

The self-controlled man

Ecclesiastes 7:26 *And I find more bitter than death the woman, whose heart is snares and nets, and her hands as bands: whoso pleaseth God shall escape from her; but the sinner shall be taken by her.*

The woman caught the man whose heart was not stayed upon the Lord. On the other hand, the Lord delivered from the woman's snare the man who pleases God with his thoughts and actions. When we consider this verse in light of what we see in society around us, we can begin to understand why women are gaining such tremendous control and authority in every area of life.

The Old Testament law established that a man who seduced a single woman before marriage had to pay the father 50 shekels of silver, which was about three years wages, and, if permitted by the girl's father, marry the girl he seduced. Moreover, the man who seduced the woman could never put her away for the rest of his life:

Exodus 22: 16 *And if a man entice a maid that is not betrothed, and lie with her, he shall surely endow her to be his wife. 17 If her father utterly refuse to give her unto him, he shall pay money according to the dowry of virgins.*

Deuteronomy 22:28 *If a man find a damsel that is a virgin, which is not betrothed, and lay hold on her, and lie with her, and they be found; 29 Then the man that lay with her shall give unto the damsel's father fifty shekels of silver, and she shall be his wife; **because he hath humbled her, he may not put her away all his days.***

That is to say, if the father permitted the marriage, the man was bound to his wife **all his days**. The seduced woman could be rebellious toward her husband, and he had no recourse but to tolerate her rebellion. However, her rebellion against *the law of the Lord* would still require capital punishment when called for.

Deuteronomy 22:28 teaches us that if the man could not control his passions before marriage, he sacrificed his authority to control his family after marriage.

If the man was a slave to his passions before marriage, then he was a slave to his wife after marriage. **If the man failed** to exercise proper authority before marriage, God gave the woman authority over him, for he could not *put her away all his life*.

We shall see that under the New Covenant, a man can properly reestablish himself in his marriage through Christ.

We would be foolish to think that an Israelite woman under the Old Covenant law did not realize the hold she could gain over a man by seducing him before marriage. Hence, the "Preacher's" many warnings in places like **Proverbs 1**. If the single man succumbed to his

passions with a woman, no matter how overt she might have been, his passions cost him at least the dowry of a virgin paid to her father (about three years pay). But far worse, he became her slave.

God made it very costly for a man to not control his passions before marriage.

We would be just as foolish to think the **enemy of all righteousness** does not realize how God's law works and thus, his effort to influence the men in society to lose authority over their own spirit. He knows what snares to use. Actually, we give too much credit to the devil, for our worst enemy is our flesh.

Scripture warns us that if a man's authority over his own spirit is compromised before marriage, his proper authority after marriage is compromised. His compromise affects his family, his society, and his nation. As we see the wicked attack biblical manhood, we see that our enemy understands how to destroy a nation from the bottom up with things like pornography.

Quoting A.W. Pink: "After all, a nation is but the aggregate of its families, and unless there be good husbands and wives, fathers and mothers, sons and daughters, there cannot possibly be good citizens. Therefore the present decay of home life and family discipline threaten the stability of our nation today far more severely than does any foreign hostility.

"But the Scriptural view of the relative duties of the members of a Christian household, portrays the prevailing effects in a most alarming manner, as being dishonoring to God, disastrous to the spiritual condition of the churches, and as raising up a most serious obstacle in the way of evangelical progress. Sad beyond words is it to see that professing Christians are themselves largely responsible for the lowering of marital standards, the general disregard of domestic relations, and the rapid disappearance of family discipline. As, then, marriage is the basis of the home or family, it is incumbent on the writer to summon his readers to a serious and prayerful consideration of the revealed will of God on this vital theme. Though we can hardly hope to arrest the awful disease which is now eating out the very vitals of our nation, yet if God is pleased to bless this article to a few individuals our labor will not be in vain." (End quote.)

That is to say, a nation is made up of families; therefore, the nation is a reflection of the families of that nation. Good citizens start in the home. Failure in the home no only dishonors God, but is disastrous to the church and her evangelization of the nations for Christ. Failure in the home results in failure in the marriage. Simply put, Christians themselves destroy the very foundation of the nation with the disappearance of family discipline. (However, saving and converting grace for men and nations is bestowed on the most wicked sinners as pleases Him.)

