

We are now continuing with *Part 2* of the new series entitled, *The Institution of Marriage*.

Basically, last week we really only kind of laid a bit of a foundation and a groundwork for the basis of this particular series. It's good to go back now and just do a little bit of review, now that we've had a week to think about some of those things, to have considered some of the scriptures that were there. We had that opportunity, obviously, last Sabbath, but it's good to mention some of those things and build upon it and then continue forward.

So again here, it's important to understand God did not wait until later to make it known that He is the one who gave the institution of marriage to mankind, as He said in **Genesis 2:24**—

Therefore, shall a man leave his father and mother and cleave unto his wife, and they shall be or become, as we understand it, one flesh.

I'm excited about the Feast because there's a sermon that goes into this in greater depth and detail considering the things of why God said that from the very beginning of time. There are a lot of other things as well. I'm amazed at how often we go back to Genesis, Genesis 2, Genesis 3. We're going to be doing that again at the Feast this year; we're doing it here because although we didn't understand and although people haven't understood, because they're just little snippets, but God from the very beginning had an outline, and in time He's revealed more and more to help us grasp what He gave from the beginning. This is powerful and profound when we come to understand it, as God has progressively through time revealed more and more and more.

"Therefore, shall a man leave his father and mother and shall cleave unto his wife, and they shall be/become one flesh." So first this verse addresses the need to leave father and mother. To leave! If this is not done then as a whole in human life there will be conflict; there are going to be some problems. There are going to be some difficulties and battles that otherwise don't need to be there.

Now, please understand on a context of this. Sometimes there are certain things that happen out of a necessity of life for a period of time, but the goal should be to leave father and mother. So there are things in life that happen at the very beginning when people get married, and maybe there is a particular need, financial or whatever, but the goal should be even before that, if possible, to have everything set, prepared, and ready. That needs to be a goal if at all possible. People need to work in that particular direction.

But it's important why God says all of this, awesomely important. I hope I don't get into the Feast sermon because there is a lot here, brethren. There really is.

So if this is not done then there will be conflict indeed. The only exception is if a parent, usually because of old age or death of one parent, comes to live with a son or daughter. That's a different matter. That's a different situation. So again, there are things that happen in life, but there are reasons why God said this and why it's set up this way and it's important. There's so much to learn from it.

So in such a case that parent will then of necessity come under the order or the government of that household as the husband and wife work to create and form a uniquely exclusive single family unity in society and life. God has given us that definition to live by, to understand what He gave from the very beginning, and to understand the importance of it because it is about an order. It is about a kind of government that God has established for people to have that's different from others for a purpose and for a reason.

Again, if this is not done and a married couple live in a home with a father and mother then often there will be conflict because that father and mother have themselves worked, to some degree obviously, to form and create a uniquely exclusive single family unit. When you're striving to form a new uniquely exclusive family unit there will be conflict. Conflict! Governments are going to collide because it's a different order. It can't work well to the degree God has designed it except it be done this way. So that needs to be the goal, though, as I mentioned, there is sacrifice, there are things people can do, but they need to understand this is going to be a battle. They're going to have to work harder—all sides are—in such situations in life. That's just the way it is. If we understand those things then we can have more peace, more fullness of life, but there need to be goals in people's lives, and especially at the beginning all the more so.

So another important matter to face in all this is that if a son or daughter marries and lives with a parent then it is only natural, a natural thing, for parents to exert strong influence and pressure upon the newly married couple to conform to their form and custom of their own family unit. That's just the way it is. "Well, they're my children." They're always your children and the tendency of parents oftentimes is to hold on to control. You can't do it. You can't do it if you're going to do it the way God says to do it because a parent also needs to understand there's a time to let go! To let go! You don't have control of that. There may be a time to share, and so forth, in certain things in life, but you can't interfere in the control of that uniquely forming, if you will, family unit that's taking shape of itself of necessity in life. It's so important, especially in the beginning, for a husband and wife to begin forming a bond and a union and a oneness of spirit, of life that God desires for them to do. Interference in that just creates problems. I could tell you a lot of stories. It can create a lot of problems, and problems that sometimes carry on in a marriage for years and years and years to come. Some that are never resolved in life and it's in the world around us. If you look out there, it exists.

So parents have to understand this of what God is saying. Two people coming together in a marriage for the first time in life, coming to a marriage and a bond and a union like this need to understand what God is saying and why because there are reasons why God says what He does. It's

so that people can have richness and fullness in life to experience family, to experience things in marriage, a sharing together that bind two people in a very unique way that can't come together and be formed in the way it needs to, especially at the beginning, because of this. We need to understand why God set it up this way as human beings, how we need to respond to the order that God has given, the order of life, of things that work, things that work well.

So parents can't help but oftentimes in life to try to insert themselves into the lives of children even when they're not in their homes. How much worse is it if they're in their homes? And then when there are children sometimes parents try to insert themselves into the lives of the children, their grandchildren. It's not always a good thing even if you think it is; even when you think that it is, you can interfere in things that you don't understand, things that are better left oftentimes for a purpose and a reason that God has set apart and designed to give people opportunity to learn, because if they don't learn them through their experiences of making mistakes and doing the things that they're going to do, then we can hurt their development and their growth in the way that God wanted them to grow in the first place. We don't realize sometimes, even in God's Church, what we're doing, so we have to be ever so careful.

Now, there are all kinds of situations in life and certain kinds of exceptions, but we have to understand what God said and why and to strive to follow certain guidelines and to really think seriously about some of these things. So we have to be very careful. People can hurt their relationship with their child's spouse; they can hurt the relationship so much so that it carries with it scars sometimes that take a long, long time to be healed even in God's Church. I'm going back many years of just looking at things that have happened over and over again in God's Church because this is where God brings us to learn about God's way. As we go along God shows us these things in a clearer and clearer fashion.

I wish I knew these things and could see these things to the degree that I do now twenty-five years ago, thirty years ago. I would have been able to help people more because I would have seen what God was doing and would have been able to better guide and direct them, and correct them at times about certain things in their life so that they could have greater opportunity for measures of peace that otherwise they're interfering in. But unless we know them you can't give it to anybody. You can't help anyone with it. You can't give some things to people anyway, but the point being is the matter of teaching or instructing or guiding and directing. So we can't give what we don't know.

That's why I'm in awe of where God is taking us, where we are now, and where we're just about to be because you see, we're talking about a new age and a new world we're going to be living in and how it's going to be, very powerfully so. Those things that God intended from the beginning in Genesis, or at least stated and said was His desire for mankind, that He would bring mankind to that, it wasn't going to happen until the Millennium. God knew what was going to happen. God knew what was going to take place in families. He knew what human beings were going to do from the very beginning and that's why some things have been revealed through time in

progressive revelation because it wasn't for then and it wasn't for the time that the Israelites left Egypt, and it wasn't for the time of Christ, except for the Church and those God called at that time to begin learning certain things, but not even to this degree now that we're talking about. So it's really geared toward when the Kingdom of God is on earth. We're so blessed because we're so close to that God is revealing things to the Church to help us be more fully prepared and to help others because what we're learning now is going to become the norm in the world.

So again here, I want to read this again: Another important matter to face in all this is that if a son or daughter marries and lives with a parent then it's only a natural thing to parents to insert strong influence or pressure upon the newly married couple to conform to their form or custom (in other words, the way they do things) in their family unit, the way they see it, the way they have determined for themselves as a family unit. But you can't do that to another family unit. They have to determine certain things in their course, in their life. This is what helps to bind them together in a oneness of life that God wants them to experience and have that's their own without pressure from someone else to do it in a certain way, but for them to come to agreement, to work together to do it the way they desire to do it for their benefit, for their purpose and for their goals in life.

So if this interference takes place, this in turn will hinder horribly the development, love, and beauty of a new uniquely exclusive single family unity to become formed and established as it should be, period. I hope that makes sense.

Then, secondly, this verse addresses the need for two newly married people to cleave to each other and work to become one. It doesn't just happen because you say, "I do." It doesn't happen that way. You've got work to do, a lot of work, working things out in life, discussing things, having goals, discussing how you're going to work on those goals, how you're going to seek to accomplish them. It's not just the husband's way and he doesn't share it with the wife. I am amazed sometimes in times past within the Church, but it's just the way the world is, that so often the other mate doesn't even know what they have in the bank or where they bank! It blows my mind! You mean you don't share? Then they have their own accounts. "I have my account." The other has their account. They don't know what's in them. To become one! One! To share life! Where is the sharing? How do you share? How do people share? So to become one people have to know what's going on, people have to know where they're headed. Otherwise people are splitting apart and trying to accomplish something else in life rather than doing it together and going forward together.

