

A LITTLE HOME.

Give me, Oh Lord, a little home to be,
A happy place for one I love and me;
A place where we can shut the door and find.
Comfort and peace for body and for mind.

A little home that does not know the sound,
Of angry tiffs, where sulking is not found,
But loving words, a whistle and a song,
To help each other if the day goes wrong.

A little home, where generous words can give,
Each to the other space to grow and live,
Where each is quick to help and understand,
Where trust and comradeship go hand in hand.

A little home, in which all else above,
There is the beauty, and the joy of love,
A little home where thought and deed and word,
Are consecrated to thy service, Lord.

This enlightening and lovely poem was written by:-

Beatrice Gibbs.

MARRIAGE AND DIVORCE.

INTRODUCTION.

The lovely poem by Beatrice Gibbs, beautifully expresses many of the desires and aims of Christian marriage. This Divine design and purpose is not an unattainable goal, or an impossible dream; through the grace of God, many Christian couples have experienced the beauty and friendship expressed in this poem. One of John Wesley's leading preachers stated that he doubted if there was a home in England that had so much joy and laughter in it as his home. The Devil is the author of the lie that the atmosphere of a Christian home should be dour, exacting, austere and forbidding. Jesus came to give us His full joy, and abundant life, and the beauty, affection and joy of love in our homes. In Jn.15v11., Jesus said, "These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full." Jesus also prayed in Jn.17v13., "And now come I to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves." Jn.16v24.. In Jn.10v10., Jesus said, "The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it more abundantly."

Jesus comes to give us His full joy in our marriage relationships, Satan and his thieves come to rob marriages of their joy and friendship. The alarming increase in divorce, even among Christians, and the distress that this causes, is of great concern to those who lead in Christian work. It is reported that 75% of the marriages of people who have been divorced in their first marriage, fail again in their second marriage, the hardness of heart that caused the failure in the first marriage appears to have been carried over into their second marriage. The standard of divorce for trivialities, that has caused disaster for families in the world, has infected the Christian community, and there is a great need for Christians to learn and live by the Biblical truths about marriage. I pray that this book will help those who read it, to achieve this. W. H. Turner. October 6th. 2000.

CONTENTS.

1. MARRIAGE IS DESIGNED AND ORDAINED BY GOD. Page 3.

2. SUBMISSION IS FOR THE HUSBAND AS WELL AS THE WIFE. Page 5.

3. THE TRIALS AND TEMPTATIONS OF MARRIAGE. Page 12.

4. LOVE, LOVE AND THE GIFTS, AND HOME LIFE. 1Cor.13. Page 17.

5. THE CAUSES OF BREAKDOWN IN MARRIAGE. Page 22.

6. DIVORCE AND REMARRIAGE. Page 29.

7. THE ABOUNDING HARVEST OF THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT. Page 38.

APPENDIX 1. IN GEN.3V16. GOD DID NOT CURSE WOMEN. Page 55.

APPENDIX 2. POLYGAMY. Page 60.

1. MARRIAGE IS DESIGNED AND ORDAINED BY GOD.

The high value and estimation that God puts upon marriage, can be seen by the fact that God likens the joy of the inauguration fellowship meal of the saints with their Lord in the kingdom of God, to a marriage supper, and so in Rev.19v6-9., we read of, "The marriage supper of the Lamb."

1. God, and God alone is the Creator, and He ordained the creation of men and women, and marriage.

a) As one scientist has said, the theory of evolution is nine tenths imagination and one tenth bad science, in other words it is a wilful collection of twisted facts, fables and lies. It is a scientific fact that the odds against the accidental formation of life are trillions to one against; scientists cannot form life, even when they exclude chance in perfect laboratory conditions, with all the necessary chemicals and equipment. The creation of life needs a far greater mind and ability than that of man, as Paul declares, the phenomenal and amazing interrelated complexity of creation, clearly witness to the eternal power and deity of the Godhead, and leave men without any excuse. Rom.1v18-20. Darwin confessed, that it was a pity that his beautiful theory of evolution was proved untrue by the facts of fossil evidence. Another leading exponent of the evolutionary theory has stated, "We have no fossils to prove evolution, we just find it incredible to believe in God." He admitted that he believed in a lie rather than face the truth that there is a God. Innumerable facts prove the truth that there is a Creator God, and that evolutionists have twisted the facts and evidence, and wilfully held down the truth about creation. The origin of Creation and the sexes can never be explained by the theory of evolution, it contains countless contradictions and impossibilities. It is impossible for creatures to change at one leap from being an egg laying creature, to being a mammal that gives birth to fully developed babies; yet the supposed evolutionary tree propounded by evolutionists makes this false conclusion inevitable. Everyone knows that it is quite impossible for a woman to reverse this process, and become an egg laying mother by an act of her will, yet this kind of theory is applied to dumb animals. No one believes that if we stand long enough flapping our arms that we will grow wings, those foolish enough to try this, would be confined in the nearest mental hospital.

b) Men and women are a direct creation of God, and this alone can explain origin of the sexes, and the creative abilities of the human mind and personality, and the reality of mankind's spiritual and religious nature. The phenomenally complicated structure of the human body demands an intelligent Creator. No computer can match the electronic brilliance and capability of the human brain, eye and nervous system, or the complicated biochemical machinery, and efficient muscle structure and joints of a human being. No one believes the considerably less complicated man-made computer has evolved from a random mixture of chemicals, everyone knows that it has taken an intelligent mind to create it. The miracle of reproduction and birth, the incredible complexity of the body's biological chemistry, and the DNA structure and genes, are the product of a far greater mind than that of man, for men are still finding great difficulty in understanding its complexity. The amazing fact of the human body's defence mechanisms against infection by bacteria and virus, and the self-healing capability of the human body, is a proof of Divine design and creation, this could not have evolved, or mankind would certainly have been extinct before the immune system was perfected. We have joints that renew themselves, and which are much longer lasting than the stainless steel joints made by men. Men are light years away from making a computer that can mend and reproduce itself, and has a life span of up to 100 years, and can produce its own electricity and energy, and sustain and repair itself by eating and digesting organic material. No computers can compete with the amazing adaptability of a human being in many different environments, in water, in great heat, in Arctic temperatures, in mountaineering and multitudes of other tasks. Computerised robots that can do the amazing variety of things that a human being can do, are in the realm of science fiction. Such amazing biological computerisation, chemical machinery, and brilliant structural design, demand an intelligent and loving Creator.

2. Eve was God's perfect gift to Adam, and much more than Adam expected.

The animal creation could not provide a companion for Adam, Eve was God's gift of a perfect "help meet." Gen.2v18-20. The word "help meet" occurs 21 times in the Old Testament; **it implies superior help not an inferior help.** Eve was much more than Adam expected. Eph.3v20. 5v25-32. and 2Cor.11v2. In Isaiah.30v5. Ezek.12v14. and Dan.11v34., the word "help," is used of human help, but in every other case where this word is used it speaks of God's help, as in Psalm.121v2., "My help cometh from the Lord."

The expression "help meet" or "help mate," does not adequately convey the meaning of the original Hebrew, for the word "meet" is a preposition, and the famous Hebrew scholar Gesenius, probably the greatest Hebrew authority, defines this preposition as often implying, "As things which are before us, and in the sight of which we delight, are objects of our care and affections, hence Is.49v16., "Thy walls are before me," they have a place in my care and affections." End of Gesenius quote.

With this preposition "before," or "over against," is coupled the adverb "as," - the whole meaning, then, is "as before him." The "over against him," or "as before him," shows that Eve comes to complement the deficiencies of man, to meet his needs. A wife is one who supplements and complements her husband's needs and deficiencies. God meant "help meet" to convey that a wife should be a person who is before us, and in the sight of whom we delight, an object of our care and affections.

3. Sexuality is very good, and a gift from God.

a) God tells us that the creation was "good," and the human creation was "very good." Gen.1v31.

However, it was not good for Adam to be alone, Hebrew, "In his separation." Gen.2v18. Something we need to remember. In Gen.2, God uses a totally different word from "created," He uses the word "formed." Adam and Eve were created and FORMED by God. See 1Tim.2v13., Adam was first formed then Eve.

God did not make any mistakes when he ordained sex, He said it is very good. The light was good. Gen.1v4. The land and sea were good. Gen.1v10 The vegetable creation was good. Gen.1v12. The sun and moon were good. Gen.1v18. The fish and birds were good. Gen.1v21. The beasts of the earth and creeping things were good. Gen.1v25. The making of man and woman made the overall picture of creation very good. Gen.1v31.

b) The Scriptures state that sexual intercourse is not defiling.

We read in Heb.13v4., that, "Marriage is honourable in all **and the bed undefiled**, but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge." "Undefiled," "amiantos," is from the negative "a," and "maino" to defile., it speaks of that which has nothing in it that defiles, it is used to describe Jesus, our Great High Priest, and our undefiled home in heaven. Heb.7v26. 1Pet.1v4. We read in James.1v27., that "undefiled and pure religion consists of visiting the fatherless and widows in their afflictions and keeping oneself unspotted from the world." Sexual perversion is defiling, but correct use of sex is spiritually uplifting, and is a defence against the powers of darkness. This is one reason why occultists forbid to marry, as well as forbid to eat meat. 1Tim4v1-3.

c) Sexual intercourse is to be enjoyed as a gift from God.

Sexual intercourse is given, as the marriage service states, for the "mutual comfort of one with the other," and not solely for the procreation of children. Augustine said you had to think of the child and not enjoy sex. What complete nonsense! Augustine and other theologians have foolishly said that sexual intercourse is always defiling, because there is passion in it. We read in Prov.5v18., that husbands are to rejoice with the wife of their youth, and the context shows that this is referring to sexual intercourse. Prov.5v15-21. Augustine's view of sex was neither healthy or Scriptural, his viewpoint was influenced and polluted by the considerable immorality that

he indulged in before he became a Christian, and the false doctrines that he believed in his pre-Christian life, some of which are revealed in his book, "The Confessions of St. Augustine." Sex is not, as one lady said, "Something to do when God is not looking." You can be as spiritual in love-making as in the prayer meeting, or Bible study, and be filled with praise and prayer for the gift of human love and companionship. However, God's design and objectives for marriage go much further than sexual intercourse, He desires marriage to consist of a companionship, mutual sharing, compassionate concern, and "agape" love, that can be a veritable foretaste of heaven.

4. The Devil's attack on, and disruption of the first marriage, and God's reaction.

a) Satan slanders God's restrictions on Adam and Eve, and offers a false freedom and experience.

This is one of his usual ploys. Satan still attacks today with the words "HATH GOD SAID?" and proposes another way, but it ends in sorrow, pain, death and eternal judgement. Gen.3v1.

b) Satan attacks Eve while she is alone, and completely deceives her.

In 1Tim.2v14., "deceived," is "exapatetheisa," the aorist passive participle of "exapatao," "to deceive completely." Adam was not deceived, "epatethe," the aorist passive indicative of "apatao," to deceive, to trick, to mislead, he sinned with his eyes open. There was some excuse for Eve, but none for Adam. In 2Cor.11v3., Paul warns the Corinthians, "But I fear; lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety ("panourgia," craftiness), so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ." "Beguiled," is "exepatesen," the aorist indicative active of "exapatao," the preposition "ex" is perfective, and makes the verb mean "to completely deceive." "Simplicity," is "aplotetos," which can mean sincerity as well as simplicity. The Majority Text adds, "and the purity," "kai tes agnotetus." Paul warns the Corinthians that Satan is still busy in corrupting the minds and homes of believers. Satan's false preachers and fake apostles, still transform themselves into the apostles of Christ, and servants of righteousness, like Satan himself, who comes to deceive as an angel of light. 2Cor.11v13,14. God allowed Satan's temptation of Adam and Eve, and our temptations, because victory over temptation produces purity and a hatred of evil, and the reward of a crown of life to those who overcome it. James.1v12-17. 1Pet.1v4-7. Temptation is unavoidable, it is a natural result of having a free will, Satan chose evil in Heaven in God's pure and holy presence, with no evil present to tempt him, it was his own desire that led him astray.

N. B. How God dealt with the first family problem.

1. God did not come storming in with anger, He gently offered his presence. The Lord God walked and spoke in the garden in the cool of the day, but they were feeling full of guilt and went and hid themselves. Gen.3v8. God gently calls to Adam, "Where art thou?" There was no confrontation, and no accusations. Gen.3v9.

2. Adam said, "I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked and I hid myself." Gen.3v10. Sin keeps us from fellowship with God and with Christians. 1Jn.1v3 to 2v2. Don't imitate them and hide away, go to God and confess.

3. God tries to draw a confession out of Adam, "Who told thee that thou was naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree that I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat?" This was not an angry accusation, it was a gentle inquiry to promote confession and repentance. Gen.3v11.

4. Adam blames Eve and God. "The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree and I did eat." Gen.3v12. Adam did not repent, he said that God's gift, Eve, was really to blame. Eve blames the serpent, "The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat." Gen.3v13.

5. God curses the serpent, and promises that Jesus would bruise the serpent's head. God said that He would put enmity between Satan and women. Women have always been an enemy of Satan, and Satan her bitterest enemy, not only because of her spiritual qualities, but because her seed, Jesus, would bruise Satan's head, and destroy Satan and his evil works and power. Gen.3v15. 1Jn.3v5,8.

Some antidotes to Satan's attacks.

a) Don't let Satan wind you up when you are on your own, to give your hubby a hard time when he comes home.

b) Be prayerful. Keep close to God, and be prepared for the hour of temptation.

c) Be creative. Do interesting and creative things that engage and relax the body, and rest the mind and spirit.

d) Be active. Some one has said, "When the going gets tough, the tough go shopping." There is no need to go on a shopping binge, you can window shop and not buy anything, a change like this can remove spiritual stress as well as physical pressure.

e) Get into informal Christian fellowship, for sometimes formal meetings can increase stress and tension, whereas a chat over a cup of tea or coffee, and prayer with sympathetic loving friends can remove physical and spiritual strains and pressures.

2. SUBMISSION IS FOR THE HUSBAND AS WELL AS THE WIFE.

1. WHAT IS THE NATURE OF THIS SUBJECTION AND SUBMISSION IN THE SCRIPTURES?

To understand properly what is meant by submission we have to consider the original Scriptures. The Scriptures apply submission to many aspects of the Christian life, and to men as well as women.

a. Paul tells us that we are to be subject to earthly governments, for they are ordained by God. Rom13v1-5.

We are to be in subjection to the higher powers. Rom.13v1-5. Titus.3v1. 1Peter.2v13. However, Peter chose rather to obey God rather than man on vital matters of faith and conscience. Act 5 v 24. Peter and Paul told slaves to submit to their masters, the apostles had a commission to preach the Gospel, not to bring about the abolition of slavery, submission to governments in this injustice was a necessity in their day. Titus.2v9. "Exhort slaves to be subject to their own masters, and try to please them in everything, and not to talk back to them." 1Pet.2v18. "Slaves be subject to your masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the harsh." Subjection should be a reality to all Christians in their daily lives.

b. Paul tells us that we are to submit to the guidance of wise, reasonable and godly Christian leaders.

Paul said, in Rom.16v16., "I beseech you brethren - that you submit yourselves to everyone that helps us and laboureth." Some of these labourers that Paul mentions here were woman, and Paul tells the men to be subject to their ministries. We need to realise that in Heb.13v7,17,24., "hegeomai," which is translated as "rule," means to lead, to guide, and should, according to Vine, read in v7, "Be mindful of those who are guiding you," and in v17., "Give ear to those who guide you, and be willing to submit to what they say." In Heb.13v17., the word for "submit," is the verb "hupaikeo," it is derived from "hupo," under, and "eiko," to yield, and means, to yield under, be weak; to surrender, it is used in Heb.13v17., of "submitting" to spiritual guides in the churches whose guidance is not only seen to be right, but is also conveyed in a reasonable manner.

The word for "obey" in Heb.13v17., is the verb "peitho," which means "to persuade, to convince one to believe by words, to listen and obey because of reasonable argument." Vine writes, "**The obedience suggested is not by submission to authority but resulting from persuasion.**" So we see that the teaching of the elders is acceptable, because it is seen to be reasonable, not because it is dictatorial. So we see that "peitho," to persuade, and "pisteuo," to believe and trust, are closely related, in fact Strong states that "pistis," faith, is derived from "peitho." Faith is produced by the persuasive arguments of truth, "peitho" suggests the obedience produced by faith. Rom.1v5. "Obedience of faith, "hupakoē pisteōs." In Heb.3v18,19., the disobedience of the Israelites is said to be the result of their unbelief. Faith is an internal unseen thing, which produces an obedience, which can be seen. Truth persuades us to believe in God, and true faith in God produces obedience to God.

c. All Christians are to be subject to each other.

Paul directs us in Eph.5v21., "To submit yourselves one to another in the fear of God." Peter states that ALL must submit to each other, 1Pet.5v5., "Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, ALL of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble." We are all to submit to the body of Christ. Church leaders are not just to be subject to Church leaders, as is a common practice today, they are to be subject to the whole body of Christ as well.

In 1Cor.14v32., Paul states that "the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets." Prophets are not only to prophesy in an orderly controlled manner, and consider others, they are subject to the judgement of other prophets. 1Cor.14v28-32.

d. Our Lord was subject both to His earthly parents and His heavenly Father.

In Lk.2v51., "hupotasso" tells how Jesus as a child was subject to Mary and Joseph. Several Scriptures state that Jesus recognised the Father as His head and submitted to His will. 1Cor.11v3. John.6v38. "For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of Him that sent me. Jn.4v34. 5v30. In 1Cor.15v27,28, we read of God bringing all things under subjection to Jesus, and of Jesus being subject to the Father. Eph.1v22. Phil.3v21. Heb.2v5,8. 1Pet.3v22., "Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him." Even the creation will be subject to unreality until Jesus returns, we read in Rom.8v20., "For the creature was made subject to unreality, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope."

e. The submission of discipleship to Christ.

A learning devoted follower of Jesus. "Mathetes."

"Disciple," is the noun "mathetes," from "manthano," to learn, and literally means, a learner, a pupil, in contrast to a teacher, "didaskolos." (The verb "matheteuo," is used in Mt.13v52. 27v57. 28v19. Acts.14v21.) A disciple, then, is one who follows someone's teaching, we read of the disciples of John, Mt.9v14.; the disciples of the Pharisees, Mt.22v16.; the Jews said that they were disciples of Moses, Jn.9v28.. It is also used in a general sense of all the "disciples" of Jesus, even those who followed Him secretly, Lk.6v17. Jn.6v66. 19v38.; it is used of the twelve apostles, Mt.10v1. Lk.22v11. Jesus said that those who are "abiding in His Word," are really His true disciples. Jn.8v31. 13v35. 15v8. In Acts disciples are said to be those who believed in Jesus and confessed Him. Actr.6v1-7. 11v26. 14v20,22,28. 15v10. 16v1. 18v27.19v1. 21v16. Tabitha is said to be a "mathetria," a

female disciple. Acts.9v36. A disciple is not just a pupil, but a devotee, and an imitator of Jesus. Jn.8v31. 15v8. We are "fellow-disciples," "summathetes," of Jesus. Jn.11v16.

Following after Jesus, and submitting to His Lordship. "Opiso."

The Greek word "opiso," is used in connection with "hepomai," to follow," in the sense of "following behind someone," as a sign of subordination to the person you respect and of being their pupil. Jesus said, "Come after me, "deute opiso mou," and I will make you to become fishers of men." Mk.1v17,20. 8v34. Mt.10v38. Obedience is implied in the disciple.

f. The following Scriptures speak of wives being in subjection to their husbands.

1Cor.11v3. "But I want you to know that the head of every man is Christ, the head of woman is man, and the head of Christ is God." This suggests submission, even though it does not actually state it.

1Cor.14v34. "Let your women keep silent in the churches, for they are not permitted to speak; but they must be in submission, as the law also says." See further note later.

Eph.5v24. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing."

Col.3v18. "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord."

Titus.2v4,5., "Admonish and encourage the young women to love their husbands, to love their children. v5 "To be self-controlled and pure, to be busy at home, to be kind, and to be subject to their husbands, **so that no-one will malign the word of God.**" "Admonish and encourage," is "sophronizo," to make of sound mind, i.e. (figuratively) to discipline or correct:

1Pet.3v1,5. "Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives. v5 For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands."

The verb "hupotasso," is translated as "submit," "be in submission," "be subject," and "be in subjection" in the above Scriptures. "Hupotasso," is primarily a military term, meaning, to rank under, from "hupo," under, and "tasso," to arrange, and so means, to set in array under, to submit, to subject, to subordinate. So the submission here referred to is a submission which enables us to fight and win the victory in our marriages. It is not a husband being autocratic or despotic. Obviously subjection to God implies obedience to His desires and commands, this is supported by Strong's definition that "hupotasso," means, "to subordinate; reflexively, to obey." Submission to God in marriage relationships means that wives must not only submit themselves to their husbands, but that husbands must submit to God's command, that they are to love their wives as Christ loves the Church.

"Hupotasso," occurs in Lk.2v51. 10v17,20. Rom.8v7,20. 10v3. 13v1,5. 1Cor.14v34. 15v27,28. 1Cor.16v16. Eph.1v22. 5v21,24. Phil.3v21. Col.3v18. Titus.2v5,9. 3v1. Heb.2v5,8. 12v9. James.4v7. 1Pet.2v13,18. 3v1,5,22. 5v5. The verb "hupotasso" is rare outside of the Bible. The Septuagint translates "waiteth," in "waiteth upon God," in Ps.62v1., and "wait," in Is.62v5., and "rest," and "wait," in Ps.37v7., with "hupotasso," to be in subjection.

In James.4v5-7., "hupotasso," describes a submissive setting in military array under God to resist Satan.

We are not to submit for a moment to Satan's lies, and his attacks upon our standing in Christ, we are to resist, ("antitasso," another military term), the Devil, and he will flee from us. This submission to God is again referred to in Heb.12v9., "Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live?" In Rom.8v7., Paul warns, "The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." The choice is submission to God and the spiritual mind, or domination by the carnal mind, which will open us to the attacks of Satan. We are victors in Jesus, let us resist Satan, and fight for our marriages, power and grace are given to work miracles in our marriages, as well as in peoples bodies, indeed, this can often be even more important in God's eyes.

The seventy evangelists were amazed at the armoury and authority that they had, when they submitted to God, and set themselves in military array under Him, and used the authority of the name of Jesus. In Lk.10v17,20., we see their joy when they found that demons were subject to them in the name of Jesus. Jesus directed them to have a correct perspective of this armoury, power and joy, "Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven." Jesus and His salvation, is God's supreme unspeakable gift to us. Paul was distraught that the Jews turned down this unspeakable gift, and would not submit to God's way of salvation in Jesus. Rom.9v1-5. Paul states the folly of the Jews in Rom.10v3., "For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God."

The noun "hupotage," Strong 5292, which means, "subjection," only occurs in four places in the New Testament.

In 2Cor.9v13., Paul commends the Corinthians for their subjection to the gospel of Christ.

In Gal.2v5., Paul states that he did not give place by subjection to the Judaizers for one hour.

In 1Tim.2v11., Paul writes, "Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection."

In 1Tim.3v4., Paul states that an Pastor-Elder-Overseer is to be, "One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity." "Hupotage," is not found in classical Greek outside of the New Testament.

N.B. The word "obey" is generally used for servants and slaves and always for children. Eph.6v1,5. Col.3v20,22.

The word for "obedience" is the noun "hupakoe," it is quite unlike "hupotasso." "Hupakoe," is derived from "hupo," under, and "akouo, to hear; it is used in secular Greek to describe someone standing at a door and listening intently; and later it was used to speak of the obedience which followed hearing and understanding a request or a command. Paul uses it to speak of "the obedience of faith in Rom.1v5.

The verb "hupakouo," means "to listen to," with the derived sense, "to obey," it is used in Acts.12v13., when Rhoda comes to the door "to listen to" Peter's urgent knocking on the door. Elsewhere in the New Testament "hupakouo" is translated "obey," In 1Pet.3v6., Peter gives Sarah as an example to women of subjection and listening obedience, "Even as Sara obeyed Abraham, calling him lord (or "Sir." Mt.13v27. Jn12v21.): whose daughters ye are, as long as ye do well, and do not give way to fear." Sarah did obey Abraham, "calling him Lord," however, it is a striking fact that the situation was reversed in Gen.21v12., God told Abraham to "obey" Sarah, "in all that Sarah saith unto thee **obey her voice** --- Cast out bondswomen and her child." On many occasions wives have God's answer to marital problems, and have to be listened to and obeyed.

Strong states that the verb "hupakouo," 5219, means, to hear under (as a subordinate), i.e. to listen attentively; by implication, to heed or conform to a command or authority." It occurs in the following places in the New Testament. Mt.8v27. Mk.1v27. Mk.4v41. Lk.8v25. " Lk.17v6. Acts.6v7. Acts.12v13. Rom.6v12. Rom.6v16,17. Rom.10v16. Eph.6v1,5. Phil.2v12. Col.3v20,22. 2Thes.1v8. 2Thes.3v14. Heb.5v9. Heb.11v8. 1Pet.3v6.

e) Subjection does not exclude equality.

The subjection of Jesus to the Father at the end of the millennium shows subjection can be the perfection of trusting love and equality. 1Cor.15v28. For our Lord is equal in deity to the Father. Phil.2v6,7.

f. Submission to an unbelieving husband, partnership with a believing wife.

Submission and living with an unbelieving husband.

In 1Pet.3v1-6., Peter gives a totally different emphasis, he states how a Christian wife must act if they are married to an unbeliever.

a) Many more women than men have been converted in Church history, so the combination of a believing wife with an unbelieving husband has been a common occurrence. A Christian woman must not argue with or preach at their unbelieving husband, but submit, and win their husbands without a word. In 1Pet.2v11 to 3v8., Peter suggests that a Christian wife should be prepared to stand some abuse, he says "Likewise ye wives," and infers that wives are to stand some buffeting like slaves, and be submissive even to the harsh, and take ill treatment patiently like Jesus. Submission means that we trust God to work things out, like Jesus, who though brutally treated, "kept entrusting himself to Him who judges righteously." 1Pet.2v23.

b) Paul states that Christians should marry "only in the Lord," 1Cor.7v39.; and not be unequally yoked with unbelievers. 2Cor.6v14. "What fellowship has righteousness with unrighteousness, and what communion hath light with darkness."

c) In 1Cor.7v12-16., Paul makes it clear that our Lord did not give any teaching about how a believer who was married to an unbeliever should behave and react if problems occurred in their marriage, so Paul gives his own inspired teaching on this matter, "To the rest I say, not the Lord." Paul declares that Christian husbands and wives must not send their unbelieving partners away, for their partners may be saved by their thoughtful, loving and godly living. However, Paul says that if the unbelieving partner leaves, the situation changes, and the Christian is no longer bound in marriage to the unbeliever.

N. B. In 1Cor.7v26-28. we read that because of "the present distress," that is, the very considerable persecution, Paul states that it was not wise to seek a wife. It was good not to dismiss a wife if one was married, and it was also not wise to seek a wife if they were loosed, however, if they are loosed from a partner, and do marry, "they have not sinned." In 1Cor.7v27., "Art thou bound unto a wife? seek not to be loosed, ("luisis" 3080). Art thou loosed ("lelusai" 3089) from a wife? seek not a wife." Strong defines "luisis," "3080, from 3089; a loosening, i.e. (specifically) divorce:" "Lelusai," is the perfect passive indicative of "luo," to loose, to release.

g. Christian wives and husbands should live and communicate as equals.

Peter makes it clear in 1Pet.3v7., that Christian partners are "heirs together of the grace of life," and that Christian husbands are to honour their wives, and recognise their biological problems and weaknesses, and that

husbands must not treat their wives badly, or God will not listen to their prayers. Peter makes it clear that Christian marriages are a partnership of saints, who are equal in God's eyes, and there should be mutual honour and respect for each other. Domination is forbidden. Peter says that Christian partners are, "Heirs together of the grace of life," he is obviously speaking of a joint sharing of decisions. Though the final decision should rest with the husband, if married couples can't agree on important decisions, it is best not to act. Submission does not rule out equal authority, or joint decision making.

2. A HUSBAND'S HEADSHIP SHOULD BE LIKE CHRIST'S HEADSHIP OF HIS CHURCH.

Paul commands husbands to love their wives as Jesus loves the church, and husbands must submit to this. Eph.5v22-25.

All have to be subject to each other. Self love and selfishness are the very opposite of loving your wife as Christ loved the Church. The kind of headship that some men manifest to their wives, almost makes them a stranger to them, people can be married but be strangers to each other, and live separate lives. Jesus loves the Church, not because He has to, but because He wants to, and this caring love is the very nature of His being. This is how husbands should love their wives.

1. The Headship of Jesus is totally unselfish.

All Jesus possesses, He holds for His Church, He is totally unselfish, He is the servant of His church, and lives to bless and enlighten it, and He told us that the leaders and members of His Church should act in the same way. Mt.20v25. Lk.22v25. Christ's headship was manifested in selfless love even to death Phil2v8. Matt.26v39. When husbands submit to Jesus they enjoy physical, emotional and spiritual protection, a wife's submission to her husband is intended to produce the same protection. Women are sometimes emotionally and logically vulnerable, and need to be protected, for 1Tim.2v12-14., tells us that Satan deceived Eve. Wives deserve, and should get, this protection, and should receive priority attention before others.

2. Christ's headship is proved by sacrificial love, not by insistence upon authority.

We should love our wives as Christ loved the Church, and died for it, and show the "agape" love of 1Cor.13. towards our wives. Eph.5v25. Husbands should be gentle and lowly minded to their wives, like Jesus. Mt.11v28-30. Look for her problems, listen to her, be kind, build her up, express warmth, and joy and thankfulness over the relationship, the Church is a precious treasure, your wife is one too. Eph.1v18. Mt.13v44. Christ manifests perfect fruit of the Spirit in His headship over the Church. This was manifested in kind words, gentleness and perfect love. Watch words that hurt, speak healing words, not bitter ones.

3. Christ was equal with the Father, even though he submitted to the Father for the work of redemption.

The Jews persecuted Jesus because of His claim to equality with the Father. Jn.5v17,18. 10v33. We read in 1Cor.11v3., that the Father is the Head of Christ, however, Paul said that Jesus is equal to the Father, but for our sakes and salvation He has chosen to make Himself subject to the Father and under His Authority. Phil.2v5-10. Jesus is subject to the Father, but they communicate and live as equals, this should be true in the home situation, husbands and wives should communicate as equals. Women may be physically the weaker vessel, however, in intelligence, spirituality, stamina, or devotion, they are often the stronger vessel.

4. Christ's leadership recognises our limitations as well as our talents and abilities.

Jesus does not ask of us more than we can do, and we should not demand more of our wives than they can do.

- a. True headship recognises the emotional, biological and intellectual differences and problems that woman have.
- b. Sensible men realise that a woman's differences and strengths complement men's limitations.
- c. Headship means that you recognise and welcome the feelings and intuitions of woman.
- d. Headship recognises that a woman's investment in the home is much greater than her husbands. Success in the home gives a wife stability. Sensible husbands recognise that women are gifted by God to rear children and protect their husbands.
- e. Husbands should recognise that a woman's genetical makeup and chromosomes, are different to those of men in every cell of their bodies. Dobson says, "The hypothalamus, called the seat of the emotions, is wired differently to that of a man."
- f. A good wife continually teaches the head of the house, the husband, many things, if he is humble enough to receive them.

