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## *The Home—Husbands and Wives*

#0436

Study Given by W. D. Frazee

Turn please to Matthew 7—The closing words of Jesus' Sermon on the Mount. I have a great desire that every home represented here tonight shall be a home that survives the wreck of a world. We all know that divorce courts are working overtime these days. And for every married couple that seek the courts, there are others who, because of any one of a number of reasons, don't go that far, but there's really a separation in heart. To state it the other way around, and I'm quoting inspiration now: "There is not one marriage in one hundred that results happily. Not a very good batting average, is it?"

You would think that men and women would want to learn a system that produces better results. So our text tonight tells us how to be successful in homebuilding. We will listen to the words of Christ, and as we listen, pray that the Holy Spirit will be our teacher, and what a wonderful teacher He is.

"Therefore whosoever hears these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock..."

Here's successful home building

"...the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock. And every one that hears these sayings of Mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it" Matthew 7:24-27.

One of these two pictures represents your home. Which will it be? Oh, I'm so glad that we may choose.

Now, a large section of the audience is composed of those who have already chosen their life partners. If I were speaking to young people in their teens and 20s before marriage, there are some things I would spend more time on tonight, than I will. However, for the unmarried, there will be plenty to think about in the study tonight. But I shall tell you frankly that my main message tonight is to those who already have their life partners. If I present an ideal which seems far above you, remember I'm only presenting the words of God. I want to assure you at the outset that by God's grace, you can reach the ideal. Keep that in mind all the way through.

This is what I love about the plan of salvation; it is a constant adaptation and application of the ideal to the real, the practical. And no matter how many failures you may have made in your home life, your home experience, you can come off victorious in the home stretch of the race. I don't care whether you're in your 20s or 30s or 40s or 60s, or anywhere up beyond that. No matter what problem you're in tonight, my dear friends, 40 years in the ministry of Christ has taught me that there are not very many really happy homes. There're plenty of people who can put on a good front as they walk down the street. They may even come in the church arm in arm. But God only knows the problems that they have in their inner life. And this is because the marriage union offers the greatest opportunity in the universe for the manifestation of love or selfishness. Whichever one predominates is going to come out.

You can hide some things from people you only see once a week. The world has an expression of letting one's hair down. Well, it comes down All right inside the home, doesn't it? But when the great Creator planned the first marriage and conducted the first wedding, He planned that this should be the crowning blessing of His creation. This was the last thing He did on the sixth day of creation week. This was the keystone, the capstone of the work of creation: the home, marriage. And, like all the rest of His creation, He pronounced it very good.

If we do what our text says, and build upon the Rock, we can have homes that survive the shock, survive the storm, survive the earthquake, survive every devastating influence that may be brought to bear against the home. Your home can be successful.

Now, how to be; Jesus lists two things here—that's all there is to it. The first is to listen to what He says, and the second is to do it. Obviously, the reason for listening is in order to do it. How foolish would a man be to pay an architect for a set of blueprints and then never look at them? Just go ahead and build without them. How foolish on the other hand, to spend days and weeks and months pouring over the blueprint then never put them into a building. Theory and practice, study and action, these must be combined if we're to have successful homes.

There are a few successful homes in this world. Even in this Godless, immoral, unsatisfied, restless, rebellious 20<sup>th</sup> century, there are some successful homes. They are the ones whose members follow the sayings of Jesus Christ.

Last night I studied with you the relationships between parents and children. We showed that the two great principles are law and love: Love prompting the directives on the part of the parents, and love inspiring the response of obedience on the part of the children. But behind and underneath, successful relationships between parents and children is a meaningful relationship between husband and wife. This is the heart of the successful home. This is its beginning and the kernel of it all the way through.

May I say again, seeking to be practical? Where, because of death, father or mother must tackle the job alone, or where because of supreme selfishness on the part of one member or the other, there is lack of unity, in any case, my friends, if there is only one member of the team that is willing to work with God, God can still do some things—don't forget that. It's an easy thing for husband or wife, as the case

may be, to alibi out; to say, “Oh, well, I’d like to have a Christian home, I’d like to have a successful home, but...” And of course, following the “but” is the description of the failures of the companion.

My dear friend, do not for one moment take that view. Do not waste any time in that direction. While I speak to husbands and wives collectively tonight, I would like to speak to each of you individually. You can do something about making your home a successful home. Don’t wait for someone else. Don’t wait for the other party. Make the move. You can do it. We’re going to study tonight how to have a happy, successful home.