There are so many lessons to be learned by such things and that's why really this teaches us so much about government and how God works and how people are to work together in unity and harmony to make something work, and how it binds them closer together. The more you work at this the more you become one the way God intends, the way God desires, where there's true peace and focus in life. The joy and the fullness of sharing those things as they come about, as you work at various things, means so much more, the sharing in it that is so unique, such an

incredible experience that God gives us in life. There's so much to learn for human beings, so much to learn because there's been so much damage because of human nature over the past 6,000 years and how people have lived. They haven't known God's way and what God says is the best way, the only way to work at various things in life and why. So He shows us how to do those things and we grow stronger and live happier and have greater peace and fullness in our life, richness in our life that otherwise we cannot have.

So again, this verse addresses the need for two newly married people to cleave to each other and to work to become one because it's a matter of work. It doesn't state that specifically about work, but it takes work. That's how you become one. So we discussed some of this in *Part 1* and we'll see more about this a little bit later here.

Also it was made clear that God has given us a strong definition of marriage. I marvel at this sometimes, how that certain things come along. We come to a certain point and God says, "This is what it is. This is what you need to say. This is where you are." This is what we need to grasp, and so He has given us that. Again, knowing this definition of marriage that God has given His Church will help to shed understanding on why God stated this from the beginning as He did. So that definition, once again: "The legal and/or formally recognized union through a vow, through promise" (because that's what a vow is, it's a promise). When we do that in marriage it's a promise to each other and there are witnesses. That's why it's there. There's this promise, which is a vow to each other and to God Almighty and His Son Jesus Christ. Sometimes we don't recognize the seriousness of what we say and the words we speak and in such a union God puts a lot more importance upon it, about what is being said, because that's such an important phase of life, one that He established from the very beginning and said, "This is what I am giving you in life, marriage. Two are to leave father and mother and become one." One! One family unit! Awesome. From the very beginning God gave us those things. So we learn to work at those things.

The definition again: "The legal and/or formally recognized union through a vow (through promise) between a man and a woman to share life," to share. It's not one sided. It's all about sharing; it's all about sharing dreams and goals and desires. Everything you basically do in your life you share it. Nothing is one sided. It's not going to be just the way one person thinks it's going to be or needs to be or should be or whatever at all. Two must discuss and talk about everything that they do in their life—everything that they do in their life—every goal, every desire, whatever it is, your job, the place you live, whatever it is in life, how you do things in your home and so forth, how you rear your children. There must be in agreement in that because many fall short on that one. They don't have agreement so one will go to one parent and one will go to the other, or they won't even bother going to the other anymore because the other one is going to be the one they want to hear, because there's not agreement and unity and oneness in family as to how things are going to be done. There needs to be order and if a child can't see that order what they see is division and what they see is a husband and wife who are not in agreement. Then they learn and grow up and do exactly the same thing. It's that horrible, sick cycle that just keeps

going on in life and we just repeat it. In God's Church we're to stop that cycle just as we do in our own lives. God has called us to change the cycle of human life, to one of disobedience to God to one of obedience to God, to learning how to live in peace and unity and harmony with God's word and God's way of life.

So it starts in the home. It starts in the home. That's where it begins. That's why there needs to be such absolute unity and oneness in how people work together because if they don't work together in these things the confusion, the drama, the dysfunction multiplies and increases and spills over. Then the battles and the arguing and the contentions and the behaviour, attitudes, it just gets worse and worse and worse and worse and worse. That's the way the world is. You don't have to look very far. It's just out there in the world. So God has called us to stop that cycle. Just like He has in our individual lives, He wants us to do things in a right, in a proper way starting in the place that it all begins - family.

We all have dysfunction. When you are called into God's Church you have dysfunction in your life because you're called out of a world that is not functioning as it should be. It's not functioning according to God's word and God's way of life. My greatest battles have been, one, because I've come out of dysfunction in society, dysfunction in family and so have you. That's the way it is because they didn't know God's way. They weren't able to live it. And even if you had parents who did live God's way they were coming out of that dysfunction and they still had some in their life they were trying to overcome and conquer and they didn't get rid of it all.

That's why I love what Mr. Armstrong said, "It's going to take 3 and 4 generations to get things to where they're kind of leveled out a little bit here so we can really go forward!" Why? Because of all the dysfunction! Because one generation has it and they pass it along because you rear children and they learn that way of doing things. That becomes them in their minds, in their thinking. Then, thankfully, the way it should be working and the way it's intended to work and the way God works with us is that they will begin seeing things because they have a head start. See, they have a head start from what we were in the world and we were called out of the world. Then if another generation comes along then they have a great advantage and they're way ahead of what we were. That's the way a parent should want it. "I want them to be way ahead of where I was at any point in life so they can have every opportunity to make the changes they need." Then those children come along and there's still going to be a measure of dysfunction there, some measure of some things of human nature that they haven't seen and conquered yet and each generation can become better and better as we go along.

Then we get to the third and fourth generation out here, things are going to be sailing quite well in this world over all. We don't get there easily. It's going to take a lot of work, especially in the Millennium, in the beginning of the Millennium. All the different religions people are coming out of, different nationalities, different governments and so forth, and that garbage and that weight and that baggage and those rocks, you know, that we pull behind us. It takes time to shed a lot of that.

So, I've got to get back on track here, back to my notes. So much to learn. So much to grow in.

Also, before proceeding we're still catching on some things there that we discussed last time because, again, we just kind of glossed over a few things in *Part 1* and started our thinking in a particular way, in a particular fashion concerning marriage here and the institution of marriage and what God has given to us. Now we're striving to build upon that just a little bit more.

So before proceeding it would be good to review other scriptures and add even more at this particular time. Matthew 19. Again, one part was when there was the occasion when Christ was questioned about marriage and divorce.

Matthew 19:4—And he answered and said to them, Haven't you read that He who made them at the beginning made them male and female? That in itself is a marvel, how God made us in life. Incredible plan and purpose God has had and what we can learn from all this. ...**and said, For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother and cleave,** again, that compound word that means "to unite or glue" and "toward or together." That's what we're to do: "Glued together," one purpose, one mind, one objective in live, one focus in life. ...**and cleave unto his wife, and the two of them shall become one flesh?** So again, as God's purpose they should learn to work together as one unit, a team, a family, a unit. That's what it means to be one, to work together as a unit, single unit, a single family. That's what a family is. That's what God's Family is. We're striving to work together in a focus that God has given to us that is unique to us and no one else shares in it in the world. They don't have this. All the scattered bodies out here and groups after the Apostasy, they don't have the focus we have. Not at all! They don't have the understanding of certain things that God has given to us, of things we need to be working on and preparing for the return of Jesus Christ. We are a unique family unit with God Almighty and Jesus Christ His Son preparing for awesome things that God has given to us. We have a specific kind of focus that God gives and He continues to sharpen that focus in our lives as we move forward here.

So I can't help but think about where we are. Things are lighting up a little more in the world around us. The book is getting ready to come out. I'll tell you what, there's a reason why God has control of timing of everything that takes place. This world is not at peace. This world is in great conflict. I hope we can see it.

So again here, "to cleave," cleave, glued together, one unit. "Shall a man leave his father and mother and cleave unto his wife, and they two shall become one flesh." God's purpose is incredible. One is not enslaved to the other. One is not subservient to the other. Many marriages are based upon that in the world around us. One is up here and one is kind of down here somewhere. It's not a team, not up here together, not up here working together as one, sharing in decisions and choices of things that are made. Instead it's one person's way, as a whole, oftentimes. That's the way it's been for 6,000 years, as a whole; it's been oppressive, harsh, cruel.