N. B. 1. CHRIST-LIKE HEADSHIP HONOURS THE WIFE. 1Pet.3v7.

In 1Pet.3v7., Peter exhorts husbands, "In the same way you married men should be considerate with your wives with an intelligent recognition, honouring the woman as the weaker vessel, but {realising that you} are joint heirs of the grace of life, in order that your prayers may not be hindered and cut off." Amplified version.

a. Peter tells us that we are to have a conscious sensitivity and intelligent recognition of our wives biological pressures. "Intelligent recognition," is "gnosis," conscious sensitivity. "Bestowing," is "aponeMontes," the present active participle of "aponeuo," to assign, to show, to pay honour to someone. "Honour," is "timen." So recognise and give honour to your wife in her biological pressures, in menstruation and menopause, etc..

b. Make your wife feel special in front of others, and make your wife feel special at home. Express genuine warmth, be kind, build her up. Write down your appreciation and feelings on special days.

c. Communication must be in love, its not just what you say, it is the way that you say it. There must be no put downs. Communication should be in touches and eye contact as well as in words. Don't get quiet and broody, be gentle and teachable. Be a good listener, listen to your wife and her problems.

d. Marriage should be a real friendship, not just a sexual relationship. Manifest 1Cor.13. in your relationships, words and communications.

N. B. 2. CHRIST-LIKE HEADSHIP ACCEPTS A WIFE AS SHE IS.

1. You must accept your wife as she is. You must not say, I wish that you were like so and so, or did such and such, like someone else. Wives also must not say, "I will alter him;" a domineering wife was a great danger in the early Church, it can be a disaster in a Christian home today. God will not listen to the prayers of either a husband or wife, who is arrogant, hard, and difficult with their partner.

2. Husbands should not think that their headship gives them the right to force their wives to do things that they are not happy with, or to force them to do things his way

3. We must learn to express different opinions without anger or bitterness, wives are usually right in home decisions, and husbands wrong. Do not make important decisions without total agreement, and this is a wise practice for churches to follow.

4. Paul says husbands must not be embittered against their wives, but must continuously and actively show "agape" love towards them. In Col.3v19., "ove," is "agapate," the present active imperative of "agapao," Paul instructs husbands to manifest a continuous present tense "agape" love to their wives. "Embittered," is "pikrainesthe," the present middle passive imperative of "pikraino," to make or become bitter, to embitter, the verb gives the idea of being sharp, harsh and bitter. "Pikraino," speaks of the friction caused by impatience and thoughtless nagging. A wife will not be encouraged to be a good wife, or be a happy wife by the perpetual nagging that the present tense indicates. God states that you must not nag your wife, or be exasperated and angry with her. In Eph.5v25., Paul again uses "agapate," the present active imperative of "agapao," to exhort husbands to love their wives. God commands Christian husbands to manifest a continual habitual attitude of "agape" love to their wives.

5. We read in Prov.19v11., "A man's discretion makes him slow to anger, and it is his glory to overlook a transgression. In James.1v19., James exhorts us, "Be quick to hear, slow to speak and slow to anger." We should carry out these instructions in our home relationships. Love also, "Rejoices with those who rejoice, and weeps with those who weep." Rom.12v15.

N. B.3. CHRIST-LIKE HEADSHIP ALLOWS FREEDOM, LIBERTY OF ACTION AND CREATIVITY.

Some nations keep their wives imprisoned in the home. The Babylonian Talmudic Jewish commentary on Genesis states that one of the curses of Eve was to be kept as a prisoner in the home, this is truly evil. One of the major characteristics of this age of grace is freedom, and this should have its place in our homes.

1. The glorious freedom of the sons of God.

We read in Rom.8v20.,21. "For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it in hope; v21. because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the sons of God." Paul contrasts the "futility," "mataistes," the aimlessness and inability to reach a goal, or achieve happy results in the rule of present mankind, with the time when creation will be set free from its bondage to decay and corruption into the glorious freedom of God's children. Paul reveals the delightful fact "the glorious freedom" that will come on the world when the sons of God begin to rule. "The glorious freedom," is literally, "ton eleutherian tes doxes," "the freedom of the glory." "Freedom," "eleutherian," means, liberty, freedom, generosity, independence, it is the opposite of slavery , "douleia," which speaks of having to follow a prescribed course as slaves do.

Freedom is part of the age of grace, we are under "the perfect law of freedom." James.1v25. Judgement is without mercy to those who show no mercy, but mercy triumphs and exults over judgement in this law of liberty. James.2v12,13. There was a considerable controversy in the early Church over the freedom of Christians from the requirements of the Law's legal ceremonial restrictions and rules of life. Gal.2v4,5. 5v1,13. 1Cor.10v29. The Judaizers tried to spoil the believers liberty in Jesus by bringing them in bondage to the Law. Paul did not give place to them for an hour. Gal.5v1-13. We are to stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free and are not to be entangled with a yoke of bondage. However, we are not to use our liberty as an occasion to the flesh, but by love to serve each another.

In the Millennium people are mortgage free, and sit under their own vines and fig trees. Isa.32v17. The Mammon of unrighteousness no longer rules, God's love rules, and the result is liberty and freedom. When God's love rules in the home the result is the same. Heaven comes to earth, when we exercise freedom under the constraint of "agape" love.

2. God's angels have real liberty and freedom of action within the constraints of love.

The creativity and freedom of the angels, God gave them a creation to enjoy, and be creative with. Job.38v4-7. They sang together and shouted for joy, at God's free giving love, and their freedom of expression, and God's development of their creative abilities. We read in Job.1v6,7. and 2v1,2., that angels came to present themselves before God, and tell Him what they had been doing. This shows that God gives angels great independence of action, and opportunity to express themselves. There are several different levels of authority in the angelic kingdom, we read in Col.1v16., of thrones, "thronoi;" and lordships, "kuriotetes;" rulers, "archai;" and authorities, "exousiai."

3. A WIFE DOES NOT HAVE TO GIVE UNQUESTIONING OBEDIENCE TO HER HUSBAND.

a) Wives are to be in subjection to their husbands. Eph.5v22,23. "Wives be subject to husbands - be submissive and adapt yourselves - to your own husbands as (a service) to the Lord. v23. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the Head of the Church, Himself the Saviour of His Body." Col.3v18. Titus.2v5. However, between Christian partners this is not an unquestioning obedience, a husband who truly loves his wife will respect, value and consider the opinions and advice of his Christian wife. God says that a wife must say no to her husband if he asks for sexual intercourse while she is menstruating. Lev.20v18. In Israel people were executed for failing to comply with this, this was because God did not want damaged eggs to produce handicapped and sickly children. Paul states that it is children and slaves who are to obey. Eph.6v1,5. Col.3v20,22.

b) Christian headship is not like that of the Gentiles. "It shall not be so among you." Mt.20v25-28. Jesus does not lay down the Law, He is gentle and reasonable, all husbands should follow His example. Mt.11v28-30.

c) Christ's headship is constrained by love, and is thoughtful, considerate and without domination.

Jesus does not rule us without consideration, He allows discussion and questions. Wives should be consulted and listened to, and given the benefit of any doubt. God never intended a wife to be dominated by her husband, wifely submission is not servility. The story of Abigail and foolish Nabal in 1Sam.25v4-42. N.B. v25,38., proves that wives can be wiser than their husbands. Wives and husbands should discuss problems and activities, and a mutual judgement is essential. The idea that wives should not examine and question their husbands ideas, is completely wrong, it is certainly not New Testament submission. Sharing the spiritual rule of a family can prevent families from missing God's will and prevent backsliding, and sharing financial matters can stop partners from being burdened with financial pressures. It is also very important that a partner does not feel that their mate and children consider them incompetent in making financial decisions, so sharing in financial matters is important.

4. IT IS NOT WRONG FOR A CHRISTIAN WIFE TO EXPRESS HER OPINION.

When Paul wrote in 1Tim.2v12., "I suffer not a woman to teach or to control and usurp authority over a man," he was not only speaking of relationships in the home, he was also thinking of the special and prevailing deadly circumstances of that time.

1. This was written by Paul as he was chained up in prison during Nero's persecution in A. D. 67.

Nero burnt Rome because he desired to widen its streets, and wanted to build more modern houses. He blamed the Christians for his own act, and started a murderous execution of Christians, which became an appalling blood bath. Even the Romans, who usually enjoyed such cruel public butchering of people, began to be sickened by the carnage. It was particularly dangerous to upset the heathen in AD 67, when Nero, the worst emperor of them all, was ravaging the church. The heathen would not tolerate a dominant woman, so a domineering Christian wife would give the heathen just the excuse they needed to persecute Christians, and would inflame an already deadly situation. Paul wrote this letter to Timothy during the lethal persecution in Nero's reign, he warns Christian families that a domineering wife could cause the death of all her family.

2. Godly Christian women were made to play in horrific debauched scenes and orgies.

F. W. Farrar in, "The Early Days of Christianity," states: "Christian women, modest maidens, holy matrons, must be the Danaids or the Proserpine, or worse, and play their part as priestesses of Saturn and Ceres, and in blood stained dramas of the dead. --- Infamous mythologies were enacted, in which woman must play their part in torments of shamefulness more intolerable than death." End of quote.

N. B. The heathen were offended by the liberty and freedom of Christian women. In 1Tim.2v9., Paul tells the Christian woman to dress with becoming modestly, "kosmios;" self-control, "sophrosune;" and reverence, "aidos," (only here and Heb.12v28.), and without any expensive clothing or jewellery, or hair styling. This was not only because it was morally correct, but it also greatly helped to prevent persecution arising from jealousy and covetousness.

3. Paul is speaking against the domineering wife.

Some wives are domineering, critical, jealous, manipulative and malicious. John Wesley was very fond of a woman called Grace, but while John was absent, Charles Wesley persuaded Grace that it would hinder John's ministry if he got married and persuaded her to marry someone else, and on his return John found his beloved Grace married to someone else. He was very upset. This outrageous interference led to awful consequences. John Wesley met and married a widow named Mrs Vizelle; she treated him appallingly; she dragged him around the house with his hair, she altered the letters that John had written, in such a way as to make him look vile, and then published them, and distributed them. She left him in the end, and Wesley wrote, "I did not dismiss her, I did not forsake her, I will not recall her."

In 1Tim.2v12, "usurp," is "authenteo," (Strong 831), it means, to have power over, and it only occurs here. Strong says that "authenteo" is from 846, "autos," which is derived from "hentes," "a worker," so it came to mean, "to act for oneself," and so, "to dominate, to usurp authority." The basic idea is being "self-assertive." It is never right for a woman to dominate and dictate to her husband, and arrogantly teach him. Some have applied 1Tim.2v12., to a church situation; Dake states, "It was the custom for men to speak up in public assemblies, to ask questions and even interrupt the speaker when they did not understand but this liberty was not granted to women." However, Paul does not appear to back up this opinion, for he says that women have the right to pray, prophesy, preach, and do other things in the Church, when God authorises them to, and men have to recognise that authority. 1Cor.14v34-39. A woman is not usurping authority when she exercises her God given authority.

Note. "Sobriety," "sophrosune," means, soundness of mind, literally, sanity, self-control, soberness, and sobriety from "sophron," safe in mind, from the base of "sozo," to save, protect, heal, make whole, preserve, and "phren," the feelings (or sensitive nature), by extension (also in the plural), the mind or cognitive faculties.

N. B. 1. Women in leadership.

Paul could not have meant that it was wrong for woman to teach men, or Priscilla would not have taught Apollos. Timothy was instructed in the Scriptures by his mother and grandmother. 2Tim.1v5. Paul declares in Gal.3v28., "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ." In Rom.16v1,2., we read that Phoebe was the deaconess at Cenchrea, the eastern harbour in Corinth. Paul states that she had been "a succourer of many, and of myself also." The word for "succourer," is the noun "prostatis," which means, "one standing before," "prostatis," is the feminine form of "prostates," and means protectress, patroness, leader, partner. It is the noun form corresponding to the verb "rule," "proistemi," in 1Tim.3v4,5,12., "rule well" in 1Tim.5v17., and "maintain," in 1Tim.3v8,14.. Paul said Phoebe was "a ruler of many and myself also." When a man is told to "stand before," his family well, men translate it as "rule," when it was used of Phoebe, a woman., men translate it as "succourer."

Sir W. M. Ramsey, wrote that the cities of Asia Minor had women magistrates, presidents of games, who were loaded with honours. He writes: "the custom of the country influenced even the Jews, who at least in one case appointed a woman at Smyrna to the position of "archisynagogus," ("ruler of the synagogue)."

Ramsey also states: "Among the Asian Jews, women took an unusually prominent place." However, at Corinth, Priscilla was in a totally different situation, and the Jews would hate her for instructing Apollos. The Jewish husband prayed every day, "Thank you God for not making me a Gentile, a slave, or a woman." The Jews who followed the teaching of Hillel divorced their wives for the most trivial reasons, just like the Greeks and Romans. They looked upon women as "things," not as people, and they had no legal rights. The Jews who followed the teaching of Shammai said divorce should only take place for immorality .

N. B. 2. Women are to rule their households. "She who must be obeyed."

In 1Tim.5v14,15., Paul states, "I will that the younger women (widows) marry, bear children, rule the house, give none occasion to speak reproachfully. For some are already turned aside after Satan." "Rule the house," is "oikodespotein," the present active infinitive of the verb "oikodespoteo," 3616, to rule over a house, and family, to manage the household, from "oikodespotes," 3167, the ruler, guide, and master of the house, householder, it is made up of "oikos," house, and "despotes," someone who has "absolute ownership and uncontrolled power." "Oikodespotes," only occurs in the synoptic Gospels, its twelve occurrences are in Mt.10v25. Lk.13v25. 14v21, as Master of the house; in Mt.13v27,52., 20v1. 21v33.; as householder; in Mt.20v11. 24v43. Mk.14v14. Lk.12v39. 22v11., as goodman. "Despotes," gives us our English word "despot," and in both English and Greek the meaning is exactly the same, it means one who has absolute ownership and uncontrolled power, an absolute and arbitrary ruler, from whom there is no appeal. "It was the title slaves were required too use in speaking to the master who owned them as a property." "Despotes" is rendered as "master," in 1Tim.6v1,2. 2Tim.2v21. Titus.2v9. 1Peter.2v18.; and as "Lord," in Lk.2v29. Acts.4v24. 2Pet.2v18. Jude.v4. and Rev.6v10. It is used as a title of God in Lk.2v29. Acts.4v24. and Rev.6v10.; and of Jesus in 2Tim.2v21. Titus.2v9. 1Pet.2v18. 2Pet.2v1. and Jude.v4.. Women have great God-given authority in the home.

N. B. 3. Leaving and cleaving.

Paul quotes Gen.2v24., in Eph.5v31., "For this reason shall a man LEAVE his father and mother and shall CLEAVE unto his wife and the two shall become one flesh." The word "cleave," is "proskolethesetai," the future passive indicative of "proskollaomai," to be glued to, to be joined to. "Leave," is "kataleiphei," the future passive

of "kataleipo," to leave behind. The man leaves his parents to cleave to his wife, and to manifest a headship like that of Christ to His Church.

We cannot help but be alarmed and disgusted at the contemptuous attitude of most of the heathen to women, and their ill-treatment of the gentler sex, but we are saddened that this contemptuous attitude and ill-treatment was found among many of the Jews, and many in the Christian Church. A wife is not to be looked upon merely as a house-keeper, or just as a sex object, and baby producer, she is a "helpmeet of a superior kind," who is given by God for companionship and friendship.

POINTS TO NOTE FOR THE VIRTUOUS WIFE AND HUSBAND.

1. Don't criticise, or dwell on, your partner's bad points, you have some bad points too. You must never make your partner feel small, or give them a feeling of insufficiency. Encourage your partner, commend their good points, and keep on telling them how much you appreciate them, and how much they mean to you. Col.3v18,19.

2. Deal with anger and rows. Remember wholehearted forgiveness brings healing, God says that if you don't forgive your partner, He won't listen to your prayers, or forgive you. Mk.11v20-26. Be loyal to your partner, and never slander them to others.

3. Cultivate your abilities as a helper, and do everything heartily as unto the Lord. Col.3v17-23.

5. Don't be arrogant with your partner, be ready and willing to learn, and admit that you were wrong.

6. Cultivate your spiritual life, it will make you liveable with, and nice to know.

7. Don't have an over ambitious concept of goals to aim at, don't imitate the worldling in their wants and greed.

8. In 1Pet.3v5., Peter tells married women to be flexible, and to fit in with their husbands plans. Peter speaks out of his long experience as a married man, and quotes the example of saintly women of old who trusted God and fitted in with their husbands plans. However, in Christian marriage good husbands will also fit in with their wives plans as well, if it is at all possible to do so.

9. BE FILLED WITH GOD'S AMAZING LOVE, AND LET IT PERVADE AND RADIATE FROM YOUR HOME.

A VIRTUOUS, CAPABLE, STRONG WOMAN. Proverbs.31v10-31.

We read in Prov.3v10. "Who can find a woman of strong character, and strength of purpose, for her price is far above rubies." **A good wife is anything but weak, for "virtuous,"** A.V., is "chayil," 2728, it means might, strength, power, etc.. The main meanings of this noun is its 244 occurrences in the Old Testament, are strength, army and wealth. The good wife has great strength of character, and determination.

SUBMISSION DOES NOT MEAN REPRESSION.

A good husband allows his wife to develop all the facets of her character, and makes sure that all her abilities are used in a productive way, but he allows his wife freedom to plan her own direction and priorities.

a. Her husband's heart trusts her, he has no need of spoil, she has good financial arrangements. Prov.31v10.

b. She is a continual blessing, she does him good not evil all the days of her life. Prov.31v11.

c. She works with her hands with wool and flax. Prov.31v12.

d. She provides good meals, she brings food from afar. Prov.31v14,15.

e. She buys a field and works it, and plants a vineyard. Prov.31v16,17.

f. She girds her arms with strength, and does not strive to achieve vain worldly standards. Prov.31v17.

g. She gives satisfaction with her merchandise. Prov.31v18.

h. She works at night by candlelight. Prov.31v18.

i. She works at the spindle and distaff making clothes, linen, and tapestry. Prov.31v19.

j. She ministers and feeds the poor and needy. Prov.31v20.

k. She provides warm winter clothing for her household. Prov.31v21.

l. She sells the fine linen and girdles to merchants. Prov.31v24,25.

m. She is filled with wisdom, and her tongue is the law of the kindness. Prov.31v26.

n. She is active not idle. Prov.31v27.

o. Her children call her blessed, her husband praises her, she excels them all. Prov31v28,29.

SOLOMON'S CONCLUSION ABOUT THE VIRTUOUS WIFE.

a. "Charm is deceitful and beauty is vain, but a woman that fears the Lord, she shall be praised. Give her the fruit of her hands and let her own hands praise her in the gates." New King James Version. Prov.31v30,31.

b. The wife should be encouraged to express her talents and gifts, she is not crushed.

c. The virtuous wife of Solomon managed the household. Some women, like men, are incompetent in dealing with finances; others are wasteful, selfish and inconsiderate over finances, and cannot be trusted with management of the household. The husband of the virtuous wife safely trusts his wife to manage the household,, her husband is not a manager, he is a loving friend, who trusts his wife, as a wife, not as a servant, or an employee.

3. THE TRIALS AND TEMPTATIONS OF MARRIAGE.

1. THE TEMPTATION TO SEXUAL SIN, THE NEED FOR SELF CONTROL.

A. PAUL WARNS OF THE PRESSURE OF UNGRATIFIED DESIRE.

God has said that it is vitally necessary for Christian partners to have a fulfilled sexual experience. In 1Cor.7v2., Paul says that marriage can preserve people from immorality, particularly if they find it difficult to control their emotions; and so he advises each man and woman to have a partner. Paul says in 1Cor.7v7., that both self-control in celibacy, or a wife can be a gift, "charisma," from God. In 1Cor.7v9., Paul also states that if people cannot exercise self-control, it is better for them to marry than to burn or be aflame with ungratified desire. "Burn," is "purousthai," the present passive imperative of "puroo," to set afire; the passive indicates to be aflame. Paul says if people do not have self control then they should marry. "To exercise self-control," is "egkrateuontai," the present indicative middle of "egkrateuomai," to exercise self control, to have power over one's self, from "en," in, and "kratos," power, strength.

In Matt.19v10-12., while Jesus was giving teaching on divorce, His disciples said, "If such is the case of the man with his wife, it is better not to marry." Jesus said to them, "Not all men can accept this saying, but only those to whom it has been given. For there are eunuchs who have been born incapable of marriage, and there are eunuchs who have been made so by men, and there are eunuchs who made eunuchs of themselves for the sake of the kingdom of heaven. He that is able to receive, let him receive it." Not many people feel that they should stay unmarried for the sake of the kingdom of God. In 1Tim.3v2-4., Paul suggests that Pastors should be married men.

Many woman do not know what it is to come to a climax and orgasm. This is a disaster and can cause great frustration and even marriage breakdowns. Paul warned this could lead to temptation from Satan, "Lest Satan tempt you." 1Cor.7v3-5. It is important that the man does not have his fun and leave his wife frustrated. It is important that she comes to a climax before he does. The fruit of the Spirit is self control, and this is as important in sexual intercourse as in other areas of life. If it is at all possible both partners should come to a climax every time they make love. "Agape" love is just as necessary in sexual matters, as it is in Church fellowship. We have to let the fruit of the Spirit grow with perseverance in our marital relationships. In 1Cor.7v2,3., Paul, like Augustine, said that marriage is a check against immorality, but he goes much further than Augustine's distorted view of marriage, and describes the blessedness of Christian marriage, and likens the relationship of a husband and wife, to the relationship between Christ and His Church.

B. PAUL WARNS OF THE DECEPTIVE POWERS OF THE FLESH.

a. All mankind, except Jesus, has been seduced by the flesh.

Paul said that all mankind has been pressured, tempted and deceived by the unlawful desires of the flesh, and died spiritually by following their overtures. "Sin deceived me." Rom.7v11. "I died." The unlawful desires of the flesh deceive with an alluring mirage of great fulfilment, but they fail to live up to their promise, and indulgence in them destroys real happiness and brings a person into great bondage to desire. Paul speaks of the battle with the flesh, and states that there is victory in Jesus. Hallelujah! Rom.6v19. 7v15-25. Gal.5v16-24.

b. David and Bathsheba.

David admired Bathsheba's beauty, then desired her, and then committed adultery with her. 2Sam.11v2-5. David was tempted when he had time on his hands, he stayed at home, "At the time kings go out to war." David neglected duty and work, and also obviously neglected self-discipline and his communion with God. 2Sam.11v1. 1Chron.20v1. Satan finds work for idle hands to do. God gave Adam work to do to keep him from sin, "I will curse the ground for thy sake." Gen.3v17-19. After David sinned with Bathsheba, he tried to cover his sin, he murdered Bathsheba's husband Uriah, with the sword of the children of Ammon, and came under Divine condemnation and judgement for it. 2Sam.11v15,24. 12v9. Ps.32. Ps.51. He destroyed a happy home through lust, this same story has, sadly, been repeated multiplied millions of times throughout history, and is a major cause for the break-up of marriages in our present day.

C. PURITY IN THOUGHT.

a. Looking at a woman with lust is adultery in the heart. Mt.5v28. You can admire beauty without desiring it; however, we need to watch our eyes, for lust of the eyes can lead to indulgence in the lust of the flesh, as it did with David. 1John.2v15-17.

b. Sexual fantasies are defiling. Partners who fantasise that they are in bed with another partner, have need of cleansing, emotional victory, and the holiness of thought which alone brings true happiness and fulfilment. We read in Rom.8v1-4., that there is victory in Jesus through His law of the Spirit and life. We have to put off the old man and put on the new man, we can put on Christ, and crucify the evil desires of the flesh. Col.3v5,8-14. Eph.4v22,23. Paul tells Timothy, "keep thyself pure." 1Tim.5v22. Purity, as well as evil, originates in the mind. Mt.15v19. Mk.7v21. Sexual relationships can be totally pure, for, "To the pure all things are pure." Titus.1v15. Heb.13v4.

D. HOMOSEXUALITY AND LESBIANISM.

God says that these relationships are evil and He forbids them in both the Old Testament and New Testament. Gen.19v5,24. Lev.20v13. Deut.23v17,18. 1Kings.14v22-24. 15v11,12. 22v46. 2Kings.23v7. Joel.3v3. Eph.5v3. 2Tim.3v13. 2Pet.2v7-22. Jude.v7-19. Of particular importance is Rom.1v25-28., where Paul states that these "vile lusts," are evil, and are "against nature." They are viewed in the same bad light as sexual relationships with animals. Lev.20v13-16. Paul states that when burn with lust for men, they receive "the reward that was fitting for their error." The aids epidemic has become a threat to the survival of mankind because of unlawful sex and misuse of drugs.

In 1Cor.6v9-11., Paul condemns homosexuality, "Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals ("effeminate," is "malakoi," "soft," a technical word describing the passive partner in homosexual relationships), nor sodomites ("arsenokoitai," one who lies with a male as with a female), v10 nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God. V11 And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God." 1Tim.1v10. God can forgive, deliver and cleanse men and women from these sexual sins and make them into pure and godly Christians.

E. SEXUAL PERVERSION IN MARRIAGE.

We do not have to make the choice between sexual fulfilment and morality, the person who practices pure sex has the truest fulfilment and happiness, and does not lose communion with God, or sacrifice holiness and purity. Obedience to God's word brings liberty and joy, sexual perversion brings bondage. Oral sex is wrong, and all kinds of perverted sex destroy character and true happiness; it is righteousness and purity that produces lasting peace and true fulfilment. Is.32v17.

2. THE TEMPTATION TO WORLDLY GREED.

Christians should reject the temptation to take the standards of the worldling, and not make worldly acquisition their goal.

A. The temptation to fill up the life with things.

Things do not satisfy, relationships do, an abundance of possessions does not bring happiness. Be on your guard against covetousness, greed, jealousy and envy, they always destroy friendship. Lk.12v15. A worldly attitude is spiritually weakening, and leaves an aching void. Jesus promises rivers of living waters, He is the answer to the aching void, not things. Jesus gave the despised Samaritan woman, with many marriage failures, His living water, and a new start, and new esteem for herself.

B. The temptation to desire the most beautiful home, the best car, and trust in externals for happiness.

Decorating a home can be a creative outlet. but lusting after a better house, expensive furnishings and equipment, and other wants, can put financial pressures on a family, which can destroy their happiness. So differentiate between needs and wants, and don't try to keep up with the Jones's. Resist the temptation to make comparison with other peoples homes, work and possessions. Jesus told us to beware of greed, for abundance of possessions does not produce happiness. Lk.12v15.

C. Contentment, caring love, and generosity is the cure for greed. Lk.12v32-34.

We read in Heb.13v5,6., "Let your character and way of life be free from love of money and craving for earthly possessions, and be content with such things as you have, for God Himself has said, I will never, never cease to sustain and uphold you, and never, never, never forsake or desert you. (Five nevers) So we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, I will not fear what man shall do unto me." Paul stated in 1Tim.6v6-8., "But godliness with contentment is great gain. v7. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. v8. And having food and raiment let us be therewith content." Beware! Many men and women have died prematurely through the pressure and overwork brought upon them by the thoughtless extravagance and demands of their partners.

3. THE PARTICULAR TEMPTATIONS OF WOMEN.

A. The temptation to feel the need to prove your worth as a wife.

Resist Satan's attack on your worth as a wife and mother, and don't let him compare you with other women, you have your strong points too. A comparison with the woman of Prov.31, would make most women feel inadequate, so be yourself. You don't have to prove your worth, you have to be what you are. Leah felt the pain of rejection that all women experience who feel unworthy or unloved, her fruitless attempts to win Jacob's affection fill us with sympathy. Gen.29v31-35. 30v20. Jacob's hatred of Leah was a sin, and God said in His Law, that a wife who was treated in this way had the right of divorce, and her children could not be disinherited. Ex.21v10,11. Deut.21v15-17.

B. The temptation to look good and to be physically beautiful. Only 6% of women are said to be happy with their looks.

Christian women must refuse to accept the world's view of women and fashion as seen in magazines and on television, and reject the Barbie doll figure of a teenage body, of large busts, slim waists and long legs. Curves are attractive, not skinny people. Feel free to be plump, a few years ago this was looked upon as desirable. Christian women should also reject the diet obsessions, that can lead to "anorexia" and "bulimia," and other physical disorders. Good husbands must also reject the world's standards of fashion and looks, and recognise that true beauty is inward not outward. 1Pet.3v3.

C. The temptation of greed and the shopping bag.

Be vigilant against worldly greed. Watch excessive desires and shopping madness, and the misuse of your credit card. Beware of the pressures of advertising and an instant society. Watch financial stupidity, one lady bought a \$10,000 ring she could not afford, just to make herself feel good and worth something. It is very wrong to waste the family's income, and thoughtlessly put pressure on our partner through this. Let us consider each other and lay up treasures in heaven. Lk.12v32-34.

D. The temptation for food and comfort eating.

- a. Living for food. Pressure produces hunger, however, comfort eating produces emotional pressure.
- b. The Martha mentality. The emphasis on food for the best reasons can go over board. Lk.10v38-42.

E. The pain and temptation of childlessness. 1Sam.1v1-28.

Hannah was so pained by her childlessness that she staggered like a drunken woman, her pain and prayers brought an abundant answer from God for herself and the nation, in the form of her child Samuel.

F. The pain of early bereavement

We see from Luke.2v36-38., that Anna gave herself to prayer and fasting, when her husband died after seven years of marriage, she did not allow the pain of bereavement to destroy her, she went to God for grace and strength and received a prophetic ministry from Him, she used her experience to comfort and strength to others. Let all bereaved ones imitate her.

G. The temptations and loneliness of being single.

The whole makeup of women was created for bearing and caring for children, therefore, being single can be difficult. However, single people do not need to miss out, they can have God's best. Paul gives valuable teaching on being single.

- a. The blessing of independence, and freedom from the pressures of marriage and children.
- b. The blessing of freedom from many financial pressures that come on married people.
- c. The blessing of freedom to engage in unrestrained Christian service in work and church, they have no wife, or husband, or children to consider. Fulfilment outside of marriage can be a divine possibility and gift. 1Cor.7v32-35. In 1Cor.7v7., Paul said that God's gift to one is a wife, to another His gift is self control. "Gift," is "charisma," Paul said that a partner, as well as self control, can be a grace-gift from God.
- d. When Paul said, "I say to the unmarried and widows, it is good for them if they abide even as I," he was speaking in the context of "the present distress," that is, the severe persecution that most of the Church was experiencing at that time. 1Cor.7v8,26. Bringing up families in this relentless, merciless and murderous persecution was extremely difficult, when multiplied thousands of families, including the children, suffered martyrdom. 1Cor.7v7-9,26.
- e. Get into the protection of a loving Christian friends. Satan often tells beautiful, gracious, and talented women that they are ugly, and have other bad deficiencies, or they would have a partner; you need good friends to reassure you at times like this.

