

"THE SHIP OF MATRIMONY"

Married . . . "only in the Lord." I Cor. 7:3

I. Should Have a Good Launching

1. Not a runaway or secret marriage.

A. "In the presence of these witnesses"

B. When William Jennings Bryan went to call on the father of his prospective wife and seek the hand of his daughter in marriage he knew the father's strong religious feeling and thought he would strengthen his case by a quotation from the Bible; so he quoted the proverb of Solomon:

"Whoso findeth a wife findeth a good thing. But to his surprise the father replied with a citation from Paul to the effect that ~~her~~ that marrieth doeth well, but he that marrieth ^{not} doeth better. The young suiter was for a moment confounded. Then with a happy inspiration he replied that Paul had no wife, and Solomon had 700, and Solomon, therefore, ought to be the better judge as to marriage!

2. Not an unequal marriage

A. II Cor. 6:14

B. Mark Twain and Olivia Langdon's marriage an illustration of how unbelief in a husband affects a believing wife.

"Livy, if it comforts you to lean on the Christian faith, do so." --

"I can't, Youth; I haven't any."

C. Clarence E. Macartney's 5 dents for mar.

(1) Don't marry a woman who does not pray.

(2) Don't marry a bad-tempered or jealous woman.

(3) Don't marry a woman who loves the moving pictures and the matinee more than the home.

(4) Don't marry a woman who drinks. It is bad enough when a woman marries a man who drinks, infinitely worse when a man marries a woman who drinks.

(5) Unless you have plenty of money, or she has plenty of money, so that you can employ someone to do it for you, Don't marry a woman who cannot cook or cannot learn to cook.

To the young woman:

- (1) Don't marry an unbeliever.
- (2) Don't marry a man of bad habits.
- (3) Don't marry a coffin man, that is, a man with room for himself and no one else.
- (4) Don't marry a peacock man, a conceited man.
- (5) Don't marry a man of low moral standard.

II. Must Avoid the Rocks to have Smooth Sailing.

1. What are the rocks? Here are in order the ten ranking sources of family quarrels in the U.S. as discovered by the most recent survey of the American Institute of Public Opinion:

- (1) Money matters
- (2) Difficulties about raising children
- (3) Drinking
- (4) Other women, other men
- (5) In-laws and relatives
- (6) Staying out late.
- (7) Trivial things
- (8) Leisure time.
- (9) Selfishness.
- (10) Religion, lack of faith.

2. How to avoid them.

- A. Unselfishness and consideration
- B. Constant remembrance and keeping of wedding vows.
- C. Christian faith and practice.

III. Can Look Forward to a Peaceful Harbor.

1. In this life, -- "a happy home is as near to heaven as we ever come in this world."
2. In the life to come, ill. of the yacht cruising among the Western Islands of Scotland, owner said, "Did we--pass there in the darkness?"

The Unseen Love which guides us.

"He leads us on

By paths we do not know.

Upwards he leads us, though our steps are slow

Though oft we faint and falter on the way

Though storms and darkness oft obscure the day

Yet, when the clouds are gone,

We know he leads us on."

Conclusion:

Marriage is the figure of the relationship between Christ and His Church.

1. Based on sacrificial love. -- story of the little boy, the bird, and his mother.
"Yes, but I love you a great deal more. I could not really love anything that gave you pain." (Webb, #697)

2. Based on love that cannot be degraded. Story of how they tried to ruin little Prince Louis, and he would clench his fists and shake his curly head and stamp his feet and cry, "I will not do it! I dare not do it! I was born to be a king, and I will not defile myself!"

3. Based on the grace of Christ alone:
'Twas not the church that saved my soul
nor yet my life so free from sin;
'Twas Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God,
He rescued me, He took me in.

'Twas not my works that saved my soul,
Nor yet my zeal, my prayers, my tears;
'Twas Jesus Christ, the Son of God,
He bore my sins, He calmed my fears.

'Twas not the law that saved my soul,
Nor yet the deeds of virtue done;
'Twas Jesus Christ, the Gift of God,
He bled, He died, my soul He won!"

--Oswald J. Smith