That's why I marvel at something that came out last Sabbath thinking about some of this, thinking about how technology in the last 150-200 years has burst forth on the earth. Knowledge, understanding, and science leading in the kind of technology we have now, all by design because of where we are. It's at the end. It's at the end before God's Kingdom is going to be established, things that God gives to mankind to teach incredible lessons. One is, "You're going to destroy yourself. You never use anything right. You never do. You don't listen to Me." So that alone is an awesome thing, but I think about the thing that's been changing concerning women. Look back in time here when voting began and some of the suffrage things and movements and the like that took place and having the right to vote because they didn't have the right to vote, not that I'm trying to encourage you people to go out here and vote, but just that thing alone of a struggle. Women weren't looked upon as being up there with the man. "They can't make those kinds of decisions. Are you kidding?!" I mean, that's the way society was for thousands of years. The women? You've got to be kidding. Having a say? "They're in the other room. That's why they're in the other room. We are going to decide how things are going to be." That's the way of life, isn't it?

Now, a lot of us don't understand that because we don't understand history or we haven't really experienced some of those things in the world around us, but you understand if you've lived back in the forties and the fifties and sixties. Sadly, it's still in the seventies, eighties, nineties and two thousands, but it's lessening. God's bringing it more and more to the forefront and women are in industry, they're CEO's, they're everywhere because they have fought. They have fought and do you think these things are just by coincidence? Just like technology, it's because God has brought the world to a point to where certain things are brought out, to where now it's time. God inspires certain things to be done at certain times in history to change things in the world around us. So if you look back at some of the things that have happened at different stages of history, God's been there, not that they're going to come to God's way of doing it, but its bringing things to the surface.

Just like right now. If we're not careful we're not going to see what's really happening right now in the news, in the world, and so forth. You're witnessing things that if we're not careful we'll just think, "Well, that's the norm and that's the way it's always been." Oh, no, it's not. Oh, no, it's not. It's all by design so that God can work with human beings to give them a potential to see things that otherwise if it was allowed to go on as it might normally without His intervention in various things they wouldn't have the same potential to be able to see. I don't know about you, but I am sick and tired. You think the world isn't getting a little bit that way, of what they turn on when they turn on the news? You think people out here haven't just about had it up to here? Government can't agree. You think people aren't seeing that in a way they have never been able to see it to this degree in life? You get control of a certain part, of segment of something and you still have jealousies and envying and backbiting and fighting going on and people that can't get over themselves and they won't work together for a common cause because of these things because they have their way of doing it and "I'm going to show you!" You know, "I'm going to show you!" So people can't get along and nothing can get done because we can't govern ourselves.

That's the bottom line. That's what God is showing the world. Awesome! Awesome what you're seeing taking place out here right now.

Anyway, if you can understand some of that and understand how God has been working to bring things to the light about women and society, because He's preparing them to be able to hear something later on here as soon as Jesus Christ returns so it'll be easier for them to receive it so the world can be changed more quickly because if it was allowed to go on the way it was 200 years ago and then all of a sudden we have this abrupt change of God's Kingdom coming to this earth and now you're going to have to start educating people their minds would be so set in the garbage and swill that's there. How they think toward women, or toward one another in different things, the job and the task before us would take a lot longer and be a lot harder to do, and a lot less would be able to come through it all.

So again here, one is not enslaved to the other and one is not subservient to the other. It is a sharing. Sharing means an equality of life. Very seldom is there a matter of government that even becomes an issue in life if it's done the way God says to do it. If it's done the way God says to do it, it'll never be an issue with either party. Never.

Matthew 19:6—So then, they are no more two but one flesh. Therefore, what God has joined together... What God Almighty has joined together! It's a promise before God and God has made it possible. God gave the institution of marriage, and He is the one responsible. He is the one that has given it to us. We are to receive it with that kind of importance in life, that kind of importance that God places upon it in life, and knowing if God has said this, how do people engage then in life in that relationship, a husband and a wife?

So He says, **don't let man put asunder.** In other words, separate or divide, because God is the one that made it possible and God is the one that has given to you that opportunity to say, "I do." "I do." So, candidly, in life divorce should never, ever, ever, ever, ever, ever be a choice in life, but God, because of the hardness of our hearts as human beings, allowed it, allowed it to Israel. Because of the different situations, even in God's Church those things are a reality of life, sometimes rightly so. Ee'll come to some of those things as we continue on.

Then, **verse 7, They said to him, Why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement, and to put her away?** You see the language that's going on here? It's not about how the wife can put away the husband because as a whole society wasn't like that. Do we grasp what we read sometimes in understanding the kind of world that God worked with from the time of Adam and Eve on because of the hardness of human being's hearts and the sin involved, and because of strength and because of some of those things alone and the force that can come from a man toward a woman, and because of the way God created a woman and a man, that there's a uniqueness there that a man can take advantage of in a wrong way and did, and has as a whole for 6,000 years? Disgusting, the misuse of authority, of life, of what God gave, a power, if you will, not even of authority, because God didn't even give that as authority, but a power. Human

beings have done that. Nations have done that. Nations oppress other nations because they can and because they will and so they think they know what's best and so they have their own nation building. That's why when you hear someone say, "We're not nation building." That's a unique thought. Anyway, let's see how well you stick to that one! Everybody, people have to have their finger in it somewhere. If not done openly it's done in secret back there, sometimes through a sniper's rifle. It's a sick world we live in. That's how people are. That's how the world is. Put someone out of the way if they get in the way. Take care of it one way or another. It's happened as a part of history. It's just the way people think. Sick. It really is. The world is sick and needs healing. Thankfully, we're there. We're right there at the doorstep where God's going to change it. He had His fill after 6,000 years. I marvel at the patience of God because of His great purpose and what He's doing and because of His seeing the Great White Throne the way that He does and the way that's sometimes hard for us as human beings. He has patience, but thankfully He put a limit on it. And we're living at the limit—6,000 years—thank God.

So he said here, **Moses, because of the hardness of your hearts, allowed you to put away your wives.** So the language was one here of he's talking to the men. The women aren't there. They aren't asking these questions. The Pharisees and Sadducees, the women weren't coming out and asking these questions. It was the men because that was the world. That's society. They ruled the world. They ruled their families, harshly so. Some of them, most, still do to this day, harshly, oppressive. It's sick. It's the only word I can find.

And he answered them, Because of the hardness of your hearts it was allowed, He allowed you to put away your wives, **and from the beginning it was not so.** It was never God's purpose, never God's mind. In other words, it was never really God's desire but you are what you are. So God has worked with a world that is that way. So how do you work with a world that's that way? You can't make it the Millennium. It's not the Kingdom of God on earth yet so you work with people the way that they are because of the hardness of their heart. There are certain things you allow and work with in that context to the degree you can, and there is much to think about and much to learn from that process alone, to understand how God worked with Israel and why He did so much of what He did in the way that He did it. We'll touch on just a little bit of that as we go along.

I might as well address part of it right now rather than thinking about it a little bit later. Anyway, just like it says here, this was not so from the beginning. It wasn't God's purpose. So even with Adam and Eve from the very beginning, we think about some of that, what happened at that time, how society became after their sin. The whole world changed. The world changed. God knew it was going to. God knew what the world was going to become, how people would live, how families would become. You think about what happened with the first two there, the selfishness there of the mindset that's been on its own way and its own control in life and controlling of others. That's what we do as human beings. People try to control others. People try to control. It's just the way human beings are. Because of selfishness people try to control situations or people around them. It's the way it is.

So what follows that is incredible oppression and abuse. That's what followed. This is also why God allowed some to have, if you look back at Israel, many wives and concubines. God was dealing with the world as it was, not the way that it would even be at a time when He began to work with the Church in a different way and what He would bring it to at that period of time, as some of these things began to change, as God began to lead and guide and reveal more. He began to reveal more to the Church, began to give to mankind better understanding and work with the world as well in some of these matters.

So again here, there are reasons why God worked at different ages with different peoples in the way that He has. It's because of the way they were. It's because of the way the world was at that time and it wasn't time to try to change any of it yet. There was 4,000 years to go by where very little of God's influence was going to be exerted upon the earth. There was no Church, just individuals here and there called, individuals here and there, just here and there. There was not very many at all in the first 4,000 years. Awesome! So the world was what it was. God wasn't trying to change the world; He let the world just live to teach lessons: "You can't govern yourselves. You're going to have nothing but misery and unhappiness in your lives. You're going to have wars and fighting's. Your children are going to go off to war. Governments are going to oppress you. That's the way your life is going to be because you don't want Me." So God's let man have a big belly full of that, but at different times He began to intervene and work with and change because of a different purpose of what was taking place. So God has allowed various things to take place.