4. THE TRIALS AND TEMPTATIONS OF EDUCATING AND DISCIPLINING CHILDREN.

- a. Eph.6v14. Children obey your parents etc., "That you may live long," the first commandment with a promise. "Fathers do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord."
- b. Discipline with understanding, dignity and caring love. There is a real necessity for praise and encouragement, for over correction and harshness with children will discourage children. Col.3v21. Eli did not restrain or

discipline his sons, they grew up into evil men, their judgement and execution by God demonstrates the necessity of discipline. 1Sam.3v11-15.

c. Children need rules, but they also need freedom too. Too many rules, and over discipline, will definitely be counter productive. Parents need to reach agreement in discipline, otherwise children will play one parent off against the other.

N.B. SURVIVING THE STRESS OF CHILDREN.

a. Caring for babies and raising children can be very exacting and exhausting, and the burden must be shared. Raising and educating children puts considerable financial pressure on parents, children try to keep up with the Jones too, and the parents have to foot the bills.

b. The war of independence. Teenagers can cause parents great pain and hurt. Children turn into young adults and they can put colossal pressure on their parents, as they fight to get their own way, and see how far they can go, and what they can get away with. Happy indeed, and rare, are the parents who do not have this problem.

5. THE TEMPTATIONS, PROBLEMS, TRIALS AND AWFUL FEELINGS OF MENOPAUSE.

Great hormone changes occur at menopause and this can produce the following debilitating physical effects.

a. Severe depression and anxiety that can often last for months, a Vitamin B complex can be a definite help.

b. Great emotional pressure and feelings of frustration.

c. Awful feelings of self criticism, worthlessness and low esteem. There is a great need for reassurance and real affection.

d. Excessive response to trivial problems. Noise can be very irritating and television and radio can seem very loud.

e. Concentration and memory are often affected.

f. Sleep patterns can be disturbed.

g. Hot flushes, headaches, dizziness, trembling, and ringing in the ears.

h. Pains in various joints., and osteoporosis. Hands and feet can go to sleep and tingle.

i. Reduced and greatly diminished sexual desire, and dryness of mucous membranes.

j. It can sometimes cause heart problems and irregularities, e.g. palpitations and tachycardia (accelerated heart beat).

k. Excessive water retention and weight gain or weight loss.

These symptoms can be reduced or eliminated by Oestrogen hormone replacement therapy, this is recommended by some doctors, however, other doctors are very concerned about possible side effects, and do not recommend it for patients with some medical problems. Creative activity and Christian service can be a good remedy for many menopausal problems.

WOMEN AND HUSBANDS IN MINISTRY. Menopause need not be looked upon as an unmitigated disaster, for:

1. Middle age can be a time of special spiritual opportunity and service.

Middle age can not only be a prime time for marriage relationships and companionship, it can also be a prime time for service, for experience and wisdom give added value to ministry. Release from the pressures of bringing up children can give new opportunities to develop our spiritual life and enjoy the joyful release into new outlooks, ministry and prayer. From 1Cor.9v5,6., it appears that the apostles and Peter, and the brethren of Jesus took their Christian wives with them in ministry in their later years, for Paul uses "periagein," the present participle of "periago," to take around. (as a companion).

2. Priscilla and Aquila. In Acts.18v26-28., Priscilla and Aquila helped Apollos into deeper truth. Aquila is mentioned first in Acts.18v2,26. and 1Cor.16v19., as was the custom; Priscilla is mentioned first in Acts.18v18. Rom.16v3. and 2Tim.4v19..

Prof. Sir William M Ramsey says "The cities of Asia Minor had woman magistrates, presidents of games, and were loaded with favours. Ramsey says The custom of the country bothered EVEN THE JEWS who at least in one case appointed a woman at Smyrna to the position of "archsynagogus," "ruler of the synagogue." Ramsey also states "among the Asian Jews woman took an unusually prominent place." However at Corinth, Priscilla was in a totally different atmosphere as regards the position of women. Here the Jews would hate her for instructing Apollos. This gives added light on 1Cor.14v34,35., when Paul speaks against women speaking or chattering in the church.

Alford sums up the opinion of many early Church Fathers when he says that Aquila was rather the ready and zealous patron than the teacher; and the work of teaching, or a great share of it, seems to have belonged to his wife, who was called by the name of Prisca or Priscilla. She is always named with Aquila, even in Acts.18v26., where they instructed Apollos in Christian doctrine. Priscilla was one of the women of Is.40v9., "O women that bring good tidings to Zion."

SHOULD WOMEN ALWAYS KEEP SILENT? 1Cor.14v34,35.

When Paul said, "Let your women keep silence in the churches; for it is not permitted unto them to speak;" he uses "lalein," the present infinitive active of "laleo," to speak, to chatter, to talk at random, in contrast to "lego,"

to talk with reason; the present tense gives the sense of continuous talk, whether in the form of chattering to their husbands, or in domination of a meeting with unedifying random talk.

God has directed women to speak in public, God inspires them to prophesy.

Miriam prophesied, Ex.13v20., and in Micah.6v4., God gave her credit with Moses and Aaron, for the deliverance from Egypt. Deborah. Judges.4v6. See Ch.4 and 5. Anna. Lk.2v36-38. Huldah. 2Kings.22. The daughters of Zelophehad. Numb.27v1-11. God approved their message. Women prophesied in song. 1Chron.25. God still inspires women to prophesy and pray. Acts.2v16-18. 1Cor.11. Philip's four daughters prophesied. Acts.21v9. Is.40v9. Joel's prophecy confirms the prophetic and gift ministry of women. Joel.2v28,29. with Acts.2v16-18. In Deut.16v11., God commanded woman to be at the Pentecost feast.

In Ps.68v11., "The Lord gave the word: great was the company of those that published it," the word for company is feminine, so this verse should read "The Lord gave the word: great was the number of women who published it." Jesus asked women to go and tell about his resurrection. Mt.28v9,10. Mk.16v9-16. Jn.20v11-20. "Declare His doings among the people." Is.12v4.

Paul warned against Jewish fables and commandments of men in Titus.1v14..

The Jewish Talmud did forbid woman to speak, they said: "It is a shame for a woman to let her voice be heard among men." "The voice of a woman is filthy nakedness." "Let the words of law be burned rather than trusted to a woman."

"Let your women keep silent in the churches, for they are not permitted to speak; but they are to be submissive, as the law also says." 1Cor.14v34. However, we must remember that in 1Cor.11v5,17., Paul said that women could pray and prophesy in the Church, so Paul could have been rebuking idle chatter, for "laleo" can mean this, or he could have been correcting dominant women who were monopolising the meetings. We must also realise that Paul had many women co-workers, who laboured with him in the Gospel, and if it had been wrong for them to speak, he certainly would not have allowed it.

Rom.16v3. "Greet Priscilla and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ." Priscilla and her husband Aquila were Paul's employers in tent-making, and co-workers with him in preaching the Gospel at Corinth and Ephesus, over a period of about 5 years. Priscilla taught Apollos, and she would not have disobeyed Paul and done this if it had been wrong. Acts.18v24-28.

Rom.16v6. "Greet Mary, who laboured much for us." A Jewish woman who had previously laboured with Paul elsewhere, but was now in Rome. See Rom.16v12., "Salute Tryphina and Tryphosa, who have laboured in the Lord. Greet the beloved Persis, who laboured much in the Lord." These were three women who laboured with Paul in the Gospel. In 1Cor.16v16., "Submit yourself unto such, and everyone that helpeth with us and laboreth." includes these women labourers. See Phil.4v3., "I intreat thee also, true yokefellow, help those woman who laboured with me in the Gospel."

N. B. Rom.16v7. "Greet Andronicus and Junia, my relatives (or country-folk), and my fellow prisoners, who are of note among the apostles, who were also in Christ before me." Chrysostom and others say that Junia was a lady apostle.

WHY DID JESUS VISIT THE WOMEN FIRST ON THE RESURRECTION MORNING?

a. The women were more spiritually minded than the men.

Women are usually more spiritual and more devotional than men. Lecky, 1838 to 1903, states in his, "History of European Morals," "The general superiority of woman to men in the strength of their religious emotions, and their natural attraction to a religion which made personal attachment to its Founder its central duty, and which imparted an unprecedented dignity, and afforded an unprecedented scope to their characteristic virtues, account for the very conspicuous position that female influence assumed in the great work of the conversion of the Roman Empire. In no other movement of thought was it so powerful or so acknowledged. In the ages of persecution female figures occupy many of the foremost places in the ranks of martyrdom, and pagan and Christian writers alike attest the alacrity with which women flocked to the Church." End of quote.

b. The women loved Him most.

There can be little doubt that Mary and the women loved Jesus more than the men, except for perhaps the beloved disciple John. Mary was still weeping after three days, and her eyes were so filled with tears that she could not recognise Jesus and thought that He was the gardener. Jesus revealed Himself first to His friend Mary Magdalene, this revelation of her resurrected Lord calmed her fears and filled her with joy and praise. Mk.16v9-11. Jn.20v1-18. Mary had none of the terror and fear that the men had when Jesus appeared to them, perfect love had cast out fear. Lk.24v37. Jn.20v16-18. 1Jn.4v18. The men obviously felt the pain of their loss, but they had nationalistic ambitions and hoped that Jesus would restore freedom to Israel. Lk.24v21. Mary felt the terrible loss of her friend and Saviour, her grief was based on personal affection and genuine love for Jesus, not on the nationalistic ambitions of the men. Those who loved Jesus most took a fearless and unashamed open stand by the cross of Jesus, Mary the mother of Jesus, and her sister, Mary the wife of Cleopas, Mary Magdalene, and the beloved apostle John. Jn.19v25-27. It appears the rest of the apostles were too afraid to be there. Jn.20v19.

c. The women needed his help the most.

Those who loved Him the most, were most in pain over their loss, and so our Lord, came to remove their pain and give them His joy. In Mt.28v9., "All hail," "chairete," is the present imperative of "chairō," which Rotherham translates as, "Joy to you!"

d. The men needed to be taught a lesson about their attitude to women.

Jesus had to teach men to respect the ministry and revelations that He has given to the women, and their equal status before God with the men, as Paul informs us in Gal.3v28., "There is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus."

4. LOVE, LOVE AND THE GIFTS, AND HOME LIFE. 1Cor.13.

We need both love and the gifts of the Holy Spirit in our marriages, and God delights to develop them in us.

The placing of 1Cor.13. between two chapters on spiritual gifts shows that Paul is particularly considering love in relation to spiritual gifts, however, this chapter can apply to every part of our lives and to our marriage relationships as well. The "more excellent way," is a "more surpassing way," than just coveting spiritual gifts. It is not love severed or separate and distinct from all other gifts, graces, attributes, talents and relationships; it is love as the motivating force and guiding principle of all these desirable and lovely things. It is certainly not, as some would have us think, love in opposition to the gifts of the Spirit.

The position of this chapter is an embarrassment to many Christian expositors; on either side of it are experiences of which they know little or nothing, and it is always difficult to write of an experience that is foreign to you. Many expositors take this chapter right out of its context and speak of love quite separately from spiritual gifts. However, in 1Cor.14v1., Paul clearly tells us why he wrote this chapter on love; he writes, "follow after love and desire spiritual gifts." Paul places this discourse on love in the middle of his instruction on spiritual gifts, to emphasise both the need that love has of spiritual gifts, and the need for love in the manifestation of spiritual gifts. Without God's power, love cannot meet the needs of the Church or world, and without love, power from God can be terribly misused, as Satan abundantly demonstrates. Love is very often powerless without the Holy Spirit's gifts, but even His lovely gifts can be profitless without love. With love the manifestation of the gifts of the Holy Spirit in our homes is precious, profitable, and be positively critical to victory and happiness in our lives. God desires to deliver us from temptation and evil, and to bless and help us, and His gifts are manifested in our homes to this end.

God knew that Satan would attack the powerhouse of the Church; and knew that it was in the area of spiritual gifts and love that the Church would fail most; and so through the apostle Paul He gives some direction and advice on these great subjects. The oil of love is never needed anywhere more than in the power-house of the Church. The Bible COMMANDS us to seek after both love and spiritual gifts. If we really desire and follow after love, we shall desire, encourage, and love spiritual gifts. Those who are seeking love from the God of love, will also seek His gifts of love. "Charismata." There is a wonderful healing power and exceedingly precious fellowship in mature Christian love. When a person comes into the fellowship of Christians who have this beautiful love and affection for one another they can experience a wonderful healing balm and comfort, and if those Christians have all the gifts of the Spirit in operation, they can experience God's delivering power and love through them. God pours out an absolutely wonderful blessing upon churches where Christians really love one another. However, a church or home, which lacks love, and is filled with strife and bitterness, is a very unhappy place. Ps.133v1-3. Gal.5v14,15.

Paul exhorts us to manifest "agape" love.

The New Testament Scriptures use "agape" to describe the love of God and Christian love, and it is the word that is used to describe the love that a man must have for his wife in Eph.5v25. and Col.3v19.. It is the love that God demands for Himself and our neighbour. Mt.5v43,44. 22v37,39. It is the love of the new commandment that Christ gave. Jn.13v34,35. 15v12. It is the love that the abounding iniquity of these last days will cause to grow cold in the careless Christian's heart. Mt.24v12. This is the love of God that is shed abroad in our hearts after endurance in tribulation. Rom.5v5. It is the love of God from which nothing can separate us. Rom.8v39. It is the love that caused God to send His Son to die for us. Jn.3v16. It is the love that is the fruit of the Spirit. Gal.5v22. "Agape" love is a matter of the heart as well as a benevolent and loving mind. "Agape" love is not just intellectual, it is a warm and fervent love, "see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently. " 1Pet.1v22. Hos.11v8. Lk.19v41-44. "Agape" love, then, is not only an emotion, it is a standard of life, a warm and righteous attitude of mind, it is God's divine principles and compassion manifested to us, through us, and in us, it will totally transform our marriage relationships if we manifest it in our lives and homes.

"Agape" love is usually distinct from "phileo" love, the love of emotion and friendship, which could vary a great deal in intensity and sincerity. "Phileo" love is used at its lowest level to speak of the base love of the Scribes and Pharisees for prestige and position, and of Judas's kiss of betrayal. Mt.23v6. 26v48. In sharp contrast, "phileo" love is also used in the Scriptures to speak of the highest levels of divine love and affection, and is raised to a level of tenderness and beauty quite unknown to the Greeks. Jn.5v20. 11v3,36. 16v27. 20v2. Christ's "phileo" love for the Laodiceans, would be quite incomprehensible to the worldly Greek. Rev.3v19. A good example of the general difference between "agape" love and "phileo" love is found in Jn.21v15-19.. The Lord Jesus twice asks Peter if he still lays claim to the constant, unflinching, benevolent "agape" love. Peter can only

answer that bitter experience has taught him that his love is only the fervent, tender, but weak "phileo" love. When the Lord Jesus asks Peter if he loves Him with a "phileo" love, it breaks Peter, he said in effect, "You know my heart Lord, and my "phileo" love for you, and you know how broken I am because my warm but weak love has failed you." The Lord Jesus comforts His distraught apostle with the disclosure that his life would end in a magnificent display of "agape" love; Peter would lay down his life for his Saviour and His sheep, and until that occurs he is to follow Him and feed His sheep and lambs. Oh, the wonderful "agape" love of Jesus for us, He accepts our "phileo" love and transforms it by His grace. 1Cor.16v22. "Phileo."

The world needs the "agape" love of Jesus, worldly "phileo" love and "Eros" love can never satisfy the soul, or transform it into something beautiful, only divine "agape" love, can do that. When the world sees Christians united by divine "agape" love in our homes as well as our churches, then, and only then, will it believe that Christ has the answer to their need. Jn.17v21.

1. EVERY MINISTRY IS PROFITLESS TO US IF WE DO NOT POSSESS LOVE. 1Cor.13v1-3.

a. We can have spiritual gifts, but without love our souls are empty.

We can speak the most beautiful tongues and yet have an empty soul.

The Holy Spirit can enable us to pray and praise with the most wonderful languages and with the most exalted words, but if they are not manifested in love, we will not receive or impart any real or lasting blessing either to ourselves or others. Without love, speaking in tongues is empty unblest noise, "roaring brass and clashing cymbal;" with love it opens the very gates of heaven.

We can have the gift of prophecy and yet be nothing.

We can utter precious divine truth and predictive prophecy and yet be, not merely a nobody, "outheis;" but "nothing," "outhen," at absolute zero spiritually. Mighty inspiration without love still leaves us a complete failure. It is a tragedy when the gift that is designed to edify the Church, fails to edify the possessor of the gift, when love is lacking. With love, prophecy conveys the comfort and strengthening love of God into the Church. Even the gifts of the Spirit do not profit us if we do not possess love.

We can have the gifts of power and demonstration and yet be nothing.

Signs and wonders can be a sign of the approval of God, Acts.2v22., and can bring tremendous blessing to needy people, however we can manifest these gifts and yet be a complete failure in God's eyes, if we do not love people.

b. We can have a profound Scriptural and spiritual knowledge and yet be nothing.

Paul tells us that it is possible to know "all mysteries," "mysteria," that is, God's secret purposes and plans, and "all knowledge," and yet be devoid of love to people. We can have a mind full of divine truth and yet have an empty soul. Satan is the perfect example of this. Ezek.28v12-20. Is.14v12,13. Rev.12v10-12. Knowledge without love produces pride and arrogance, and a contempt for people of less ability, privilege and gift. Compare Jn.8v3. with Lk.6v20. Divine truth can deliver the soul, feed the mind and spirit, and establish and sanctify the Christian; it is absolutely vital; but we need love to make it profitable to us.

c. We can give most sacrificially but without love it does not profit us.

Our most sacrificial giving is profitless to us unless love is our motive for giving. We can give away all our earthly treasure, and yet not lay up any treasure in heaven. We can give away all that we have, like the widow of Lk.21v1-3., and yet, unlike her, it will profit us nothing, because we have no real love for God or people. Mt.6v1-4. Mk.12v41-44. 2Cor.8v1. to 9v15. Gal.6v2,5-10. Acts.2v44,45. 1Tim.5v16. Christian giving in love is wonderful, it blesses the giver more than the recipient of the gift.

d. We can even die a martyr's death, but without love it profits us nothing.

Our Lord, Himself a martyr, told us not to court persecution or death. Mt.10v23. The needless sacrifice of our life out of a sense of bravado or pride, will bring us no eternal reward. It is only unavoidable martyrdom out of love for Christ, and in the will of God, and the path of duty, that brings a heavenly reward. It is not only spiritual gifts that do us no good, or bring us no reward, if we are lacking in "agape" love; a profound spiritual knowledge, sacrificial giving, and a martyr's death do not benefit us either.

2. THE ATTRIBUTES OF LOVE. 1Cor.13v4-7.

1. Love suffers long, love is patient. "Makrothumeo," literally, "long passion."

Paul uses "makrothumei," the present active indicative of "makrothumeo," to emphasise the continual habit of controlling the mind and passions for a long time. Paul showed this patience in speaking as he did to the unruly Corinthian Christians. "Makrothumeo," occurs in the New Testament in the following places. Rom.2v4. 9v22. 2Cor.6v6. Gal.5v22. Eph.4v2. Col.1v11. 3v12. 1Tim.1v16. 2Tim.3v10. 4v2. Heb.6v12. Jam.es.5v10. 1Pet.3v20. 2Pet.3v15. It speaks of divine patience, as well as patience with people and with circumstances. It signifies the very opposite of the attitude of the worldling, who look upon short patience, retaliation, spite and vengeance as virtues. With the Greeks "megalopsuchia," was a virtue; it was the desire for vengeance, and the refusal to tolerate and accept any injury. These attitudes should have no place in God's family; God has been very longsuffering with us; let us imitate our longsuffering Lord, and show patience with others.

2. Love is Kind. "Chresteuetai."

"Chresteuetai," is the present middle of "chresteuomai," to be gentle, benign, and kind in behaviour and service to others; from "chrestos," useful, kind, gracious, gentle (like Christ's yoke in Mt.11v30.). Origen says it means, "Sweet to all ." Though "chrestos" occurs elsewhere, (Mt.11v30. Lk.5v39. 6v35. Rom.2v4. 1Cor.15v33. Eph.4v32. 1Pet.2v3.), "chresteuomai" only appears here in the New Testament, it speaks of a gracious, kind and gentle behaviour. Love not only suffers long with people who are a trial to its patience, it is kind to them and does them good in a positive manner. The present tense again shows the continuous nature and habit of this constructive kindness.

3. Love is not envious. "Ou zeloi."

"Zeloi" is the present active indicative of "zeloo," from "zeo," to boil. Paul here warns us that love does not boil with envy or jealousy. The present tense shows the permanent lack of envy and jealousy in the soul of the Christian who is motivated by "agape" love. The noun "zelos" is used in a good sense of the noble aspiration, and godly zeal and ardour of our Lord in Jn.2v17.. The verb "zeloo" is also used in a good sense in 1Cor.12v31., where Paul exhorts us to covet spiritual gifts, but he does not want us to manifest the envious begrudging spirit that is part and parcel of worldly covetousness. Love recognises the various ministries of Christ's Church, it is not jealous of what God gives to others. 1Cor.12v4-6. Rom.12v4. Gal.5v19-21. Acts.13v44,45. Love never boils with jealousy.

4. Love does not vaunt itself, it does not brag, or display itself.

"Vaunteth not itself," is "ou perpereuetai," the present middle of "perpereuomai," to brag, to boast ostentatiously; from "perperos," braggart." Paul is speaking of a loud talking, presumptuous, ostentatious, arrogant braggart. Paul said, "What hast thou that thou hast not received." 1Cor.4v7. Every good gift, ability, achievement, spiritual blessing, and conquest; arises from God, and "agape" love, humbly and contritely recognises this. The present tense shows that "agape" love always refuses to brag and boast. This vaunting pride destroyed Lucifer, the light bringer, and turned him into Satan, the prince of darkness; pride will also destroy us if we allow it into our beings. Is.14v12-20. Ezek.28v12-20. This vaunting spirit is the spirit of the powers of darkness. Acts.8v9. It has no place among the children of God. If God gives us peacock's feathers, let us humbly give God all the glory. Love is never anxious to impress others with its gifts and achievements.

5. Love is not puffed up. "Ou phusioutai."

"Phusioutai," is the present middle indicative of "phusioo," to puff oneself up like a pair of bellows. It is only used by Paul in the New Testament, in 1Cor.4v6,18,19. 5v2. 8v1. 13v4. and Col.2v18., the Corinthians suffered a great deal from this spiritual disease, from the number of times that Paul mentions it. Our dear Lord Jesus is "meek and lowly in heart," He knows the proud afar off, but dwells with the contrite in heart. Mt.11v29. Ps.138v6. Is.66v2. Love is not conceited, or blown up, like a pair of bellows, with a sense of its own importance. This is the inward cause of the previous outward manifestation. The greater our "puffage" is, the greater our spiritual "shrinkage" will be, and the more certain it will be that the Lord will deflate us. The present tense shows that a truly loving Christian always refuses to have conceited and inflated ideas about themselves, or get puffed up about their successes, achievements, or spirituality.

6. Love does not behave itself rudely, unbecomingly, or disgracefully.

Love never behaves indecently, or unbecomingly. "Aschemonei," is the present active indicative of "askemoneo," to behave in an unbecoming, indecent, or shameful manner, that is open to censure. It is only used in 1Cor.13v5 and 1Cor.7v36., where it speaks of a virgin being shamefully hindered from marriage by a Father or a prospective husband. The adverb for "decently," is "euschemonos," is used by Paul to state that all should be done decently and in order (taxis) in the Church. 1Cor.14v40. The present tense shows that Christians who have "agape" love always refuse to act in a disorderly and unbecoming manner.

Christians can experience strong workings of the Holy Spirit and be perfectly in order in God's eyes, when men are critical of their response to God's power. Acts.2v13-16. Lk.19v37-40. See also. Heb.5v7. Neh.12v43. 8v6,12. Ps.47v1. 98v4. 126v2. 149v3. 150.v4. Dan.8v18-26. 10v8,11,15,17. Rev.1v7. etc. However, we must realise that what is "seemly conduct" in the secret place of prayer, can be "unseemly conduct" in a Christian meeting, or when the unconverted are present. Paul informs us in 1Cor.14v17-25., that continual and loud speaking in tongues is undesirable even in gatherings which are composed entirely of believers; and is completely wrong when the unconverted and unlearned are present. We should show restraint in speaking in tongues, shaking, laughing, and anything else that causes consternation in people. We have to make some allowance for immaturity in young Christians or young converts, but "unruly" Christians are to be gently but firmly warned and controlled. 1Thes.5v14. 2Tim.4v2. Titus.2v15. However, let us beware of "unseemly discipline," for by being harsh and graceless we can permanently injure people, destroy Christian fellowship, and bring churches into spiritual bondage.

The Holy Spirit is a perfect Gentleman, He will not cause us to get into a frenzy, or act in a way that produces concern, fear, friction, stress and distraction in the saints, and disgust in the outsider. Unfortunately, every revival brings its quota of excess and fanaticism. However, the dangers of a powerless, sub-normal, formal Christianity are far worse. Wise leadership, good teaching, and mature example can lead Christians from "unseemly conduct," into the green pastures of a fruitful manifestation of the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

7. Love seeketh not her own, and does not insist upon her rights. "Ou zetei ta heautes."

Love does not seek its own interests. This follows on from the last quality of love, it is the cure for disorderly conduct and other misuses of the gifts. Love does not think of its own profit or interests. It considers how it may best profit others. The present tense shows us that the permanent guiding principle of a heart of love, is service, not self-seeking. Jn.13 all. Mt.20v20-28. Rom.15v1-6. N.B. v3. 1Cor.10v23,24.

8. Love is not provoked or irritable, it does not fly into a temper.

"Provoked," is "paroxunetai," the present passive of "paroxuno," to sharpen, provoke, or stir up. It only occurs here and Acts.17v16., where it says that Paul's spirit was stirred within him when he saw the city of Athens wholly given to idolatry. There are times when it is a sin not to be angry, but a person who can't control their temper, is no use in the service of God, for they can hurt and injure so many people. Mt.23v1-39. Lk.16v14,15. 1Tim.3v3. 2Tim.2v24,25. Eph.4v15. Gal.13v26. When the Corinthian Christians were misusing their spiritual gifts, Paul gave them sound teaching, not an exhibition of bad temper.

Love never gets angry and forbids spiritual gifts, nor does it call this bad temper and unbelief by the name of righteous indignation. For the noun "paroxusmos," see Acts.15v39., where Paul and Barnabas both failed to manifest "agape" love, and had a most unchristian angry dispute. See also Heb.10v24., where "paroxusmos" is used in a good sense, "And let us thoughtfully consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works." Here Paul uses "katanoomen," the present active subjunctive of "katanoeo," to put the mind down upon, to thoughtfully consider; and he uses the present tense to show that "agape" love always thoughtfully considers how to provoke to love and good works, and is never provoked to fly into a temper.

9. Love thinks no evil, is not mindful of wrongs.

"Logizetai," is the present middle passive indicative of "logizomai," to count, to set down as an account, as in a ledger. Love does not keep an account of wrongs done to it, or scores to be paid back. Love does not have outbursts of anger, or keep that anger burning, by cherishing real or imaginary records of the failures and sins of husbands, wives or fellow Christians. Jesus said a Christian who is dominated with "agape love will love their enemies, even if they do not like them, or their ways; and pray with genuine concern for those that despitefully use them. Mt.5v43-48. Lk.6v26-28. 23v33,34. Acts.8v51-60. Love does not compile or settle accounts with people. It finds no sense of superiority or satisfaction in the faults of others. Those who harbour a bitter unforgiving spirit can expect severe discipline from God. Mt.5v21-26. 18v21-35. Mk.11v25,26.

Injuries should be dealt with immediately and not allowed to fester, Mt.5v23,24. Lk.17v3,4., and where there is repentance there must be whole-hearted forgiveness. If the Church fails to follow the procedure of discipline laid down in Mt.18v15-22., then our Lord personally disciplines His loved ones. 1Cor.11v27-32. It is better to put matters right now, than to have to do it at Christ's judgement throne. Rom.14v10-13. The injured party should be humble and perform positive acts of kindness to the person who has injured them, so that repentance and reconciliation is made easier. Gal.6v1. Rom.12v14-21. 1Cor.1v10. Phil.2v3. Eph.3v8. 1Tim.1v15. Severe judgement awaits those who have compiled cases of "Pentecostal failures," in order to deny Christ's spiritual gifts to His Church. Love longs that they would change these unchristian attitudes and be blessed.

10. Love rejoices not in iniquity, it is not glad when others go wrong.

Love does not rejoice ("ou chairei") over evil, sin and failure; this is the mark of the wicked in Rom.1v32.. Love does not enjoy evil, nor does it find pleasure in finding out the faults of others, or in making them known. 1Jn.2v15-17. There is no triumph in knowing that we were right about another's failings, a heart of love is sorrowful, prayerful, and broken over the fall or faults of another. We are in real trouble with God if we use a revelation of the Holy Spirit to expose and condemn, when God wanted us to use it to convert, help and strengthen a person, and as a directive to pray earnestly for them. See how prayerfully and kindly our Lord dealt with Peter and the woman at the well. Lk.22v31-34. Jn.4v16-18. Love wants to help the fallen, not condemn them. Love never gloats over, or finds satisfaction in, other people's failures.

11. Love rejoices with the truth, it rejoices when the truth prevails.

After describing a succession of things that love will never do, Paul turns again to the positive aspects of love. "Love rejoices in the truth," it not only sides with the truth, it rejoices when truth sanctifies Christians, and is manifested in their lives. Jn.17v17. Truth, as well as love, is here personified and powerfully compared with unrighteousness. 2Thes.2v12. Instead of finding pleasure in compiling and gloating over a person's faults, the loving Christian rejoices in their spiritual victories and attainments, and will do all they can to promote further spiritual well-being. It may be difficult to rejoice in truth when it shows us our deficiencies, but it is essential if we are to make spiritual progress. Jn.8v32. 7v17. 14v21. 2Tim.3v8.

12. Love bears all things, it bears up under everything. "Panta stegai."

"Stegai," is the present active indicative of "stego," to cover, to hold off, to hold out against; it is from "stege," a roof, a flat roof of a house. It means to protect by covering, and has the thought of enduring, sustaining, uplifting and protecting. Love can bear and endure the faults and hatred of others, it delights to sustain and uplift struggling souls; and where it is consistent with Church purity and discipline, it covers with silence and conceals the faults of people. Love secretly mends and prays over the faults of others, no disappointment, abuse, injury or ridicule, can stop the healing ministrations of the loving heart. Peter knew that Christ's "agape" love had "covered his multitude of sins." In 1Pet.4v8., Peter uses "kaluptei," the present active indicative of

"kalupto," to throw a veil over, to cover, hide, and conceal. The noun, "kalumma," is used in 2Cor.3v13-16., of a veil. Love bears up, covers and veils, where possible, the sins and failures in the body of Christ.

13. Love believeth all things, it has no limit to its faith and trust. "Panta pisteuei."

Love is not gullible, but it does not give people up as hopeless when the evidence is heavily against them. Prov.14v15. 1Thes.5v12. Even when there are dark signs in a person's life, love gives themselves to believing prayer on their behalf, and trusts God to bring them through. Love also has a perfect trust in the Word, love and provision of God. Phil.1v6. Faith based on love is a present tense reality, and it is an infectious faith that encourages others to trust in God. Heb.3v13.