This "old man and his wife" are excited to see the explosive growth of the homeschool movement being forced upon the parents by the openly demonic education establishment and demonic State, *i.e.*, the **beast**. We also rejoice as we observe apostate churches driving godly "homeschoolers," and others who desire Truth, to good orthodox churches.

Led by the fathers, parents are taking their biblical responsibility to raise self-controlled children to the glory of God. We pray that God will use the godly homeschool movement to build the proper biblical foundations of the kingdom of God. How long will the apostate State allow the homeschool movement to prosper?

Psalms 11:1 *In the LORD put I my trust: how say ye to my soul, Flee as a bird to your mountain? 2 For, lo, the wicked bend their bow, they make ready their arrow upon the string, that they may privily shoot at the upright in heart. 3 **If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?***

The wicked who are conspiring to overthrow the *Lord and his Anointed* know precisely where to shoot the fiery darts. The primary target of the fiery darts are the men. **The darts** are designed to enflame their lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, and their pride of life.

When the men are compromised, the family is compromised. That compromise results in the disappearance of family discipline, and the sure destruction of the foundation of a godly social order. **That is to say**, when a man's self-control is compromised, his effectiveness in his family and in society is compromised, if not destroyed.

Furthermore, Scripture makes it clear that any effort to correct the "top" without correcting the foundation, the family, is futile. **In other words**, the enemy of all righteousness understands that failure at the foundation will cause the entire social structure to collapse.

Notice how the world is doing everything possible to destroy godly manhood and the Christian family. The idea of a Christian family is being replaced with an idea of "shacking up" and "sodomite relationships." These evil lifestyles are demanding and getting the same recognition as Christian, biblical lifestyles. Actually, the wicked are being exalted over the righteous in society and in the judicial system. It is distressing how prevalent and acceptable such wicked arrangements have become, and there is no shame on the part of the wicked, *e.g.*, "This is my fiancé," as they show off their children.

Revelation 2:14 *But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication.*

The *stumblingblock* was the offer of beautiful women to men who were controlled by the god of their belly, *i.e.*, fleshly appetites. (Philip 3:19) The result was God's severe judgment against His Covenant people.

Our text Ecclesiastes 7:26 tells of the woman who seduces the man before marriage. However, we are assured that the self-controlled, Godly man in thoughts and deeds will be delivered by God from the woman's seductive actions, but the sinner will be captured by her. (Pro 1, &c.)

The man is always held responsible and accountable though the woman may be the one making unlawful advances before marriage. If the man has Godly authority over his passions, he will remain free of her clutches. If he allows his passions to gain control, he must pay the price, and what a horrendous price to pay for a moment's pleasure. (Ask King David when we meet him with the Lord.)

The Violated, Guilty Conscience

Paul tells us that every person is created in the image of God, and thus has the basic instincts of God's law within him, *i.e.*, **the conscience**. Though the sinner knows God, he suppresses that knowledge, yet his guilty conscience will cry out against his evil deed.

[See TBE, Aug 20, “**The Destructive force of Guilt and Fear,**” and how they are being used to destroy both the church, state and nations:

www.biblicalexaminer.org/PDF/TBE%202020%2008.pdf]

Three results of guilt:

First, John 8:9 *And they which heard it, being convicted by their own conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, even unto the last: and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst. (With no witnesses against her, the law could not condemn her.)*

A violated conscience, guilt, prevents boldness in crying out against sin in others.

(A juror who is secretly guilty of the same charge against the accused will probably vote against conviction.)

Second, Proverbs 28:1 *The wicked flee when no man pursueth: but the righteous are bold as a lion.*

A violated conscience, guilt, robs even the Christian of his boldness for righteousness and justice in society.

Third, 1 Timothy 1:18 *This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy, according to the prophecies which went before on thee, that thou by them mightest war a good warfare; 19 Holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck;*

A violated conscience, guilt, prevents one from being able to carry on the *good warfare* against the world, flesh and the devil. A violated conscience over things that took place before marriage can shipwreck a marriage.

Cleansing the conscience in order to have **a proper relationship** under God with his wife,

family and society starts with the man accepting his responsibility before God. (*Be strong, and quit yourselves like men*, 1 Sam 4:9.)

If cleansing is needed, it must start by the husband humbling himself as a little child before his wife and confessing "It was my fault, not yours! I sinned against the Lord and against you, and I ask your forgiveness." (Matt 18) Repentance and confession will permit the man to gain the loving, godly control of his house, and the respect of his wife. Though he may have proper control already without confession, can he have a clear conscience?