This came up even last Sabbath, a couple of questions about it, and I thought, "Well, that's good, and maybe we can interject some of that without going into great detail" because I don't have time to go into a lot here. Especially in the life of someone like David, and King David and what he experienced in his life and so forth and some of the others through time, but life was different in the world and God dealt then with the world in a different manner, even with those with whom He worked because He was working with individuals who lived in that world. It's progressive revelation, progressive truth, even in understanding of certain things. It was more important, without saying a whole lot more, that God worked with individuals to the degree He did exactly as He did, giving them understanding here about various things He did to the degree He did exactly as He did. Awesome! And the more you can see those things or look at those things and understand it in that context, that all along the way in 6,000 years God has had a purpose and a plan and a way that He works with us as human beings, different ways at different times for different purposes. Over all, though, for the primary purpose, and the primary purpose has always been the 144,000, but there are different things in the world as well.

So again here, incredible what God allowed to take place because He was dealing with the world as it was, not as He had given from the beginning because mankind, society, nations and so forth, were living their own way. So whether it be Abraham, King David, or others, they themselves were being worked with by God, but not in a Church environment. They were worked with Individually

in the world, in the society they lived in at that time. In some cases it was only one individual in all the world. Many of times in 4,000 years there was only one individual with whom God was working in all the world. He wasn't working to change the world, but He began to work with certain individuals in the mind and give understanding of those things that were the most important to bring them to a point where He could say, "Now I know you," and they could become a part of a great resurrection that's about to take place. There's much to learn about things that God has done in the way that God has done them. He does them perfectly. Perfectly! Perfectly! We should be in awe at everything God has done all along the way because it's perfect in ways that our mind really can't even begin to comprehend, but we can strive to understand it. We can strive to grow in it. God will bless us in that as time goes along, and has blessed us mightily through time.

So it wasn't in a church environment that these individuals were being worked with. They were being worked with in the way the world was at that time and He had not yet led mankind to the Church, as began after Pentecost in 31 A.D. So here God could begin to work with and teach, as you read in verses, Jesus Christ came along and started teaching things they had never been taught, never been written before, never been shown before to the degree he showed them. He began to show them things as we just read here about marriage. "It was never meant to be that way. Haven't you read from the beginning that God made male and female, and the two are to become one flesh and leave father and mother? Haven't you read this? Don't you understand God's purpose and what He's doing and how we're to live life?" Then as time went along he gave more and more and more, and then gave a great deal to the apostle Paul to give to the Church about the institution of marriage. If we really grasp and understand the things that Paul wrote marriages would have absolute peace, but because we're human beings we don't always have peace because human nature always pops its ugly head up at different times and that part of selfishness that comes out of us, male and female, in human life. So you have to work on self and seek to be in unity and harmony with what God gives.

So, continuing **Matthew 19:9—And I say to you, whosoever shall put away his wife, except for fornication**, the word is "**porneia**," and immorality, if you will. There was a time in Worldwide and Mr. Armstrong and the Church was striving to address some of these things. God brought us to a point to begin scratching the surface of it, but never really getting beyond a certain point and never really addressing everything. It was difficult. Time has gone on then since that time. I think of the decades that have gone on in some cases, and He finally brought us to a point where He brings more of it together because it's time. So he says, **Whosoever shall put away his wife...** And the reverse is true as well, see, because a lot of this conversation is going to the way the world was, and it was men. Men. So, so much of it is addressed in that fashion, but it applies to men and women. He's talking to men here. There were no women sitting around. Now, when he was separate from them in those occasions there and teaching in different areas he taught men and women, but it wasn't a part of society to do that, see, as far as the way the Jews were being taught and so forth and how people learned, etcetera. Even within the Church there are certain

things that were done for a time and in a certain way because that's the way society was. It's because the way society was, not because that's the way that God wanted it to be! So even through time in the early Church you have to understand, through the times of Peter and Paul and John and different ones there, all of them still living in a world very much adverse to anything being directed toward women. It just wasn't that way, but it was in the Church slowly but surely, a little bit here and a little bit there.

So he says, **except for porneia, and shall marry another, commits adultery; and whosoever marries her who has been put away does also commit adultery.** You know what? We can understand some things about that which is physical. That becomes very clear. If someone cheats on a mate they have done something so horrible to the marriage! Now, sometimes a marriage can work through some of those things and work to recapture certain things in life and strive and repent. God allows that. Sometimes a husband and wife can work through some of those kinds of things when they happen. Sometimes they cannot because of the trust and so forth. If that becomes a choice, and something like that happens, understandably so, that there are some cases like that where because of what people are coming out of and because of the way they are they can't deal with it, and divorce is right. So be it. Porneia.

We'll talk about some of these things more as we go along. But anyway, what a horrible, horrible thing that human beings do, to so throw a nuclear bomb in a marriage because that's kind of what it's like on a spiritual plane, just totally horrifying!

And also, **and whoso marries here also, it talks about here, commits adultery.**

So, **verse 10—His disciples then said to him, If this be the case of the man with/toward his wife, then it's good not to marry.** "This is too much." They really couldn't handle this. They had never heard anything like this. A society that is oriented to the male only, as a whole, deciding and determining everything in life? Because that's the way it was. So it's like, "This is a little bit too much to bite off."

But he said to them, All cannot receive this saying, except to those to whom it is given. I love that verse because it's about the Church. Truly, to be able to do and to live what God gave from the beginning you must be in the Church. They were cut off from the tree of life, they were cut off from God's spirit, they were cut off from God Almighty, and therefore, they could not address such issues in life. They could only have a certain measure of experience to a very limited degree of what they could have had otherwise in human life and in the kind of peace and richness and fullness and bond in sharing that God intended from the beginning. So as a whole through 6,000 years it hasn't been experienced to the level and degree that it has the potential of; it's far, far, far beyond what human beings have had and have been able to do. People so rob themselves, so cheat themselves, so corrupt the human mind sometimes that the mind can't think right in these areas.

Next, I should say, it is important to understand that the physical aspect of cheating and adultery is not difficult to grasp, as I said, but once again this has been given to the Church. Beautiful what it says in that verse because we can address it. We can do what God says. We can have a mind transformed that can think and do and be the way God says it is and can experience those things in marriage, primarily if both are in the Church, but even when one is in the Church there can be richness of a marriage, if the other is pleased to dwell with them in their beliefs and their religion. I have seen individuals have those kinds of marriages that have far exceeded two individuals in many cases who are in God's Church, because of how individuals have chosen to live their life and living it close to God. So again here, everything is unique to itself, to each individual and to pairs, couples as well, but how much more when both can share that much more, when you can share this way of life and the marriage and everything else in it to the degree and level that God grants to some in God's Church because not everyone can share that to that same level and same degree. The more you can share, the more that that bond is there in planning and purpose and being together, the richer the marriage and the life becomes, has the potential to become, has the greater depth of meaning of purpose that God intended from the very beginning.

So again here, it's given to the Church. That's whom it's for: "To whom it has been given." People in the world can't receive what we're talking about here (it's impossible), on the same plane with the same understanding on a spiritual plane because we're about to go a little bit farther than that, which has a great deal more meaning and purpose. So once again, to the Church. So there's much more to this on a spiritual plane. It concerns spiritual adultery, porneia on a spiritual plane to those to whom it has been given. Awesome! The physical part is easy to understand, and it's easy to understand how divorce can come about and be justified so one can remarry again, but not the person who committed it. They're gone anyway unless it's in the Church and they repent and God forgives them and a spouse forgives them and they're able to move forward and heal wounds. It's a rarity, but it happens when people strive to live God's way of life, all the more so in a powerful way. And I've got to hand it to them, indeed, in every way, because it has to be done God's way all along the way.

So there is much more to this on a spiritual plane. It concerns spiritual adultery, spiritual porneia, spiritual immorality. If it comes to the point that if one who is married in the Church and is separated from the Church, from God, then the spouse who remains in the Church can justifiably so become divorced and can remarry because that is the worst. If two have been given this and one does this on a spiritual plane so much so that they're cut off from God Almighty, they're gone. They're gone. Looking back in history and seeing what's happened I don't know that it's ever happened that one can come back from some of those kinds of things, that far beyond.