14. Love hopes all things, it is full of hope in all circumstances. "Panta elpizei."

Hope looks at the character of God as the grounds of its expectation. The victory of hope can be as great as the victory of faith, as can be seen in the case of Abraham, "Who against hope believed in hope." Abraham was strengthened by divine grace, and a spirit of praise and worship. Gen.18v1-15. Rom.4v17-23. No opposition, temptation, or distress can destroy the hope that is ours in Christ Jesus. There is a dead hope as there is a dead faith, and there is a living hope as well as a living faith. James.2v14-26. with 1Pet.1v3. Prov.10v28. 11v7,23. Rom.5v4,25. 15v4,13. Phil.1v19,20. Col.1v5,23,27. Titus.1v2. 2v13. Heb.3v6. 6v11,18,19. 1Pet.1v21. 3v15,16. 1Jn.3v2,3. 1Thes.5v8. When love has little grounds for faith in a person, because of real dark appearances of sin in their life, love never ceases to hope that the person will get back on the right way, and that truth and goodness will triumph. Our hope springs out of faith in the character, love and truth of God, and is a present tense reality.

15. Love endures all things with triumphant fortitude. "Panta hupomenei."

Love endures when it can no longer believe or hope. It endures without limit for the sake of others. The word for "endure," is, "hupomenei," the present indicative active of "hupomeno," which means, "to bear up courageously with triumphant fortitude." The same word is used in Heb.12v2. to describe how the Lord Jesus endured the cross with triumphant endurance. Love does not allow trials to break or mar their spirit; it goes through trials with perfect confidence in God. Love endures all things so that the God of love may manifest His power and love through the lovely gifts that He has given. Indeed, one may have to suffer the most determined vicious persecution from unbelieving worldly and religious people for the sake of Christ's spiritual gifts. Acts.14v19-22. 13v50-62. 1Cor.4v11-13. 2Tim.2v10-13. James.1v12. God's love imparted to us by the Holy Spirit, enables Christians to always face life's problems and evil people with triumphant fortitude. Rom.5v1-5.

3. THE ETERNAL NATURE OF LOVE, AND OUR GIFTS AND KNOWLEDGE. 1Cor.13v8-13.

a. Paul tells us that our temporary gifts and knowledge are a partial experience of Heaven.

The gifts of the Holy Spirit are a temporary and partial use of "the powers of the age to come." Heb.6v5. The gifts of the Spirit do not cease in the sense that there will never again be any miraculous manifestations of the Holy Spirit; it means that the temporary and limited manifestations of the Holy Spirit and partial revelations of God, are swallowed up in the continuous, complete and eternal enjoyment of the supernatural power and divine nature of God. The part is swallowed up in the whole. In the same way our present knowledge will come to nought, or vanish away, in the sense that our limited knowledge will be swallowed up in, and superseded by, the infinite knowledge of the kingdom of God. Our present Scriptures are but a minute fragment of God's unlimited all-knowledge and divine truth; its moral truths will never pass away, but it is only a very small partial revelation of God's eternal plans. The gifts of the Spirit, which are a partial and limited use of "the powers of the age to come," will continue, like our present limited knowledge, until our dear Lord Jesus comes again.

b. God uses spiritual gifts, and our experiences of life, to produce love in us.

God uses life, with all its trials and difficulties, mixed with His grace and gifts, to conform us to the image of Christ and form love in us. Rom.8v14-18,28-39. Our experience of life, and the proper use of our temporary spiritual gifts and partial knowledge produce eternal "agape" love in us, and prepare us for the permanent, unlimited, and eternal manifestations of the knowledge and powers of the heavenly kingdom, so they are vitally important.

c. Our present Christian experience compared with life in God's kingdom of love.

Paul compares a baby with a full grown man.

Paul tells us that our knowledge and most wonderful Christian experiences in this world, when compared with the knowledge and glory of God's heavenly kingdom, are like the first broken and hardly intelligible words and thought of a child, compared with the greater knowledge and speech of a keen and well-informed man. Oh the glory and immensity of God's kingdom! Oh the glory of His presence! Press on struggling Christian to the glorious life that awaits you in heaven.

Paul compares a shadowy image through an obscure mirror with face to face vision.

"Darkly" means literally "an enigma, or riddle," and then, "an obscure intimation." The revelations that we receive are sometimes very trying and puzzling until they come to pass. 1Pet.1v10-12. Even the Scriptures can only give us a limited idea of the glory of God's heavenly kingdom, for no language can describe or convey an experience that is so sublime and glorious. Rev.21 and 22. 2Cor.12v1-4. Compare 2Pet.1v19. with Mal.4v2. 2Cor.4v17. 1Jn.2v27,28.

d. The perfect day and kingdom of love for which God is preparing us. "to telion." v10.

God's aim in Christian service is to produce love in us, as well as to meet people's needs. The quality, not quantity, of our lives and work is the thing that matters in God's eyes. 1Cor.3v11-17. God is trying to get us conformed to the image of Jesus; He is trying to prepare us for living in Heaven, and ruling with Christ. The powers of the age to come demand heavenly love. Rom.8v29. Eph.1v5,6,17-23. 2v6,7. Heb.6v5.

When Christ comes we shall be known perfectly, and know others perfectly.

We shall "fully know as we are fully known." "Fully know," is "epiginosko," which speaks of full knowledge. Our abilities and personality will no longer hide the secret state of our heart. We shall see and know each other as He knows us, nothing will be hidden, everything about us will be made known. For the pure in heart this will be a day of great joy, for others it can be a day of shame. Mal.1v1-3. 1Jn.2v28.

When God's kingdom comes we shall know God perfectly.

We shall see our heavenly Father and Jesus face to face, we shall see how glorious and wonderful They are and experience the most wonderful communion with Them and rejoice in Their plans for us. Even if our works have been "burned up," at His "kind but searching" examination of our lives, we will enjoy His blessing and salvation, and eternal kingdom. 1Cor.3v13-15.

Love faith and hope will abide eternally in the kingdom of God.

There is one thing that is supreme in heaven and earth, a heart that is full of love, and this love with faith and hope will eternally abide. God is love and love is the supreme quality of character, it is love that makes heaven, heaven. In heaven faith and hope will never be disappointed, heaven will be a place of eternal expansion, joy peace and variety, because of universal rule of love and infinite kindness, love and affection of the lovely God of love. Until that perfect day and kingdom come, let us obey the command of God that Paul gave to us, let us pursue and follow after love, and earnestly desire and be full of zeal for the manifestation of the Holy Spirit's lovely gifts in our lives, homes, and churches.. 1Cor.14v1.

5. THE CAUSES OF BREAKDOWN IN MARRIAGE.

1. Many people blame the breakdown of their marriages on the monotony of their marital lives.

Many people today say that they are disappointed with their marriages, and complain that their lives are monotonous and empty, and wrongly feel that happiness will come with a change of partner and new circumstances. It is not long since the average length of life for woman was 32, and 38 for men, these longer lives have produced new areas of temptation for many men and women.

2. The mid- life crisis 40 to 55, is a time when many marriages have broken down.

- a. In Mal.2v14-17., God severely warns men who forsake their wives to go after younger, prettier woman.
- b. The hormone changes of menopause can sometimes greatly reduce sexual desire, and so cause marital problems.
- c. The departure of children can leave a big hole in some people's lives, which they try to fill by unlawful relationships.
- d. The mid-life crisis can be a fact with people who have disappointed work and marital ambitions, and because they fail to find happiness and fulfilment in their lives, go after extra marital relationships to try and fill the emptiness of their lives.

3. Domination by fleshly desires and affairs with other people outside of the marriage.

- a. The harlot, some of the Corinthian Christians fell to this temptation. 1Cor.6v13-20. The frustrated single or married woman.
- b. Some lustful or ambitious males or females make determined efforts to seduce their work-mates or associates.
- c. The increased spare time that some people enjoy, leads many of them into temptation and sin like David. People with time on their hands can fall into temptation, Satan usually finds work for idle hands to do. Watch the flesh. Rom.6 and 7.

4. At the opposite end of the scale, there is the too busy husband or wife.

Some people are so busy in their work and social life that they fail to communicate or show affection to their partner. Exhaustion through overwork, and the consequent ill-health, can also cause nerves to be frayed and tempers to be on a short fuse, many marriages have broken up through the friction arising from these causes. Trying to get to the top in the rat race, and career orientated living, can cause friction and marital problems. There can be frustration due to the pressure of management, or from management, and this can cause emotional instability, and bring pressure on the home.

5. Financial and unemployment pressures.

Many marriages are breaking up because bitter men take their frustrations out on their wives, until they can take no more.

6. Difficult partners who make life a misery for their partners often cause marriage break-ups.

- a. Job's wife exhorted Job to curse God, because of the great evils that had befallen them. Job.2v9,10.
- b. Abigail's husband, the foolish Nabal. 1Sam.25v2-38. Beware of making a similar wrong choice of partner.

c. Samson's choice of wife caused him real problems, and Delilah cost him his eyes and life. Judges.14v1 to 16v31.

7. Sometimes an unbelieving partner is unwilling to live with a Christian. 1Cor.7v15.

Paul and Peter give valuable commands and advice on how Christians should act when they have an unbelieving partner.

a. Paul's advice and commands.

In 1Cor.7v12-16., Paul goes into the problems that can arise when a Christian is married to an unbeliever. Paul directs Christians to stay with their unbelieving partners if it is at all possible, for a Christian partner sanctifies the marriage, and they may save their husband or wife if they act in a kind and loving way. They should not leave, or drive away, their partner.

b. Peter's advice and directions.

In 1Pet.3v1,2., Peter states that Christian wives must be in subjection to their unconverted husbands, and not preach at them, but should win them without a word by the thoughtful way that they live. In 1Pet.3v3-6., Peter stresses the need for a gentle and quiet spirit, he says that outward beauty, like plaiting hair, wearing jewellery, or fine clothes, does not make a woman beautiful, but the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit does, and is in God's eyes, beyond price. The beauty of caring love is to be shown to an unconverted husband. "Meek," is the adjective "praus," which means meek, or gentle. In Mt.5v5., Jesus said that a gentle humility and patient submissiveness brings true blessedness. Jesus is gentle, "praus," "and lowly, "tapeinos," in heart, and as we accept His invitation to come to Him, we will find rest and recreation, "anapausis," in His lowly-minded gentle love. Mt.11v28-30. Jesus will never be hard with a burdened or broken seeker, He will give us his kind and easy, "chrestos," yoke. In Numb.12v3., God said that Moses was the meekest man on the face of the earth, he was certainly not weak. "Meekness," is the noun "prautes," it signifies not merely outward behaviour, but an inner quality of disposition and a fruit produced in us by the Holy Spirit, it is closely connected with "tapeinophrosune," humility. Eph.4v2. Col.3v12. Zeph.3v12. Meekness is the gentleness of strength under the control of love, we need to manifest this fruit of the Spirit in our marriages.

In Isaiah.53v7., the enormous strength and gentleness of Christ are seen in his silence before his bitter enemies, "He was afflicted yet he opened not his mouth. He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before his shearers is dumb so He opened not his mouth." We see the flawless strength of the character of Jesus; His gentle kindness controlled His mighty spiritual power. We read in 1Peter.2v23., "Who when he was reviled, reviled not again: when He suffered He threatened not; but committed himself to Him that judgeth righteously." This is true meekness. Let us seek the Lord for grace to help us to imitate Him in our relationships in our homes. Meekness is needed so that we are not provoked by others, a quiet spirit, "estuchios," is needed so that we do not provoke others. This meek and quiet spirit is essential in the husband, as well as the wife, if there is going to be harmony in our marriages, and they are going to be preserved from friction and breaking up. Jesus said that God ordered Moses to institute divorce, "Because of the hardness of your hearts." "Hardheartedness," "sklerocardia," speaks of a heart that is dried up, "skleros," and is hard and tough. Love that manifests itself in a meek and quiet spirit is the divine antidote to this hardness of heart. Mt.19v8. On judgement day Jesus will tell the truth about us, and our marriage relationships, and He will have very strong words to say to cruel and hardhearted partners.

8. THE WORKS OF THE FLESH ARE THE REAL CAUSE OF MARITAL PAIN.

The works of the flesh are the real cause of marital pain, marriage breakdowns and divorce, they go beyond domination by fleshly desires, and physical attractions to other people outside of marriage, to other very destructive aspects of character that destroy marriage relationships. Rom.8v1-4. Jesus is still in the business of saving and healing our marriage relationships.

Paul's missionary tours brought him into contact with the total moral and spiritual corruption in the Greek and Roman world. Some measure of marital fidelity and purity was the expected norm in the early days of Rome, but when Rome conquered Greece, the debased Greek moral standards corrupted Roman life, and immorality became the established custom and practice. In Greece, there was no shame over sexual immorality, either before or after marriage. The Greek practice of husbands having cultured and sophisticated mistresses, and wives having extra marital male lovers, became the norm in Rome. All kinds of sexual depravity corrupted all of society from high to low. The wife of Emperor Claudius, the Empress Messalina, was notorious for her immorality; she frequently stole out of the royal palace to at night to serve in a public brothel; no prostitute could match her capacity or endurance, she was always the last to leave. In Rome sexual depravity manifested itself in the most appalling numbers of divorces and remarriages, and in men's treatment and attitude towards women, and the rights of women within marriage and over divorce. In Rome, women had no legal rights, a man could tell his wife to go and divorce her, just when he felt like it. Juvenal records that one woman had eight husbands in five years. Jerome tells of a woman who was the twenty first wife of her husband, and he was her twenty third husband. The Greek Plato said, "A bad man's fate would be reincarnation as a woman." God's Law did not allow this evil and contemptuous attitude to women, or the easy multiple divorce that was practised by the heathen, women had definite rights under the Law; even the right of divorce for ill-treatment and partiality in a polygamous marriage. Exod.21v10,11. (Even a guilty wife could find mercy. Deut.24v1-4.) God is very angry with men who divorce their wives when they lose their beauty as they get older, and warns that He will

not accept the offering of those who deal treacherously with "the wife of their youth" in this way. Mal.2v14-17. Peter emphasises the same point in 1Pet.3v7..

Dreadful unnatural vice in the form of incest and homosexuality was rampant every-where in both Greek and Roman society. Caligula committed habitual incest with his sister Drusilla, and Nero even violated his own mother, Agrippina. It was common talk that Socrates and Plato were "content with the love of boys," and Plato's work on homosexual love, his "Symposium" 178 D, confirms this. The whole of Greek society was riddled and corrupted by homosexuality, and Rome became corrupted by this "national disease of Greece." Gibbon tells us that Claudius was the only one among the first fifteen Emperors, "whose taste in love was entirely correct." Nero went through a marriage service, and had a marriage procession in Rome, with a castrated youth named Sporus. Emperor Hadrian had his homosexual partner Antonius deified, after his death through drowning. The depravity in society was so appalling, that even pagan writers and historians were disgusted by it. When Satan offered Jesus the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them, there was only filth on offer under the tinsel and show. In Greece and Rome it was normal for prostitution to be connected with religion. In Corinth, a thousand so called "sacred prostitutes," came down each night from the Temple of Aphrodite, to practice their seductions; and immorality with them was looked upon as a sacred duty. Our Lord told Paul in a vision, "I have many people in this city," Acts.18v8-11., and it is a remarkable fact that Paul had a mighty revival in this evil and corrupt city of Corinth. The Greek city of Corinth was probably the most corrupt city in the world; but the preaching of the Gospel brought deliverance to those held captive with sexual and moral problems. Paul's cure for the Corinthians was the preaching of Christ crucified, confirmed by mighty signs and wonders. 1Cor.2v1-4. 2Cor.12v12. It is essential to note that God's restraining hand on evil spirits, has meant that only a small minority of the Heathen have been demon possessed, even though they have been so utterly depraved in their living.

A. SEXUAL SINS.

1. ADULTERY. "Moicheia."

"Moicheia," occurs in Mt.15v19. Mk.7v21. Jn.8v3. (and Gal.5v19. in the Majority Text); and "moichos," which occurs in Lk.18v11. 1Cor.6v9. Heb.13v4. (and Jam.4v4. in the Majority Text); describes someone who has intercourse with the husband or wife of another person. "Moichalis," an adulteress, occurs in Mt.12v39. 16v4. Mk.8v38. Rom.7v3. Jam.4v4. and 2Pet.2v14. Adultery is a common sin today and it has caused the breakdown of untold millions of marriages. However, it is essential to note that Jesus showed wonderful mercy and forgiving grace to the woman of Samaria, and the woman taken in adultery. Jn.4v1-29. 8v1-11. Our Lord's name is Jesus, "Jesus," a transliteration of the Hebrew, "Joshua," which means, "Yahweh is salvation, or Yahweh is the Saviour," Jesus came to save and restore, not to condemn, and He has forgiven and restored untold millions of marital failures, and this is still His present ministry today. Jn.3v16,17.

2. SEXUAL IMMORALITY. "Porneia."

"Porneia," is used for all kinds of unlawful sexual uncleanness, and includes homosexuality as well as fornication and harlotry. A "porne" is a prostitute and "porneia" speaks of sexual love that is not love at all, but merely a selfish gratification of lust. In sharp contrast to this is true Biblical love and marriage, where each partner manifests constant genuine practical care and tenderness towards the other partner. Relationships in Christian marriage should be like that between Christ and His Church. Eph.5v24-29. Col.3v18,19. Lust defiles the personality, but true love, and the correct use of sexual powers, produces an enlargement of the soul and spirit and true worship of God.

Paul warned the Corinthians, that many of them had been sick, and others had died by divine discipline because of their unclean living. 1Cor.11v29-32. The man who committed incest with his father's wife, was disciplined by handing him over to Satan for the destruction of his body; however, a real repentance caused mercy to be shown and judgement to be withdrawn, and the man was welcomed back into fellowship. 1Cor.5v1-5. 2Cor.2v4-11. 7v8-16. The cure was discipline by exclusion from the Church fellowship, and possible judgement and execution by God, if there was no repentance. God loves and cares for His Church, and His chastenings are intended to spiritually benefit those who are under discipline, and purify and protect His Church from evil. 1Cor.11v32. Paul urged and commanded the Corinthians to flee from sexual impurity, because those who did such things would not inherit the kingdom of God. 1Cor.6v9-20. 2Cor.12v20,21.

Paul told the Greek Thessalonians that they must totally abstain from sexual impurity, 1Thes.5v3-5.; and the Colossians to mortify the sins of the flesh, and to put on the new man. Col.3v5-14. These were totally new ideas to the nations that Paul went to preach to, for pandering to the evil desires of the flesh was the norm. Paul's message to these people was salvation and victory in Jesus. The cleansing blood, and risen life of Christ, gave them, and still gives us, the power to live in purity, and in victory over the flesh.

3. UNCLEANNESS. "Akatharsia."

"Akatharsia," speaks of moral impurity. It is used in the papyri to describe the dirt in a filthy house, and pus from an infected wound. In the Septuagint it is used of an unclean immoral woman in Hos.2v10.; the ceremonial and moral uncleanness that stops a person approaching God in Lev.18v19. 22v3.; and the moral uncleanness that destroys a person or nation in Micah.2v10. and Prov.6v16.. "Akatharsia," speaks of a corrupt person whose whole personality is defiled by filthiness in word thought and deed, and who glories in that corruption and filthiness. There is a great deal of uncleanness in the world today, it is poisoning millions of marriages; many

people have been deceived by the lie of the Devil that that fulfilment comes through uncleanness, when the truth is that true fulfilment and happiness can only come through purity and genuine "agape" love.

4. SHAMELESS ABANDONED SENSUALITY. "Aselgeia."

"Aselgeia," speaks of shameless wantonness and lasciviousness. It describes someone who is audacious, insolent and violent, totally undisciplined and debased, and completely controlled by sensual desire. They have a total absence of sympathy, and are completely indifferent to the feelings and opinions of others. They have no desire to repent of their sin, or hide sin; and they openly applaud immorality. This is the shameless total abandonment to evil seen in Rom.1v32..

N.B.1. There is a progression and climax of evil in these words. "Moicheia," is infidelity in marriage. "Porneia," includes all sexual uncleanness, and unnatural sexual perversion. "Akatharsia" shows the spreading defilement and deterioration of the whole personality. "Aselgeia" speaks of shameless total abandonment to evil. These words describe the worst of sexual immorality, and the total depravity of personality; however, Paul did not say that these people were possessed, he says that this was a result of allowing the flesh to dominate the life. We know that Satan can use and incite the desires of the flesh; however, Paul blames this total depravity of soul on people's desire for indulgence in the sins of the flesh. Some people don't need much help from the Wicked One to be really evil, they just wallow in the sins of the flesh. The sexual sins that we have considered dominated the cities of Tyre, Sidon and Sodom; Jesus said the cure for this evil was mighty signs and wonders that would convict and compel them to repentance and faith. Mt.11v20-24. Lk.10v13. Rom.15v18-21.

N.B. 2. Some preachers foolishly say these works of the flesh are demons, and try to exorcise them from almost everybody they pray for. They give the works of the flesh such names as, a spirit of anger, a spirit of lust, a spirit of homosexuality, and many other such names. This cannot be correct, for nowhere in the Scriptures do we find any evil spirit being named in this way, nor anyone being exorcised of moral problems. "A spirit of divination," can be exorcised, but you cannot exorcise the sins of the flesh. Acts.16v16. It is impossible to cast out the flesh, it has to be conquered by repentance, walking in the Spirit and self discipline. Gal.5v16,24. Paul ascribes moral problems to "the works of the flesh," and "an evil heart of unbelief." Heb.3v12. People **corrupt themselves** and wilfully welcome the dominion of the flesh, and the corruptions of the world, the flesh, and the Devil. Exod.32v6,7,25. Deut.9v12. Rom.1v18-32. 3v11-23. Eph.2v1-3.

Some people ascribe physical sickness to demons; however, only a small fraction of sickness is due to demon possession. Jesus did cast out a spirit that made a person dumb in Mt.9v32,33 Mk.9v17-25. Lk.11v14., and healed a person blind and dumb by casting out an evil spirit. Mt.12v22. The woman in Lk.13v11., with "a spirit of infirmity," was not exorcised by Jesus, He laid His hands on her and healed her. Satan had bound her with sickness for eighteen years by attacking her body with evil power; she was not possessed by a demon, no more than Job was when he was attacked by Satan in his body. In Mt.4v23,24., we see that epilepsy, lunacy, and ordinary sickness is distinguished from demon possession and exorcism.

N.B. 3. Paul exhorts Christians to "mortify" and "put off the old man and his evil deeds and put on the new man and agape love," and "to put on the Lord Jesus Christ." Eph.4v22-25. Col.3v5-17. Rom.13v14. We put off the old life by an act of repentance, and obtain victory over the works of the flesh through the "law of the Spirit and life in Christ." Through Christ's atoning blood and His life and intercessions, we can be set free from "the law of sin and death," and the "righteousness of the Law can be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Rom.8v1-4. Paul achieved victory over the flesh through the grace of God, and by exercising self-discipline, and a transfigured renewed mind; 1Cor.9v24-27. Rom.12v2.; and victory over Satan by putting on God's armour. Rom.13v12. Eph.6v11. Paul commended the Corinthians for their repentance and godly sorrow, which brought deliverance from evil in their lives. 2Cor.7v1,8-11. Walking with God will transform our marriages, and preserve them from the disruptions and pain caused by the works of the flesh. Gen.5v22-24. Heb.11v5.

B. SINS OF FALSE RELIGION.

1. IDOLATRY. "Eidolatreia."

Idolatry is the worship of images and things before God. Paul deliberately placed idolatry immediately after sexual perversion, because it was the desire for immoral living that produced idolatry, people wanted gods that condoned immorality. Israel made a golden calf so that they could run riot in the sins of the flesh. Paul tells us that sexual powers wrongly used end up in idolatry, and making idolatry of sex, and the worship of the creature instead of the Creator. Rom.1v16-22. Paul states that demons are behind idolatry. 1Cor.10v20. Heathen idols were often horrendously ugly, Diana (Artemis) of the Ephesians was a really ugly black squat idol covered with many breasts. False religion in the form of idolatry and occultism, were among the major opponents of the early Church. Many Christians were executed by the Roman state, because they would not worship the Emperor as God. The world today has its idols, it worships its film stars and pop idols, sex and material things. Our Lord told us not to be anxious, for life's material necessities will be added to us if we seek first the kingdom of Heaven. Mt.6v25-34. Lk.12v22-34. The evils of idolatry, witchcraft, and sorcery have always been the enemies of marriage, they always destroy marital happiness; covetousness is idolatry of worldly things, and it has the very same result. Col.3v5.

2. SORcery AND WITChCRAFT. "Pharmakeia."

"Pharmakon," was a drug and, "pharmakeia," the use of drugs. The noun "pharmakeia" occurs in Gal.5v20. Rev.9v21. 18v23.. "Sorcerer," "pharmakus," occurs in Rev.21v8.; and "pharmakos," in Rev.22v15.. "Mageia," "sorceries," in Acts.8v11. and "mageuo," "sorcery," in Act8v9.. "Magos," is translated as "sorcerer" in Acts.13v6,8.; and the plural "magi," as "wise men" in Mt.2v1,7,16. Sorcery and witchcraft in Paul's time were very similar to their modern equivalents; images of people were made and destroyed, and curses were put upon people by invoking the powers of darkness. In Paul's time, magic, divination, astrology and the occult powers mentioned in Deut.18v10-22., were commonly practised. People were full of fear, and used amulets and charms in an effort to protect themselves from witchcraft, sorcery, magical spells and the evil eye. The value of the books on magic burned in the revival at Corinth was about £50,000, which shows how rife magical practices were in Paul's time. Acts.19v19. These occult practices were one of the main obstacles to the spread of the Gospel in the early Church, and this is why miracles were needed to confirm the truth of the Gospel. Philip and Paul compelled the Gentiles to believe in Jesus, by doing greater miracles than the servants of Satan. Acts.8v4-13. 13v6-12. 18v11-20. Rom.15v18-21.

N.B. 1. Paul tells us that people go into idolatry, witchcraft and sorcery, because they want a belief that will allow them to indulge in the sins of the flesh. If people wilfully reject God and righteousness, God gives them up to a reprobate mind and the lusts that they desire. Rom.1v18-32. N.B.v24,26,28. However, God's amazing love and protecting mercy is still around His creation, and His mighty hand restrains the powers of darkness to a great extent. 2Thes.2v7. This is why only a few worldly people have been possessed by evil spirits, even when they worship idols and been addicted to charms and occultism.

N.B. 2. God's children and their homes are protected from curses put upon them by occultists, for God's guiding eye and power protects Christian homes from Satan's malice. Numb.23v23. Ps.32v8-11. 1Pet.1v4-8. When Balaam tried to curse Israel by sorcery, God would not allow it, and made Balaam pronounce blessing on Israel. Numb.22v5,6. 23v8,23. Balaam was greedy for Balak's promise of wealth, he knew that God's anger would come against Israel if they went into evil, so Balaam told Balak to send in many of the beautiful women of Moab to corrupt Israel by immorality and idolatry. Rev.2v14. Numb.31v15,16. Satan still uses the same ploy today to break up people's marriages. Balaam's plan was successful, but it did not profit him, he died under divine judgement, fighting the people of God. Jude.v11. Josh.13v22. Rev.2v14. The Egyptian sorcerers Jannes and Jambres, who opposed Moses, even turned sticks into snakes by the power of Satan. However they found themselves out-miracled by Moses, and on the receiving end of divine judgement, when they tried to resist and oppose God. 2Tim.3v8. Exod.7v11,12,22. 8v7,18,19. 9v11. Witchcraft and sorcery are repeatedly condemned and forbidden in the Scriptures; God warns that eternal punishment awaits all occultists who do not repent of their evil practices. Ex.22v18. Deut.18v10-22. Is.2v6. 47v9,12. 57v3. Jer.27v9. Dan.2v2,27. Mic.5v12. Mal.3v5. Rev.9v21. 21v8. 22v15.

C. SINS RELATED TO PERSONAL, HOME, SOCIAL, AND CHURCH LIFE.

Many attitudes that ruin and destroy marriages are here described.

1. ENMITIES. "Exthrai."

Millions of marriages that started with affection have ended in hostility and enmity. "Echthros," is an enemy, "exthrai," is enmity, personal animosities and quarrels. It only occurs three times in the New Testament, all of them in Paul's writings. Paul writes in Gal.5v20., that it is one of the works of the flesh. In Rom.8v7. he states, "The mind which is only interested in carnal things is hostile to God." Finally Paul tells us in Ephes.2v14-16., that the Law of God was the reason for the enmity between Jew and Gentile, and that the cross of Jesus is the means by which God has reconciled Jew and Gentile, and put to death the enmity between them. Enmity is the driving force behind class and racial prejudice, and the Jews were badly polluted by it, they said that the Gentiles were on a level with the forbidden unclean animals, and were fuel for the flames of Hell, and hated by the Almighty. Peter, like all Jews, was poisoned by these evil ideas, and would not even eat with a Gentile; God taught him differently through a remarkable vision, in which He commanded Peter not to call God-fearing Gentiles unclean, because they were acceptable to Him. The lesson was completed by meeting the remarkable godly Gentile Cornelius, and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon him and his godly praying friends. Acts.10v1-48. 11v1-7.

2. VARIANCE, FIGHTINGS, STRIFE. "Eris," plural, in the Majority Text.

"Eris," speaks of contention, variance, strife, and dissension. Enmity, "exthrai," is a state of mind; whereas, strife, "eris," is the product and manifestation of that hostile mind. "Eris," occurs in Rom.1v29. 13v13. 1Cor.1v11. 3v3. 2Cor.12v20. Gal.5v20. Phil.1v15. 1Tim.6v4. Tit.3v9. It is one of the evils of the heathen world, which should not be seen among Christians. Rom.1v29. 13v13. Paul uses "eris" three times when he laments the real and deep hatred and quarrellings between the sects and parties in the Church at Corinth. 1Cor.1v11. 3v3. 2Cor.12v20. Our Lord is also very sad when He sees His perfect ideal of happy marriage destroyed by strife and dissension.

In Phil.1v15., Paul warns us that enmity can even be the motivation for preaching the Gospel. What was true then, is true today, there can be bitter rivalry and strife between denominations. Christ is often preached and uplifted in evangelism to increase a denominations membership, rather than to meet people's needs and glorify Him. The same message can be preached, but the motivation can be entirely different; we can use our organisations with the pure motive to serve and uplift Christ, or we can uplift Christ with the impure motive of exalting and increasing our denominational or personal kingdoms. The parable of the workers in the vineyard

shows us that our motives for serving God will be "tried by fire" at the judgement seat of Christ. 1Cor.3v10-14. Mt.19v23. to 20v16. Jesus warns us that a hireling spirit, and wrong motives in serving God, will result in those who are first in the Church on earth, being last in God's kingdom. Mt.19v30. 20v16.

Rivalry, "eris," manifests itself in party spirit and doctrinal bigotry, it is seen when denominations become more important than God and people. Rivalry is the enemy of true Christian love and unity, for it divides up the body of Christ. The cure is not organic unity, but a true unity of the Spirit and love between all Christians. The powers of darkness try to foster party spirit in the Church for they know that this will effectively destroy the power of the Church. The approaching terrible end time trials will compel many Christians to forget their bigotry and party spirit, and make them fellowship in love and unity together.

3. JEALOUSIES. "Zeloi."

a. "Zeloi" is used in a good sense.