As I mentioned, the two great principles that underlie relationships between parents and children, these two great principles underlie the relationships between husband and wife. They are law and love. You can’t get along without either one. If you try to run a home without rules, without order, you will have the absence of order, which is chaos. And that’s not Heaven on earth. It’s more like the other place. But all the order in the world, all the organization in the world, all the rules in the world will not solve a thing. The home in God’s plan is particularly, and especially the place of love.

Let’s turn to Matthew 19 and see how the Savior outlines the plan for the successful home:

“...He answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that He which made them at the beginning made them male and female, And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder” Matthew 19:4–6.

I wonder why Jesus put that last point in. I’ll tell you why. Every devil in hell, and he has too many men and women in the world helping him, working with their satanic majesty, is trying to break up homes. I hope you’ll never be guilty of lending a hand to this work. May I put in right here this thought? When you lend a sympathetic ear to the complaints of the husband against his wife or the wife against her husband, you are helping the Devil break up homes. And you can be just as sanctimonious as you wish, but that’s the business that you’re in.

We need to be helping and encouraging people to find the solution to their problems in counsel with God and each other instead of pedaling their family secrets all over the country. May I read a comment on this, from the book *Ministry of Healing*? This handbook on survival that I was mentioning last night.

“Around every family there is a sacred circle that should be kept unbroken. Within this circle no other person has a right to come. Let not the husband or the wife permit another to share the confidences that belong solely to themselves” *Ministry of Healing*, page 361.

There are some people here tonight probably that if they would get this one paragraph and put it into practice, it'll do them more good than all the rest of the study put together. The Holy Spirit will have to tell you whether you're the one that needs this or not. But this is part of the solid rock on which to build a successful home.

It has become fashionable today, to seek out marriage counselors of all stripes and kinds—religious, scientific, and otherwise. But I want to tell you something my friends, and I'm not ruling out the fact that sometimes people need counsel, but first let me tell you two things. Jesus knows more about how to solve your problems than any man or woman in this world. And if husband and wife will get down upon their knees together, together mind you, and pray together over their problems with no third party around, if they will frankly look at their problems at the feet of Jesus, nine times out of ten they can get help without any third party ever knowing anything about their problems.

The second thing I want to tell you on that point is this: If after they have tried the best they know to pray and study through their problems, they still recognize that they have a problem they haven't been able to solve, if husband and wife together will seek counsel, and will seek that counsel together, they will save many a heartache.

May I say right here, dear husband, each one of you men personally, if your wife feels that it would be helpful if the two of you would seek some good, responsible counsel, wouldn't you be willing to go, even if *you* didn't think it was necessary, if she thinks it's necessary? Wouldn't you be willing for her dear sake to go together—the two of you and get some counsel? Likewise, the wives.

But first, don't forget what I said first. If the two of you again, and again, will kneel at the feet of Jesus, the two of you alone, no other person, not when the children are around, when they've gone to bed, sometime when the two of you can be alone.

I had an experience a few years ago that impressed me very much. I was talking with a young person grown. And this young person told me that the two children in that family agreed that they never had in all their lives, during the more than 20 years that they'd been growing up, they had never witnessed the father and mother disagree in the presence of those two children. Isn't that a wonderful record? How about it parents, can your children witness to that? That is the ideal.

That doesn't mean that husbands and wives won't have problems. But there is a way to deal with those problems.

There are things that have to be done in life. I had an operation once, but I didn't have it out in the street.

Adventist Home:

"Parents are to work together as a unit. There must be no division. But many parents work at cross-purposes..."

Children are quick to discern anything that will cast a reflection upon the rules and regulations of a household”  
*Adventist Home*, page 312.

How is it, mothers? Do your children think that you love them better than daddy does because you’ll give into them? What a shame. It’s a wonderful testimony when a child can truly say, “I know that whatever father or mother says, the other one agrees.”

Of course, this means that sometimes one parent has to defer an answer until there’s an opportunity for consultation. When our little girl was growing up, she came to know as a matter of routine that if she asked one of us about something she might get an answer like this, “Well mother and I’ll have a conference,” or “Daddy and I will have a conference, then we’ll see.” She expected that, no problem about it. I recommend it to you.

Never disagree in front of the children. Never disagree in front of the neighbors or anybody else. Take your problems to the Lord.

You say, “But suppose we don’t know the Lord?” Then I invite you to get acquainted with Him. Because I’ll be honest with you, I don’t know any way that a home can survive today without Jesus in the home. Love and law are the basis of a successful home. Jesus is the living law, and He is love. You cannot get true love, lasting love, eternal love without Him.

“He that loves not knows not God; for God is love”  
1 John 4:8.