Anyway, there's good reason that Jesus Christ spoke of specific spiritual matters that concerned marriage and the spirit of the law at the beginning of his ministry. You remember the point when we started reading and talking about when Jesus Christ began to magnify the law and he began to

say, "I have not come to destroy the law or the prophets," but he's come to fulfill it, to magnify it, and he began to reveal things on a spiritual plane that if you have hatred in your heart, if you can't get along, if you can't forgive someone else, if you have wrong feelings towards someone else and you will not let that go, that you've already committed murder in your heart. Now, the world hadn't heard that before. They didn't understand those kinds of things. Jesus Christ began to give it to those who could receive it because only those who have God's spirit can really receive these things on a spiritual plane because it requires God's spirit to receive this in spirit and in truth, to understand to its greatest depths what this means and how we can respond and change in our life then and address those kinds of things.

Sadly a lot of times when people have conflict and have had conflict in God's Church this doesn't seem to hit sometimes because they get wrapped up in jealousies or envy or "The way they talk to me," whatever it might be, the way they said it, whatever indignity that exists there, if you will. Anyway, things that go on sometimes and people get so involved in such friction.

I think of last year's Feast. Some of these things happened during the Feast, happened directly after the Feast. I love dealing with such things! Anyway, I do it because it's a responsibility. I love it when people are able to repent, but when they don't repent then that's the reason I don't like it, because a lot of times these things don't get resolved. Sometimes it leads people right on out of the Church, and that's the part I don't like. I don't like having to deal with the kind of things where someone comes to a point and it's like this is the judgment, it can't go on anymore. It still blows my mind how often things like this happen, but we're human beings and people have conflict and they have arguments and they get into disputes with each other in God's Church, and it even happens in marriage. In God's Church? Yep. It happens. Things happen. People get into situations where they fight each other and they're not in agreement about various things and they're unhappy and they go to bed unhappy and they wake up unhappy and they get caught up in the world. Then something's going to have to change because you can't stay in God's Church and be like that and you can't be angry at each other and chew each other out and have battles and fight and contentions, and then the feelings that go with that if they're not dealt with. Something has to give. And the reality is, yes, it does, because that's porneia. You either change and you repent of that or its goodbye.

So, awesome here that as Jesus Christ began his ministry we read a part of this where it went into and it led up to the point where it talked about something concerning marriage.

Let's notice **Matthew 5:30**, because you see, right through here Jesus Christ at the very beginning of his ministry began to talk about how he didn't come to do away with the law and the prophets, he came to magnify it, in essence, to fulfill it and magnify what's there, to show it as it is on a spiritual plane. He addresses this. It's on a spiritual plane: **And if your right hand offend you, "be a cause to sin," cut it off and cast *it* from you; for it is profitable for you that one of your members should perish, and not that your whole body be cast into gehenna.** See, this is on a spiritual plane, to learn something from it, to understand something. This isn't about something

physical. He's not discussing and telling people something physical about plucking out an eye or cutting off an arm. It's about the Church. It's about what Jesus Christ was coming to suffer for, coming to give his life for, coming to die for, and then to be resurrected so that people could come into one Body, to the Church, and begin this process of learning and conquering and overcoming things on a spiritual plane. So in the Church it's better if there is this kind of thinking and kind of mind and it commits such things, that if there isn't repentance quickly and speedily and fruit to prove and to show that, then it's just going to hurt the Body and it's better that it be cut off from the Body. That's spiritual brethren, to understand something on a spiritual plane of how God's spirit works and how it does not work. See? It doesn't work in someone's life who is cut off from the flow of God's spirit. That's why it's so important to repent quickly when we have certain sin in our life, to repent quickly and make the changes and that's how God deals with us in life. It's spiritual. He deals with us on a spiritual plane with the mind, with our thinking, to transform our thinking, to repent, to think, to learn to think differently, to be in unity with God and His thinking. It's not our will, not our way, but His way, His will.

...for it is profitable that one of your members should perish, than your whole body be cast into gehenna. Then the following verse. It's not by accident, it's not by coincidence that Jesus Christ addressed everything that he did here in the exact order that he did as well. **It has been said, Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement. But I say unto you...** See, this is spiritual. It's given to those who can receive it. It's about the Church, in essence. That's who it's about because it's given to those who can receive it, **that whosoever shall put away his wife except for the cause of porneia causes/has made her to commit adultery;** in other words, if she remarries. **And whosoever shall marry her that is divorced commits adultery.** So again here, it's all in this context about a relationship with God, about a relationship in God's Church, about whether or not someone is able to continue in the Church, and if not then they're severed from the Body, and so often that severs the marriage as well. Some continue in those situations and they can work through certain situations, but the reality is in so many cases there is the right to separate that as well, if someone so chooses. Sometimes people do and sometimes people don't. That's choice.

Ephesians 5, let's turn over there. We need to look at what the apostle Paul was given to tell husbands and wives about how they should function and work together as a single family unit, as one unit together. As I mentioned earlier, it is amazing what God gave to Paul to give to the Church and the more these things are able to be lived by, the more we apply them in our life, the richer life becomes, the more peace we have in life, and especially in marriage.

Ephesians 5:21, just breaking right in here: **Submitting yourselves to one another in the fear of God;** in other words, with God in the forefront, before them, before those who are married, in all things, before the husband and wife. God first! God first! Boy, are we tried in that. God is going to know whether He is going to be first, and to the degree He's not. God knows when He's first in life from you as an individual. He knows if you're placing Him first and where we're not we will go

through things until we can be molded and fashioned into that as being a living reality. God must be first in every person's life. Nothing else. I love what Jesus Christ said when he talks about even in the beginning of your calling about father and mother, sister and brother. They can't be first. God must be. God must be first. Awesome!

So we go through things in life to learn that and the quicker we learn that one the happier our lives and the more fulfilling our lives and the more content we will have, contentment in life, and the greater peace we'll have in life, candidly, because if every decision you make in life is based on the fact that God is first than that is awesome! There is no question, no question to anybody else. No question in your spouse's mind. No question in your children's mind. No question in anybody else's - your boss, the people you work with on the job - they know that certain things are first in your life and this is the way it is and that's just the way you live your life. It's not a matter of being obstinate as far as our relationships concerned. It's just a matter that this is the way. This is the way. This is what I'm doing. This is what I'm doing. No asking.

You're not asking for your boss's permission to leave for the Feast of Tabernacles. Well, you are and you aren't. You say, "I'd like to put this in and have this time off for this period of time and here's a piece of paper," if you need to do that. Sometimes you don't have to do that because you already have a relationship. He already knows you're going to be gone. He knows you're going to be gone because you've been through this a few times before. But in case they have forgotten or they don't know, sometimes it's good to hand them a piece of paper and you're going to let them know the period of time. So you are asking because you're being kind about it, but you're solid. You're absolute about it. "I have to have these days off." "Well, we can't let you off for that time period." "I'm sorry, but this is my religious belief and this is what I have to do. This is what I'm going to do. I understand that it can be difficult here but I'm willing to come in more hours before and more hours afterward and work on Sundays, whatever you need. If you need that I'll be glad to do whatever I can to help you out so it's not as much of a burden, if that's the case. But I have to do this; it's something I'm committed to."

So, anyway, God is first and after a while, after you're there, if you're there for many years, they say, "Oh, it's that time of year again, huh? Okay," and sometimes they'll put you to the test because sometimes we're put to the test. What are you going to do? Well, it's going to be another job. "If they're not going to have me here I may go through some hard times," and God sometimes lets us go through some hard times because we realize, we learn what it's like to obey God in this kind of a world. We learn about things about obedience that we can't learn any other way. Sometimes through the suffering you go through, you learn. Think about what it says about Jesus Christ, of what he learned through what he went through. We can learn things by what we go through, things that were embedded more deeply in him because of what he went through. Awesome! He set the example for us. So God must be first.

What a beautiful thing if that was always the case because, you see, if a husband always puts God first he's not putting himself first and he'll treat his wife in a certain way because of that. A wife,

if God is first, she's going to treat her husband in a certain way because this is the way God says it's to be in life and this is how you receive fullness and richness in life through the experience. We do things God's way because God is first, because our judgments are based upon things that God says this is the way it's to be done. This is how you do it, and if you strive to do it God's way how can you go wrong? It doesn't mean it's going to be perfect or work out perfect for you. It may not work out for you at all, but you've done it God's way and that's what we're to do. As time goes along things become better and better for us, our thinking, and the way we are as human beings. Awesome, how God works with us.

