

HUSBANDS AND WIVES

"He who finds a wife finds a good thing, and obtains favor from the Lord." (18:22)

INTRODUCTION—Godly homes don't just happen. They are the fruit of much toil and labor. They are built by the strong hands of both men and women who follow after the wisdom of God (24:3-4; cf. Psalm 127:1). Such homes are a blessing and are reinforced by God.

The most intimate human relationship in the home—or the world—is with one's spouse. The stability of that relationship is more important than anything they possess (15:17; 17:1). Its success is based on the partnership between the two (cf. Luke 11:17).

I. HUSBANDS

- A. Good Husbands are Rare (20:6). As many negative things as are said about women in Proverbs, the men may think they are naturally superior as husbands. Not hardly!
- B. His Greatest Treasure (18:22; 19:14). She is his blessing from a gracious God. She enhances his position, brings out the best in him, and brings him honor and dignity (31:10-12,23).
- C. Troublesome Husbands (11:29; 27:8). Such irresponsibility in the family breeds separation and emptiness for him.
- D. Faithfulness (5:18). The warnings against sexual sins are addressed almost entirely to the men in Proverbs. Why?
 - 1. Beware of the Harlot (5:1-6; 7:24-27). Like a leech she will suck all his livelihood and vitality from him, leaving him empty (5:9-11). Then too, he must face the punishment for his sin (5:14,21-23).
 - 2. Share Love with Your Wife (5:15-20). That is the only sure way of happiness and fulfillment.

II. WIVES

- A. Power to Stabilize or Destroy Home (14:1). A wife will manage and establish a home or bring it crumbling down. The home teeters on her character—she will either balance and support it through her wisdom or bring it crashing down through irresponsibility and folly (cf. 1 Timothy 5:14).
- B. Makes or Breaks her Husband (12:4). She will either bring out the best in him and assure him of honor and dignity (31:23) or through her shameful behavior bring disgrace to him and continually gnaw away at him and waste him like a consuming bone disease (cf. 11:22).
- C. Contentious (19:13; 27:15-16). A wife always at conflict with her husband, nagging and restless is a torturous irritation—like constantly dripping water. She cannot be quieted and it is useless to even try.
 - 1. A man's only relief from her is separation—whether sleeping on the couch, in another room, or as far away as he can get (21:9,19; 25:24).
- D. The Worthy Woman (31:10-31). She is rare and priceless, a blessing to her family and deserving of their praise (31:28-31).

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS—

- 1) *Is a successful home a partnership or dictatorship?*

- 2) *What is more valuable than a peaceable home (15:17; 17:1)?*
- 3) *Are good husbands about as rare as good wives (20:6; 31:10)?*
- 4) *How is a man's wife his greatest treasure?*
- 5) *Why do you suppose the instructions about sexual sins are addressed solely to the men?*
- 6) *How beautiful can love be between a husband and wife (5:15-20)?*
- 7) *What power does a wife hold in the home (14:1)?*
- 8) *Why does a wife have such a tremendous positive or negative effect on her husband?*
- 9) *What is the effect of a continual dripping of water (19:13)? What is the similar problem with a continuous dripping on a rainy day and a contentious woman (27:15)? Will there be peace in such a home?*
- 10) *Is the description of the worthy woman (31:10-31) just a man's conception of his dream girl or a real and obtainable description of a godly woman?*