If there’s a man or woman here tonight who does not know God, may I invite you, friend, even if you care nothing about yourself for the sake of your home, why not let God come into your heart and make the home a successful, happy home? Some of you who’ve experienced it will agree with me. There is nothing this side of Heaven that is so heavenly as a truly united home where husband and wife love each other truly. May I tell you, love is not selfishness, and selfishness is not love?

A friend of mine gave me a picture, they knew I was teaching a class in the home and preparation for marriage, they thought I might be interested in this picture, and I was.

In this picture, the artist was picturing a couple at the marriage altar. The bishop was there all decked out as Bishops are supposed to be at a wedding, and the bride and the groom. But in each corner of the picture, the artist put the dream on this side of the groom, and this side of the bride.

In this picture, the groom’s dream was this: he was in bed in the morning, and his wife was bringing him breakfast in bed. And oh, it was fixed out so nicely with the morning paper on the tray, and a flower. It was just a nice breakfast. This was all while they were standing at the marriage altar, you understand—this was a dream.

Over In the other corner was the dream of the bride. You know what she was dreaming, don't you? She was getting breakfast in bed. Her young husband was bringing the tray with a great smile and a bouquet.

Now, as artists sometimes do, perhaps this was a bit exaggerated. But too many marriages begin with something at least second cousin to that. Do you know what I mean? Too many people are getting married so they can be waited on and they can be happy.

"Well," you say, "Why not? Why shouldn't I get married to be happy?" I'll tell you this friend, if you get married basically to be happy, it'll be a wonder if you even get to first base. To make a home run is impossible.

You say, "What's it for then?"

The purpose of marriage is to understand and reveal the love of God; that's the purpose of marriage. Turn over to the book of Ephesians, and we will read the divine picture. I hope nobody is going to feel offended when you hear these verses read. I'm just reading what's in the Bible; it's been here for 2,000 I'm just going to read it just like it is:

"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 loves his wife loves himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourishes and cherishes it, even as the Lord the church: For we are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church" Ephesians 5:22-32.

Yes friends, this is the greatest mystery of life, the mystery of love. There are millions of people who are mated but not matched, who are married and never know this mysterious union that is spoken of here. It is the union of love, divine love expressed through human hearts.

The reason that I said some people might feel offended if I read this is that Paul starts out here with the expression, "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands." That's not very popular today. That's very old-fashioned. In fact, it's so old-fashioned that some people think that it belongs to the Dark Ages. Well, it's farther back than that. It goes clear back to the Garden of Eden. When God made

Adam and Eve and placed them in that beautiful garden, He put them on full equality, as you know... But when sin entered, it was necessary that there should be a headship established in order for there to be a successful home. I simply refer to the Bible record that the Lord gave that job to the husband.

This doesn't mean that he's to be a dictator. It doesn't mean that he's to be a boss. It means that he is to be a leader. And if you have never done this, you just might try this experiment: Pick out the successful marriages that you know about and see if you do not find that in almost every case, in that successful marriage there is a wife who looks up to and respects the husband to whom she's married, am I right? You know I am. This is a very important ingredient if we are to be survivors as married couples in this wreck of a world.

"Ah," but says one suffering wife, "I wish I had a husband that I could look up to and respect."

That's a very practical problem in some cases, and I do not overlook it. I refer you to what I said at the beginning of this study. If the two of you will seek the Lord in prayer together, God can solve every problem in your home. But you will not solve the problem by rebelling. You will not solve the problem by tossing in the wastebasket the divine plan. You will not solve the problem by substituting your human reason and judgment for the divine will.

You will notice that this same Scripture that speaks about the wife respecting her husband's leadership lays a great deal of emphasis on the husband doing what in the home? What's the verb that's used there? Look at it, what does it say the husband is to do? Love.

Let me tell you something. If Jesus is in the home, and the husband will love his wife, it will be a lot easier for the wife to respond with respect and cooperation. This is a two-way street. It needs both parties for full success.

But don't also forget what I said, if you're the only one in the home that knows God and loves Him, do your best to carry out your part of the partnership. And it's amazing how, as you add, God will multiply.

But now come back to this expression here: "For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery." There are probably human beings who would say, "I don't see anything so very mysterious about it. It happens all the time. A man and woman get acquainted. They finally decide they want to be married; they are married; they set up housekeeping; they begin to live together. They begin to enter into the physical union that marriage provides for. I don't see anything so very mysterious about it. It happens all the time."

The mystery is not the physical union. Animals engage in that all the time. And millions of men and women who act like animals. The physical union of marriage was designed by God to represent and express a great spiritual union of two lives. But this can never be unless there is unselfish love. I know of nothing in all human experience where love on the one hand or selfishness on the other will manifest itself as much as

in the home; in the marriage union itself. Millions of people who are engaging in this physical union from time to time know nothing of the mystery that Scripture is speaking of here. They go through that physical experience just as they might eat their three meals a day, but they do not understand this mystery of love.