So, it's very clear here what it's talking about here in this process, **Submitting yourselves to one another in the fear of God.** In other words, God is to be first. **Wives submit yourselves unto your husbands, as unto the Lord.** So there is an order of things that God has given. God has also revealed some more when it comes to the ministry because it's a matter of how God's spirit works. It's about how God's spirit works through people's lives.

Let's turn over to 1 Peter. You can hold your place here in Ephesians. So again here, this is a matter of order in a single, family unit. It's a matter of how God works in an orderly way in a family through the husband to the family. So God has chosen to use that for a purpose and by design because of the purpose of order. There has to be order and there has to be a way for things to function properly, orderly, but when done God's way it's not even an issue. Candidly, it's never an issue when it's done God's way. So husbands are to understand that as a matter of order, not of unbridled authority - it's not about this authority - and power to be exercised over the wife. It's not about that. It's not about authority over the wife, because, you see, even within the Church this has been taken in a wrong way. In the world of traditional Christianity when people strive, or think that they're living by these things it's not done in a right way. Not at all. It's not done through God's spirit obviously; it's done by human selfishness to try to apply these things. They use such scriptures as an excuse or as a tool for power and abuse of authority that doesn't even exist and they abuse it. Sadly that's happened in God's Church. I think back in Philadelphia and I've seen this abused a lot - not just a little, a lot, a lot by the ministry because they didn't know. They didn't understand any different as a whole oftentimes. Wives were told to put up with things and do things that they should never have been told to do. "Well, he's the head." "You've got to..." Even when they weren't in the Church, the men weren't in the Church, there were things that wives were told to do, and "Well, he's the head of the house." Oh, give me a break! If they're not even in the Church; there's no head of the house whatsoever, in this case, in reality, if you understand what I'm saying, as far as God is concerned, but that makes it harder for the wife, but she needs to understand there are certain things that you can stand for and stand properly for, you know, for yourself before God and you're right and you're just in doing so. Anyway, that just didn't exist as a whole because it wasn't time yet for some of those things to be given to the Church, but we're closer now to the return of Christ and what the world is going to be like and those things are being established.

So again, husbands ought to understand this is a matter of order, not of unbridled authority and power to be exercised over the wife. This is a matter of order that is exercised in true love, of outgoing concern and of sacrifice. It's a big difference, but we don't tend to think that way as human beings, but we're supposed to, especially in God's Church. So consider the kind of instruction here given in 1 Peter 5. This is instruction given to ministers and how they are to work with the Body in responsibilities as a matter of government that's given and how to exercise authority and responsibility.

1 Peter 5:1—The elders who are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed. Feed the flock! Feed the flock. It's from a Greek word for "shepherd," which means, "to care for, to tend to, to watch over, to take the watch over, to protect." It's the exact same thing given to a husband that a husband should have that kind of desire in their heart and in their being toward their wife and toward their family. To protect, to work for, to provide for, to feed, to nurture in every way they can in life. That should be at the forefront of their mind.

Sometimes people have to learn how to work first, have to learn how to hold down a job first, how to learn to do various things in life first to provide for themselves. Because if a person can't work then how are they going to provide for and have this kind of nurturing care for another? See? We should strive to improve ourselves in life. We should strive to improve where we can to be able to do this job better if we can in life. Shouldn't we? That's the way it should be.

So please understand, the reason I get a little vocal on some of this is because I think of all the history of all the things I've seen in times past and of the things that weren't done in this way. I've seen it in the ministry of God's Church and I've seen it in husbands and families in God's Church, of things that should never, never, never be because it doesn't go into unity and oneness with what God has given to the Church to live by. This is where we really begin to learn. This is where we have opportunity to learn some of the greatest of things in life about God; it's in individual family units. If we don't know how to love one another in that kind of a unit how on earth can we deceive ourselves into thinking we can love others in a family, a much greater family of diversity than one that's supposed to be working together in unity and harmony and oneness of life in everything they do and sharing together? So sometimes we deceive ourselves as human beings.

So there is much to learn about this. There is much that can be learned in how we live our lives - not just toward one another in the Church but how we live our lives in this environment that starts right here. This is where it begins! This is what makes a society! This is what makes a nation! This is what makes a Kingdom! Family, when it's done God's way, individual family units working together as one family. Awesome! Awesome! God's bringing the world to that point in time where that can become more of a reality in life.

So, there's always much to learn and much to grow in, much to change. Because, you see, the world can't receive it. If people heard this right now they'd say, "You are stark, raving mad!" It's

kind of what they told Jesus, "It would be better for a man not to get married. You think we can do this? You've got to be kidding!" Yet this is what the world is going to be taught because this is what's going to become the norm as time goes along.

Feed the flock. So there's a lot said there about nurturing and caring. That's why it's a word that comes from the word for shepherd and what it means to be a shepherd, to take care of, to protect from any harm. It's that desire to take care of. That that should be a burning desire because this is what God has given as a matter of responsibility in life. So if that's a person's focus and that's a person's goal they will work toward that in everything they can do because it's God's way.

...**not by constraint**, not because it's your job or your duty, not with feelings of being forced to do so. I think I've told a few stories in times past of asking different ones when we used to have deacons and deaconesses in the Church, and they were there to serve and to help and they were ordained as such, and they were recognized in the Church as people who tended to serve and give more, and even within the ministry I've seen these kinds of things. There were times I dreaded, as a pastor, to go and ask someone to do something of service to others in the Church because I knew it was going to be a whole lot easier if I would just do it myself and let something else suffer that I needed to be doing for the Church. So the whole idea behind all this is when you have many more people to serve within a body that if there are others to help out with that service that's what they're ordained to do and should help in doing so, but when you know there's going to be the kind of friction and so forth that there is, it's just like, why bother, because of what you're going to have come back at you.

I've had individuals tell me, "Well, let me check my appointment book." I've been told this. "Let me check my schedule here to see if I can work that in." I understand that to a degree. I can understand someone having maybe an appointment to do something or something somewhere, but knowing all the time that's what I'm going to get? Get ready; here it comes, "Let me check my appointment book. Let me see if I can squeeze that into my busy schedule." Oh, okay. Next week? Next month? Oh, you can do it next year? What month?

I think one of the best ones ever was one time when there was a woman in the Church who was in a very crippled state in many ways. Sometimes she had to walk backwards to get up her stairs because she couldn't do it forward to get into her house. I asked an individual who was a deacon in the Church to help her out. She had some problems with her wheelchair. The wheels needed to be changed, and I can't remember the exact reason why. I asked him to take her wheelchair so that when they were helping her in and out of services she had it. This particular wheelchair was for special use, for the Church, and for them to use or different ones to be able to use to help her out at different times.

Anyway, time went by, and I don't remember everything perfectly here, but I can give you the overall part. Anyway, I'd asked him to do this. "Oh, sure." Anyway, I wish they'd given me an

appointment, a time in their book they were going to get it done. But anyway, time went by and I didn't know it hadn't been done, hadn't been taken care of. Months went by. We went through the winter, came to the spring, and come to find out she didn't have this wheelchair. How she was getting around and the hardships she was having because of it, I don't know. So I called them up and talked to them, "Oh, it's out on the back porch." Oh. It might have been in the wintertime too, because I think it was in a snowdrift. I think the snow was up on the porch and it'd had been rusted. At least it got rusted, had been rusted because of all the snow and everything being outside for this length of time. Months! Months! I went to get the wheelchair, changed the wheels. It took me five whole minutes to change the wheels and I got the wheelchair back because their attitude of service sucked, stunk. It blows my mind things like this could happen in the history of the Church, but it did.

I could tell you a lot more but I'm not going to, but you can see my dismay over such attitudes. That's why it says here then, "not by constraint," not because it's your job or you feel like it's your duty and you're doing it regretfully. That's why such individuals I never even liked asking because I knew their attitude anyway. I knew their attitude was one of it wasn't service, it wasn't for the Church, it was just for show. It was just so I could be seen for who I am. "Look at who I am. And maybe on occasion, if there's somebody to be seen by, you know, others in the Church, and maybe I'll help out and do something that can be seen by everybody else, then that makes me feel pretty good." But to do something? Change the tires at some time? Now, if we'd had the whole Church gathered out there at a picnic or something and we're all gathered around, "Okay, let's see you change those wheels! It's your turn." "Oh, yes, I'm looking forward to that one!" I hope you understand what I'm saying. If people can be seen for doing something sometimes it's just like, "They're watching me. I'm being seen for my righteousness." Isn't that amazing how we are as human beings? Sometimes we do things and we think somebody else is watching and we get this kind of a puffed up feeling inside. It's just natural to please somebody else, to be seen by somebody else. I really loathe that about human nature because it's in us all as human beings, and sometimes it's too much and too many to be seen sometimes.