In the Septuagint of God's zeal; "The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this;" Is.9v7.; and the jealous dedicated love of God. Ezek.16v37,38. 23v25. It describes Christ's zeal for God and righteousness. Ps.69v9. Jn.2v17. It describes Paul's godly jealousy for the Corinthians, 2Cor.11v2., and their zeal for Paul, 2Cor.7v7., and the zeal in their repentance, 2Cor.7v11., and their zeal for the poor at Jerusalem. 2Cor.9v2.. The verb "zeloo" is used for zeal for spiritual gifts in 1Cor.12v31. and 14v39..

b. "Zeloi" is used in a bad sense.

Paul uses "zelos" of his own and the Jews misguided "zeal for God," and the Law. Rom10v2. Phil.3v6. In Rom.13v12,13. Paul warned the Corinthians that jealousy is an evil work of the flesh; and a proof of the domination of the old nature, and told them that he feared that it could return. 1Cor.3v3. 2Cor.12v20. Jealousy cannot stand the light and glory of Christ's holy presence. Jealous suspicion has poisoned and even destroyed many marriage relationships and marriages.

4. PASSIONATE EXPLOSIONS OF ANGER. "Thumoi."

"Thumos," occurs in Lk.4v28. Acts.19v28. Rom.2v8. 2Cor.12v20. Gal.5v20. Eph.4v31. Col.3v8. Heb.11v27. Rev.12v12. 14v8,10,19. 15v1,7. 16v1,19. 18v3. 19v15. It speaks of "stirring emotions," then, "a flair up of temper," or "passionate explosive outbursts of anger. "Thumos" anger is "great but transient anger," and is "like fire in straw;" which distinguishes it from "orge" anger; which is a long-lasting anger which is cherished in the memory. "Orge" is used to speak of God's weighed judicial verdict; His anger of justice. Rom.1v18. Eph,5v6. Col.3v6. Rev.6v16,17. 11v18. etc.

a. "Thumos," can be used of anger in a good sense, of righteous indignation.

"Thumos" is used to speak of God's righteous anger in His judgmental acts in the Great Tribulation, and on the great day of His wrath at Christ's coming. However, Paul states that anger, "orge," and wrath, "thumos," now rests upon all those who are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness. Rom.2v8. Our Lord's anger in Mt.23, shows that it is very necessary to be angry at injustice and evil; anger can be an instrument of God's purposes; indeed it is a sin not to be angry at times. God's "thumos" anger springs from His "agape" love; and gives us a revelation of His heart and mind, and His great concern and care for His creation. We too, can be angry "orgizo," and yet not sin, but get rid of it before sundown. Eph.4v26.

b. "Thumos," can speak of outbursts of uncontrolled harmful rage.

"Thumos" anger, and "orge" anger, and bitterness, clamour, evil speaking and malice, are to be put away from us; and are to be replaced by tender-hearted forgiving love. Eph.4v31,32. The "thumos," explosive temper; and the "orge," brooding anger; are to be "put off," with the other evil works of the flesh. Col.3v8. Jesus said that if we are angry with our brother without cause, we are liable to judgement. Mt.5v22. In 2Cor.12v20., Paul states his fear that he would find outbursts of anger in the church at Corinth, along with other works of the flesh. Violent outbursts of anger injure the weak and innocent, and destroy homes and churches. Many marriages have been destroyed by "thumos" outbursts of anger in the home, and by smouldering "orge" anger inside marital partners. Root them out, and get them gone.

5. STRIFE, SELFISH AMBITION.. "Eritheia."

Selfish worldly ambition has destroyed a great many marriages. "Eritheia," means literally, "working for hire," and is from "erithos," "one who works for hire;" it is used in the sense of one who can be bought, or bribed. Some say it speaks of a self-seeking person, and selfishness. Others think it speaks of factions, and party rivalry, a person whose allegiance can be bought for advantage. Wordsworth says; "The word "eritheia" is from "erithos," "a labourer for hire" (from root "erdo"), 1. "a mercenary;" and 2. one who "hires himself" to a cabal for "party purposes:" and therefore signifies, 3. "a venal partisan;" such as the "factions" of gladiators, and other ruffians hired by rival candidates at elections to intimidate the voters in the Roman forum." Aristotle uses the verb "eritheuesthai," to speaks of the self-seeking pursuit of office by unfair means, a corrupt personal ambition for power, without any concern for the welfare of the people. Aristotle said this practice could lead to revolutions; it can certainly lead to the break-up of marriages.

Paul uses "eritheia" five times, Rom.2v8. 2Cor.12v20. Gal.5v20. Phil.1v16,17. 2v3., and James twice. James.3v14,16. Paul uses it in the context of party spirit and divisions within the churches. In 2Cor.12v20., Paul feared that party spirit was a sin that defiled the Corinthian Church. In Phil.1v16,17., Paul criticises the

competitive party spirit of some preachers. In Phil.2v3., Paul exhorts us not to do anything from ambition, or vain glory, but to follow Christ's wonderful example of self-renunciation and humility. In Gal.5v20., Paul warns that "eritheia" is a dangerous work of the flesh, and in James.3v14,16., James warns it produces "every evil work." In Rom.2v8., Paul uses "eritheia," of worldly people whose self-seeking unrighteous ambition stops them from obeying the truth. This scrambling after wealth, honour, position, and power, has disastrous effects in churches and homes, as well as the world. Rackham says the meaning is "election intrigue;" which would well describe the power politics and worldly attitudes which have often corrupted church organisations. Paul is speaking of a self-seeking ambitious person, who seeks after power and office, not with the thought of loving service, but for personal and party profit and prestige. Selfish ambition ruined Satan, and it has ruined many Christians and churches, and destroyed many marriages. Is.14v12-20.

6. DIVISIONS. "Dichostasia;"

Unity of purpose in the home is as important as unity in the Church, a permanent state of friction and disunity is almost certain to produce a breakdown in marriage. Division is due to domination by the flesh. "Dichostasia," means "splits in two," or "a standing apart," from "dicha," "asunder," and "stasis," "apart." It speaks of a state of acute and settled division, which destroys the unity of Christ's body, or a marriage. In the New Testament, "dichostasia" only occurs in Paul's writings. In Rom.16v7., Paul warns the Roman Christians to mark and avoid those who cause divisions. Divisions in the Church may seem to be due to theological controversy, class and race hatred, and religious bigotry; however, the real cause is domination by the carnal nature, and failure to mature spiritually. In 1Cor.3v1-3., Paul states that the divisions in the Corinthian church were due to carnality and spiritual infancy, and this is the real cause of divisions in the home.

7. HERESIES. "Haireseis;"

Many marriages have been ruined because the partners in a marriage have refused to give each other space to observe their religious, or secular preferences. The English word "heresies," is a transliteration of the Greek word "haireseis;" the English word speaks of false doctrine which is opposed to orthodox truth; whereas "haireseis," means "choosings, preferences," and is derived from "haireomai," or "haireo," "to choose, to select." See Phil.1v22. 2Thes.2v13. Heb.2v25. It can be used for either a good or bad choice, or preference. In the New Testament, "hairesis" usually speaks of a form of opinion, and is used in the sense of a sect; the sect of the Sadducees, Acts.5v7.; the sect of the Pharisees, Acts.15v5. and 26v5.; of Christians, as the sect of the Nazarenes, Acts.24v5.; which in Acts.24v14., Paul says his enemies contemptuously called heresy, "haireisin." In Acts.28v22., the Jews at Rome said to Paul, "concerning this sect, "hairesis," we know that it is everywhere spoken against." The plural "haireseis," is used to speak of preferences or choosings which cause division in the church. In 1Cor.11v19., "heresies," could be "sects," a separation on doctrinal lines. Christians can have different preferences and different doctrinal views, and yet remain in perfect love and accord. However, intellectual differences can lead to the actual separation of Christians from one another, and this is what Paul is thinking of in Gal.5v20., and 1Cor.11v19.. This difference of opinion, "hairesis," can lead to actual schism, "schisma," in the body of Christ; and even to "damnable heresies," that destroy the soul, and fragment the Church. These preferences have divided homes, and ruined marriage relationships. 2Pet.2v1.

8. ENVYINGS. "Phthonoi."

Envy is even more destructive in family relationships than jealousy. Jealousy, "zelos," casts hostile grudging looks; "phthonos," "envy," is more malignant than jealousy, it has arrived at the stage of hostile acts. It is grief at another person's good fortune; it is not just the pain that they do not possess their good fortune or blessings; but the bitterness that the other person does. It is not so much the desire for what another person has; it is the desire to take away from another what they have, or prevent them from possessing it. "Zelos," "jealousy," can sometimes speak of noble ambition, and desire for something good, as well as a covetous evil desire; whereas. "phthonos," "envy," can only speak of a bitter ill will. It is not just the pain over an enemy's good fortune; it is the grief over a friend's good fortune. The jealousy, "zelos," of the Jews led to the active opposition of the more malignant "phthonos," "envy;" and caused them to murder Jesus. Though Judas became possessed by Satan, it is not recorded that any of the leaders of Israel became possessed, the evil jealousy and envy in their hearts drove them to oppose and murder Jesus. Mk.2v5-7,16,23,24. 3v1,2. 15v10. Mt.27v18.

"Phthonoi," occurs in the Majority Text, in the works of the flesh in Gal.5v19-22.; Paul uses it in Rom.1v29., to speak of one of the sins which people are filled with when they choose not to retain God in their knowledge; and in Phil.1v15,16., of some who preached Christ to spite Paul, and tried to hinder his ministry. We are warned against this dangerous sin. 1Tim.6v4. Tit.3v3. 1Pet.2v1. (Gal.5v26. "phoneo"). The envy that drives one to keep up with the Jones's can lead to tragic circumstances.

9. MURDERS. "Phonoi."

Envy and strife has led to a large number of murders in families throughout the centuries. The alliterative reading, "phthonoi phonoi," "envy, murder," occurs in a large majority of texts and versions in Gal.5v21., and Paul also uses this combination in Rom.1v29.; and it is not without reason; for envy has caused war in world history, and murder in families, as we see in the case of Cain and Abel. Gen.4v1-10. James.3v14 to 4v6. Pilate knew that Israel's religious leaders had murdered Jesus out of envy. Mt.27v18. Mk.15v10.

10. DRUNKENNESS. "Methe."

Paul warns us that drunkards will not inherit God's kingdom, and we are not even to eat with them. Lk.21v34. 1Cor.5v10,11. Untold millions of marriages and homes have been destroyed, and are still suffering today from drunkenness. It causes physical and psychological injury to wives and children, financial deprivation, stress, anxiety and fear. Paul said he would not drink wine if it caused anyone to stumble, this is an important principle. Prov.20v1. Rom.14v21. 1Cor.8v9,13. Social drinking with unbelievers is very dangerous. 1Cor.6v9 to 7v1. It is true that Jesus drank wine with perfect self-control. Mt.11v19. Lk.7v34. However, Jesus warns us that drunkenness will stop us from being prepared for His coming, and will end in eternal punishment. Mt.24v48-51. Lk.21v34. Also see Prov.20v1. Is.28v7. Ezek.23v33. 39v19.

11. RIOTOUS ORGIES AND FEASTING. "Komos."

Paul also uses "methē," "drunkenness," and "komos," "riotous feasting," in Rom.13v13., the only other place where they occur together in the New Testament. Paul was speaking, not of a celebration, but of total debauchery, orgies and blasphemous riotous feasting; like Belshazzar's feast. Dan.5v1-31. In 1Pet.4v3., Peter also warns against this "revelling and banqueting." Orgies still occur today, and even ordinary parties often lead to immorality and the break-up of marriages.

12. AND SUCH LIKE. Paul states that the list could be extended, it is comprehensive, but not exhaustive.

THE MEANS TO SELF CONTROL IN THE CHRISTIAN.

a) Through legitimate fulfilment of proper desire. "Let them marry." 1Cor.7v2,7-9.

b) Through the means of grace, fasting, prayer, fellowship and God's Word.

c) Through a life of love and service that fulfils and satisfies.

d) Through crucifying the flesh through the fullness and presence of the Holy Spirit, and the law of the Spirit and life in Christ. Rom.8v1-3. Gal.2v20,21. In Gal.5v24., Paul tells us, "They that they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts." The cure for the works of the flesh is repentance, crucifixion of the flesh, living in the Spirit, and the growth of the fruit of the Spirit. Gal.5v16-26.

e) Through considering the end of life and future reward, as Paul states in 1Cor.9v26,27., "Lest by any means, after that I had preached to others, I myself should be rejected." "Rejected," is "adokimos," "disapproved," it is used of metals, which are not up to standard, and are not sterling silver." Our marriage relationships will be tested and tried by God.

Some ascribe the works of the flesh to demon possession, however, these fleshly works can't be exorcised. those who replace the teaching of Paul with a false exorcism, give Christians the wrong medicine, and fail to solve their marriage problems.

6. DIVORCE AND REMARRIAGE.

Divorce in the Law was not just the idea of Moses, it was the command of God. If a partner was guilty of immorality, the innocent partner could divorce them instead of having them stoned for immorality. Divorce was also allowed for reasons other than immorality. Deut.24v1-4. Exod.21v10,11. Jesus said the basic cause of divorce was hardness of heart. The appalling level of divorce today declares that the hardness of heart that caused God to tell Moses to institute divorce in the Law, is even more prevalent today, and one shudders to hear that large numbers of ministers of the Gospel have been divorced. The pain and distress caused in the lives of married couples, and their children, by this large scale deviation from the perfect marriage pattern laid down by our heavenly Father, greatly grieves Him. God looks upon divorce, and the problems that cause it, as a tragedy, and as a breakdown of His divine purposes. The home and family has always been a prime target of Satan, for widespread divorce brings instability to a nation, and destroys its spiritual foundations.

1. God's perfect pattern and desire is one partner for life.

There can be no doubt that God desires one man and woman to be married together for life, and His attitude to divorce is clearly stated by our Lord in Mt.19v6-8., "What therefore God has joined together, let not man put asunder." This is confirmed by our Lord's words, "Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so." In Mal.2v14-17., God warned Israel in the strongest language possible against men dealing treacherously with the wives of their youth, and says that He hates the divorce of a partner for treacherous reasons. Woe betide those who do this, they will have to answer for it on the day of judgement.

2. The life of Jesus proves that mercy is available for all who have failed to live up to God's perfect plan.

Jesus was censured for welcoming and forgiving people with moral problems, His enemies said, "This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them." Lk.15v2. His merciful dealings with the Samaritan woman at the well, and the woman taken in adultery, prove that Jesus desires to forgive and restore people, not condemn them. Jn.4v1-30. 8v1-11. Many preachers today lack the restoring love and mercy that Jesus showed to people with broken lives and failed marital relationships. Their hard preaching has caused people with marital problems to come under extreme condemnation, and made them feel they were hopeless cases, and forsaken by God. God's understanding love, forgiving mercy, restoring grace, and wisdom, can restore these broken lives.

3 The subject of divorce and remarriage has been an area of considerable discussion and controversy.

There has been a wide divergence of opinion among Christian theologians about divorce. The complex questions it has raised has taxed the minds of theologians throughout history. The prejudices and traditions of theologians

have often obscured the clarity of the Biblical teaching about divorce and remarriage. All Scripture is God-breathed and inspired and profitable; it is breathed out by God, and breathed into by God. It is for correction, and instruction in righteousness, which means that it is to restore happiness to people, not destroy their happiness for ever. 2Tim.3v16. Discussion of the truths about divorce can be really profitable, and as spiritually releasing and delivering as any other truth, and can reveal the heart and great grace of God. Many people feel condemned over their divorce, they need the release from condemnation, that comes through a correct understanding of Biblical truth, and the realisation of the full and free forgiveness in Jesus. We will now consider some of the problems of legislating for divorce and the answers that God gives to these problems.

1. LOVE, NOT LEGISLATION, IS THE KEY TO MARRIAGE RELATIONSHIPS.

From the time of Moses to the present day, legislating for the complex problems of marriage relationships and divorce has proved very difficult, you cannot compel people to love each other. People fall short of God's perfect and highest ideals, because of the hardness, stubbornness, and perversity of their hearts. Mt.19v3-8. It is usually quite impossible to legislate happiness in a divorce situation. It is genuine love, not legislation, that will keep marriages together. The history of the world has clearly shown that it is impossible to correct human behaviour by legislation, or make people love one another by passing laws. Though the Law could not make people live to God's perfect and highest ideals; God, in His Law, regulated marriage and divorce, and prevented the evil excesses of the Heathen by strong legislation. The experiences of God's people proved that even this Divine legislation fails if people do not love one another; for it is only when people possess "agape" love that they will keep the Law of God and really care for each other.

2. GOD'S MERCY IN HIS LEGISLATION.

a. Is a divorced person, who has proved their emotional weakness, to be denied the spiritual safety of a good relationship, and be under a life-long ban against marriage? In 1Cor.7v2,9., Paul says that it is better to marry than to be aflame with an ungratified desire, for it can lead to immorality. This is as true for those who are divorced, as for those who are not married.

b. We can exclude mercy with a too legal approach, so in the law of God there was both severity and mercy. A partner could be stoned for infidelity, but in Deut.24v1-4., God said that the guilty party could be put away privately without being stoned, and said that even those who had been guilty of immorality, and had been divorced, could experience divine mercy and marry again. This was to give them the spiritual and moral security that was probably only possible for them in a stable marriage relationship. They were preserved from further immorality by divine mercy, the age of grace cannot be less merciful than the age of Law. We read in Deut.24v3,4., that if there was a second divorce, marriage to the previous husband was forbidden.

c. In Mt.19v9., Jesus states that the innocent divorced party can remarry without any thought of failure or sin, if the other partner has committed adultery. In 1Cor.7v15,39., Paul states that a Christian whose unbelieving partner had departed was no longer bound in marriage to them. In 1Cor.7v10-16., Paul makes a ruling on a Christian believer being married to an unbeliever, and in so doing makes it clear that our Lord's words on divorce in Mt.5v32. and 19v9., did not cover this situation. In 1Cor.7v27,28., Paul also informs us that those who have been loosed from a wife, that is, they have been divorced, have not sinned if they marry. "Sinned," is "hemartes," the aorist active indicative of "hamartano," literally, to miss the mark, and morally, to err, to sin.

3. DEDICATED LOVE, NOT PERMISSIVE MERCY, IS GOD'S IDEAL FOR MARRIAGE.

a. We should make it a rule to reject every sexual impulse and thought, which is outside pure Christian "agape" love.

b. Dedicated "agape" love, not permissive mercy, is God's ideal standard for marriage. It is very difficult to keep people from taking the lower standard of God's permissive will and act of mercy as the norm, instead of the original divine standard of one man and wife joined together by God for life. Many Christians have been corrupted by the low moral standards of the world, and by the worldlings attitude to easy divorce.

c. In the village where I was born, the first divorce there shocked and appalled the whole village. However, nowadays the sense of shock has gone, people have become hardened, and acceptance of immorality and divorce has become the norm. The consequences of this immorality has been an outbreak of diseases which threaten the very existence of mankind.

4. MERCY FOR THE MERCIFUL, STRICT JUSTICE FOR THE MERCILESS. James.2v13.

We have to avoid the two extremes of a hard legalistic approach and a lax careless approach, Jesus shows us the perfect example. We read in Ps.18v25,26., "With the kind and merciful you will show yourself kind and merciful; With an upright man you will show yourself upright; With the pure you will show yourself pure, and with the "ik-kale," the crooked, devious, froward and perverse you will show yourself "paw-thal," contrary and froward." In Mt.5v32. and 19v9., Jesus answered the hardhearted, froward and merciless Scribes and Pharisees, and their evil interpretation of Deut.24v1-4.. Many of them divorced their wives for almost anything, even trivial reasons, like cooking a bad meal, combing their hair in the street, or for talking too much. However, the real reason was often that the husband had seen and desired a prettier and younger woman. To these unmerciful, hard-hearted, and perverse Pharisees and their Scribes, Jesus gave a severe answer and the full severity of the Law. To those who were broken in spirit by their sin, and looking for mercy and grace, like the woman at the well, and the

woman taken in the act of adultery, Jesus gave a merciful answer. Jesus promised the Samaritan woman a fountain and well of living water springing up into everlasting life within her; He will do the same today. John.4v4-29. 8v1-11. There is mercy for people who have had marital failures. A return to the teaching of Jesus, and the love and holiness manifested in His early Church at Jerusalem, is the only thing that can produce lasting marital happiness, not a liberalisation of divorce laws that gives easy divorce.

5. GOD'S MERCY TO THOSE OUTSIDE OF THE COVENANTS OF LAW AND GRACE.

a. God is merciful to those who do not have the light of His truth, He winks at ignorance. Acts.17v30. It is not Scripturally correct to apply a Law given to the people of God, to someone who had a breakdown in marriage before they knew Jesus as their Saviour. Our Lord's word and attitude to the Samaritan woman at the well, give important light on His attitude to people whose marriages have failed before they come to know Him as their Saviour. Christ's dealings with this Samaritan woman, who had been "married" to six husbands, is critically important to any consideration of the subject of divorce.

b. When our Lord spoke to the woman at the well, He did not, and could not, unscramble her past relationships with six men; He offered His free forgiveness, and dealt with her present relationship. Jesus did not say that His living water was conditional upon her return to her first husband, this was almost certainly quite impossible. The Lord Jesus offered His New Covenant blessings to the Samaritan woman in spite of her past.

When, in John.4v16-19., the Lord Jesus said to the Samaritan woman, "Go call thy husband," the woman answered, "I have no husband." Our Lord saw through the double meaning of her words, and her deception, by revelation from His Father, as in Jn.1v48. 2v23-25. 5v20,30.. However, Jesus wanted to save her, not condemn her, so He kindly said, "You have well said, I have no husband. For you have had five husbands, and now he whom you have is not your husband. This is a true thing ("alethes") you have spoken," The noun "aner" ("andra"), can mean either "man," or "husband," the Samaritan woman had her "man," but he was not her "husband" in the full and legal sense of "aner." Our Lord's words, "Go call thy husband," seem to imply His acceptance of the present situation, and the recognition that this man was her husband, even if there had been no legal public marriage contract. Jesus did not attack her for her bad living, He came to save her from the misery of her sinful life, for He is the Saviour, who comes to save us from our sins. Mt.1v21-23. Jesus did not speak to her in a spirit of condemnation, The "must needs go," the Divine "dei" of John.4v4., shows that Jesus was directed and driven by His own and the Father's compassionate love for this needy woman, and the other Samaritans, who were burdened down with their sins.

The Jewish rabbinical teaching stated that a woman could be married only twice, or at the very most three times, and the Jews would have totally rejected this Samaritan woman, on all counts, but our Lord Jesus did not, He welcomed her into the New Covenant blessings and kingdom. This shows us that those who come to Jesus are freely forgiven all their previous marriage problems and are given a new start by God. Their marital sins are buried with Christ, with all their other sins, "Never to be remembered anymore." Rom.6v4. 2Cor.5v17-19. If we do not recognise this, we are in trouble with God, for if we do not accept God's forgiveness of others, and forgive them, God will not forgive us. Mk.11v26. Lk.17v1-4.

Wonderful grace of Jesus, greater than all our sin, making true worshippers of God in spirit and truth, out of the despised and rejected failures of the world. Jn.4v23-30,39-42. The despised harlot was the key to a great revival, and the whitened harvest fields being reaped. If we have a hard pharisaic attitude we will miss such great moves of the love, mercy and power of God.

6. SATAN IS VIOLENTLY HOSTILE TO WOMEN.

A great deal of the hostility toward women comes from Satan and the powers of darkness, as God said in Gen.3v15., "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed." The demon-dominated attitude of men towards women in the Gentile world, contributed a great deal to their attitude to divorce. Plato said, "A bad man's fate would be reincarnation as a woman." In Rome women had no legal rights, a man could tell his wife to go, and divorce her, just when he felt like it. Juvenal records that one woman had eight husbands in five years. Jerome tells of a woman who was the twenty first wife of her husband, and he was her twenty third husband.

The law of God did not allow this contemptuous and evil attitude to women, or the easy multiple divorce that was practised by the heathen, women had rights under the Law, and even the right of divorce for ill-treatment and partiality in a polygamous marriage. Deut.24v1-4. Exod.21v10,11. The children of the hated wife had full rights in the inheritance, and if the firstborn was the son of the hated wife, her son still had the firstborn's double portion of the inheritance. Deut.21v15-17. A man who falsely accused his wife of not being a virgin when he married her, was publicly whipped and fined 100 shekels, payable to her father. and was unable to divorce her at any time in the future. Deut.22v13-19. It is quite clear that God laid down real protection for women and their marriage rights in His Law.

7. THE DISGRACEFUL PERVERSION OF WOMEN'S RIGHTS IN OUR LORD'S TIME.

a. In our Lord's time the marriage rights of women that were laid down in the Law were being largely ignored, and the Scriptures perverted and twisted to justify lustful and corrupt men's evil attitudes to women. When the Lord Jesus started His ministry, He came to a down-trodden, ill-used, and male-dominated, female population.

In Israel women were being divorced for spoiling a meal by wrong seasoning, for eating food that had not been tithed, for combing their hair in public, for loud or constant talking in the home, or talking to another man; the real reason was often because the husband had seen and desired another younger or more beautiful woman. This perversion of the divorce laws stated in Deut.24v1-4., was taught by a Jewish Rabbi called Hillel, and many in Israel followed his teaching, rejecting the more Scriptural teaching of the Rabbi Shammai, who taught divorce should only be on the grounds of immorality, fornication and adultery.

b. God warns in Mal.2v14-17., that He hates the putting away of "the wife of the youth," and that He will bear witness against those who deal treacherously with the wife of their youth, the wife of their covenant. God states that it is an appalling sin to divorce a wife for failing looks, and God's anger and judgement rest upon those who divorce their wives for trumped up trivial reasons, so that they can go and obtain a younger and prettier wife.

c. In Mt.5v31,32. and 19v3-9., Jesus enters into the controversy over the correct exposition of "uncleanness" in Deut.24v1-4., "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for just any reason?" Jesus lifted the subject of divorce from a petty dispute between two schools of thought, to a real concern for people. Jesus states in Mt.5v32., that divorce should only be for unchastity, "parektos logou porneias," "except for a matter of unchastity," which is equivalent to the "me epi porneiai," "except for unchastity," of Mt.19v9.. Jesus clearly states that the innocent party can remarry without any sense of failure or sin.

d. In Mt.5v32., the words "causes her to commit adultery," are in the Majority Text, "poiei auten moichasthai;" "moichasthai" is the present infinitive of "moichaomai", "to commit or be guilty of adultery." However, Aleph, B, D, 13, 33, 124, 209, Theophilus of Antioch, A.D. 170-182.; Origen A.D. 185-254; Chrysostom of Constantinople, A.D. 397-407.; Theodoret of Cyprus, A.D.420-458. and the Critical Texts, read "moicheuthenai," the aorist infinitive passive of "moicheuo," and so could read "causeth her to suffer as an adulteress." In other words a guiltless woman, is punished and suffers in the same way as a guilty adulteress, for something as trivial as cooking an unsatisfactory meal, and had the grievous difficulty of making her way in life on her own. The men who caused this evil situation had committed a monstrous sin, and Jesus let them know it..

8. THE EVIL OUTCOME OF DIVORCE, "FOR EVERY REASON."

Marriage is a divine institution, and a divine command enforces and commends the preservation of marriage. A man and wife are made "one flesh," and God joins them together, and man is not to put them asunder. This permanence of marriage is seen in the example of the first parents. Mt.19v4-9. The evil effects of divorce "for every reason" are clearly perceived in Jewish, World and Church history. Mt.19v3.

a. As we have seen in Mt.5v32., some manuscripts have the aorist passive, "she suffers like an adulteress;" a completely innocent wife suffers just like a real adulteress, when God's Law is twisted and corrupted, and justice is perverted.

b. The children are hurt, and those who hurt children should remember that it is "better for them that a millstone be hung round their neck and they were drowned in the depth of the sea. Mt.18v1-14. N.B. v6.

c. Groundless divorce causes a spiritual pollution, it is a sin that comes out of the evil heart of men. Mk.7v21-23. Mt.19v9.

d. There is a certain judgement on adultery. Marriage is a precious thing and should be held in honour in all things, and the marriage bed is undefiled; but those guilty of sexual impurity and adultery God will judge. Heb13v4. Those who wilfully commit immorality will not inherit the kingdom of God. 1Cor.6v9-11. Gal.5v19-21. Rev.21v8. A fearful warning. However, see Ps.136v1., "O give thanks unto the Lord; for He is good: for His mercy endureth for ever." In 1Cor.6v9-11., Paul states that the unrighteous and immoral will not inherit the kingdom of God, and then states, "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." Believers in Jesus, "are washed, sanctified and justified in the name of Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God," from their past moral failures. The past IS buried when we come to Jesus and walk with Him. We read in Acts.13v39., "And by Him all that believe are justified from all things, from which they could not be justified by the Law of Moses." This includes divorce. In Mt.12v31,32., Jesus said, "All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men." Divorce is not an unforgiveable sin. James said that we are "judged by the law that gives freedom;" with the "mercy that rejoices over judgement." James.2v12,13.

TWO PEOPLE WHO COULD NOT DIVORCE UNDER THE LAW.

1. A man and woman who had intercourse before marriage, and neither was betrothed. Deut.22v28,29. The man had to marry the girl, and pay a 50 shekels fine to the father of the girl, and he could not divorce her. Neither death nor divorce was God's answer in this situation, the couple were directed to marry.

2. A man who falsely accuses his wife of not being a virgin when he married her, when her father produced the tokens of her virginity, the husband was publicly whipped and had to pay a 100 shekel fine to the woman's father, and he was not able to divorce her all his life. If the woman was found to be guilty, she was stoned to death for immorality. Deut.22v13-21.

N. B. "An offering of jealousy."

In Numb.5v11-31., we read that if a husband had doubts about his wife's faithfulness, but lacked any evidence to prove his suspicions, he could bring his wife to the priest with a meal offering, "an offering of jealousy, an offering of memorial, bringing iniquity to remembrance" made up of about 3 pints of barley. The woman was made to say, "Amen, amen," to "an oath of cursing," and she had to drink holy water mixed with some of the dust off the floor of the tabernacle. The issue was then left in the hands of God, and if no ill effects followed, then the woman was declared innocent, if she was taken terminally ill she was guilty. A man could not have his wife stoned to death on the grounds of suspicion. This ceremony not only exposed and removed an immoral wife, it also gave protection to a good wife from an unbalanced, jealous, and suspicious husband, and, unfortunately, husbands like this are still with us today.

PEOPLE WHO WERE STONED TO DEATH FOR IMMORALITY UNDER THE LAW.

1. A woman was stoned to death who was found not to be a virgin when married. Deut.22v20,21.
2. Adulterers were put to death if they were found in the act of adultery. Deut.22v20-22. In Jn.8v1-11., the woman taken in the act of adultery in was shown the divine mercy of the Law implied Deut.24v1-4., not the hard justice of the Law.
3. A betrothed virgin, who was raped, if she was in the city and did not cry out for help, was stoned to death with the man who committed the rape. Deut.22v23,24. If a betrothed virgin was raped in the countryside, when no one was near to help, only the man was stoned to death. Deut.22v25-27.
4. Homosexuals were stoned to death under the Law. Lev.20v13. Deut.23v17,18. It is looked upon as bad as sexual intercourse with an animal, where both animal and man or woman were put to death. Lev.20v15,16. Homosexuality is worse than adultery, for Paul says it is "against nature." Rom.1v26,27.

