

(Sex, Love & Marriage) 9. the Highway of Happiness

by Zac Poonen

The Highway of Happiness is God's path for us in the realms of sex, love, and marriage, where we can experience true blessedness and joy by respecting God's boundaries and honouring Him in our relationships.

Scripture: Genesis 12:2, Genesis 22:18, Psalm 23:5, Proverbs 5:11, Ecclesiastes 10:8, Isaiah 35:8, John 2:1, Acts 20:35, Galatians 3:14, Galatians 6:7, 1 John 3:5

Topics: "Christian Marriage", "Obedience To God"

Description

Zac Poonen preaches about the importance of choosing to walk on God's Highway of Happiness in the realms of sex, love, and marriage, emphasizing the need for obedience to God and respect for His boundaries. He warns against the consequences of breaking through God's fences, using the example of Eve being deceived by the Devil in the garden of Eden. Poonen highlights the significance of inviting Jesus into marriages, allowing Him to solve problems and meet needs, as seen in the wedding at Cana where Jesus manifested His glory. He encourages couples to obey God's commands, transforming the ordinary aspects of married life into something precious and valuable.

Transcript

There is a Highway of Happiness in the realms of sex, love and marriage that God wants us to tread. But many seem to prefer walking in the gutter of misery!

The issues involved in relation to these subjects have been made clear. It remains now for us to make the choice. Each one of us stands before God alone in the secret area of his/her heart. No one other than God and you may know the decisions you make there. But the effectiveness and blessedness of your life will depend on those decisions. There is a price to be paid, if we are to walk along God's Highway - the price of obedience to God at every step - for the Highway of Happiness is also the Highway of Holiness (cf. Isaiah 35:8 with 10).

God has created fences on either side of this Highway, and the Bible warns us that whoever breaks through these fences will be bitten by a serpent (Ecclesiastes 10:8). In the garden of Eden too, God fenced off one forbidden tree. But Satan showed Eve the beauty of the fruit of that tree, told her of the advantages of eating it, and assured her that she would not suffer any consequences if she ate it. She was thus lured into breaking through the fence and was promptly bitten by that old Serpent, the Devil.

The forbidden realms in sex, love and marriage that God has fenced off, are clearly shown in the Bible - and made plain in this book. The Devil however, has succeeded in luring millions of young people (and older people too) to leave God's Highway, break through God's fencing and partake in what God has forbidden. These folk discover too late that the bite of the Serpent is as deadly today as it was in the time of our first parents.

Our safety lies in abiding rigidly by the Word of God - in respecting the fences that God Himself has erected. Beware of breaking through them, "lest afterwards you groan in anguish and in shame....and you say, 'Oh, if only I had listened! If only I had not demanded my own way! Oh, why wouldn't I take advice? Why was I so stupid? For now I must face public disgrace'" (Proverbs 5:11-14 - TLB).

We can never "ignore God and get away with it" (Galatians 6:7 - TLB).

Cups Running Over

The wedding at Cana, on the other hand, gives us a glimpse of the blessedness that comes through honouring God (John 2:1-11). It is significant that it was at a wedding, that Jesus decided to manifest His glory for the first time. Even today, He desires to manifest His glory at every wedding and in every marriage. Sex, love and marriage are among His most precious gifts to us and can be the means whereby He reveals His glory not only to us but through us to others as well - if only we will let Him.

The shortage of wine at Cana indicates that problems and needs will arise in every marriage. These problems can ultimately lead both husband and wife to a point of continued frustration and despair. But when Jesus is given the pre-eminent place in a marriage, He very soon solves the problems and meets the needs - as He did at Cana.

It is not enough for Christ to be invited as a guest into the home; He must be Lord. It is mere mockery to hang a placard on the wall which reads, "CHRIST IS THE HEAD OF THIS HOUSE", if in actual fact the husband (or the wife!) is the real head. But wherever Christ is truly acknowledged as Head and Lord, He manifests His glory as really as He did at Cana two thousand years ago (verse 11).

"Whatever He says to you, do it", was the advice given by Mary to the servants there (verse 5). They heeded that advice and obeyed Jesus implicitly and immediately - and soon the problem was solved. If only married couples (as well as young people contemplating marriage) would heed the same advice and render the same implicit and immediate obedience to the Lord's commands, how soon their problems would find a solution.

The water was transformed into wine at that wedding. That which was tasteless and colourless and ordinary was changed in a moment into something sweet and sparkling and costly. This symbolizes how the common things of married life (including the monotonous drudgery of daily routine) can begin to sparkle with a luster, when the Lord is given full control of the home. The tasteless becomes sweet, and infinite value begins to be seen in that which was formerly despised as common.

The needs of many people were met too, as a result of that miracle. A Christian marriage never fulfils its purpose by providing happiness merely for both the partners. God's intention is that married couples should have their cups "running over" constantly (Psalm 23:5). They should be the means of blessing to many others - in fact to every one they meet. God once said to an obedient servant of His - "I will bless you....and you shall be a blessing - dispensing good to others....(and) in you shall all the families and

kindred of the earth be blessed" (Genesis 12:2, 3). That blessing of God is for us too, according to Galatians 3:14. What greater aim could one have in marriage than that? But the measure in which we become a blessing to others will depend on the measure in which we obey God in our daily life. "In your seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, because you have heard and obeyed My voice", said the Lord to Abraham (Genesis 22:18).

The miracle at Cana holds out a message of hope too, for those who have blundered and failed in the realms of sex, love and marriage. When the wine failed at Cana, they turned to the Lord and He did not let them down. He will not let you down either, if you turn to Him in your need - no matter how great your failure may have been. He only asks you to be honest about that need (as those in Cana were) and to tell Him of your failure. Have you through your foolishness, allowed things to go too far with that girl (or that boy)? Have you blundered in the matter of love - perhaps through ignorance? Are you, as a result, facing embarrassment and frustration now? Do others misunderstand you and reproach you - or perhaps malign you? Then turn to the Lord at once, without a moment's delay. He is the Friend of sinners. He waits not only to forgive your sin but also to clean up the mess that Satan has made of your life. It was to fulfil these two purposes that He came into the world (1 John 3:5, 8). Don't give way to discouragement, for there is hope even for you. The Lord more than made up for the lack at that wedding in Cana, and He can more than make up for every lack in your life. The Lord manifested His glory at Cana, and He can do the same in your case.

If you have faced disappointment, take heart from the fact that true blessedness in the Christian life comes through renouncing and not through possessing (Acts 20:35). God can make all things work together for your good, and help you to live a full life for His glory in spite of unfulfilled desires.

From Glory to Glory

Let your aim be to glorify God in the realms of sex, love and marriage, and you will then have no need to fear that you might miss His perfect will in these areas. He will assuredly lead you along that Highway, where no lion or ravenous beast is found, but where instead the glory of God shines more and more - brighter and clearer - until the very end of life's journey. May you tread this Heavenly Highway all your life. Amen.

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