As Pink said, "After all, a nation is but the aggregate of its families, and unless there be good husbands and wives, fathers and mothers, sons and daughters, there cannot possibly be good citizens."

The recovery of this nation for righteousness starts with humble, self-controlled men, whatever their age.

Observe:

First, through fornication before marriage, females can place guilty men under their control. An immoral relationship before marriage can place the husband under his wife's authority because of his guilty conscience; she may or may not take advantage of his guilt. Certainly, all our wives know how to direct things more to their liking, but here we see the wife exercising undue authority in various realms, *e.g.*, children, worship, occupation, &c.

Pastors commonly see this basic biblical principle of guilt at work in their congregations, though maybe not understood by the men involved.

Please note, however, that we are not saying that all marriages in which the wife exerts excessive authority are the result of the husband's ungodly actions before marriage.

The breakdown of Godly authority in the home **may have** started with the breakdown of Godly authority before marriage. The man (or woman) might have said, "Why not? We are going to be married anyway." As a result, guilt compromises the man in his Godly authority in his family, as well as in society. The cause of the breakdown of Godly authority in the home is found in the Word of God, *viz.*, the men, even Christian men, have failed to exercise proper authority over their spirit in their lives.

Second, not only is Godly authority lost in the home after marriage, Godly authority is undermined throughout society. Because the God-ordained roles of authority in the home are compromised before marriage, the woman's God-ordained role is also compromised: the woman moves into positions of authority in society never meant for her by God. Moreover, no effort short of Godly self-controlled men acting like men can reverse the wicked trend of the feminization of society.

Third, the "crime wave" started when the sinner yielded to his, or her, sinful fleshly appetites before marriage. Crime will be "brought under control" only when the men, as well as the women, of the society bring their spirit under control. It goes without saying that proper control comes only from repentance, conversion and submission to the control of the Spirit of God.

We must agree with Pink, "Sad beyond words is it to see that professing Christians are themselves largely responsible for the lowering of marital standards, the general disregard of domestic relations, and the rapid disappearance of family discipline."

MEN MUST BE MEN!

The violated conscience, which results in massive guilt over things that happened before marriage, can be devastating after marriage. In Hebrews 23:4 and 12:15, God promises judgment upon the whoremongers and adulterers. The Christian will avoid eternal judgment, but he cannot avoid the guilty conscience that condemns him for his previous actions without repentance and confession before God and man. Marriage is far more than a physical union; it is a spiritual union beyond our human understanding.

What a message for our day!

Our message is that both men and women are responsible to exercise Godly authority over their spirits at all times no matter what the circumstances, especially over their sinful passions. Therefore, proper authority in the home and society must start by men exercising Godly authority over their spirit. Additionally, those already in the compromised position after marrying their "lover," now must accept responsibility for their ungodly actions with their wives before marriage if they desire proper respect and authority in their homes and society.

Can we, according to God's word, expect a wife to submit to proper authority after marriage if her husband could not submit to proper authority before marriage? There must be repentance over ungodly actions before the wife can be expected to properly submit after marriage.

We cannot over-stress the importance of a man, no matter what kind of pressure is placed upon him by his natural passions, being responsible and pleasing God before marriage.

In closing, let us look at some assurances from God's Word:

1) confession and repentance: Matthew 5:23 *Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee;*

2) leave the past behind: Philippians 3:13 *Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended:*

but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, 14 I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

I realize the context of 3:13, but this verse will also put behind us unwise decisions that still might lay heavy on our mind.

3) with the clear conscience press ahead in our high calling in Christ Jesus: **Philippians 3:14** *I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.*

There are many things that must be left behind so we can press ahead in God's high calling for us in Christ Jesus.

4) pray that God will reveal further steps that must be taken so we can be like Him: **Philippians 3:15** *Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you.*

5) we have been washed, sanctified and justified by the blood of Jesus Christ. We **can and must now leave the past behind** and move forward in fulling His calling to expanding His Kingdom with the boldness of a lion:

1 Corinthians 6:11 *And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.*

Conclusion:

Men, we must *Be strong, and quit yourselves like men,* and with a conscience void of offense toward man and toward God move ahead with boldness and confidence and press for the victory promised through Jesus Christ against the very gates of hell.