WHAT IS MEANT IN DEUT.24V1., BY "ERVAH," "UNCLEANNES." Strong 6172.

As we have seen, death was prescribed for adultery. However, we read in Deut.24v1., that if a man found "some uncleanness" in his wife, he could write her a bill of divorcement, instead of having her stoned to death. God directed Moses to institute the practice of divorce, and said that mercy could be shown to a guilty wife at the prerogative of her husband. Jesus said that this was an accommodation by God, because of the hardness of people's hearts, "Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so." Mt.19v8. God gave His Law on divorce to Moses, Moses certainly did not institute divorce on his own authority, without God's permission, or authorise something that gave God displeasure, and was against His will. When Mary, the mother of our Lord, was found to be pregnant; Joseph decided to make use of this alternative to execution, and give Mary a bill of divorcement, and divorce her privately. Mt.1v19.

The Hebrew "ervah," "nudity," is translated as shame, nakedness. and uncleanness. It is derived from "arah," to make bare, or naked, to uncover. It is used of nakedness and shameful exposure of the body and genitals in Gen.9v22,23. Exod.20v26. 1Sam.20v30. Is.20v4. Lam.1v8. Ezek.16v36,37.; and about 30 times in Lev.18 and 20, of illicit sexual intercourse. It is used in Deut.23v13,14., of human excrement which a person failed to cover with soil, and so was "ervah," an "unclean thing," (it seems that God believes that hygiene, sanitation and cleanliness is part of godliness, not next to it). The use of "ervah" in Deut.24v1., indicates a serious moral sin, Rotheram takes this view and translates it as, "some matter of shame;" and the Peshitta translates it, "some evidence of prostitution in her." God said that the woman who was divorced could go and marry someone else, but if her second husband died or divorced her, she was not allowed to return and remarry her original husband, for "she is defiled," however, she was not forbidden from marrying a third husband.

OUR LORD'S TEACHING ON DIVORCE AND REMARRIAGE.

Our Lord's teaching in Mt.5v31,32..

When our Lord said six times, "But I say unto you," in Mt.5v21,22,27-34,38,39,43,44., He was not abrogating the Law, for He said, "Think not that I am come to destroy the Law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil." Jesus said that not one jot or tittle shall pass from the Law, till all be fulfilled. Mt.5v17,18. Jesus was not contradicting or relaxing the commandments, He was correcting the misinterpretation of these laws by the Scribes and Pharisees. Jesus did not exactly quote Deut.24v1., He was quoting and dealing with the distorted current versions in Judaism. The Law was not abrogated by our Lord, He showed the correct interpretation of it.

Jesus limits the grounds for divorce to adultery, and the husband or wife are completely blame free if they divorce their partner for proven immorality. The husband is not obliged to put away his wife for adultery, but may do so, however, as in the case of the prophet Hosea, he may aim for reconciliation and not use his right for divorce. Many Jews divorced their wives for trivialities, Jesus said of such a husband, "he makes her to suffer as an adulteress," and an innocent woman suffers the stigma and the pain of adultery, and is a victim of something which is unlawful in the eyes of God. The husband may appear clean and virtuous to men, but he, and all those who practice this infamy, are guilty in God's eyes of grievous sin, and of making void His Word.

Jesus said that He who marries a wife divorced for trivialities commits adultery, so our Lord inferred that illegitimate divorce does not do away with the marriage bond in the eyes of God. There is good reason to believe that the woman who is here spoken of as "her who is put away," is the woman who has been divorced for trivial reasons, without being unfaithful. What was a woman who was put into such a situation to do? Our Lord was very angry with the Scribes and Pharisees who treated women with contempt and practised this kind of divorce, which condemned innocent women to stigma, shame and insecurity.

OUR LORD'S TEACHING IN MT.19V3-8..

Our Lord responds to the question, "Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?"

a. It was really a theological trap, not a genuine inquiry.

The Pharisees wanted an argument to put our Lord on the spot, and to ensnare Him into taking sides between the opposing viewpoints, our Lord did not fall into the trap.

b. The Lord said the cause of divorce was "the hardness of your hearts," "pros ton sklerokardian umon."

The Lord said that moral failure, friction in the home, and matrimonial perversity were due to a lack of true love and hardness of heart. Jesus said that people destroy their own happiness by failing to manifest true love. "Hardness," is "sklerokardian," it describes a heart that is hard, tough, and dried up, "skleros," from "skello," to dry. This is a heart dried up of love.

"Peptomene(n)," the perfect passive participle of "peroo," to harden, to petrify, to form a callus, is used to describe the apostles unbelieving hardened hearts in Mk.6v52. and Mk.8v17., the perfect indicates a settled state and condition of hardness. Mark wrote down Peter's memories of the life of Jesus, so we can see that Peter was really honest about his and the other apostles hardness of heart, and deficient spiritual perception. It is bad enough to have a heart that is hardened and is lacking in faith, it is even worse to have a heart that is hardened and lacking in love, and that destroys marital relationships, happiness and security.

c. Divorce was permitted under the Law, but not wholeheartedly approved.

The Pharisees said in Mt.19v7., that Moses commanded, "eneteilato," the aorist middle of "entello," to command; however, in Mt.19v8., Jesus said that Moses permitted "enetrephen," the aorist of "epitrepo," to allow, to permit, inferring that it was a concession to human weakness, not an whole-hearted endorsement of the practice of divorce. However, in Mk.10v3., Jesus did use "command," "eneteilato," and in Mk.10v5., he uses "commandment," "entolen," the word that is used most frequently for moral and religious precepts; this shows that it was part of the Law, even though it was an accommodation to human sin, failure and weakness.

d. "From the beginning it was not so."

The ordinance of marriage at creation contained no instructions on divorce, men and women were expected to stay together for life. Jesus brought them back to the first principles ordained by God in the creation of Adam and Eve. He said, "But from the beginning it hath not been so," "genonen," the perfect active of "ginomai," the perfect emphasises that God's original ideal had continued in force and had not been abrogated, or superseded.

e. Jesus decreed, "What therefore God has joined together, let not man put asunder." Mt.19v6. Mk.10v9.

Jesus used these very strong words to condemn the breaking of the divinely joined union of a man and woman. Jesus appealed to the Scriptures, the two partners become one flesh; they are joined by God, not for temporary convenience, but in a bond that is intended to be indissoluble, for in Mt.19v6., "joined together," or "yoked together," is the timeless aorist "sunezeuxen," from "sunxeugnumi," to join together, to yoke together; God Himself yokes people together, to work together for life. "Let not man put asunder," "anthropos me chorizeto," the present imperative third person singular of "chorizo," to separate, to divide, in the middle voice "to depart from," and it is used in this sense by Paul in 1Cor.7v10,11,15., of the departure from and separation from a partner. Paul uses it in Rom.8v35,39., to say that nothing can separate us from the love of God; God desires that nothing and nobody should be allowed to separate those whom He has joined together in marriage.

f. The remarriage clause and the exception clause.

The remarriage clause, "and shall marry another," "kai gamnon allen," and the exception, "except it be for fornication," "ei me epi porneia," only occur together in Mt.19v9.. This exception gives the innocent party the right of divorce, but not the duty of divorce, adultery can be forgiven, and the marriage healed and saved. Some people whose partners have been unfaithful, do not accept their right to divorce their partner, they feel that they may have lost a battle with evil in their marriage, but they fight on to win the war, to restore their marriage relationships. Each individual must decide for themselves what they must do, for the personalities involved in marriage problems vary as much as the problems themselves.

Many of the Scribes and Pharisees followed the school of Hillel and practised an illegal divorce in the eyes of God, Jesus like the school of Shammai, said that divorce should be for "fornication," "porneia," prostitution and unlawful sexual intercourse of every kind, and as in Mt.5v32., Jesus states that the innocent party can marry again.

In Mk.10v11. and Lk.16v18., there is no exception clause, these texts were doubtless speaking about divorce for anything less than adultery, as in Mk.10v12., where the Lord speaks against a woman taking the initiative to divorce her husband for anything less than adultery. The woman is granted the same rights as the man in divorce matters. Jesus makes it clear that a person can divorce their partner if they commit adultery, and that they can marry another when divorce has taken place. The textual evidence is on the side of the exception clause, and not with the Codex B Vaticanus reading that eliminates it.

God warns us in Heb.13v4. and Rev.21v8., that His judgement will fall on those who commit adultery, this should cause everyone to treat the subject of divorce very seriously. Judgement day is coming.

PAUL'S TEACHING ON MARRIAGE AND DIVORCE.

Those who object to remarriage do so on the grounds of Mk.10v11., Lk.16v18., and also 1Cor.7v10,11., "And to the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord, Let not the wife depart from her husband: v11. But and if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband: and let not the husband put away his wife." This is obviously referring to a believer leaving a husband or wife for anything less than adultery. Paul states that if a wife ignores our Lord's prohibition and departs, "choristhei," the aorist subjunctive passive of "chorizo," to place room between, that is, to go away: depart, put asunder, separate, he directs, "let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband." The departure here appears to be speaking of separation, not divorce, though it is used by our Lord in Mt.19v6. and Mk.10v9., to speak of the permanent separation of divorce, and is translated as "put asunder." According to Mk.10v12., a woman has the right to divorce an unfaithful husband.

In 1Cor.7v11., Paul uses "aphienai," the present infinitive of "aphiemi," to send away, to divorce, when he commands that the husband is not to "put away" his wife. The Authorised Version renders "aphiemi," "put away," in verses 11 and 12, and "leave," in v13, whereas, the Revised Standard Version translates all three places as divorce. "Aphiemi," is used of Jesus sending away the multitudes, Mt.13v36. Mk.4v36.; and of Jesus sending away his spirit, Mt.27v50. 15v37.; and of the disciples leaving all to follow our Lord. Mt.19v29. Mk.10v29,30. Lk.18v28,29. The verb "aphiemi," does not always imply formal and legal dismissal, as Moulton and Milligan point out, "It may just as well mean simply, "let go," as in ordinary colloquial speech," however, many expositors feel that "divorce" is correct here. In Mt.5v32. and 19v9,, Jesus was dealing with cases where both partners were believers, He said the only exception that makes divorce absolutely legal in God's eyes between believers was immorality. In 1Cor.7.v10,11., Paul is considering a situation where it is not correct to separate or put away the wife. Paul reiterates our Lord's command, because he recognises that the new converts at Corinth, and , indeed, all Christians, can have hardened hearts and have the capacity to act in a perverse way and violate the rights of their marital partners.

In 1Cor.7,v10,11., Paul is not supporting the Roman Catholic interpretation that Mt.5v32. and 19v9, are giving the right of separation, but not the right to dissolve the marriage bond. In 1Cor.7v11., Paul is dealing with Christian partners, who are in danger of breaking up their marriage, he does not approve of separation between two Christians, he is merely trying to regulate matters when things go badly wrong. It is also clear that Paul gives the right of divorce on the grounds of immorality, as a last resort, if a marriage cannot be healed.

PAUL'S ADVICE TO CHRISTIANS WHO ARE MARRIED TO UNBELIEVERS.

In 1Cor7v9. and 2Cor.6v14., Paul states that a Christian should not marry an unbeliever, however, in 1Cor.7v12., Paul deals with the problem of people who were married before their conversion. Paul makes it clear that this was another marital problem that was not covered by the teaching of our Lord, he goes on to consider how partners who are married to unbelievers should act, "But to the rest speak I, not the Lord," "tois de loipois lego ego, ouch ho Kurios." Paul states that Jesus gave no direct commandment about this, so he gives a ruling as one who has received mercy and been faithful, and has received guidance and direction from the Spirit of God. 1Cor.7v25,40. Paul deals with the questions that arise from people who were married before they became Christians. Is it legitimate for a believer to be one flesh with an unbeliever? Should a Christian remain with their unbelieving partner? What about the children? Paul definitely states that a believer must remain with their partner, and that, far from being contaminated by an unbeliever, a Christian partner's presence will sanctify the marriage relationship and the children, and he says that the unbelieving partner may possibly be saved by the winsome and thoughtful behaviour of their Christian partner. Paul reveals the heart and mind of God on marriage relationships with unbelievers, and the transforming power and spiritual potency of the faith and love of a believing Christian partner.

The believer is not to leave, if the unbeliever, he or she, "be pleased to dwell with them." Peter, in 1Pet.3v1-3. , goes even further, and suggests that wives should be prepared to stand some measure of ill-treatment from their unbelieving husbands, like the slaves mentioned in 2Pet.2v18-23., who are exhorted to follow the example of our Lord, who did not revile His persecutors, but committed Himself to God when He suffered wrongfully. The phrase in 1Pet.3v1., "likewise ye wives," links the advice to the wives with the advice to the slaves. Wives should not leave even if their faith brings intense pressure upon them. Peter says that wives are not to preach at their husbands, but are to win their husbands "without a word," by the godly and thoughtful way that they live. However, no matter how gracious and kind a Christian partner may be, their partner may leave them, so Paul goes on to deal with this issue.

PAUL'S INSTRUCTION ON WHAT TO DO IF AN UNBELIEVING PARTNER LEAVES.

In 1Cor.7v15., Paul states, "But if the unbeliever depart, let him depart. A brother or sister is not bound in such cases,. For God has called us to peace." Paul's instructions are both decisive and definite, if an unbeliever departs, then the marriage bond is broken. Luther argued that under such circumstances the Christian partner was released from their previous marriage bond and could marry again. This would certainly be true if the unbeliever married again, and it is also true if the unbeliever has deserted their partner on a permanent basis. The phrase, "But God has called us to peace," reveals that God releases a Christian from the marriage bond to

an unbeliever in the case of wilful desertion, and He gives Christians peace in such decisions, not condemnation. In 1Cor.7v12,13, the imperative "me apheeto," is used regarding leaving, here in 1Cor.7v15., "chorizestho," the present imperative passive of "chorizo," to sunder, sever, disunite, to withdraw, to depart, is used.

LET HIM OR HER DEPART, BUT DON'T DRIVE THEM AWAY.

An unbelieving husband may depart, even when a Christian wife has followed out Peter's instructions in 1Pet.3v1., and has tried to "win them without a word," by their godly living. If the kind and thoughtful efforts that have been made by the Christian to retain the unbelievers affections have been rejected, and they depart, Paul directs, "Let him depart." A Christian must not drive their unbelieving partner away, however, they should not pursue the deserting spouse, they have to let them go, and be in peace over the desertion. "Let him be gone," a severe and almost harsh statement.

WHAT IS THE EXACT MEANING OF "IS NOT BOUND?" "Ou dedoulotai."

1. It obviously means the cessation of further conjugal duties, bed and board, it certainly cannot mean less. Some say that this is as far as the matter goes, or Paul would be contradicting the Lord if it meant divorce. However, Jesus was dealing with the situation where both partners were believers in the God of Israel, whereas, Paul is dealing with the case where a believer is married to an unbeliever. This is why Paul states, "Thus say I, not the Lord;" and by saying this he confirms that Jesus had not dealt with the case where a believer is married to an unbeliever, but only where both partners were believers in God.

2. In 1Cor.7v10,11., when Paul speaks of the injunction that believers should remain unmarried if they separate, or else be reconciled. However, in regard to a believer being married to an unbeliever, he gives no such command in 1Cor.7v15.; Paul does not say that they must remain unmarried, indeed, the words "is not bound," "ou dedoulotai," obviously mean, "is released from the marriage bond." If the unbeliever goes, they would likely go to another partner, and so there would then be no doubt about the dissolution of the marriage bond. The only question that arises is what the position is if the unbeliever remained unmarried, or without other companionship. Leaving the Christian partner for unfaithfulness would obviously give the right for absolute and legal divorce. In 1Cor.7v15., the lack of instruction that separation must not result in remarriage when the unbelieving partner departs, indicates that remarriage is possible. The fact that Paul does not mention that the deserting unbeliever has to marry before the bond is broken is very significant, and shows that Paul considers the unremediable desertion by an unbeliever a basis for divorce, even if the unbeliever remained unmarried.

3. In Rom.7v2., when Paul states, "a wife is bound to her husband by the Law as long as he lives," he uses "dedetai," the perfect passive of the verb "deo," to bind, to speak of the bond of marriage, the perfect emphasises the state or condition. In 1Cor.7v27., when Paul speaks of the marriage bond, he uses "dedesai," the perfect passive 2nd person singular of "deo," to bind. In 1Cor.7v39., Paul again uses "dedetai," the perfect passive indicative of "deo," to bind.

In 1Cor.7v15., when Paul says a Christian partner is not bound when an unbelieving partner leaves them. "depart," is chorizestho," the present imperative passive of "chorizo," to sever, to withdraw, to depart, to separate, to divorce. In 1Cor.7v15., Paul uses "dedouletai," the perfect passive indicative of "douloo," to be a slave, to enslave, to be under bondage, which some have stated that "deo" is certainly not a stronger word than "douloo," and if anything "douloo" carries a stronger force than "deo." So "ou dedouletai," may strongly be argued to mean, "Is not bound in the marriage bond."

4. The wilful and obstinate desertion of a believer by an unbeliever is grounds for divorce, as "The Westminster Confession" states, "Nothing but adultery, or such wilful desertion as can in no way be remedied by the Church, civil magistrate, is cause sufficient of dissolving the marriage bond.." Chapter 24, Section 6.

N. B. 1. A believer must not cause or encourage the desertion of the unbeliever, for this will have to be answered for at the judgement seat of Christ. Separation and desertion must be the sole responsibility of the obstinacy of the unbeliever.

N. B. 2. Can 1Cor.7v15., be applied to all wilful desertion? Two Christian partners are to have a higher standard than a mixed marriage, and God expects them not to give up easily on their marriage, but to make the most earnest efforts to keep it intact.

N. B. 3. The Catholic Church quite rightly allows the annulment of marriages which are not consummated; it also allows annulment under other circumstances, even when marriages appear to have been consummated, but this is not an easy or quick process, and it only happens in a few cases, however, this appears to be divorce under another name.

A SUMMARY, AND SOME CLOSING THOUGHTS, ON MARRIAGE AND DIVORCE.

Marriage in the Old Testament.

Marriage under the Law was prohibited with certain relations. Lev.12v7,13,14. Wives for sons were chosen by fathers, or if a father was absent, by mothers. Gen.24v3. 21v21. 38v6. A heiress had to marry in her tribe. Numb.36v6. There were racial bars against marrying certain nations. Exod.34v12-16. Duet.7v1-6. Joshua.23v11-13. Judges.2v11-15. 1Kings.11v1-13. There was no war service for one year for newly married men. Deut.24v5.

Divorce.

Divorce was taken for granted in the Old Testament, and God said in His Law that divorce gave the right to remarry. Gen.21v14. Lev.21v7-14. 22v13. Numb.30v9. Deut.24v1-3. Is.50v1. Jer.3v8. The Law made it clear that divorce was to be withheld under certain circumstances, and in the case of flagrant adultery capital punishment made divorce unnecessary. Deut.22v13-29.

A divorced woman, who had re-married, could not marry her former husband again, even if her present husband died. Deut.24v1-4. Christ did not change the Old Testament meaning of divorce, He says that unfaithfulness and any other form of sexual uncleanness is the only real grounds for divorce. This was what Shammai taught, whereas Hillel taught that a man could divorce a wife for almost any reason.

The Hebrew word "ervah" in Deut.24v1., translated in the Authorised Version as "uncleanness," indicates some serious moral fault, not a trivial thing. Christ said that God permitted divorce because of men's hardness of heart, and 100,000 pending divorces prove that men's hardness of heart is still the same, and that you cannot legislate the Christian ideal of marriage, even though it is the correct and perfect standard. The Christian ideal is the correct standard for all, but it is impossible for many, because of the hardness of their hearts, it is only real love that can make the Christian ideal work. Moses did not allow easy divorce, it was for some real moral failure, and neither should we, we should treat unfaithfulness, immorality and divorce as seriously as the Scripture does. Job.31v1,9-12. Prov.2v16,18,19. 5v3,4. 6v9,24-29,32,33. 7v5-22. Rom.7v3. 1Cor.6v15,16,18. 10v8. 2Cor.21v21. Gal.5v19,21. 2Pet.2v9,10,14.

N. B. The verb "apoluo," "to let loose from, let go free" is made up of "apo," from, "luo," to loose, is used of divorce in Mt.1v19. 5v,31,32. 19v3,7-9. Mk.10v2,4,11,12. Lk.16v18. In Mk.10v12., Jesus used it of the right of a wife to put away her husband. "Apoluo" is used in Lk.13v12., of a woman being loosed from infirmity, and in Mt.18v27., of someone being loosed from debt; it is used in the sense of people being sent away in Mt.15v39. Mk.4v36. 6v45. and Acts.17v14. Eph.5v22,23. Wives be subject to husbands - be submissive and adapt yourselves - to your own husbands as (a service) to the Lord. v23. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the Head of the Church, Himself the Saviour of His Body.

The noun "apostasion," lit., "a standing off," is from "apo," "from," and "stasis," "a standing"; It is used of "a bill of divorcement," in Mt.5v31. 19v7. and Mk.10v4., this is a quote from Deut.24v3., and was included in the Law by God Himself. See Is.50v1. Jer.3v8..

God warns that there will be severe judgement on men who forsake the wife of their youth.

Mal.2v13-16.

Divorce should not be treated lightly, every effort should be made to preserve a marriage, even when things have gone badly wrong. Paul says in 1Cor.7v10-14., that Christians should live with their partner as long as they are willing to do so. All in a person's power should be done to restore a happy loving relationship; suspicion, bitterness and criticism will never build up anything, genuine affection and love are the only thing that can heal human relationships, and this can only come by partners praying together, and real caring for one another. Christians should make every effort to save a marriage, and they should give every consideration to their partner and children.

In Mt.5v28. Jesus said that men who look upon a woman with lust are adulterers in God's eyes.

Judged by this standard, the fallen, like the fallen woman of Jn.8v1-11., will find it very difficult to find any person who can condemn them, and a wonderful Saviour, waiting and longing to forgive and bless. Jesus said the Christian attitude is not to throw stones, but to be gentle and consider ourselves. It is not enough to dogmatise on New Testament law, we have to be full of New Testament grace, a hard proud spirit is just as evil as sexual promiscuity. 2Cor.7v1. Mt.21v28-32. Let us always remember that this is the age of grace. There is a time for Christian discipline, but there is never a time when we can be without Christian love. Let us all be watchful in these dark evil days, and lovingly help every stumbling brother and sister. 2Cor.2v6-8. Gal.6v1. Let us manifest the same grace that Christ manifested to the Samaritan woman and Mary Magdalene. Some have made adultery and divorce into unforgiveable sins, but they are not; unfaithfulness, like any other sin, can be forgiven. Both those who have sinned before they were married, and those who have sinned after marriage, can experience the mercy of God and receive forgiveness and blessing.

A CHRISTIAN MAY REMARRY.

1. After the death of a partner.

Mt.22v23,24. Rom.7v1-4. 1Cor.7v39,40.

2. After pre-conversion divorce.

"As far as the east is from the west, so far hath He removed our transgressions from us." Ps.103v12. "I, even I, am He that blot out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins." Is.43v25. God blots out the sins of the past, including marriage sins. Some people have been divorced before they became Christians, and their marital relationships and lives are like scrambled eggs, which cannot be unscrambled, but God can renew them, and fill their lives with joy, just as Jesus promised the Samaritan woman, who had been in six relationships before she met Jesus. John.4.

3. After an unbeliever leaves the believer they are married to.

In 1Cor.7v15., Paul states, "If the unbeliever departs, a brother or sister is not bound in such cases." Paul states that the bond of marriage is broken on the grounds of irremediable desertion, as in Rom.7v2., where death is said to make the partner free from the marriage bond. The Westminster Confession states, "nothing but adultery, or such wilful desertion as can in no way be remedied by the Church or civil magistrate, is cause sufficient of dissolving, the bond of marriage." Ch.24. Sect. 6.

In 1Cor.7v14., Paul shows the sanctifying effect of a godly wife, and writes in 1Cor.7v9-13., that separation of a wife from her husband is to be avoided. If a Christian wife separates herself from an unbeliever, she is to remain unmarried, or be reconciled. If the unbeliever departs it is a totally different matter, divorce is possible.

4. As an act of mercy to the guilty party.

We read in Deut.24v2., that the divorced woman who is the guilty party, "May go and be another man's wife." It cannot be that our Lord was contradicting the Mosaic Law in His statement in Mt.5v32. and 19v9., and Lk.16v18., for He was the one who gave the Law to Moses. However, let us remember that our Lord makes it quite clear, that it is quite wrong to take God's permissive act of mercy as His standard for divorce, all such marital moral failures will have to be answered for on judgement day, and could well lose a Christian their reward. Let us make "agape" love the guiding principle of our marriages, and aim for God's perfect will, not His minimum permissive will.

There is great and widespread unhappiness in the world today through marriage infidelity, physical abuse, and the other works of the flesh. The cure for these evils is the grace and forgiveness of God, and the fruit of the Spirit which we will now consider.

7. THE ABOUNDING HARVEST OF THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT.

Jesus said hardness of heart is the real cause of breakdown in marriages, or in other words, marriages break up because people lack love and the other fruit of the Spirit, and allow the works of the flesh to dominate their lives. In Gal.5v19-26., Paul describes the fearful consequences of living in the flesh, and the glorious privilege and opportunity of manifesting the fruit of the Holy Spirit's character in our lives. The choice is before us, of either the way of death and corruption, or of life. Gal.6v7,8.

1. "THE PEACEABLE FRUITS OF RIGHTEOUSNESS." Hebrews.12v11.

The noun "karpos," "fruit," can be used to describe works or deeds, which are the outward manifestation and product of either good or evil inner attitudes of heart, or good or evil spiritual forces. Mt.7v16. In Gal.5v19-22., Paul states that yielding to the Holy Spirit produces His beautiful qualities of character in us; whereas yielding to the bad desires of the flesh produces the evil "works of the flesh." Fellowship and living union with Jesus will produce "the fruit of the Spirit" in our marriages. Jn.15v2-8,16. Gal.5v22. The singular form is used to describe the nine fruit of the Spirit, they are, "love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faith, meekness, self-control," in contrast with the plural antagonistic "works of the flesh." See Phil.1v11., "Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God." In Heb.12v11., God's educational disciplines are said to produce "the peaceable fruit of righteousness." We read in James.3v18., that "the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace." Those who sow the seed of peace in their homes, will reap a harvest of righteousness. See Eph.5v9., "The fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth." No one can bless our homes like the living God.

In the parable of the sower, in Mt.13v22. and Mk.4v19., Jesus uses the adjective "akarpos," "unfruitful," which is derived from the negative "a," and "karpos," fruit, to warn us that our lives and marriages can become unfruitful if we allow, "the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in" to choke God's Word. Paul follows a similar line when in Ep.5v11., he directs us to "have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them. See Titus.3v14. 2Pet.1v8. Jude.v12. Jesus also warns us in Lk.8v13,14., in the parable of the sower, that if we allow the "cares and riches and pleasures of this life," to dominate our lives, we will, "bring no fruit to perfection."

The characters of the Trinity perfectly manifest the fruit of the Spirit.

The Trinity do not just possess and perfectly manifest the fruit of the Spirit, these fruits describe the very nature and loveliness of their beings, it is what they are. In His humanity Jesus was the perfect manifestation of the fruit of the Spirit in human form. He had submitted to the Father's grace and the Spirit's presence, and had grown in spiritual power and godly character. Lk.2v40,52. Is.49v1-3. 50v3-7. The life of Jesus gives us the perfect example of the fruit of the Spirit. Jesus said, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." Jn.14v9. The heart and character of the Father was perfectly manifested in our Lord's life. Jesus did not bring His unlimited divine powers into a human body, but by submission to the Spirit's presence, He "grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon Him. -- And Jesus INCREASED in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man." Lk.2v40,52. The most striking thing about Jesus was not His miracles, but His wonderful character; His miracles flowed out of His character and His relationship with the Father. Jesus showed to us that real love not only manifests kindness and gentleness after suffering for a long time, but it also gives to the uttermost.

The transformation that Divine love and grace can bring to our characters and homes.

These fruits are the result of submitting to the influences of the Holy Spirit, whose aim is to develop the character of Christ in us. God determined before creation to make every effort to transform us into the image of Christ. Rom.8v28-31. In Gal.5v19-26., Paul describes the fearful consequences of living in the flesh, and the glorious privilege and opportunity of manifesting the fruit of the Holy Spirit's character in our lives and homes.

2. BOTH THE FRUITS AND GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT ARE NEEDED IN OUR HOMES.

a. The gifts and fruit of the Spirit are complementary, not in opposition, both are needed in our homes.

Power needs godly character to guide it; godly character needs Divine power and wisdom to meet the needs placed before it. We need both the Holy Spirit's gifts and His fruits to perform God's will, and live a Christ-like Christian life in our marriage relationships, our church life and Christian service. The fruit and gifts of the Spirit are complementary; and the life and ministry of Jesus shows this perfectly. At Nazareth, most people, including Christ's brothers and sisters, were antagonistic to His perfect prayerful life and godliness, and they were unwilling to believe in His ministry, because of their ingrained contemptuous hostility to His purity and holiness. Ps.69v7-21. Jn.7v5. Mk.3v21,31-35. 6v1-6. Jesus was despised, rejected and murdered by the envious religious leaders of Israel. Mk.2v5-7,16,23,24. 3v1,2. 15v10. In contrast to this was the almost total acceptance of Christ's ministry by ordinary people, when they saw the mighty signs and wonders that Jesus did. Mk.12v37. 1v26-28,45. 5v2-6,15,20,21. 6v32-34. etc. Bitter envy and jealousy moved Joseph's brothers to sell him into slavery, and Israel's religious leaders to oppose Jesus and His Church. Acts.7v9. 13v45. 17v5. James.3v14.

The gifts of the Holy Spirit are the operations and acts of Divine love and compassion, God cannot deny Himself in our home situations, He is always available to give us Divine wisdom and guidance as well as miraculous power for protection and healing. God cannot help but manifest Himself in acts of Divine love in our homes, when we have need of His presence and power. God told Joseph and Mary to flee into Egypt BEFORE Herod's attempt upon the life of the infant Christ took place, and He told them when it was safe to return, and warned them not to live near Herod's evil son Archelaus. Mt.2v13-23. God gave a miracle child to the great woman of Shunem and raised her child from the dead; God told her where to go to avoid a famine, and when she returned home and went to the king to ask for the restoration of her property, the timing of her request was divinely inspired, she received an abundant provision from the king. 2Kings.4v8-37. 8v1-6. God is just as interested with our home circumstances and problems, as He is with our church situations. The gifts of the Holy Spirit produce character by revealing God; their manifestation by the early Church revolutionised the lives and homes of multitudes of people, they saw God, and their characters, lives and homes were changed as a result; their repentance brought real fruit in daily living.

b. The gifts of the Spirit will be perfected at Christ's coming.

The partial manifestation of spiritual gifts will be replaced by their complete and perfect manifestation at the coming of Christ. Our limited manifestation of the gifts will be swallowed up in the greater powers of the kingdom. We now experience in part the manifestation of the powers of the age to come. Heb.6v5. It is the exchange of the partial for the perfect. Those who say that the gifts have now been removed from the Church are in great error, the Spirit of God has come to abide with us for ever, and He will manifest His great and loving powers, in us, and through us for ever. Until the perfect day of our Lord's coming, we need both the Holy Spirit's gifts and fruits in our marriages.

