

*Marriage
Is for Those
Who Love
God
...and
One Another*



Marriage Is For Those Who Love God -- And One Another

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MARRIAGE IS FOR THOSE WHO LOVE GOD— AND ONE ANOTHER

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To Faye, my beloved companion, who has meant so much to me in choosing the direction of my life and in making that life a happy one, and to my three children for whom I wish every happiness in their own marriages, I dedicate this little volume with all my love.

INTRODUCTION

While many fine books have been written on the subject of marriage, most fail to recognize the importance of the spiritual side. This book shows forcefully that the spiritual side of marriage is basic — that “marriage is for those who love God and each other.”

Thomas B. Warren is a graduate of Carrizo Springs, Texas, High School, having finished as valedictorian of his class in 1937. He studied at Trinity University in San Antonio, Texas, graduated from Abilene Christian College in 1947, did graduate work at Southwestern Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, and received the Master of Arts degree from the University of Houston. While working as evangelist for the Eastridge Church of Christ in Fort Worth he is also working toward his doctorate at Texas Christian University. Brother Warren has a wonderful family of his own — his wife, two daughters, and one son. During his many years as a gospel preacher he has devoted much time and study to matters pertaining to marriage and the home. He is exceptionally well-qualified to present the material contained in this volume.

Any study which relates to the home is a study of exceeding great importance. The influence of the social unit called the home extends to and vitally affects the church, the nation, the individual. If the home is as God would have it be marvelous benefits will accrue to the church, to the nation, and to the individual. An ancient proverb holds: “If there be righteousness within the individual there will be happiness within the home; if there be happiness within the home there will be harmony in the nation; if there be harmony in the nation there will

be peace in the world." The home as God would have it will be productive of personal righteousness. We must be intensely concerned about God's laws regarding the home.

The very foundation and continued existence of a home as God wants it to be is the sacred covenant called "marriage." Marriage was divinely instituted, and is subject to divine rule and regulation. God wants (and planned) that the parties to the marriage vows be happy. This happiness is realized if and when the marriage is successful. And, the marriage is successful when governed by the laws of God — resting securely upon a solid spiritual foundation.

In marriage there is a physical aspect, and there is (or must be) a spiritual aspect. It is the spiritual which undergirds the physical. Without this spiritual foundation the marriage is not (and could not be) what God wants it to be. The spiritual foundation will contribute to wonderful physical intimacy, and thus to a successful marriage, which in turn will bring abundant "showers of blessings" upon all concerned.

These are basic points emphatically stressed in the following pages. The author has properly stressed the spiritual side of marriage; he has not failed to stress equally the physical side. In a simple, holy, dignified and beautiful way he has shown the power and value of the physical intimacy between husband and wife. He has shown the tragic consequences of failing to heed the Bible teaching in this regard. He has shown that the Bible deals with these matters and that we have no right to disregard or to fail to teach its message. By failing to teach on these subjects we encourage people to learn erroneously, and from improper sources.

The messages which constitute this book were delivered orally, and were taken from tape recordings. This accounts

for some repetition, but most likely the repetition of fundamental points is an added value.

This book is extremely practical. It deserves (and we predict, will have) a wonderful circulation. It has a vital message for those already married; it ought to be studied carefully by those contemplating marriage. It deserves to be in every home, and will find its way into many classrooms. It will accomplish untold good.

—Roy Deaver

PREFACE

Many books have already been written on the subject of marriage. I hope this little volume makes some contribution to that array of literature. When I began the study which culminated in the book which you now hold in your hands, I had no plans to publish the material, which was first delivered orally.

The elders of the Eastridge Church of Christ, Fort Worth, Texas, a congregation with which I have labored as minister for more than nine years, asked me to speak, in connection with the opening of the new auditorium of the Eastridge church, on the subject of marriage. This was done in a series of five sermons.

As the elders of the Eastridge church and I discussed the need for such a series of sermons, we envisioned the following groups as among those who might benefit from such a study: (1) young people who had never been married but who were looking forward to marriage; (2) young couples who had been married but a short while and still did not know very much about marriage; (3) those who had been married for quite some time but whose marriage was a mediocre affair; (4) those whose marriage was in trouble, with a lot of strife and bitterness; (5) those whose marriage was in great trouble and, therefore, in danger of divorce. The sermons were prepared with these groups in mind.

As the sermons were delivered from night to night, the response by those who heard was indeed most encouraging to me. Before delivering the sermons, I knew that there was a need for such a study, but the delivery of the ser-

mons revealed the fact that there was an even greater need than I had suspected. It was clear to me that the people were hungry for a concentrated series. I had preached on various aspects of marriage before, but there is an added value to a concentrated series, delivered within the span of just three or four days. Many of the people who heard the sermons simply insisted that the sermons be published and put into permanent form so that others might also have access to the material which was set forth in the oral sermons. I had not thought that the sermons were anything unusual, but upon the insistence of so many I decided to undertake the publication of them. The reader must decide for himself as to whether or not that undertaking was a wise one.

Since I firmly believe that God created man in His own image, and since I also firmly believe that marriage is of His appointment, I have tried to explain the meaning and aims of marriage in the light of what I understand the Bible to teach. I have read many other books, but I have ever recognized the Bible to be authoritative in whatever matter it may speak.

While I believe that marriage counselors and physicians may be very helpful, and while I believe they have said and written many good things about marriage relations, I do not believe that people can make of their marriage what they should without being guided by Bible teaching. I believe firmly that the Bible gives the answer to the basic problems which arise in marriage. Therefore, I heartily commend the prayerful study of it to everyone who is planning to be married or who is already married. People who follow its teaching will be successful in their marriage. I also urge the sincere study of the Bible every day for every person. I sincerely hope that all I have said in this book is in harmony with Bible teaching.

Marriage can be a source of great happiness. It can also be a source of great unhappiness. Marriage can be an instrument for great spiritual growth. It can also be an obstacle which stands in the way of spiritual growth.

It is my prayer that the readers of this book may find something which will enable them to live better with one another and to walk closer to God. If this should happen in the case of even one couple, then the publication of this book will have been worthwhile.

I have long been convinced that marriage, in its highest or ideal sense, is for those who truly love God and one another. This conviction led me to preach this series of sermons, and it led to the publication of this book. May the Lord bless the reading of it.

—Thomas B. Warren

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