I can only express to you tonight this thought. There is something beyond what most people are experiencing. There is something beyond the mere fulfillment of physical desires. There is the possibility of a husband and wife joined in a union of which the physical is both the symbol and expression in which heart blends with heart and soul with soul. But this takes prayer, and this takes study. May I tell you, because of the education that most people have received in the street, in the alley, as they grow up with young companions, learning this little piece of information, and that one about physical relations between men and woman; very few people have high and holy concepts of the physical union of marriage. As the result, they are not able to experience Heaven on earth in these relationships.

May I read you something here which presents a most beautiful picture and a great challenge in *Volume 5* of the Testimonies? To me, it's one of the most beautiful statements in all the inspired writings. Listen carefully while I read:

“Only where Christ reigns can there be deep, true, unselfish love. Then soul will be knit with soul, and the two lives will blend in harmony. Angels of God will be guests in the home, and their holy vigils will hallow the marriage chamber. Debasing sensuality will be banished. Upward to God will the thoughts be directed; to Him will the heart's devotion ascend” *Testimonies for the Church, Volume 5*, page 362.

Isn't that a beautiful picture, friend? Ah yes, when people are married and whether they've been married for a year or 50 years, it's a wonderful thing when the door is closed to every other human being, and husband and wife are alone together, and yet not alone. “Angels of God will be guests in the home, and their holy vigils will hallow the marriage chamber.” If this thought seems a bit strange, may I suggest getting used to it? If what you do dear husbands and wives when you're alone in the marriage chamber is such that to witness an angel present would somehow seem out of place, then one of 2 things is so: either what you're doing is out of place, or your concepts are out of place. Believe me, I'm touching at something very practical and very real.

Marriage, and this intimate physical relation of marriage, the union of the husband and wife, God intended to be entered into only in the spirit of love. God intended that every child born should be the fruit of love. This is His plan for the home. This is why He made marriage. This is why He gave men and women this wonderful gift in which we share with the Creator in the continuance of the race.

But this great gift is not merely that children may be born. It is that husband and wife may be joined into an intimate union in which they know each other. Do you remember how the Bible speaks of this physical union; over there in the fourth chapter of Genesis? The Scripture states in a simple, matter of fact way,



“And Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain...” Genesis 4:1.

Why is that verb “knew” used there? Ah, my friends, there’s a deep reason for it. God intends that a man and a woman shall know each other in marriage as they can never know each other in any other relationship. And believe me, there is nothing in which your real self is exhibited more than in this intimate union in marriage. If there is love there, it will be manifest in courtesy, politeness, consideration, the desire to please the other rather than selfishly wanting your own way. But if selfishness is there, it can be manifest in lust that permits no restraint, and no consideration of the other party.

May I speak especially to men? Husbands, may I suggest that you study very carefully the chapter in *Volume 2* entitled "An Appeal to the Church"? Read there page after page the inspired description of the wrong practices in many homes. Read the earnest exhortations to deep love in these matters, unselfish love, pure love.

I suppose that what I have said is plain enough. But I do not need to say the next thing, but I find by the experience of many years that there is no subject that people are more capable of misunderstanding than the subject I’m studying with you tonight. Unless any un-listening person should carry away some foolish and untrue report, may I say very plainly, there is nothing in what I have studied with you from the Book of God tonight, which suggests that the marriage relations should not be entered into between the husband and wife? On the contrary, I have shown you from Jesus’ statement in Matthew 19, and Paul’s statement in Ephesians 5, that this physical union of husband and wife is the expression of love, and a token and symbol of the love between Jesus and His church.

Why would Christ take this physical union of marriage and use it in this exalted way unless in His mind, it was an exalted function and an exalted experience? And if human experience today is so much the other way, I’ll tell you what is the matter. We have been listening too much and looking too much to the ways of Babylon, and not enough to the counsels of God.

If we quit all this silly sentimental stuff that comes from the world, this romantic idea and also the filth and lewdness of the world, and also my friends a lot of this so-called scientific information; if we will come to the Bible and the *Testimonies*, and build our homes on the saying of Jesus, we can have homes that survive.

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W. D. Frazee Sermons  
435 Lifestyle Lane, Wildwood, GA 30757  
1-800-WDF-1840 / 706-820-9755  
[www.WDFsermons.org](http://www.WDFsermons.org)  
[support@WDFsermons.org](mailto:support@WDFsermons.org)