

*Marriage*

# WIVES AND HUSBANDS.

TWO DISCOURSES

BY

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## THE GOOD WIFE.

Eph. v. 22-29.—“Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord.

For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the Saviour of the body.

Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything.

Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;

That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word,

That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.

So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself.

For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church.”

Col. iii. 18, 19.—“Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord.

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I. Pet. iii. 1-7.—“In like manner, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, even if any obey not the word, they may without the word be gained by the behaviour of their wives; beholding your chaste behaviour coupled with fear.

Whose adorning let it not be the outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing jewels of gold, or of putting on apparel; but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in the incorruptible apparel of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of



great price. For after this manner aforetime the holy women also, who hoped in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection to their own husbands: as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord: whose children ye now are, if ye do well, and are not put in fear by any terror.

Ye husbands, in like manner, dwell with your wives according to knowledge, giving honor unto the woman, as unto the weaker vessel, as being also joint-heirs of the grace of life; to the end that your prayers be not hindered."

The most important relation between human beings, as well as the most intimate, is the relation of husband and wife. Marriage is the oldest of all institutions, lying at the foundation of home, of society, of government. It is of the utmost importance, therefore, that right ideas prevail as to the duties of wife and husband. Did you notice that in these passages I have read, where the duties of wives and husbands are mentioned together, the wives are put first? I do not think this is accidental. It is more important that a man have a good wife, than that a woman have a good husband. More is at stake in the home, and in society. Woman was made as an helpmeet for man. It was not that Eve needed a husband, but that Adam needed a wife. The wife makes the home, molds the character of the children, and by her influence strengthens her husband for his work in the world. The decay of the

home is one of the saddest signs of our times. The increase of divorces, and the ease with which divorces are obtained, mark a sad decay in our home life. This is particularly true in our cities, where in the rush of business and the whirl of pleasure there is no time left for family life. Go to any handsome residence on a fashionable street, and you will find that the gentlemen of the family hurry off to business before the ladies show themselves, and the gentlemen get lunch down town in the middle of the day, and do not go home at all till after business hours. Immediately after supper, both the ladies and the gentlemen hurry away to some place of entertainment, or to some social engagement, and thus the family are together only at the supper-table, and there is no opportunity for family intercourse and for real home life. It is simply that these ladies and gentlemen are kin to each other, and have a common house where they eat and lodge.

In an ideal state of society, every woman would be a wife, and every man would be a husband. The entrance of women into so many lines of industry and of business, which formerly were appropriated by the men, has been heralded as a mark of the great progress of our age. It is claimed that woman is being

"emancipated," that she is "coming to the front," that she is showing her capacities and abilities, and making wonderful "progress." So far from these facts being a sign of progress in our age, they are a sign of social decay, and mark the decline of home life. It is a sad thing to see women in large numbers earning their living. Far be it from me to say anything in disparagement of the noble women who are wage-earners, and who bravely face the necessities of their condition. I admire their brave independence and their faithfulness in meeting their responsibilities. I am always ready to take off my hat to Miss Jennie as she stands behind the counter of a dry-goods store, because I know what it means for her to stand there. But I have no respect for Ben, who is loafing around that drinking-saloon, and who, if he were what he ought to be, would take Jennie from behind that counter and have her make a home for him. It is because so many of our men are worthless, that so many of our women have to earn their bread. To glory over this fact, as some apostles of "progress" are doing, is to glory in our shame. In a perfect state of society, no women would earn their bread, outside of a few employments, like teaching children, household duties, the pre-

paration of female apparel, etc., etc., which are peculiarly suited to women. It is a crying shame upon the men of any community, when any considerable proportion of the women are wage-earners. We sadly need in our country a revival of the home, the Christian home with all that it ought to mean.