3. THE CONFLICT IN THE SOUL BETWEEN THE FLESH AND THE SPIRIT.

a. The body, "soma," and the flesh, "sarx."

The word "soma," "body," is used to speak of a living body, of both natural bodies, and celestial bodies; 1Cor.15v35-44.; and the Church as the body of Christ. 1Cor.12v12-27. Eph.1v23. 4v4,12,16. "Soma" is seldom used to speak of the evil desires of the body. Jesus said the whole body is full of darkness, when people's eyes and hearts are full of greedy ambition, love of worldly things, lust, and evil; but the whole body is full of bright shining light, when our hearts are single, "aplous," sound, healthy, clear. We cannot serve God and Mammon; serving Mammon destroys marital happiness, and causes breakdowns in marriage. Mt.6v19-24. Paul says people dishonour their bodies by sin; Rom.1v24.; and exhorts the Roman Christians not to allow sin to reign in their bodies. Rom.6v12. He tells us that sexual sin is a sin against our bodies; and our bodies are now the temple of the Holy Spirit. 1Cor.6v18-20. Paul instructs us to crucify and mortify the evil deeds of the body. Rom.8v13. Gal.5v24. James warns us that uncontrolled sinful use of the tongue defiles the whole body. James.3v6.

"Sarx," "flesh," is used, without any bad idea, to speak of mankind in general, "all flesh," Jn.17v2. Acts.2v17. Rom.3v20.; and of the bodies of beasts and men, 1Cor.15v39. However, it is also used to speak of the domination of the soul by the flesh in fallen mankind. Eph.2v1-3. 2Pet,2v18. The world is full of the lust of the flesh and eyes, and the pride of life. 1Jn.2v16. Those who allow the desires and biochemical functions of the body to dominate the soul, should realise that this minding of the flesh is hostile to God, and the Law of God. Paul states that those who live just to cater for the appetites and impulses of their fleshly nature, cannot please God; and will die spiritually and eternally. Rom.8v6-14. Paul states that all mankind has given way to the deceitful promises of the flesh, and experienced bondage to the flesh, the temptations arising from the flesh he describes as "sin in the flesh." Rom.7v9,17,18,23. 8v3. Paul also said that Christians who are dominated by the flesh are "carnal," "sarkikos," and said that divisions in the Church proved that those who caused them were

carnal, "sarkikos," and spiritual babies. 1Cor.3v1-4. 2Cor.10v4. Peter warns us to abstain from fleshly lusts that war against the soul.1Pet.2v11.

It is a wonderful fact that God the Word became flesh, out of pure love for us, and suffered and overcame the trials and temptations of true humanity. Jn.1v14. 1Jn.4v2,3. 2Jn.v7. 1Tim.3v16. Rom.1v4,5. 8v3. Heb.2v17,18. 4v15. 5v7. 10v5. Jesus was manifest in flesh, "sarx;" but He never allowed it to dominate Him, He was "in the likeness of sinful flesh," "en homoiomati sarkos hamartias," just as He was "in the likeness of men," "en homoiomati anthropon," the likeness was real. Phil.2v7. "Homoioima," occurs in Rom.1v23. 5v14. 6v5. 8v3. Phil.2v7. Rev.9v7. Jesus had a real humanity, not a false phantom humanity as the Docetic Gnostics taught. Jesus conquered the flesh that had contaminated and led all mankind into sin. Alford writes on Rom.8v3., "in the likeness of the flesh of sin' (the flesh whose attribute and character was sin. The genitive is not 'hamartolou,' but implies far more-[not merely the contamination by, but] the belonging to and being possessed by."

The Expositor's Greek Testament gives light on Rom.8v3., here is a summary of its arguments. In Rom.8v3., "homoioima" emphasises our Lord's likeness to us, not His unlikeness; and what Paul means by "flesh of sin," is that God sent Jesus in that nature which in us is identified with sin. This was the "form" (and "homoioima," signifies "form" rather than "likeness") in which Jesus came amongst men. This does not deny Christ's sinlessness, which is an irrefutable fact in Paul's eyes. If anyone argues that it is a contradiction to declare that Christ was sinless, and say at the same time that He came in a nature which we identify with sin, we would answer that this identification does not belong to the essence of our nature, but to its corruption, and all the New Testament declares that Jesus is one with us-short of sin. The likeness of our Lord's limitations is the point which is here affirmed, and it is an essential and fundamental qualification of our redeeming Lord. End of summary.

Christ partook of human flesh, but did not partake of the sins of the flesh, His holy life condemned sin in the flesh and showed that it was possible to live in victory over the flesh. In Heb.2v16-18., we read that Jesus took on Him the seed of Abraham, and that it was a moral duty and necessity ("opheilen," the imperfect active indicative of "opheilo," "to be obligated"), for Him to be made in all points like unto His brethren, and suffer the same temptations, so that He could be our sympathetic High Priest. To be tempted in all points like we are, He had to be made in all points like as we are. Heb.2v17. with 4v15.

b. The way to conquer and crucify the works and desires of the flesh, is by receiving life in the spirit.

Paul exhorts us not to make any provision for the lusts of the flesh, Rom.13v14.; but to cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit. 2Cor.7v1. The law of the spirit and life in Christ makes us free from the law of sin and death. Rom.8v1-4. Walking in the Spirit means that we shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh; and by the Spirit's power we are able to crucify the works of the flesh, and put off the sins of the flesh. Col.2v11. Gal.5v16,17,24. We are not to allow sin to reign in our bodies, but to use them as instruments of righteousness. Rom.6v6-23. Paul says that Christians are "spiritual," "pneumatikos," when they walk and live in the Spirit. 1Cor.2v15. 3v1. Gal.6v1. Our spiritual weapons are not "of the flesh," "sarkikos." 2Cor.10v4.

c. The conflict in the soul for the soul.

Two totally opposite forces seek to dominate the soul, and Gal.5v17. shows us that victory comes through the Spirit of God. Two forces lined up in conflict with one another, "allelois antikeitai," like trench warfare. When the Spirit of God dominates, moulds, and controls, it produces godly fruit of character. When the flesh dominates and controls, we find the evil works of the flesh. The domination of the Spirit produces life, the domination of the flesh produces corruption. Gal.6v8.

1. LOVE. "Agape."

We have already considered "agape" love in some detail in our study of 1Corinthians chapter 13, so we will not consider it at length here. God wants to fill our homes with "agape" love. God is love, perfect "agape" love, 1Jn.4v8., and the source of "agape" love. 2Cor.13v11. His love is "great love." Eph.2v4-7. Ex.34v6,7. Love is the supreme fruit, and therefore stands first. The greatest of these is love. 1Cor.13v13. Love is the fulfilling of the Law. Rom.13v10. 1Jn.2v9. Love includes all the other virtues, it is the perfect bond which binds all together, it is the thing that will keep our marriages intact and blessed. Col.3v14.

1. Christian thought and doctrine extended and transformed the meaning of "agape" love.

The Trinity redefined the use of "agape" love way beyond the narrow and limited thought of love of the heathen. The New Testament makes it an unconquerable, all-embracing, benevolence, it is used to describe the incomparable love of God.

2. Christian love has to do with an attitude of mind as well as a warmth of heart.

It is not a mere uncontrollable "falling in love," it is a loving of fallen people. It is a victory over enmity, hostility and loneliness. It is a love for enemies. This does not mean you feel the warmth that you have for your nearest and dearest, it is an unconquerable benevolence of mind, that wishes the unlovely and perverse well. It is opposite of the thought of Aristotle that love is for the lovely. Agape love is a gracious will as well as a loving heart, it is a benevolent mind, and not just an emotional reaction. Paul manifested this love, some suggest that Phil.1v8., can be translated, "I love you with the very love of Christ."

The totally different attitude of Greek and Christian thought in respect to caring love.

The Greek philosophers aimed at total self-sufficiency, and total independence of anything outside of themselves," and tried to find happiness and peace totally within themselves, "autarkeia." They tried to let nothing touch or effect them which happened to themselves or others, "apatheia." This is how they aimed to get serenity, peace of mind, and tranquillity. "ataraxia." All this is in striking contrast to the caring love of Christianity, Christian love cares.

Love alone is the source of Christian unity, fellowship, and stability in the Church and the home.

In Col.2v2., Paul speaks of us being, "Knit together in love." In Eph.5v2., Paul tells us to "Walk in love." Acts.1v14. In Col.3v14., Paul writes, "And above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfectness." Acts.2v42-46. We are known to be His disciples by love. Jn.13v35. This applies to our home relationships, as well as in our Church relationships.

Love is a vital co-partner of faith in service to God and each other. Eph.1v15. 6v23. Col.1v4. 1Thes.1v3. 3v16. 2Thes.1v3.

In Gal.5v6., Faith which works by love, "works" is "energeo." Love energises faith, faith manifests itself through love. Let love make you slaves to each other. Gal.5v13. See Jn.13v15. 1Cor.9v12-22. 16v14. Love is the garment of service.

AGAPE LOVE AND TRUTH.

We must love the truth with an "agape" love. 2Thes.2v10. Love produces obedience to the truth, Jesus said in John.14v21., "He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him." We can experience a manifestation of Jesus and the Father in our homes, if we love and obey the truth, a truly wonderful promise. See Jn.14v15-17,21. In 2Thes.2v10-12., we read that those who perish do so because they do not love the truth, Antichrist and his followers are here named. The truth must be spoken in love. Eph.4v15. Some preachers like to hurt people with the truth, they enjoy whipping God's people, but that is the Devil's work. Jesus wept as He warned of the destruction of Jerusalem. Lk.19v41-44. Mt.23v37-39. In Mt.23v13-29. "woe," "ouai" means both "woe" and "alas," it is a lament, not the words of passionate anger, but the pain of heart-broken love, as we can see from Mt.23v37-39., "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often I desired to gather your children in the way a bird gathers her chicks, under her wings, and you would not. Behold your house is left unto you desolate." This was pain, real deep pain. See Lk.19v41-44.

THE AMAZING LOVE OF GOD. GOD IS LOVE. 2Cor.13v11.

God's love is totally undeserved. Rom.5v8. It is a great redeeming love and is full of mercy. Eph.2v4-7. It is a love for the whole world. Jn.3v16. It is a totally sacrificial amazing love. Jn.3v16. 1Jn.4v9,10. Gal.2v20. The Son of God who loved ME, and gave Himself for me. Eph.5v2. Rev.1v5. There is nothing He will not do for us. It is a transforming, disciplining, and sanctifying love. Heb.12v6. 2Thes.2v13. Rom.8v35-39. "Who shall separate us?" It is a surpassing love, which can only be fully understood by revelation. Eph.3v15-19. God's love causes Him great pain. Hos.11v8,9. "How can I give you up? - My heart --- within me My compassion grows warm and tender." Lk.19v41-44. This love can be in our homes and lives, and can make them a heaven upon earth. Let us allow the Holy Spirit to develop this greatest fruit of the Spirit in our lives.

GOD HAS INCLUDED US WITHIN THE SPHERE AND QUALITY OF THE LOVE OF THE TRINITY.

Jesus said that He had declared the Father's name to His disciples, "that the love wherewith Thou hast loved Me may be in them, and I in them." Jn.17v26. We are loved like God's dear Son. Col.1v13. with Jn.3v35. 10v17. 15v9. 17v23,24. "Agape" love can only be developed by abiding in the love of the Trinity. We must sit at the feet of Jesus, like Mary of Bethany. Jn.12v1-8.

CONCLUSION.

For people who are dealing with difficult, and possibly unconverted partners, remember "agape" love is not liking. You can love people without liking the way that they live. Lk.6v27,28. Jesus said that we should do good to our enemies, and love them, and pray for them. We are loved by God, and are indebted to His great love, let us manifest His love in our lives and homes. It is in the manifestation of our love to others, that our love for God is proved. In the fellowship of love, love is inspired. Through the contemplation of our Lord's life and love, we are changed. 2Cor.3v18. Faith and hope are great, but THE GREATEST IS LOVE. 1Cor.13v8. 14v1. It is our Lord's new commandment, let us obey it.. Jn.13v34,35.

2. JOY. "Chara." Strong 5479.

a. The Greek greeting, both written and spoken was "chairein," "joy be with you."

"Chairein" is the present infinitive of "chairo," it means, "joy be with you." "Chairein" was used by the Roman officer Claudius Lysias to Felix, when he wrote to him concerning Paul. Acts.23v26. Judas came to Jesus with the word "chaire," the present imperative of "chairo," which means, "rejoice." Judas kissed Jesus fervently, "kataphilesen," the compound word means "to kiss fervently." What dreadful, hypocritical play acting, Judas kissed Jesus with murder in his heart. There is a great difference between the world's insincere greetings, and the greetings between members of Christ's Church.

b. The greetings of the churches has a much deeper meaning, than the greeting of the worldling.

In James.1v1. "Greetings," is "chairein," "joy be with you." In 2Cor.13v11. "Farewell," is "rejoice," "chairete," the present active imperative of "chairō," "to rejoice;" it means, "keep on rejoicing." In Acts.15v23., "Greeting," is "chairein," "joy be with you." God's joy can be manifested in us and in our homes and it should surprise and astonish the worldling.

c. The New Testament is full of joy, and God wants to fill our homes and marriages with joy.

The feminine noun "chara" occurs sixty times; it is derived from the verb "chairō," "to rejoice," which occurs seventy two times. "Chara," "joy," is from the same Greek root as "charis," grace; Christian joy springs from a life filled with the beauty of grace and love; joy come through serving others in love, and joy in people and God. 2John.v12. Joy can never be obtained through selfishness, things or possessions. Jesus said, "Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life does not consist in the abundance of things which he possesseth." Lk.12v15. The selfish person in the end destroys their own happiness; it is only by following the example of the totally unselfish dedicated love of God, that we can enjoy true and lasting heavenly joy.

d. The Spirit of God imparts His full joy to us, not solemn misery.

The joy that the Holy Spirit gives is much more than ordinary happiness; the word happiness comes from "hap," which means "chance, luck, or fortune; Christian joy does not depend on chance, luck, good fortune, pleasant circumstances, or the superficial, empty and transient pleasures of the world. It is a "joy unspeakable, and full of glory," the full joy of Heaven. 1Pet.1v11. "The kingdom of God is not in meat and drink; but righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." Rom.14v17. 15v13. God comes to impart His joy to us, and fill our homes with His joy. 1Thes.1v6.

e. Jesus has promised to give us His full joy.

Jesus said, "These things have I spoken unto you, **that My joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be FULL.**" Jn.15v11. See 17v13. In 1Jn.1v1-4., the apostle John states that we can have a full joy through fellowship with the Father and the Lord Jesus. **We are given the joy that angels enjoy, an everlasting joy, the joy of God.** Is.35v10. Angels shout and sing for joy, and so can we. Job.38v4,7. Lk.15v7,10. Nothing and no one can take this joy from us. Jn.16v22. Our joy flows from God's love for us, and nothing can separate us from God's love. Rom.8v28-39. Christ's joy, like His peace, can fill our hearts even in the greatest of trials and difficulties. Paul and Silas were praying and continually singing after being severely beaten with rods, and being placed in stocks in the prison. Acts.16v22-25. 2Cor.7v4-6,13. 8v2. See Jn.16v20-24.

f. There is great joy in faith in God our Father and the Lord Jesus.

The joy of faith is a fact. Mt.13v20. 28v8. Jn.3v29. Lk.8v13. Phil.1v25. 1Pet.1v8,9. 1Jn.1v1-4. In Lk.2v10., "Chara," joy, is linked with "megas," "great;" in the angel's message of "good tidings of great joy." In Lk.24v52,53.; the disciples great joy over Christ's resurrection. In Acts.8v8., the converts at Samaria had great joy. In Acts.15v3., there was great joy over the conversion of the Gentiles. In 1Pet.1v6-8., "Chara" is linked with "agalliao," "to exult, to rejoice greatly," to speak of our exultation and unspeakable joy in Jesus, "Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see Him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory." We will "rejoice exultantly at the revelation of His glory" at His second coming. 1Pet.4v13. Jesus will present us "in exceeding joy," "en agalliasei," to God our Father. Jude.v24. Joy in Jesus is part of Christian daily living. The Church is God's joy and exceeding treasure. We are "the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints." Eph.1v18. God is the person who sells all to buy the field with the treasure in it. Mt.13v44.

1. THE FOUNDATION OF OUR JOY, IS JOY IN OUR LORD.

a. Joy in the birth, life and ministry of our Saviour.

In Lk.1v28., Gabriel said to Mary " "Be rejoicing ("chaire"), for you have been encompassed with favour." The angel said to the shepherds, in Lk.2v10,14., "I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people." The angel adds "and peace on earth and good will towards men;" which is the reading of the vast majority of texts; "goodwill towards men," is the nominative case "eudokia," showing that God's great good will is extended to all fallen mankind, just as the good news was in verse 10. The minority reading has the genitive case, "eudokias," and so reads, "peace among men of good will," this limits the boundless good will of God towards all of mankind, to a select group, and so it cannot be correct. Ps.78v41. David, in Ps.145v8,9., confirms that God's good will extends to all; "The Lord is gracious, and full of compassion: slow to anger, and of great mercy. THE LORD IS GOOD TO ALL: and His tender mercies are over ALL His works." The desire of God to show mercy is revealed in the ministry of Jesus, in His teaching and the countless manifestations of the healing mercy gifts of God. Multitudes found healing and forgiveness through Christ's ministry.

b. Joy in our resurrected conquering Lord.

Christ is our joy. Peter says in 1Pet.1v8., "in whom --- ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory." When Jesus met the women after His resurrection, His first words to them were, "Rejoice," "chairete," the present imperative of "chairō," to rejoice, it can be translated as "Be rejoicing." Mt.28v9. This salutation is only used in the Gospels, Gabriel used it to greet Mary in Lk.1v28.; Christ's' enemies used it to mock Jesus in Mt.26v49. 27v29. Mk.15v18. and Jn.19v3.. The Church is God's joy and exceeding treasure. We are "the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints." Eph.1v18. God is the person who sells all to buy the field with the treasure in it. Mt.13v44.

c. The joy imparted by the Gospel. Lk.15v5,7,9,10,25,32

The aim of the Gospel is to give men joy, there is joy in heaven over sinners repenting. Mt.18v13. There is joy in believing. Rom.15v13. The Samaritans had "great joy," when Philip preached the Gospel to them with signs and wonders. Acts.8v9. The Ethiopian Eunuch also went on his way rejoicing, after hearing the Gospel from Philip, and after witnessing Philip's supernatural transport. Acts,8v37-40.

2. THE JOY OF CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP.

a. The early Church was filled with a joy that was both attractive and triumphant.

The joy of true Christian fellowship and home life, is something that the world cannot comprehend. Phil.2v1,2. It is a foretaste of the joy and fellowship of the kingdom. Joy comes from people not possessions or things. Christian joy, like Christian peace, is much more than worldly happiness. Christian joy is "not as the world gives." It is the joy of God in the soul, it is an abounding joy. This joy comes from the Holy Spirit's presence and fullness. It is a triumph of Divine grace and power.

b. The joy of praise and worship together. "Rejoice ever more." 1Thes.5v16.

Even before Pentecost the disciples were continually praising God in the Temple, because their Lord and Saviour was alive and still with them. Lk.24v52,53. There was joy in the simple home fellowships of the early Church, around a simple meal. Acts.2v46. Joy in the singing of the Spirit-inspired psalms and hymns and spiritual songs. Eph.5v18,19. Col.3v16. Through Jesus we should continually offer up a joyful sacrifice of praise, even the fruit of our lips. Heb.13v15.

3. THE JOY OF SERVICE.

a. Joy in God's acts of power.

The healing of the man at the beautiful gate shows the real joy in healing. Acts.3v8. The seventy returned with joy at the miracles God had done through them in the name of Jesus. Lk.10v17. Jesus directed them to rejoice more in the fact of their salvation; however, He also exults that God had given these Christian babies such great power and blessing. Lk.10v17-24. They were more privileged than the prophets. Our Lord also rejoiced over the ministry of the 12 apostles. Mt.11v25-27.

b. Joy in converts.

Jesus rejoiced with all of heaven over converts to the truth. Lk.15v1,5,7,9,10,32. Mt.18v13. Paul said his converts and flocks were his glory, crown and joy. Col.4v1. 1Thes.2v19,20. 3v9. Paul rejoiced and kept a prophetic eye upon his converts. Col.2v5. True joy springs out of relationships, out of people, not possessions. In 2Jnv4. And 3Jn.3,4., John rejoices that Christians and his "children," were walking in the truth. In Col.1v24., Paul rejoices in his suffering on the behalf of his converts and Christ, and rejoices that he completes what is lacking in the sufferings of Christ. Christian leaders will have to give an account of their charges at the judgement seat of Christ. Heb.13v17.

c. Joy in fulfilled answers to prayer together.

It is wonderful when we pray through for one another, and see God's exceeding more abundant answers. We are to ask and receive that our joy may be full. Jn.16v24. Lk.11v9-13. Eph.3v20. James.5v13-18. We should rejoice over all the wonderful answers from our generous heavenly Father, His interventions through friends, healings, circumstances, finances, etc..

d. Joy in fulfilling God's will and finishing the course planned for us.

In Acts.20v23,24. Paul said that he wanted to finish his course with joy. In Rom.15v32. Paul states his desire to come to the Romans "in joy," "en chara," "in the will of God." God wants us to fulfil our proper and godly ambitions.

4. THE JOY OF THE LORD IS OUR STRENGTH AND PROTECTING FORTRESS.

a. The joy of the Lord is an impregnable stronghold, let us defend our homes with it. Neh.8v10.

In Neh.8v10., the word for "strength" is "maoz," which means "fortress, stronghold, rock," as well as "strength." It speaks of an impregnable defence. This joy was received in joyful social fellowship, at a festival, in a love feast, as they ate a meal together. The same is true of the communion services of the early Church, **they were feasts of love and joy**. Paul and Jude condemn those who abused and spoilt the love and joy of these feasts. 1Cor.11v17-22,33,34. Jude.v12. Paul makes it clear that it was a simple meal, and gluttony was frowned upon and forbidden. The feast was in the joy and love of prayerful social fellowship and the presence of God, and in remembrance of our Lord's death and resurrection, not in the food.

b. The joy of the Lord triumphs even in persecution and trial.

Persecution could not break the spirit of the early Church, they rejoiced in the Lord. This joy was a fact in severe persecution, we read, "And the disciples were filled with joy and the Holy Ghost." Acts.13v50-52. The Thessalonians had joy in severe persecution. 1Thes.1v6. Paul and Silas sang for joy of heart in the stocks in prison, even after a terrible beating. Acts.16v19-26. "A broken spirit drieth the bones," so rejoice in God. Prov.17v22. We have a joy and peace that overcomes trial. Jn.16v33. Our trials can be a great blessing, even when they cause us to be in heaviness through manifold temptations. 1Pet.1v4-7. James.1v12. Paul said in 1Thes.5v16-18., "Always be joyful;" he lived his advice, for in 2Cor.7v4., he writes, "I am exceeding joyful in all

our tribulations." Our joy in trial is derived from the presence and promises of our Lord; "I have spoken these things unto you that My joy may abide in you, and that your joy may be full." Jn.15v11.

d. The eternal joy and eternal joyful creativity of the kingdom of God.

The angels shared with God in the joy of creativity. Job.38v7. We will share in God's creative joys and pleasures for ever more. Ps.16v11. Eph.2v7. "That in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus." "The unsearchable riches of Christ." Eph.3v8. "Unsearchable" is "anexichniaston," from the privative "a" and "exichniazo," "to trace or track out;" it is only in Rom.11v33., where it speaks of the amazing untraceable wisdom and ways of God. Christ's riches and God's ways are inexhaustible and untraceable even to angels as well as men. Job.5v9. 9v10. Satan and his angels, evil men and sin are banished forever. There will be joy without pain or tears. Rev.21v1-8,27. Oh the beauty and the glory of that kingdom! Eternal joyful activity, no boredom, eternal creativity, eternal joy with God.

3. PEACE. "Eirene." Strong 1515.

Christian peace is not natural peace. It is Christ's peace, it is the peace that pervades all of heaven. Jn.14v27. It is a peace that passeth all understanding. Phil.4v7. When my father tried to gas my mother, brother and myself while we were upstairs in bed, God's angels and peace surrounded us. When my mother sat on the stairs for many nights over a period of about 2 years with my father threatening to kill her, God's peace sustained and surrounded her.

1. THE HEATHEN PHILOSOPHER'S FALSE IDEAS OF PEACE.

God emphatically states that the wicked cannot know peace; Is.48v22. 57v21.; and that they do not know the ways of peace. Rom.3v17. Is.59v7,8. The heathen Greek philosophers tried to find ways of peace without following and finding and following the true and living God. Their highest idea of peace falls far short of the Christian idea of peace. They sought for tranquillity, "ataraxia," and in their works several ideas occur which are quite contrary to the Christian idea of peace.

1. The elimination of desire. They said that human desires that brought one into conflict had to be taken away, and looked upon asceticism as the answer to obtaining tranquillity.

2. The elimination of emotion. They refused to have emotional ties with others, saying that if they did this peace was lost forever. Emotional sterility, apathy, and emotional unattachment, "apatheis," was their idea of tranquillity and peace; and brought emotional famine, in the disguise of peace.

3. The elimination of concern for others. These philosophers tried to isolate themselves from people's problems. The Stoics taught that the idea of caring for anyone or anything was to be strangled before it was born. How dreadful!

4. The elimination of dependence upon others. They said that attainment of total self-sufficiency and self-dependence, was the way to tranquillity. Total independence of others, or anything, "autarkeia," and insulation from life, brought peace. Epicurus said that peace was, "absence of pain in the body, or trouble in the mind;" and he and his fellow philosophers said that this was attained by having a self-contained life without any dependence upon others, or care for others. These self-centred, selfish ideas of peace are totally different from the Old Testament ideas of peace, and far below the theology or reality of Christian experience. Unfortunately these ideas are still followed by many people today, but this kind of peace, is a false peace, and a false foundation that will not stand the storms and floods of life.

5. In our day it has come to mean the elimination of war. However, the peace that is the fruit of the Spirit, is much more than the absence of war, it is the peace that accompanies the all-pervading presence of God.

2. THE OLD TESTAMENT IDEAS OF PEACE.

a. "Shalom."

"Shalom" is derived from a root meaning wholeness, soundness and completeness, the thought of 3Jn.v2. and 1Thes.5v23.. Barclay says that "shalom" means "all the things that produce man's highest good." "Shalom" carries with it the thought of total peace and well-being of body, Ps.38v3.; soul, spirit and prosperity of circumstances, Job.15v21.

N.B. God's peace is accompanied by divine protecting power.

The blessing of peace that was given in Numb.6v22-27., caused divine power to operate on Israel's behalf, it was not a negative thing, it was a positive blessing and reality, which brought protection and health to the people of God. With prophets like Moses, Aaron and Miriam pronouncing the divinely ordained benediction of Numb.6v22-27., blessing was sure to follow. God kept His Word, even when the people of Israel were rebellious in the wilderness, there was not one feeble person among all their tribes, Ps.105v37., their clothes did not wear out, nor did their feet swell over a period of forty years. Deut.8v3-5. N.B.v4. Neh.9v14-21.

b. "Eirene."

In the Septuagint "eirene" describes a life which is serene and secure because of the protecting and enriching presence of God. David said he could sleep in peace because of God's safe-keeping. Ps.4v8. The Millennial kingdom will be secure and at peace, because Christ and His brethren will reign in righteousness, "the work of

righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever." In Jer.29v11., "eirene is used in God's thoughts of good will and peace towards mankind. See also Is.54v10., God's covenant of peace is guaranteed to last like the mountains and the hills.

3. THE NEW TESTAMENT USAGE OF PEACE, "EIRENE."

Christian peace, "eirene" carries all the positive attributes that are seen in the divine "shalom;" they are yea and amen in Christ. 2Cor.1v20.

A. PEACE "EIRENE," IS USED IN GREETINGS WITH GRACE, "CHARIS."

The normal Jewish greeting was the Hebrew "shalom," but grace and peace is the greeting some New Testament epistles. Rom.1v7. 1Cor.1v3. 2Cor.1v2. Gal.1v3. Eph.1v2. Phil.1v2. Col.1v2. etc.. "Eirene" occurs 88 times in the New Testament, and occurs in every book. The first greeting of the risen Christ to His fearful apostles was "Peace be with you." Jn.20v19,21,26. Peace is Christ's gift. Jn.14v27. To the weeping women and the fearful men, the resurrected Lord Jesus gave His joy and peace. These greetings carried in them the power and grace of God, it was not the formal greeting of the unbeliever. The deep spirituality and dedicated prayer lives of the early Church brought real power and protection to the people of God. When "shalom" was used in invocation with the great name of God, it was just as effective under the new Christian covenant as it was under the covenant of the Law.

B. PEACE IS THE RESULT OF A RIGHT RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD.

The natural result of believing in Jesus is peace. Rom.5v1,10. We have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Rom.15v13. The God of hope fills us with all joy and peace in believing. Col.1v20. The blood of Christ has secured peace for us. God is called the God of peace six times. Rom.15v33. 16v20. Phil.4v9. 2Cor.13v11. 1Thes.5v23. Heb.13v20,21.

4. CHRISTIAN PEACE HAS TO BE JEALOUSLY GUARDED AND EARNESTLY KEPT.

a. In the Church. We are to strive to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. Eph.4v3.

We are to seek peace and earnestly pursue it. 1Pet.3v11.

We need zeal to be found by Him in peace at His coming. 2Pet.3v4.

Peace is the basis of fellowship, "koinonia," and unity, "henotes." Eph.4v3. Churches can be miserable places when peace has gone through bickering. All can, and should be one, in Christ, whether Jew, Greek, slave, male or female. Gal3v28.

N. B. Be warned! Even the two greatest Missionaries of the Church had an angry dispute.

In Acts.15v36-40., we read that Paul and Barnabus had "a sharp contention" over John Mark; "sharp contention" is "paroxusmos," "a sharp fit of anger, sharp contention, angry dispute," our "paroxysm," only here and Heb.10v24.: it is derived from "paroxuno," "to sharpen," metaphorically, "to incite, to stir up." See Acts.17v16. Paul had an angry dispute with Barnabus, the very thing he wrote against in 1Cor.13v5.; "love is not provoked to anger." In Acts.15v37., we read that Barnabus had made up his mind to take Mark with him on their proposed missionary journey. In v38 we read, "But Paul kept on thinking it right and wise not to be taking along with them this one;" and refused to take Mark with them on their missionary journey. Paul said Mark was the one who withdrew from them from Pamphylia, and went not with them to the work." For "withdrew" Paul uses "apostanta," the aorist participle of "aphistemi," which means "to depart, to desert, to apostatise from;" indeed, it is our very word for "apostasy. Both of their minds were made up so they parted and their ministry together was severed asunder, "apochoristhenai." "to sever, to separate." Barnabus went off with his cousin Mark, and Paul departed with Silas. This is the last we see of Barnabus in the New Testament, except for a reference by Paul in 1Cor.9v6.. Barnabus earned his name, he was full of compassion and encouragement, a great and noble soul; he saved and developed Paul's ministry, and here he tries and succeeds to save the ministry of Mark. Mark made the grade, and both Peter and Paul recognised his valuable ministry. 1Pet.5v13. Col.4v10. 2Tim.4v11. Mark's lasting work is his Gospel, which is the ministry of Jesus through the eyes of Peter.

b. In the heart.