So, **not by constraint**, not because it's your duty, and so someone may do something even in a marriage because somehow others are around, or whatever, and they feel like they have to do it, but it's not really in their heart or desire. That's may be a bad example, but I think you understand what I'm talking about. It's the same thing that applies to the ministry; it applies to a husband. It's not because it's your job or your duty, not with feelings of being forced to because all of a sudden something's come to the surface and you've got to do something, **but willingly**.

...**not for filthy lucre**... This can mean because of this, but there's more than that that's meant here as far as the Greek language and what it said. "Not for base gain," is the example of what is here; i.e., not for selfish gain, not just for something that I'm going to get out of it, that if I get something out of it then I'll do it because I'm going to get something back. ...**but of a ready mind**. In other words, wanting to do it eagerly because that's the attitude. It's one of service. It's one of

...serving, isn't it? Awesome! What a unique spirit. What a unique spirit, to have a spirit of service. A husband to have that kind of an attitude, to work on that kind of an attitude toward a wife? Can you imagine? One of service. Because, generally, in society and the world and the way it's been it's the other way around. "I'm here to be served." "Bring me my beer. I'm at the TV. I can't be bothered right now; I'm in the middle of this game." We see those things in advertisements. You see them on TV sometimes. In reality sometimes it happens. It happens way too often in the world around us. That's the attitude people have.

Neither as being lords over God's heritage, lording it over others. It's amazing how human beings can be. Sometimes as soon as the "I do's" are done, things changed. How many people I've even heard who've been in God's Church, who have made those kinds of comments. "As soon as I said, 'I do,' it changed that day." It was no longer the courting, no longer the giving and the serving and the being there and the thoughtfulness and so forth. Everything turned around. Now it's about, guess what? "I have conquered; she's mine." That's human nature. Sadly that happens on a spiritual plane in physical lives, in physical marriages. I've known marriages that have just fallen apart because of that, start falling apart from that day. Incredible.

Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being examples to the flock. I think, "Hmmm, how does that fit in a marriage?" It's about being examples to those young ones that are growing up that see such things because if a young person sees this bond, this love, this sacrifice, this caring, this giving, the kind of life in a marriage then it's easier for them to go out and live that themselves in marriage, in life, because they've seen it. That's been their example. So they're able to go out themselves and begin to practice that themselves. It doesn't mean it always works, because you know, to be successful it takes two. But what advantage, what blessings to be able to help others to learn by example.

So that's why oftentimes within the ministry I've told people the primary, truly, the primary function that individuals have is their example. It's example. It doesn't have to be up here speaking. It doesn't have to be up leading songs. It doesn't have to be up in prayer. It doesn't have to be in a sermonette because some people began to think that's what it's all about and that's what the service is all about. No, it's about the stability; it's about the fact that people know who you are and what's been given. So it's about how you live your life and by what they see then in your life as the example that this is done in a godly manner; judgment is done in a godly manner. God's first in their life. It's obvious. So we learn from those kinds of things.

So, anyway, it's applied to the ministry but don't miss the connection here of what it means in a marriage because it's about something that God has given to someone as a responsibility in life. And in marriage a husband is given incredible responsibility. So is the wife, but because of the way it's stated here there is truly a greater responsibility as a whole upon the male, upon the man. If a woman is ordained and has an ordination and that's how God's government's working in the family it's going to be a greater responsibility upon them. Truly is.

Ephesians 5:23—For the husband is the head of the wife, order, government. But again, how often does that ever have to be used? How often as a minister do I ever have to exercise government? Well, that's kind of a loaded question. It depends on the individuals. It depends on people. But as a whole, very rarely, very seldom. It's only when something is done as a matter of sin do I ever have responsibility, when something is not done God's way and I have responsibility to exercise authority, and I'm supposed to do it in a certain way too. So all of that is a part. But so it is with the husband. But if a wife and a husband are in the Church and they're striving to live God's way of life how often do you think that government's going to ever have to be used? Hopefully it's never. If both are doing what they should be doing it'll be never. If a wife is striving to live by God's way of life it'll be never. If a husband is striving to live by God's way of life he'll never abuse it and misuse it either because those things have happened far too often.

For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the Church; for he is the Savior of the Body. Therefore, just as the Church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything. Incredible, very powerful, what it says. God has shown us addition above and beyond that now. Again, this is about the flow of God's spirit and how God's spirit works within a family when there is a need. So is God's spirit working more in the man than in the woman? Give me a break! That's not what it's about. It's about responsibility when there is a need. See? It's about responsibility when there is a need. That's all this is about. It's about an order, to make certain there's order. It's not about or saying here in any fashion or form the husband is to be the teacher of the wife. Sorry. I have to put on a little bit there because that's how some people have taken it. "I am your teacher."

I'm sorry, but some things just flash into my mind of examples I'd hear of things that happened like that recently or husbands try to use scripture and try to use things about God, "This is what God wants us to do." Oh, really? And so often when I hear some of these stories and hear what's been said I think, "Oh, no, no, no, no, no. That isn't what God wants you to do. That's wrong." So if someone thinks that that's what the position of a husband is, that somehow that they're the teacher and it's like an ordination of some sort to preach and to teach in the family, and that everything is going to come through you as far as what you're going to teach in the family, you don't understand what it's saying here. That's not what it's saying at all. That's not what it's about, but scriptures and other places of scripture have been twisted to say these kinds of things because that's what people in a lot of the Protestant world believe. That's what they teach. "Stand behind me, wife, and when it's time to teach, I'll teach. Don't ask in the church because I'm the one to teach." They don't understand the society and the world they were dealing with, and that's why those things were stated. It had nothing to do with the fact that the husband somehow was supposed to teach the wife God's way of life.

Everybody hears God's way of life every Sabbath. Everybody has the opportunity to hear. See? And in many cases I've known wives that are way ahead of their husbands on a spiritual plane. That's a good thing for the marriage because it makes it a whole lot easier for the wife if he just

understood what he had. But anyway, I don't want to go there. The point being is we don't all grow at the same pace. We don't all understand the same things. We can learn from each other. That's why there should be a measure of desire to think about and listen to the other person in things that are said and to drink it in and think about it.

Therefore, as the Church is subject to Christ, let the wives be to their husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives. Love your wives. Why would a husband have to be told this? Why doesn't it say, "Wives, love your husbands," right here first? Why doesn't it say that? "Wives, love your husbands." Well, because this is just a matter of understanding human nature and how a husband is going to think as soon as he hears this one, "The husband is the head of the wife." I'm sorry, but anyway, it's human nature to take that in a wrong way. It's human nature to abuse that and misuse that. So it's like reeling it back in and saying, **Husbands love your wives, even as Christ loves the Church, or loved the Church and gave himself for it.** Whew! Now, if you really understand that in what is being said there that's a shock of sobriety, if you will. It's like "Poom!" All of a sudden if the attitude of mind is there you're the head and that goes to the head, which is what happens as a whole in human life and has happened a great deal in the past in God's Church, it just goes to the head and it never goes to this part here, verse 25, "Husbands, love your wives." What does that mean? "Even as Christ loved the Church." You're going to be sacrificing. You're going to be sacrificing your will, your desires, your wants, because to love the wife in this fashion says a lot, more than most can grasp and comprehend. No one can do it perfectly, but that should be what you strive to do, and the more you strive to do that and can accomplish that the better in life the marriage is going to be and the bond that you're going to have in oneness of life the way God has intended, gave, if you will, from the beginning.

...and gave himself for it. So it's an understanding here that this kind of love requires sacrifice. And if a person thinks that they are to exercise a certain authority and that the wife is to be the servant or whatever, this is the exact opposite. Now, it doesn't mean, husbands, that you're supposed to do all these different things and the wife isn't to do anything. You're sharing in life, the work, whatever you do in life, the different things of life.