The Apostle tells us by inspiration, "neither was the man created for the woman, but the woman for the man" (I. Cor. xi. 9). Woman, then, is God's special gift to man, and a gift that man has always sadly needed. No man's life is complete without the companionship of woman. No man can be at his best in the world, without the love of a woman. Theseus could never have made his way out of the labyrinth in which he was imprisoned, but for the clew Ariadne furnished him, and no man can rightly make his way through the mazy labyrinth men call life, without the sympathy and help of woman.

"Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands." It is the duty of the wife, then, to submit to her husband, not as a servant, but as an helpmeet for him. Her position is not one of inferiority. Husbands are to love their wives as Christ loves the church, with an unselfish, self-sacrificing love. Outside of ques-



tions of conscience, the husband is to be the head. Of course, in questions of conscience, it goes without saying that the wife must obey God rather than man. But she is to be a helpmeet for her husband. She is to have no career outside of him, or independent of him, but she is to help him to be and to do all that he is capable of being and doing in the world for God and for mankind. She is to make herself attractive to her husband, and to be as anxious to please him after marriage as before.

The wife is to make home for her husband. He is to provide for her food and shelter, clothing, etc., but she is to support him, strengthening his hands and cheering his heart in his life-work. When we read of Spartan wives, we can understand how Spartan soldiers were invincible. Roman matrons made Rome supreme in the earth, and not till Veronica and Volumnia gave place to Messalina and Agrippina, did Rome decay and fall.

The chief means by which a wife can support a husband, is to give him intelligent sympathy in what concerns and interests him. The lack of this has alienated many a man from his home. He can find around the tavern and on corners those who are interested in the same

things that interest him, and he can there get the sympathy that he craves, when he is denied this sympathy at home. No woman has a right to allow herself to become so absorbed in anything as not to give her husband that intelligent sympathy which will render her a helpmeet for him and make his home happy. The wife must know enough about her husband's pursuit to be able to strengthen him in it. A doctor's wife, for example, must know enough about medicine to give her husband intelligent sympathy in his practice. The lawyer's wife must know enough about law to be able to make herself a helpful force in strengthening her husband in his profession. And so for all the pursuits. If your husband, my sister, is not a better doctor, or lawyer, or farmer, or whatever his calling may be, because you are his wife, then you are a failure as a wife, however brightly you may shine in society, and however often your name and your dresses may be mentioned in the papers.

Of course I would not say that the wife is always responsible for the failure of her husband, because she might have such poor material in him as to render success with him impossible; but unless he is a better man, and a more efficient worker in his pursuit, whatever

it may be, because she is his wife, she is a failure as a wife. A man once said sadly of a pretty-faced dolt he had married: "She knew nothing when I married her. I tried to teach her something: it made her angry, and I gave it up." The husband must feel that his wife understands him and sympathizes with him in his work, or he will not confide in her as he ought always to do.

The wife is the largest human factor, outside himself, in any man's success. Often the world applauds the man when the credit really belongs to the wife. The wife does not appear before the public; her work is hidden, but it is none the less important. The world rang with applause of Sir Samuel Baker when he announced his discovery of Victoria Nyanza; but without the sympathy and co-operation of his noble wife, that discovery would have been impossible to him. Dr. Livingstone is honored everywhere, and he has been rightly buried in Westminster Abbey, the peer of any of the mighty dead there entombed. But as I stood there by his grave, I thought sadly of the body of Mrs. Livingstone, lying in that lonely jungle in Africa. Professor Henry Drummond thus beautifully describes his visit to the place: "Late in the afternoon we reached the spot—

a low ruined hut a hundred yards from the river's bank. A grass-grown path struggled to the doorway, and a fresh foot-print of a hippopotamus told how neglected the spot is now. "Pushing the door open, we found ourselves in a long, dark room, its mud floor broken in fragments, and remains of native fires betraying its latest occupants. Turning to the right, we entered a smaller chamber, the walls bare and stained, with two glassless windows facing the river. The evening sun, setting over the far-off Morumballa mountains, filled the room with its soft glow, and took our thoughts back to that Sunday evening, when in this same bedroom, at this same hour, Livingstone knelt over his dying wife and witnessed the great sunset of his life. Under a huge baobab tree stands Mrs. Livingstone's grave. It is now an utter wilderness, matted with jungle grass, and trodden by the beasts of the forest; and as I looked at the forsaken mound and contrasted it with her husband's tomb in Westminster Abbey, I thought the woman's love which brought her to a spot like this might be not less worthy of immortality."

