from one of our village churches came to visit me one day. The only address he knows is mine. He came.

And you know in the villages, the little children don't wear underwears. They don't wear anything. I mean small children, two years old.

They just wear a shirt that goes down to their knees and that's it. That's their modesty. So this guy came along with his little child and he was talking to me about deep spiritual things and of course this child was jumping on the coffee table and urinated right there on my coffee table.

On the table in front, in my front room. You know why it didn't disturb me? One bit. Because I was not a worshipper of my table.

I was a worshipper of Jesus Christ. I remember the days when children used to, when we used to have meetings in our home and children would practice their alphabets on my walls with, not with chalk that can be removed, but with crayons and things that are irremovable type of stuff. Well, I would tell them how to do it better but it didn't disturb me because I was not a worshipper of my wall.

We must teach them of course but many things in my life the Lord has tested me. Whom do you worship? I said, Lord you can test me in a hundred and one areas. I will never worship any material thing.

What is the difference if you worship your table or your wall and that other non-Christian worships the same stone thing made in the shape of a man? He is an idol worshipper and you are an idol worshipper. Only yours is a wall and his is shaped like a man. You think there is a difference in that? Not at all.

Your wood makes a coffee table, his wood makes a man, shaped like a man. You worship this, he worships that. What's the difference? You know the number of idol worshippers among Christians? No wonder they don't have a close contact with God.

I am so desperate to have a very close relationship with Jesus Christ and I know that for that I must have no idols at all. You don't know whether I have any idols only I know and I don't know whether you have any idols. But that is darkness.

Say, Lord separate all the darkness from my life. It will make your married life happier because many of the things we get upset in our home is over somebody spoiling something which is so precious to us. I remember telling one brother who was having a problem with anger in his home and he said, Brother

Zach, pray for me.

I said, do you love material things? Perhaps if somebody breaks something in your home, if your wife breaks something or your husband does something which spoils something which is very precious to you do you get upset? That's because you worship material things. Your problem is not anger. Your problem is you worship material things.

And you'll never get rid of anger till you stop your worship of this idol. You worship all the saris in your cupboard. I guarantee you won't get victory over your anger.

The devil will do something to mess up something there. Maybe some worms he'll send in there to eat up some of those lovely make some holes in those saris. Is that enough to ruin your Christianity? I hope it is not.

No demon in hell is going to get power over me in any area. Jesus Christ is my Lord. I determined that long ago.

He's going to be Lord in every area. Let the light shine. Separate the light from the darkness.

Use material things but don't love material things. God created people to be loved and things to be used. But man has reversed it and the devil has reversed it.

He's made people love things and use people. Don't you use people? You meet a person and say, now how can I make use of him? If the commissioner of police were a member of CFC, wouldn't you like to be his friend? Not to help him to be spiritual, oh no. How can I make use of him? How can I make use of this brother, that brother? Well, that's the way of the world.

Use people and love things. When you get converted, really converted, it turns around and you begin to love people and use things. You don't want to use anybody.

Things are only to be used. They are there. They'll get destroyed.

One day they'll wear out. So what? We are careful. We don't want to waste things.

We are very careful with all the gadgets we have. That's alright. But don't love them.

Don't get attached to them. It's darkness. Yeah, I could go through this whole chapter.

But you see there that it says here that God made the heavens and separated the earth from the heavens. It says in the next day. And he separated the waters from the seas.

I find always a separation, a separation. First day there was a separation of light from darkness. The next day it says in verse 6. Separate the waters from here and the waters from there.

The waters that were below the heavens and the waters that were above the heavens. Let there be a separation. And I see that in our life as, do you make a distinction between the things that are earthly and the things that are heavenly in your life? That's the message of the second day.

Do you make a separation of the things that are earthly and the things that are heavenly? The things that really matter. The things that don't matter so much. When you're a child, Paul said, when I was a child I thought like a child, I spoke like a child.

When I was a man I put away childish things. I remember once when my children were very small and they were playing cricket. And you know how children are.

One of their favorite words in cricket is cheater. Well my children were ordinary children like anybody else's. And they would have arguments whether somebody was LBW or not or something like that.

LBW is the most difficult to judge. Out and all is easy. Wicket taken or catch and all.

But LBW. And one day they said, you know so when they have an argument, their last resort is let's ask daddy. So they come to me, the empire.

And I say, I wasn't there really. And so I said, listen, I don't know whether who's out or who's not out but I ask you, 2000 years from now is it going to matter? And they were children. They thought like children, they spoke like children.