This is a good example maybe, where the husband has a job and the wife has a job. Now there's the sharing here because they have certain goals and they want to achieve certain things, and so there are things as far as what their goals are in life, but when they both get home the husband doesn't do the dishes, he doesn't do the cooking. Well, he doesn't do much of anything except go to work and come back. But everything else the wife kind of has a double duty there. Where's the sharing? Now, see, in my mind if both have to work like that that there should be a lot more that defines the word sharing, and that means that there should be some help being given because do you think it's unfair that two people have to be at work at 8-9 o'clock in the morning and get off at 5 o'clock, and somehow when they get off the husband goes and plants himself somewhere, you know, and is able to rest, and then all of a sudden, the wife has to go out and start working in the kitchen to get dinner ready? "Because that's her job."

Where are you sharing? Does that happen in life? I hope you know that it does and that's not right. Where is the sacrifice in that? To me the wife is sacrificing so much more, truly. Far, far more. Isn't that who's sacrificing for the husband, so that he can go in and have his feet plopped up on the ottoman? What an incredible thing to think all of a sudden he can go turn on the TV or get on the computer and send out email to who knows where and she's in there working. And on the weekend then she's still working and he's got the whole weekend off, but she couldn't get all the washing done and everything else and the drying done and the cleaning of the house and everything that takes place in a house, but he's got the weekend off. I'm sorry, but I'll tell you what, life is a lot like that in a lot of people's lives in the world.

I just hope it doesn't exist in the Church because some of you when you go home I hope you get it. I hope you get it right between the eyes. I don't mean literally, physically, you know in a fist, but I hope you get it right now and understand that, hey, you need to make some big changes. Because that's just not right. That's just not fair. I'll be honest with you, that's really disgusting because I'll guarantee you somewhere that's going on in God's Church! I don't know where. I'm just telling you right now I don't know where, but I know that it's going on. Okay? And it needs to stop because it's not right. You're not doing your job. You don't love your wife the way God says to love your wife. Let's get real! Where is the sacrifice? I'm sorry, I'd almost like to say something of what I think you might be, and it wouldn't be real nice coming across my lips right now. A lazy something. Put your mind to practice on that one there and think about what it might be. But I'll be honest that's what comes to my mind because I think that's disgusting. I don't have enough words to say how disgusting that really is. Sorry.

God has called us into His Church to learn how to love His way of life and to listen to what He says and to practice it in our lives and if we don't do those things we're not even running around the temple, we're just kind of out there on a merry-go-round taking it easy. Maybe we're in a swing set. Let's put a swing set in the courtyard because we're not inside the temple. They erected a swing. I saw a swing set in the courtyard and I saw some husbands out there swinging, taking life easy. "It's going my way. She's doing a lot of things. I enjoy this." But they're not in the temple worshipping God! We're to live a certain way of life.

It's the same thing with individuals that get into conflicts and fights with each other and even within the Church, like happened at last year's Feast and some of the things that went on. When people hear this out there and think, "Man, they got a lot of problems in their church, in that church." That's how people think, but the point being is one or two or three or four is too many in a Church nationwide, worldwide. Okay? It's just too much. It just shouldn't be there. So you know what? Something has to give. Either you're gone or this quits immediately and you repent and you learn to apologize to one another and seek to make things right or you're living a lie. You know what, when it gets to that point you're not a part of the Body anymore. We'll see you. It's not going to be allowed in God's Church and the closer we get to the end of this age God is cleansing

His Church, see, and we have changes to make in our lives. So there are things in marriage. Where you can change them, make the changes.

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; in other words, everything being done to give a right and a healthy environment in which to flourish and be blessed. That's what this is about and to adorn and to provide and to give nurture, care. That should be the thinking, see, the responsibility of thinking and a need to respond in such a fashion toward someone else.

Now, we have all kinds of situations in the Church. Where two are in the Church more is expected, obviously, of both. Sometimes then, obviously, when one is not it makes it more difficult. The primary thing you do is put God first, place God first and strive to live your life the best you can in the example you can, and so forth, and strive to live by these things to the degree and way you can in the best way you can. Because that's how you're judged.

Again, **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.** Again, a desire to provide everything needed for life, to adorn, esteem, and uphold in beauty wife and family...wife and family.

Verse 28—So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself. For no man has ever yet hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it. That's the way we are as human beings. And that's to turn around, not be incoming but to be outgoing to the other, see, to have that kind of a mindset that turns and thinks about somebody else in that light. Now, that takes God's spirit. You can't... People can't do it in the world in the way God instructs it here. It requires God's spirit to think in such a way, to think in such a mind toward someone else. And that should be what we should strive for. Those are the things that should make up many of our prayers.

What do you pray about in your marriage? What do you ask for God for help in? To change the other person? Please, don't have those kinds of prayers. It's change this, to change this, to do this in how we love each other, how we love others... and the other especially.

It's also, I'm going to read another verse here in 1 Timothy. You don't need to turn there. That's why the following verse should be magnified at this time and expounded upon even more so in the Church. And it's a simple verse from Timothy, one that people need to grasp and understand what it's saying. **1 Timothy 5:8—For if any provide not for his own...** So what is our own? Our family, whatever that is, husband and wife in this case. If we don't provide for our own the best we can, but even more so that responsibility lands upon who? On the husband. But it's a shared thing if we understand it. **If any provide not for his own, and especially for those of their own house.** See, that's what it's focusing in. It's zeroing in here; your own household. **If you provide**

not for your own, especially of your own house, he has denied the faith and is worse than a nonbeliever. That's what the word means. I'd be better... That means... Can you imagine this, "worse than a nonbeliever?" Now, we've been called to see, to know, to believe God's word, God's truth, and yet if anyone lives this God says they have denied the faith, the truth, the way of life that God has given and they're worse than a nonbeliever.

So what does this mean in life? First of all it means that everyone should... What is your family unit right now? It may just be one. You have a responsibility to take care of that one. That means to work. That means to provide. That means to learn and live the way God says. And sometimes this needs to be said in God's Church. Sometimes there are some, there are those who have certain struggles in life and go through some of these things. But where you have a responsibility to strive and fulfill to do this. And then what about the family? What about the entire family? To do the best they can to provide in their own family. Well, it's a responsibility. And if someone doesn't fulfill that in God's Church and doesn't provide for their family and doesn't work toward that... And sometimes, I understand, sometimes it requires both to do this, to share in this. In this world today this applies to both then. If it can't be done where the sharing can be done in certain manner... Because the world has changed around us and in great ways in the last 200... last hundred years, last 40 years in this respect. And so we live according to the way things are around us in the world and striving to live God's way of life. And so sometimes it requires two to make everything fit, to make everything work together to provide well in the kind of world we live in, to be able to have transportation, to be able to have a place to stay, to be able to...whatever it might be to meet the bills and whatever we have for food and the like. And sometimes it required both to share in that.

And you know what? If one is striving to do that and they're doing that to the best of the ability, you know, and it isn't accomplishing it fully, well, what about the other one? If they don't have anything at home, if there is nothing... Because it's not like it used to be. It's not like it used to be where it would take all day to get food together, to do things and the kind of cooking and things that people used to have to do. The world has changed because of technology. And so the world isn't like that. So today when two people share and share in their life together sometimes it requires and needs to to be able to provide for their family. So, you know, and the reason I mention that is because sometimes I've known of individuals who are just not willing to do that. They want to be provided for but they don't want to do anything else. They don't want to share in too much. That's not right either.

In those kinds of thing, if they exist anywhere in the environment of God's Church, need to change and change quickly. And so it takes two in a marriage to share in a family. It takes two to make a marriage. It takes two to share in life, to work together to become one. See? It does. And everybody has to weigh those things out in their own family units then as to how they're going to accomplish various things in life where they can. In some cases it can't be done so you have to work with what works in your family. But you have to decide that and you have to agree upon

that. Sometimes people don't agree in those things. And the reason I mention that is because I have to deal with those kinds of things from time to time and have of recent time. Okay? Because it exists. And it causes hurt and pain and suffering then in a family. Marriage is a two-way street. It requires both to make it successful, to make it function and work the way God has designed and wants it to.

Oh, boy! I was just getting warmed up. Looked over at the clock. Nobody... Honey? You should have said, "Hey, when are you going to stop?" Okay, well, there must have been a need to go into part of that extra as well. That's why I'm going to have to take that one.

So it looks like we will definitely have *Part 3*.