But for Mrs. Livingstone, the career of her illustrious husband would have been impossible; but she does not appear to the great



world, which is too ready to forget that she ever existed.

Mr. Gladstone said recently of his wife:

"No words that I could use would ever suffice to express the debt I owe her in relation to all the offices she has discharged in my behalf and on behalf of those who are nearest and dearest to me: not only is she the dearest and most devoted of help-meets, but for whose self-consecration to the service of her husband and children, my own public work must have been seriously fettered and hindered." Many great men tell the same story about their wives. Thomas Carlyle was thought to be lacking in appreciation for his wife, and there is reason to believe she thought so too, and the thought darkened her life. She made the mistake many wives make, as some one has said it, of thinking awkwardness in expressing feeling to be deadness in feeling. But after her death the world saw how he loved her, and how he depended upon her. She labored on at her best, though feeling that she was not appreciated fully, and shadowed by the feeling, yet she made her distinguished husband succeed as he could not have succeeded without her.

"That they may teach the young women to

be sober-minded, to love their husbands, to be discreet, chaste, workers at home, kind, obedient to their husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed." A good wife, therefore, loves her husband in preference to society, fashion, and pleasure. She seeks to make him wiser, purer, nobler, making this her chief worldly ambition. She loves her children, and does not seek to be rid of the bother of them. She trains her children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, and feels that they have been given to her to be reared to a noble manhood and womanhood. A good wife is "sober-minded." She is discreet, wise, not frivolous and giddy. She gives her attention to things that are worth attending to, and does not run after trifles. She recognizes that life is real and earnest, and that opportunity is responsibility. She is "chaste," pure in thought and in word, having no relish for scandal and villainess, does not want to get hold of the daily paper, simply that she may see about that divorce case, or about some impurity, being ventilated before the public.

She is a "worker at home." And there is plenty of work at home for her to do. She does not feel that such work is in any degree lowering to her importance or to her dignity.

Spurgeon said he had "no faith in a woman who talked grace and glory abroad, and used no soap and water at home." The good wife is to "guide the house" (I. Tim. v. 14). She is "kind," not high-tempered, ready to scold and find fault, but sympathetic, loving, helpful. She does not make unreasonable demands upon her husband, nor is she petulant with him.

A good wife is in subjection to her husband. She seeks to make him, as we have seen, all that he can be for God and for mankind. Hers is not a position of inferiority, but rather one involving special work, which is limited, and therefore intense. There is nothing dazzling about the picture given us in the Bible, of a good wife. But as Ruskin well says:

"The best women are necessarily the most difficult to know: they are recognized in the happiness of their husbands and in the nobleness of their children: they are only to be divined, not discerned: and sometimes seem almost helpless, except in their homes: yet without the help of one of them, to whom this little book is dedicated, the day would probably have come before now, when I should have written and thought no more."

And Ruskin very well says again:

"No man ever lived a right life, who had not

been chastened by a woman's love, strengthened by her courage, and guided by her discretion."

A good wife makes but little noise in the world. She does not hear her name loud on the lip of mankind. But Mrs. Browning, herself a model wife, says:

"The sweetest lives are those to duty  
wed,  
Whose deeds, both great and small,  
Are close-knit strands of an unbroken  
thread,  
Where love ennobles all.

.....  
The world may sound no trumpets, ring no  
bells,  
The Book of Life the shining record  
tells.