They said, I know dad, it won't matter 2000 years from now but right now it does matter. Now think if I was batting there and somebody said, hey he's LBW. I would just leave the bat and go.

I'm not going to stand there and argue because I'm an adult. I want to ask you, do you behave like a child in your home? Arguing about things that have no eternal value? You say it matters right now. Then you're a child.

Is it going to matter 2000 years from now? Then you're an adult if you can look at it that way. Separate the waters that are beneath the heavens from the waters that are above the heavens. That's what it says here.

Separate the things that are beneath from the things that are above. In your thinking, Lord, this is earthly, worthless. This is eternal, valuable.

That's why I tell people supposing you happen to be late for the Sunday morning service instead of 9.30 you can come only at 10 because something went wrong at home you know that can always happen especially when you have little children or something else may crop up unexpectedly accidentally and maybe you're the type of person who's very particular that you should be there on time or one of the partners, husband or wife, the other partner is not so particular don't have a fight over that. What's the use of having a fight and then coming here and saying, Oh Lord, we praise you and worship you. No.

It's better to come late peacefully. Take my word. It's better to come late peacefully than to come on time with a fight any day.

We should try and come on time but it's not always possible in this world. It's not possible. Especially with small children and numerous things.

Distances to be traveled. We can't estimate the time. Traffic could be a problem.

People could have punctures. That's why I completely stopped judging people who are late. I used to in the days when I had no wisdom.

I don't do it now. I tell them please come on time but I realize that there are many problems that we have. So don't have a fight in any case.

Tell me which is better. To come late without a fight, peacefully, happily or to come on time with a fight. You know which is better.

Why don't you do that? And I'll tell you something else. This is not just time for the meeting. It's never worth having a fight.

Ask yourself 2,000 years from now. Is this going to matter? Some things do. Like the type of movies you watch.

The type of books you allow your children to read. The type of music you allow them to listen to. Those things will matter 2,000 years from now because it's going to affect their life for the rest of their life.

Train up a child in the way he should go when he's old. He will not depart from it. That's the way he's going to grow.

Because that's the way you allowed him all types of things in your home. Make a separation between the things above and the things below. It says here then Again you find in verse 9 on the third day a separation.

Let the waters be here and the dry land be here. God called the dry land earth and the gathering of the waters he called seas and God saw that it was good. You notice here that God is a God of distinctions.

This is this, this is this. That's why in the Old Testament he said we don't want women to dress like men in Deuteronomy. The principle is not whether you wear pants or jeans.

That's not the point. That's for legalists who go down to the letter. I'm not talking about that.

There are many countries in the world where pants, men and women wear it. You go to Pakistan, almost everybody wears this salwar kameez. Men and women by the way.

This is the Punjabi dress. The men wear all white and the women, some wear white, some wear color. That's it.

So I'm not talking about that. I'm not a legalist. I was once upon a time.

Pharisee of the Pharisees, but God delivered me. But what I say is the distinction between the sexes is very important. If you don't distinguish between the sexes you go into homosexuality in one form or the other.

There is a distinction between the sexes. There is a difference between the way we have to bring up our daughters and the way we bring up our children, our boys. Sure.

I mean, for example, even the way they sit in a chair. Don't you teach your daughters to sit in a certain way when boys can stretch out their legs and cross their legs over their knees, things like that which is not proper or modest for a girl to do. There is a difference between the sexes and it's important to make that distinction.

God is a God of distinctions. He didn't make man and woman alike. There are differences.

We need to recognize those differences. Like, you know the difference between earth and sea. Earth and water.

It's very simple. It's a clear distinction. Water is water and mud is mud.

It's a distinction between the two. One is solid and the other is liquid. Do you see that there is a difference between you and your wife? That certain things she is like that because she is a woman.

It's got nothing to do with spirituality. You know, supposing your wife gets upset with you because you paid 25 paise more per kilo for that cabbage that you brought back from the market and it makes a big hullabaloo over the extra 50 paise you spent for the 2 kilos of cabbage. And you, you, you are a patient husband.

You keep quiet but in your mind you think what a carnal woman. She is worried about 50 paise. It's not that.

It's because she is a woman. You are not more spiritual than her. God has made women to think about little, little things because that's the only way they can be mothers.

She may be more spiritual than you and yet she may be worried about those little things because God has made women like that. But you can foolishly think you are more spiritual. It's not you are more spiritual.

You are a man. Men are not bothered about those things. Men are bothered about the big things.