.....  
Thy  
love  
Shalt chant itself its own beatitudes  
After its own life-working. A child's  
kiss  
Set on thy sighing lips shall make thee  
glad.  
Thou shalt be served thyself by every  
sense  
Of service which thou renderest."

These are examples of the opinions of the wisest and best in reference to the qualities of a good wife. It is the same old teaching of



holy writ, which has blessed so many homes through all the centuries and has made Christendom possible.

I beg you to cherish more the home sentiment. Let your home, if you please, be poetically sentimental. Do not be afraid of being too sentimental in your home and about your home. No home ever yet decayed through excess of sentiment, though many have sadly suffered from the lack of it. It has been well said "there is no place like home," but I thank God there is a place which home is like, and of which a model home on earth is but a faint type and symbol,—that many-mansioned home prepared by our heavenly Father's care for those who love and serve him.

That was a beautiful tribute to a noble wife, which Don Piatt wrote over the grave of his loved companion in the cemetery in Cincinnati:

"To thy dear memory, darling, and my own,  
I build in grief this monument of stone.  
All that it tells of life in death is thine,  
All that it tells of death in life is mine;  
For that which made thy purer spirit blest,  
In anguish deep has brought me great unrest:  
You, dying, live to find the life divine,  
I, living, die till death shall make me thine."

Such a wife is from the Lord, and there is no greater earthly gift.

## THE GOOD HUSBAND.

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Husband means *house band*, the bond that holds the household together. In an ideal state of society every man will be a husband, because unless he be so he is incomplete. God saw it was not good for Adam to be alone, though in a state of innocency. How much less is it good for man to be alone now, when, instead of living in pure Eden, we are in the midst of a sinful world! Least of all is it good for preachers to be alone. The Bible lays down one of the qualifications of a bishop, or pastor, that he shall be the "husband of one wife," and it is curious that the Roman Catholic church forbids all its preachers to marry. This is alike contrary to Scripture and to right reason. We know the apostle Peter was married, whom the Roman Catholics claim as their first pope, for we read that Christ healed "Peter's wife's mother." The Greek Catholic church allows its ministers to marry but once—if their wives

die, they must not marry again. And it is said that the best cared for women on earth are the wives of the Greek priests.

A man should be fit to be a husband, and if he is unfit, he should proceed to fit himself as rapidly as possible. No man is "ready to marry" when he has income enough to support a wife, or when some pretty face or figure strikes his fancy. The wife is commanded by God to "reverence" her husband, and no man is fit to be a husband who cannot command the reverence of a wife. He must be fit to be the head of a family, and unless he is so, he has no right to ask a woman to become his wife. Cato said it was better to be a good husband than a great senator, and it is true.

The first duty of a husband is to love his wife. Here as everywhere "love is the fulfilling of the law." Faithfulness in love means faithfulness in all duty, and failure anywhere means failure in love. A man must love his wife after marriage more than he loved her before. Loving her will ennoble him and make him more and more worthy of her reverence and affection. It is love that opens the eyes of the soul and gives us glimpses of the possibilities of human nature.

A husband is not to regard his wife as an



ornament, or a picture, or a plaything, or a pet, but as an helpmeet for him, mind of his mind, heart of his heart, soul of his soul. She can be these if she sees that he loves her, and under the influence of his love her heart will expand like a flower in the sun. A wife is not to a husband "like a vine twined about an oak." That old illustration of husband and wife is radically wrong. What good does the vine do the oak around which it twines? It is an injury always, and will eventually kill the oak unless something kills the vine. The moment a vine begins to twine around an oak there is a life-and-death struggle between the two. The survival of the one means the death of the other. What an abominable comparison, then, this is with which to illustrate the relation of wife to husband! Far better does Longfellow put it when he says:

"As unto the bow the cord is,  
So unto the man is woman,  
Though she bends him, she obeys him,  
Though she draws him, yet she follows,  
Useless each without the other!"