Women are bothered about the little things. If you can understand the distinction between earth and sea, you will be a very happy married person. You see, for example, that's why when a little baby starts crying and screaming, the father is standing there clueless, doesn't know what to do.

And the mother says, oh yeah, I know what that is. How did they know? Did the baby tell something, whisper something to the mother's ear which the father didn't hear? No. It's that sensitivity that a mother has.

I know what's wrong. God has made women like that. So the reason I say that is sometimes husbands can, I mean in my days of ignorance, I did that too.

Because nobody told me these distinctions. I learned it the hard way. But I'm trying to make it easier for you young people who get married, that there's a distinction between husband and wife.

And you can think you are spiritual. You are not spiritual. You are just a man.

I mean if you can lift 50 kilos and you look at your wife and say, you can't even lift 30 kilos, whatever, she's a woman. That's why the Bible itself says in 1 Peter 3, she's a weaker vessel. Recognize that.

And the next verse it says in 1 Peter 3, husbands must live in an understanding way. Understanding what? Understanding that your wife is a weaker vessel. And it says in 1 Peter 3, 7, that if you don't understand that, God will not even listen to you.

How many of you husbands have understood that your wife is a weaker vessel? And now that the wives are all happy, I want to ask you sisters. How many of you understand that your husband is the head of the house? I'm perfectly impartial. I'll tell you that.

I'm not in favor of the men or the women. Because God made them both. Brothers, do you recognize your wife as a weaker vessel? Sisters, do you recognize your husband as the head of the house? He's got to

take the decisions.

You can give him plenty of advice, but he's got to take the decision. And you must be a helper. Don't just sit back there and say, yes sir, yes sir, yes sir.

Then you're not a helper. The husband is like the driver of the bus or the car. If he takes a wrong turning, and you know it's a wrong turning, you say, no, I must be a submissive wife.

I know this will take us 10 miles off track, but I've got to keep quiet. What type of wife are you? You're not a helper. Oh, he'll get upset.

Don't get upset, husbands, if your wife gives you advice. You may take the wrong turning sometimes. Don't you think it's good to have a helper? Not the type of backseat driver who says, no, slow down, slow down.

No, no, no, don't go fast. Not that type of backseat driver. But someone who reasonably says, darling, I think we took the wrong turn there.

We should reverse. There are two types. Be a helper.

Well, I don't want to go through all the seven days, but six days. The last day, I want you to see this. Finally, it says here, God looked at everything that he had made, verse 31, and he saw it was very, very good.

It's always separation. On the fourth day, God saw light was one, darkness was another. Separation.

It's there all the way, right up to the last day. Man and woman. Please remember that to separate yourself from darkness, to separate yourself from the things that are heavenly and things that are, to see the distinction between earthly and heavenly, to see the distinction between man and woman, to see the distinction between parent and child.

Be patient. I remember once when one of my children spilt the milk and I got upset with him and then a little later I spilt my coffee and the Lord said to me, you are so old and you spilt coffee and you are upset with that two year old who spilt his milk. I said, Lord, forgive me.

I learned to be patient. I had four professors of patience living in my house teaching me for 18 years and if I've learned some patience today I have to be thankful for those four professors my boys who taught me what I could never learn any other way. I have a few brothers also who taught me in the church but but I had four living in professors.

Be thankful for those who teach you patience and don't get upset with them. My children were no worse than anybody else's. They were normal children of Adam, just like yours.

But if we get upset with them instead of saying, Lord, you are trying to teach me something you may miss out on what God has for you. Married life is a wonderful life. I've been married nearly 40 years.

It will be 40 years next year and I can tell you it's one of the most wonderful things of all. And to have children that's a tremendous blessing. Tremendous.

I wouldn't exchange it for anything in the world. Married life and children. It's molded me.

It's given me light in areas that I could never have got. It's sanctified me, helped me and enlarged my ministry. Take it in the right way and God will look at your life and say at the end, son, daughter you responded to everything I said and look what has come out of your life now.

It's excellent. Don't you want a married life like that? Don't you want children to grow up who will please the Lord? Well, if you want children to grow up who will please the Lord make sure you and your wife, you and your husband have a good relationship. That's the foundation.

When the children begin to shake, it's because the foundation is shaky. The foundation is husband and wife. Never forget that.

Let's pray. Heavenly Father, we pray that you will apply these truths to our lives. That we don't just look at them as interesting messages but something that will apply to our life and change us radically.

We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

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