If you see defects in your wife, remember your love is to be the great means of curing them, and you must ever bear in mind that she is your wife because you asked her to become so, and therefore on you rests the whole re-

sponsibility for the relationship. You cannot say, "I see I have made a mistake," and then seek to shirk your obligations. You cannot put her back where she was when you courted her. Remember you went after her, she did not come after you. You asked her to become your wife, she did not ask you to become her husband; and if you have one spark of honor in your nature, you will not be willing that she should suffer on account of accepting your offer. And then stop and consider whether you are, after all, what you led her to believe you were before marriage. Think of what you told her then, and as a man of honor, much more as a Christian, be true to your obligations voluntarily incurred. But even if there are defects in your wife,—and no woman is perfect any more than her husband,—remember that your love will bring out the best that is in her, and she will be able to strengthen you and help you wonderfully.

The good wives of whom I spoke last Sunday had good husbands. Dr. Livingstone said at the death of his wife: "I was never anything till I knew you: and I have been a better, happier, and more prosperous man ever since." And let us bear in mind that the contrast between his tomb in Westminster Abbey

and her humble grave in the jungles of Africa, is not of his making, nor is it according to his wishes. He would have preferred that she should have been in Westminster Abbey while he slept in the forests of the Dark Continent. And the same is true of Carlyle. His wife had died, you remember, sitting in a carriage while driving in London. He driver drove on, wondering why she did not give him some orders about returning. Finally, he asked a gentleman on the street to look into the carriage and see if anything was the matter. He looked in, and there sat Mrs. Carlyle, dead! Her husband was at her sister's at Dumfries, Scotland, while Messrs. Froude and Forster sent telegrams to him, one to John Carlyle, Edinburgh, and the other to his sister at Dumfries, as they were not sure where he was. Carlyle, two weeks later, wrote about her death thus (I am reading from Froude's life of him, Vol. II, p. 267 ff.):

"Saturday night, about 9 p.m., I was sitting in sister Jean's at Dumfries, thinking of my railway journey to Chelsea on Monday and perhaps of a sprained ankle I had got at Scotsbrig two weeks or so before, when the fatal telegrams came. It had a kind of *stunning* effect upon me. Not far above two days could

I estimate the immeasurable depths of it, or the infinite sorrow—which had peeled my life all bare, and in a moment shattered my poor world to universal ruin. They took me out next day to wander, as was medically needful, in the green sunny fields, and ever and anon there rose from my sick heart the ejaculation, 'My poor little woman!' but no full gust of tears came to my relief, nor yet has come. Will it ever? A stony Woe's me, woe's me! sometimes with infinite tenderness and pity, not for myself, is my habitual mood hitherto. I had been hitching lamely about, my company the green solitudes and fresh spring breezes, quietly but far from happily, about the hour she died . . . Monday morning, John set off with me for London. Never, for 1,000 years, should I forget that arrival here of ours, my first *unwelcomed* by her. She lay in her coffin, lovely in death. Pale death, and things not mine or ours, had possession of our poor darling . . . I looked out upon the spring fields, the everlasting skies in silence, and had for most part a more endurable day till Haddington, where friends were waiting with hospitalities, which almost drove me openly wild. I went out to walk in the moonlit silent streets, *not* suffered to go alone. I looked up at the



windows of the old room, where I had first seen her, on a summer evening after sunset, six-and-forty years ago. Edward Irving had brought me out walking to Haddington, *she* the first thing I had seen then; the beautifullest young creature I had ever beheld, though sunk in sorrow (she had lately lost her father) and speaking little. I noticed her once looking at me. Oh heavens, to think of that now! . . .

Very beautiful and noble to me, I laid her in the grave of her father, according to covenant of 40 years back, and all was ended. In the nave of the old Abbey Kirk, long a ruin, now being saved from further decay, with the skies looking down on her, there sleeps my Jeannie, and the light of her face will never shine on me more."

He wrote this epitaph on her tombstone where she rests. After telling of her birth and descent, he says:

"In her bright existence she had more sorrows than are common, and also a soft invincibility, and clearness of discernment, and a noble loyalty of heart, which are rare. For forty years she was the true and ever-loving helpmeet of her husband, and by act and word unweariedly followed him in all of worth that he did or attempted.

She died at London, 21st of April, 1866, suddenly snatched away from him, and the light of his life was forever gone out."

And to-day if you visit that church, the old sexton who is still there will tell you how Carlyle, when over eighty years old, used to totter in, making his way to the place, and falling down, would kiss passionately that grave, amid his groans and tears, while the people in the church were hushed in awe, and said, "behold how he loved her!"

The husband must confide in his wife fully. He must make her acquainted with all that concerns and interests him, for from her he must get that intelligent sympathy which will make her helpful to him, and make his home happy. He should give her no right to feel that she is neglected. Of course wives must not be unreasonable, they must remember that the woman was made for the man, and not the man for the woman. But it is for the husband to render unto the wife "due benevolence." He must always manifest the greatest interest in her, and be as anxious to please her after marriage as he was before. There are many things in our modern life which serve to impair husbands, and I would mention club-houses especially. No man can frequent a

club-house without injuring himself as a husband. The uniform tendency of such places is to make bad husbands. It is no answer to say that the club-house is thoroughly respectable, that no wickedness or dissipation is tolerated there. One club-house may be vastly better than another in these regards, but no club-house ever did any sort of good in the world. It is no answer to say that you want a place where you can invite your friends and entertain them. Take them to your home,—you ought to have no friends whom you would be unwilling to take to your home,—and if for any special reason you cannot just at that time take them to your home, entertain them at a hotel. Club houses do no good in the world! no good in the world! no good in the world! Are you being and doing in regard to your wife all that you gave her a right to expect you would be and do before you married her?

Inspiration commands husbands "to be not bitter" against their wives, that is, not irritating nor provoking. A husband must not try to tease or annoy his wife, but must seek to brighten her life. You go home from your business cross, out of sorts. She has been at home all day, harassed with cares and worries, bearing up under it all waiting for your coming,

sure that you will sympathize with her. And when you get home she meets you with a smile concealing the tears that are ready to break forth; half-sick she is: and then you are cross and surly. Alas, alas, that your wife and children must receive the sort of treatment you are willing to give them! A husband said sadly of his dead wife:

"She was the flower of my house. She gave my life its beauty and its fragrance, but I returned her neither sunshine nor dew. My frowns I brought home to those who were saddened by them, my smiles I wasted among those who cared not for them. And now she is gone! she is gone!"

Alas! Is this the sort of future any husband here is preparing for himself?

It was the custom of Robert Newton and his wife to retire to their closets every day and pray in secret for each other. Of course their home was happy.

The husband must show his love in little things, for, after all, little things make up the most of life. He must be kind and considerate with his wife. When she asks him for money, he must not angrily retort, "Where is all that money I gave you the other day?" If you think she is extravagant, lovingly let her know



just how much you can afford for her to spend, and the probabilities are overwhelming, if you will thus confide in her, she will show herself worthy of your confidence. When you start out and do not find your umbrella, do not angrily demand of her, "What have you done with my umbrella?" while you continue your search and presently find it where you left it. All irritating remarks leave a wound on the heart, and you should not be willing to wound the heart which of all the world is the most devoted to you.

Soon after coming to Louisville, I was boarding at a hotel, where a stairway came down just in front of the parlor door. A gentleman was standing in the parlor door, and I was in the hall. The skirt of a lady's dress appeared at the head of the stair, as she was about to descend. The man cried out angrily: "What's the matter with you? Why in the world can't you get ready sooner?" Just then the lady had descended far enough to render her face visible, and he saw who it was. Lifting his hat and smiling, he said, "I beg your pardon, madam, I thought it was my wife." Alas, alas, that a man should talk angrily to the one woman in the world who cannot help herself and must take whatever he chooses to say to her! If you

have any manhood in you, and you want to talk insultingly to some woman, select one whose husband, or father, or brother can resent her wrong and protect her from your insults, rather than select the woman you have solemnly pledged yourself to love and protect, and who has confided her life to your keeping, and must take from you whatever treatment you have it in your heart to give her.

Will you say that you are too busy to attend to these things, and to make a good husband according to the Bible standard? Nay, verily! it is the busiest men who are the best husbands. Never was there a busier man than Charles H. Spurgeon, and he was a model husband as well. I did not know until lately that he was a poet, beyond the fact that he had written a few hymns, but I recently came across this little piece which he wrote to his wife when absent from her, ten years after their marriage:

"Over the space that parts us, my wife,  
I'll cast me a bridge of a song,  
Our hearts shall meet, O joy of my life,  
On its arch unseen, but strong.

.....  
The glittering dewdrops of dawning love  
Exhale as the day grows old,  
And fondness, taking the wings of a dove,  
Is gone like a tale of old.

But mine for thee, from the chambers of joy,  
 With strength came forth as the sun,  
 Nor life nor death shall its force destroy,  
 Forever its course shall run.

All earth-born love must sleep in the grave,  
 To its native dust return;  
 What God hath kindled shall death out-brave  
 And in heaven itself shall burn."

Husbands must treat their wives "according to knowledge." They must not be foolish nor frivolous. They must appreciate their responsibilities as the head of the family, and as having charge of the training and guidance of the children. The husband is an example to the family. Stop and think, my friend, what is the effect of your example at home. Be what you desire your children to be. Josh Billings has wisely said, that the best way to train up a child in the way he should go is, "to skirmish a little along that road yourself," and there is no other way. Conduct family prayers. If you have not an altar in your family, erect one at once. Say grace at your table. You can do that whether you are a Christian or not. And if you say you are not good enough to have family prayers, who is responsible for that? Repent of your sins and give your heart and life to Christ, as you ought to have done long ago, and then by his grace you can have family

prayers and fulfill all other functions of a good husband and father. I beg you leave your children that most precious of all legacies, the memory of a praying father. If you do not know how to lead in prayer, just get down on your knees with your family and tell God you don't know how to pray, and ask Him for grace and strength. Husbands are to love their wives as Christ loved the church, with the same sort of love, tender, self-sacrificing. There is no danger of a man's loving his wife too much, and the nobler he is in the scale of being the more loving will he be toward her. Of course his love will be intelligent. The noblest men have ever been the most devoted husbands. I quoted, last Sunday, from Mrs. Browning, and I am glad to say that Robert Browning was a model husband. A lady travelling in Italy noticed an elderly gentleman, in the same compartment of the car, absorbed in reading. As the sun went down, he stopped and gazed with enthusiasm at the beauties of an Italian sunset. He opened conversation with her, though they were strangers. They talked of Italy and sunsets, and presently they got upon art and poetry. She repeated a favorite poem, which was a "Portuguese Sonnet," by Mrs. Browning. He listened, and so soon as



she had finished, he resumed his seat and his silence by the window. She was disturbed, thinking that somehow she had offended him: so, looking up, she said: "I suppose you do not like Mrs. Browning's poems?" He replied with tender sadness: "Madam, that sonnet is the sweetest, and its singer the most precious gift life has given to me. She was my wife."

To love here, is a needed preparation for loving in heaven, and though in that bright world they neither marry nor are given in marriage, yet there is a blessedness there for which faithfulness in married life here is the best preparation. Redeemed by the blood of Christ, renewed by the Spirit of God, we become the bride of Christ. He is the bridegroom, the husband; and during all these centuries the bride is decking herself and making herself ready for the marriage of the Lamb. "And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.

"Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in

fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.

"And he saith unto me, Write Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb." (Rev. xix. 6-9.)

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