We can destroy our peace if we are not careful. God's peace is the sentry of the heart. Col.3v15. Let the peace of God rule, "brabeuo," arbitrate, umpire, guard, or govern, your hearts. Anything that destroys peace must be told to move on.

1. Against worry and worldly anxiety, and the pressures of life. Mt.6v7,8,25-34. Let us watch our ambitions; and learn to be content. Phil.4v11. 1Tim.6v8. Heb.13v5.

2. Against physical or mental weariness. Exhaustion, moods, negative attitudes, and hormones have to be carefully watched.

3. Against Satan's attacks.

4. Against carnality. The life that is dominated by the flesh cannot know peace.

5. Against sin. Peace can only be sustained by godly living. Rom.2v10. Peter wept bitterly when he denied Jesus; he speaks out of his own experience of the grace of God, when he prays for grace and peace to be multiplied to his hearers. 1Pet.1v1,2.

6. Over doubtful things. Rom.14.v1.

c. With all men.

We are to strive for peace with all men.Heb.12v14.

The wall of hostility is broken down between Jew and Gentile through Christ's death. Eph.2v14-17.

d. In the home and marital affairs.

In the home we must have Christ-like attitudes to each other; Eph.5v21-33. N.B. v25,33. 1Pet.3v7-9. God has called us to peace. 1Cor.7v15. Too much activity can destroy peace, as with the case of Mary and Martha. Lk.10v38-42.

e. Over God's will and guidance God's guidance has the following characteristics.

1. It will agree with and not contradict God's Word.
2. It will be confirmed by spiritual people in the body of Christ.
3. It will be confirmed by the Holy Spirit. God will guide us by deep inward conviction, vision, voice and prophecy, and confirm that guidance with His peace. God's peace will always confirm God's guidance.
4. It will agree with our circumstances.
5. It will make the best use of our talents and abilities.
6. It will be validated by good common sense. Ps.32v8,9.

CONCLUSION.

A.. CHRISTIAN PEACE CAN ONLY MAINTAINED BY FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD AND OBEDIENCE TO GOD.

1. We can have peace through prayer and communion with God. Rom.5v1,2. Is.26v3. "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee." It is a result of abiding in Christ and subordination to the Holy Spirit. N.B. Perfect peace.
2. Christ's peace sprang from obedience to God and our peace will too.
3. The flesh dominated life cannot know peace, it brings spiritual death. Rom.8v13.

B. CHRIST'S PEACE IS PROOF AGAINST ANY CIRCUMSTANCE.

1. Christ's peace is proof against any circumstance, as He proved by His victorious life at Nazareth, the pressure and opposition of His ministry, and the awful suffering of His death on the cross and in Hades.
2. We can have perfect peace within through Jesus. Jesus said to Peter, "I am going to be betrayed by one of you and suffer and die; and you will deny me Peter, but let not your heart be troubled, believe in me." Jn.13v21,36-38. 14v1.
3. We can convey peace through our lives and our prayers, even to changing the affairs of the nations. 1Tim.2v1-8. There is peace through the Gospel, let us have our feet shod with it. Eph.6v16.

4. LONGSUFFERING. "Makrothumia." Strong 3115.

True patience is a rare thing; "Patience is a virtue, possess it if you can; seldom found in women, but never in a man;" except in the man Christ Jesus, and those who allow the Holy Spirit to produce His fruit in them. However, it is one of the characteristics of "agape" love, and Paul informs us, "Love is patient;" 1Cor.13v4.; and instructs us to, "Put on garments of patience and forbearance." Col.3v12,13. Eph.4v2. The Greek word for patience is "makrothumia," and means literally, "long-tempered;" it is derived from "makro," "long;" and "thumos," "temper." "Makrothumia" mainly speaks of patience with people; whereas, "hupomene," means "steadfast endurance," and speaks of triumph over circumstances and suffering. Both words are used by Paul, in 2Tim.3v10,11., to describe his own ministry.

1. "MAKROTHUMIA" IS USED TO DESCRIBE THE GREAT PATIENCE OF GOD WITH PEOPLE.

a. It is one of the great glories of God's wonderful character.

In Exod.34v6. "Slow to anger," is "makrothumia" in the Septuagint. So also is Neh..9v17. 103v8. In Exod.34v6., "merciful," is "rakhoom," (Strong 7349, which means), "full of compassionate, cuddling love and mercy." N.B. Jonah.4v2. Was not this my saying, when I was yet in my country? Therefore I fled before unto Tarshish: for I knew that thou art a gracious God, and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repentest thee of the evil."

b. It is the reason for God's many efforts to save us.

Paul is an example of God's longsuffering, to give hope to all. 1Tim.1v12-16. God is longsuffering and not willing that any should perish. 2Pet.3v9. The riches of God's longsuffering. Rom.2v4. The riches of God's grace. Eph.1v7.

c. It is the reason for the merciful delay of God's judgement.

The longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah. 1Pet.3v20. The tragedy is that people harden their hearts when God delays judgement and shows mercy. Rom.2v1-4. 9v17,22. Pharaoh. "Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the hearts of the sons of men is thoroughly set in them to do evil." Eccles.8v11.

d. It is one of the reasons for the delay in Christ's coming.

God delays judgement and gives space for repentance to show mercy. Rev.2v21-23. Peter tells us, "Count the longsuffering of the Lord as salvation." 2Pet.3v15. "The husbandman waiteth---and hath long patience for it." James.5v7-11. Peter warns the Christians of his day not to expect an imminent return of Jesus, as God's concept

of time is different from ours, and to Him a thousand years are like one day to us; however, when Jesus returns, the work of a thousand years will be accomplished in one day. 2Pet.3v8,9. Ps.90v4.

e. At the Second Coming of Christ God's "orge" anger turns to "thumos" anger.

The carnage and suffering caused by Antichrist and his followers and others, results in a longsuffering God destroying with fury the wicked who have caused the world's pain. Is.42v13-17. 63v1-6. 2Thes.1v5-11. It is the day of the wrath of the Lamb. Rev.6v17. To a God of love such judgements are a strange act. Is.28v21. But justice demands such acts. Rev.6v10. 16v7. 19v2. "When Thy judgements are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness." Is.26v8-10.

2. "MAKROTHUMIA," SHOULD BE A CROWNING GLORY OF A CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY.

a. Long-patience is needed in the home.

Relations between husbands and wives have to be carefully watched, and submission to each other in the fear of God is the divine desire and design in marriage. Eph.5v21. Husbands and wives are "heirs together of the grace of life," a loving relationship and partnership cemented by mutual respect and love, and blessed by God. Patience is needed in the pressures of life, and we have to be kind to one another, and be particularly careful when we are tired or sick, and tempers are frayed.

Paul tells Christian husbands to love their wives, and not to be bitter with them. Col.3v19. Peter warns us that we have to be kind to our wives and consider them, and give honour to them, and recognise the pressures that come upon them through hormone problems, or our prayers will be cut off. 1Pet.3v7-12. The husband may be the head of the house, but he must not dominate his wife, we have to love and care for our wives with the same thoughtful and gentle caring love that Christ shows to His Church. Christ loves His Church and died for it. We must positively put off the old worldly attitudes and standards that worldly men adopt towards their wives, and put on Christ, the new man. Gal.3v27. Eph.4v24. 5v25-33. Col.3v5-14.

Wives too must be submissive and not argumentative, this is particularly true when a husband is not a Christian. Col.3v18. Peter instructs Christian wives to win their husbands "without a word" by the efficient, kindly, thoughtful and loving way that they live. 1Pet.3v1-6.

Children should realise that obedience to parents is well pleasing to God. However, Paul warns Fathers to be careful how we discipline our children when they become rebellious and difficult, or we can provoke them to anger and they can soon become discouraged by unkindness and over discipline. Col.3v20,21. Eph.6v1-4. Growing up can be very difficult, and the "terrible teenage years" need real prayer, love and concern as well as necessary correction, firmness and advice. Good parents shed many thoughtful prayerful tears for their children, as Paul did for his converts. Acts.20v19,31. 2Cor.2v4.

b. Long-patience is needed in relations between Christians in Church relationships.

Paul instructs us, "With all lowliness, meekness, and patience, to forbear one another in love." Eph.4v2. Patience has to be "put on" as a garment, "Put on as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; forbearing one another and forgiving one another." Col.3v12,13. Lack of longsuffering is manifested in anger and a bitter tongue. Jam.3v6.

c. Long-patience is needed in our reaction to and relations with unbelievers.

Paul tells us to, "Be patient toward all men." 1Thes.5v14. Give the reason for your hope in meekness and fear. 1Pet.3v15.

d. Long-patience is especially needed in Christian leaders. 2Tim.4v2.

Christian leaders should preach, reprove, rebuke, and exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. Paul's qualities of character, including longsuffering, was well known to Timothy. 2Tim.3v10. Christians are to be patient with all men. 1Thes.5v14.

e. Long-patience is essential for receiving some promises. Heb.6v12.

Wait for doors to be opened by God, they will be great and effectual, but we need the right kind of friends and helpers to make use of them. 1Cor.16v9. 2Cor.2v12,13. It is very important to wait on God for His timing, as Jesus said, "My hour has not yet come." Jn.2v4. 7v30. 8v20. "My time is not yet come: but your time is always ready." Jn.7v6. "The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified." Jn.12v23. "Jesus knew that His hour was come that He should depart out of this world." Jn.13v1. 17v1. God's "kairos" timings are critical events, and are well worth waiting for with patience. We must not be insolent like Israel and say, "Wake up Lord! Why are you asleep? Rouse yourself! Don't reject us for ever." Ps.44v23.

3. THE PATIENCE OF CHRIST.

a. In the training of His disciples in truth.

Jesus explained His parables to the apostles, and was patient with their lack of understanding of the truths He taught them. Mt.13v10-18. Mk.4v9-13. Jesus patiently withheld much truth from His apostles until they could bear it. Jn.16v12.

b. In the training of His disciples in ministry.

Jesus loved His disciples to the uttermost after years of stupidity and failure, He loves us in the same way. Jn.13v1. Jesus patiently trained His disciples in their ministries, He said the saying was true that, "One soweth, and another reapeth." Some had patiently sowed without receiving fruit, and the apostles were gathering the fruit of their labours. Jn.4v35-38. Jesus was removing His disciples hardness of heart, and causing them to grow in grace. Mk.6v52. 8v15-17.

God's wonderful longsuffering love and grace was even manifested to His enemies.

Christ's heart-broken patience and love for Israel in spite of their rejection of God's time of visitation. Lk.19v41-44. How wonderful! Jesus patiently endured "hupomene," the hatred of His enemies in His sufferings. Heb.12v2,3. Like the prophets Jesus is an example of longsuffering. James.5v10,11.

Divine patience gives way to Divine judgement. God bears long with the wicked but the time comes when He avenges the ill-treatment and murder of His own elect. Lk.18v7,8. "But these enemies of mine who would not have me as their king, bring here at once and execute them before me." Lk.19v27. 20v16. The great day of God's "thumos" anger is a future certain reality. Rev.6v17. 19v15. 2Thes.1v5-11.

CONCLUSION.

Those who control their spirit and tongue and are longsuffering are greater than he who takes a city. Prov.16v32. Jesus did this perfectly in His home life at Nazareth, James remembered it well. James.3v2. Considering Jesus is the key to manifesting victorious patience, "makrothumia," and triumphant fortitude, "hupomene". Heb.3v1. 6v12-20. 12v2,3. 2Cor.3v18.

5. GENTLE KINDNESS. "Chrestotes." Strong.5544.

1. "CHRESTOTES" SPEAKS OF A HAPPY MELLOW CHRISTIAN SWEETNESS.

a. "Chrestotes" is a quality of character that fallen mankind does not possess.

In Rom.3v12., Paul writes that all of mankind has become worthless, and there is none that does good, no not one. "Good" is "chrestotes." This fruit of the Spirit is now available to mankind in salvation, through the Holy Spirit's abiding presence.

b. "Chrestotes" speaks of a kind, gentle, gracious and mellow disposition.

In the Authorised Version the noun "chrestotes" is translated as "gentleness" in Gal.5v22.; as "goodness," in Rom.2v4. 11v22. three times; "good," in Rom.3v12.; and "kindness," in 2Cor.6v6. Eph.2v7. Col.3v12. and Titus.3v4..

c. "Chrestotes speaks of a spiritual sweetness.

It is a kind, sweet, and gentle goodness, and a gentle forgiving kindness. The adjective "chrestos" is used for the sweetness and mellowness of old wine in Lk.5v39. It is the very opposite of a sour, harsh, and irritable disposition; it speaks of a calm, sweet, and sunny disposition. Knowing Jesus, the Father, and the Holy Spirit, produces in us kindness, and sweetens the temper. A religion that is sour, morose, sullen and miserable is a denial of Christianity. **Be sweet, gentle and kind at home.**

d. "Chrestotes" is an essential quality for Christians and Christian leaders.

In 2Cor.6v6., Paul said the "chrestotes" was one of the qualities of character that brought the approval of God on his ministry. See. 2Cor.6v4-6. "Chrestotes" is one of the virtues we must cloth ourselves with. In Col.3v12., Paul exhorts Christians to put off the old nature, and put on this forgiving gentle kindness. See Col.3v7-14. N.B. v7,9,10,12,14.

2. "CHRESTOTES" SPEAKS OF THE KINDNESS AND GENTLENESS OF GOD.

a. God's wonderful unmerited kindness.

"Chrestotes" speaks of kindness even to, and especially to, those who don't deserve it. Lk.6v35. God is kind, "chrestos," to the ungrateful, selfish, and wicked. Jesus tells us that our Heavenly Father is very kind, and gives without any thought of reward or recompense. Mt.5v43 -48. In the Septuagint, the Greek Old Testament, "good" is translated by the adjective "chrestos," Ps.25v8. 34v8. 86v5. (forgiving goodness): 100v5. 106v1. 107v1. 136v1. etc.: and "goodness," by the noun "chrestotes." Ps.24v7. 68v10. God's goodness prepares for the poor: N.B. Ps.145v7-9. God's is abundant in goodness, "chrestotes," and is longsuffering, full of compassion, grace and great mercy; He is good, "chrestos," to all, and His tender mercies are over all His works. All His works praise Him. Both "chrestos" and "chrestotes" occur in praise of God's great mercy, forgiving kindness and gentle goodness. Even God's judgements are good and spring from His kindness. Ps.119v39.

b. God's continuous kindness in His efforts to lead to repentance and salvation.

In Rom.2v4., Paul informs us of the riches of God's kind and gentle goodness, "chrestotes," that has always tried to lead men to repentance and eternal life; men turn this down, not realising that it is the goodness, "chrestos," of God that leads them to repentance. In Rom.11v22., Paul tells us that the merciful goodness of God precedes His severity. In Titus.3v4. N.B.v3-7., Paul writes of the wonderful kindness and gentle giving goodness of God in sending Jesus to die for us.

c. God the Father's and Christ's gentle yoke.

The adjective "chrestos" is used for the gentleness with which Christ deals with us; He gives us a gentle yoke. Christ's service is not tyrannical, Christ perfectly fits the task that He gives us to our abilities, temperament, and circumstances.

d. God's kindness and thoughtfulness to women.

Under the Law God protected women, and He severely warns husbands not to deal treacherously with the wife of their youth. Mal.2v14-17. See the kind and gentle way Jesus raised the widow of Nain's son from the dead. Lk.7v11-15.

3. THE GENTLE KINDNESS AND FRIENDSHIP OF JESUS TO SINNERS.

a. Christ promises gentle kindness to all who are heavy laden and needy. Mt. 11v28-30.

Our Lord's welcoming gentle kindness transformed needy and sinful people who met Him. People knew that Jesus really cared for them, the warmth of His love and His kindness was a tangible reality, it enveloped them when they came to Him. Jesus gave them a real welcome. If we have failed in our marriages, Jesus will still be kind and gentle with us. Come to Him with confidence.

b. The friend of tax collectors and sinners. Mt. 11v19.

Jesus got badly criticised for being friendly with tax collectors and sinners, He told three parables to show God's kindness to sinners. Lk.15v1-32. Jesus did not count the cost to bring Zacchaeus into the kingdom. Lk.19v1-10.

c. The woman at the well, and the woman taken in adultery. Jn. 4v1-29. 8v1-11.

The gentle kindness and forgiving love of Jesus is beautiful to see. There was no Hell fire preaching, there was not condemnation, only a beautiful welcome into God's gentle and kind-hearted forgiveness.

d. The whole attitude of Christ to His Church is one of tender-hearted forgiveness.

Paul tells us in Eph.4v32. "And be ye kind, "chrestos," one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." "Tender-hearted is "eusplagchnoi," literally, "having healthy bowels," or, "of good heartedness," from "eu," "well," and "splugchnon;" "the heart, the inward organs;" these were considered to be the seat of emotions and intentions, and means "compassionate tenderness." It only occurs in Eph4v32. and 1Pet.3v8., where Peter appeals for the fruit of the Spirit to be manifested.

In James.5v11., James speaks from his experience of living with Jesus at Nazareth, he extols the gentle kindness of Jesus, he says, "Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy." "Very pitiful," is "polusplagchnos," (only here in N.T.), from "polus," "much," and "splanchnon," "the heart;" it means "very kind, very sympathetic, extremely compassionate;" Jesus is very kind, and really feels for us. "Tender mercy," is "oiktirmon," a strong adjective meaning "tender compassion and mercy." "Oiktirmon" only occurs in James.5v11. and twice in Luke.6v36., where Jesus appeals to us to show the same tender mercy to others that God shows to His creation. What a lovely picture of the wonderful gentle kindness of Jesus and our heavenly Father.

4. OUR LORD'S GENTLE KINDNESS TO HIS APOSTLES.

Jesus was kind and gentle to His apostles when they were slow to answer His call to service. Lk.5v1-11. He was also kindness itself in the development of their ministries. When Jesus repeated Mt.11v28-30. to His apostles, it was for them, He was telling them that He would put a gentle and kind yoke upon them and not overburden them, and he would give them rest to their souls.

Jesus showed His gentle kindness to the apostles in their unbelief and failure, He prayed for His apostles BEFORE these failures occurred. e.g. Peter's denial of Christ. Lk.22v30-34. Jesus had called them His friends and His forgiving gentle love proved the truth of His friendship. Jn.15v13-15. This kindness to failures was again shown in His resurrection ministry to His apostles, He showed kind and forgiving mercy, "eleos," to the disciples who forsook Him, and failed Him. Lk.10v25-37.

CONCLUSION. The following hymn was written by Frederick William Faber, who lived from A. D. 1814 to 1863, and he expresses beautifully the sheer loveliness of the gentle kindness and love of our heavenly Father and Saviour, and the blindness and stupidity of the world and Church in failing to comprehend the inexhaustible fullness of their love.

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| 1. Souls of men, why will ye scatter
in God's mercy
Like a crowd of frightened sheep?
the sea:
Foolish hearts, why will ye wander
His justice
from a love so true and deep?
liberty. | 2. Was there ever kinder Shepherd
Half so gentle, half so sweet,
As the Saviour who would have us
Come and gather round His feet? | 3. There's a wideness
Like the wideness of
There's a kindness in
Which is more than |
| 4. There is welcome for the sinner,
is broader | 5. There is plentiful redemption | 6. For the love of God |

And more graces for the good man's mind, There is mercy with the Saviour; Eternal There is healing in His blood. kind.	In the blood that has been shed; There is joy for all the members In the sorrows of the Head.	Than the measure of And the heart of the Is most wonderfully
7. But we make His love too narrow By false standards of our own; And we magnify His strictness With a zeal He will not own.	8. If our love were but more simple. We should take Him at His word, And our lives would be all sunshine In the sweetness of our Lord.	

6. GENEROUS GOODNESS. "Agathosune." Strong 19.

The meaning of "agathosune" has been under a great deal of discussion.

1. THE DEFINITION OF THE MEANING OF "AGATHOSUNE."

a. "Agathosune" is not a common word.

The other eight fruit of the Spirit are easily defined, however, "agathosune is not a common word, its limited use makes it more difficult to define. "Agathosune," is not used in early secular Greek writings and only occurs in late Greek, and only 13 to 16 times in the Septuagint, depending on the manuscripts. Judg.8v35. 9v16. Neh.9v25,35. etc. "Agathos," good, is used extensively, "agathosune" only occurs four times in the New Testament, in Rom.15v14. Gal.5v22. Eph.5v9. and 2Thes.1v11..

Rom.15v13,14. Paul gives the benediction in v13., "Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope through the power of the Holy Ghost." Then he goes on to say in v14., that he was persuaded that the Romans were "full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another."

Gal5v22. "The fruit of the Spirit is goodness." Eph.5v9. "For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth."

2Thes.1v11,12. v11. "Wherefore also we pray always for you, that our God would count you worthy of this calling, and fulfil all the good pleasure of His goodness, and the work of faith with power: v12. That the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and ye in Him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ." The desires of God's goodness are always "infinitely beyond our highest prayers, desires, thoughts, hopes or dreams." Eph.3v20. God's tremendous desires to bless us spring out of His unlimited giving goodness and love.

b. The wide usage of the adjective "agathos," "good," does not help to define "agathosune."

The noun "agathosune," "goodness," is the moral quality described by the adjective "agathos," "good." "Agathos" is the most common Greek word for "good;" it occurs over 500 times in the Septuagint, and 102 times in the N.T.; it is used of physical things, like a good tree, Mt.7v17.; good ground, Lk.8v8., or a good harvest. Lk.13v8. "Agathos" can also be used in a moral sense of good persons and good things; a good man, good thoughts, good words and good deeds, and a resulting good conscience. Mt.12v34-37. Lk.6v45. Acts.23v1. 1Tim.1v5,19. Every good and perfect gift finds its origin in God, James.1v17. Lk.11v13. God alone is perfectly good, and it is only in the light of His character, that the standard and true meaning of "agathosune" goodness is revealed. Mt.19v17. The character of God reveals the fullness and beauty of the moral qualities described by "agathos" and "agathosune."

c. The heathen's views about "good" and "goodness" are no help in defining "agathosune."

As with the other fruit of the Spirit, the heathen views about "good" and "goodness" are no guide to the use of "agathos" and "agathosune," for their ideas of "the good" are far from the Biblical ideas of goodness. The secular Greek philosophers looked upon anything which gave meaning to life as good; their concept of "the good" was speculative, humanistic and depraved. Their statements, that knowing what was good would ensure the doing of the good, are contradicted by their writings which reveal the domination of the worst sins of the flesh in their lives. The Biblical concept of victory over the flesh and a life of "good" and "goodness" flowing from communion with the true and living God was unknown to the heathen. The heathens idea of "good" was pleasing the flesh and the gods, and this involved the worst levels of debauchery.

d. Christian scholars themselves vary in the meaning of "agathosune."

When Jerome and Trench compare "chrestotes," "kindness," with "agathosune," "goodness;" they say "chrestotes" speaks of gentle and gracious kindness and the kindlier aspects of goodness; as when Jesus dealt gently with the sinner of Lk.7v37-50.; and say "agathosune" speaks of moral judgement, and zeal for goodness, and the sterner qualities of goodness, such as rebuking, correcting and chastening; as when Jesus cleansed the Temple, or condemned Israel's religious leaders and threatened them with Divine judgement. Mt.21v13. 23v1-39. It is true that "agathosune" must speak of moral judgement and zeal for goodness, but the sterner qualities of goodness, seem to speak more of justice, "dikaiosune," than "agathosune."

Lightfoot agrees that "chrestotes" speaks of a kindly quality of heart, emotion and disposition towards others, that does not necessarily take a practical form; and states that "agathosune," speaks of a quality of conduct and an active and energetic principle of life that results in kindly activity towards people. Lightfoot's concludes that,

"Chrestotes" is potential "agathosune," "agathosune" is energising "chrestotes." Barclay however, says, "On this basis we might say that "agathosune" is "chrestotes" in action. It is an attractive idea, but in point of fact there is no actual evidence that the words are so distinguished in use." Barclay, however, agrees with Lightfoot's comment that "agathosune" speaks of kindly activity towards people, for **Barclay says, "Agathosune is the generosity which springs from a heart which is kind." Bloomfield agrees with this, he writes, "By "chrestotes" is denoted benignity, affability; by "agathosune," that kind-heartedness which delights in doing good."**

The Expositors Greek Testament states on Gal.5v22., "Since the object of this verse is to exhibit the harmony between the fruit of the Spirit and the restraints of the Law, those qualities only are specified which affect man's duty to his neighbour. "Love" with its unfailing attendants, inward "joy" and "peace," supplies the motive power; "long-suffering" in the face of wrongs and ill-treatment, "kindness" in rendering service to others, and "goodness" in the free bestowal of bounty on those who need, cannot fail to gain good will."

It seems, then, that "chrestotes" is an abundant forgiving kindness and gentleness, and "agathosune" speaks not only of moral rectitude, but also of an abundant generous giving goodness. Goodness is not being sanctimonious, or a negative "thou shalt not" attitude; it is an attractive generous attribute of character that gives until it hurts; just as God gave His only begotten Son to suffer and die for us, to save a sinful evil world. Jn.3v16. In giving Jesus to us, God's unspeakable gift, the fullness of God's giving goodness is revealed. 2Cor.8v9. 9v15.

2. "AGATHOSUNE" DESCRIBES GOD'S GENEROUS GIVING GOODNESS.

a. "Agathosune," is the giving goodness that gives to people what they do not deserve.

"Agathosune" goes further than justice, "dikaiosune," which gives men their due. When the Scriptures say that God is good, they do not just mean that He behaves properly, they mean that He gives generously and abundantly, infinitely beyond all that we can ask, think, desire, or dream. Eph.3v20. God's goodness is a goodness that is beautiful, warm, generous and kind. God is actively and eternally being and doing good. "Agathosune" speaks of a beautiful and attractive benevolent goodness; like "toob," the Hebrew word for goodness, which in Neh.9v35. speaks of God's beautiful and great generous goodness.

b. "Agathos" is the opposite of "poneros."

"Agathos" speaks of active goodness, the very opposite of "poneros," which is active corrupting evil. In reference to Satan, "ho Poneros," "the Wicked One," "poneros" speaks both of the active corrupting evil and the grudging meanness, that his character and actions display. See Sept. of Deut.15v9. Prov.23v6. 28v22.. God is even good to evil people; in Mt.5v45., Jesus tells us that God makes His sun shine on the evil, "poneros," and the good, "agathos." In Mt.20v16., "agathos" is used to speak of God's generous giving of rewards to the labourers on judgement day; "Is your eye evil, ("poneros"), because I am good, ("agathos")."

c. "Agathos" speaks both of an active transforming goodness as well as a generous giving goodness.

"God's goodness is not content until we are changed into His likeness; it is an uplifting goodness, that is actively transforming Christians and conforming them into the image of Christ. Rom.8v28-30. In reference to God, "agathos" speaks both of the active transforming goodness and the generous giving goodness, that is manifested in His character and His acts.

d. The cost of God's great giving goodness. God's giving goodness has meant:

1. God having to work day and night for ever; an awesome eternal responsibility.
2. God experiencing awful and continuous suffering.
3. Jesus suffering and dying, and going to Hades for us.

3. "AGATHOSUNE" INCLUDES PURITY, THE BEING AND DOING OF GOOD.

a. Goodness manifests itself in purity and integrity.

Goodness involves being good, as well as doing good. Integrity is always a part of goodness, like Job, who was a perfect man, "tam" a man of integrity. Job.1v1,8.2v3. Jacob too was a person of integrity, an upright man, for in Gen.25v27., "plain" is also "tam," "a person of integrity." Job's integrity consisted of fearing God and hating evil. Loving a good God, and keeping the heart pure are both essential parts of true goodness, for it is the pure in heart who will see God. Prov.4v23. Mt.5v8. Trees are known by their fruit, a good person brings forth good fruit, and a good person brings forth good treasure out of their heart, in both words and works. Mt.7v15-20. 12v33-37. Goodness acts as both salt and light to the world. Mt.5v13-16.

b. Goodness manifests itself in generous giving goodness and encouragement.

Barnabus, the son of encouragement, was a good "agathos," man, as well as full of the Holy Ghost and faith. Acts.11v24. His real name was Joseph, but he was renamed "Barnabus," "the son of encouragement." Acts.4v36,37. Barnabus encouraged and brought on the ministry of Paul, his welcoming kindly goodness brought Paul in from out of the cold, and opened doors of ministry for him at Jerusalem and Antioch; and later into full apostolic ministry. Acts.9v26,27. 11v24-26. 13v1-4. Barnabus stood by Mark when Paul rejected him, and developed his ministry. later Paul accepted Mark. Acts.15v36-39. 2Tim.4v11.

Barnabus manifested warm compassionate sacrificial giving love; he sold lands to meet the needs of the poor at Jerusalem. Acts.4v37. Joseph of Arimathaea was a good and just man, he gave Jesus his own new tomb. Lk.23v50-53. Mt.27v57-60. God's warm and compassionate giving of Himself leaves all of Heaven breathless with amazement. God acts are not only just, He is great in His giving goodness, He magnificently out-gives all of His creation. At tremendous cost to Himself He gave us life and being, forgiveness and salvation, and eternal life and heaven, and above all Himself, Jesus and the Holy Spirit.

It was not just the righteous of Jesus that made the demons call Him "The Holy One of God." Christ's goodness was manifested in His incredible sacrificial giving and devotion to His creation. Holiness is sacrificial goodness in action, love in uniform. The giving goodness of God is a blazing light that the demons and wicked men cannot stand. Mk.1v24 It was not only our Lord's purity that the demons could not stand, but the giving goodness of His life that condemned their greed and selfishness. Christ's zeal for God and righteousness caused the people at Nazareth, and His other enemies to resist and oppose Him.Ps.69v7-12.

CONCLUSION. Only God is truly "agathos," good, and exercises the ultimate in giving goodness, "agathosune." Lk.18v19. We can partake of His character and goodness by the power and presence of the Spirit. Rom.8v1-4. We can be transfigured by beholding His glory. 2Cor.3v18. Those who do not have the Spirit of Christ are none of His. Rom.8v5-9. The life of goodness, results in obedience to the truth, and in doing the Father's generous and loving will as revealed in the life of Jesus.

7. FAITH AND FAITHFULNESS. "Pistis." Strong 4102.

The verb "pisteuo," means to trust someone, or something. The noun "pistis," means persuasion, credence, faith. In the Authorised Version. "pistis" is translated as, "assurance," once, in Acts.17v31.; "belief," once, in 2Thes.2v13.; "fidelity," once, in Titus.2v10.; and "faith," 239 times. It is obvious, therefore, that it is quite wrong to say that Paul is speaking only of faithfulness in Gal.5v22.. Faith is one of the qualities of character that will eternally abide with love. Trust in God and each other is an absolutely essential part of the happiness and security of heaven. The fruit of faith is the extension of "saving faith," to faith in God in all other areas of our life; through walking with God. Faith is the basis of our walk with God, both on earth, and in heaven.

Do our modern translators lack the faith to trust God in the problems of life, and for miracles and healing? Is this why they prefer to translate "pistis" as "faithfulness," rather than "faith" in Gal.5v22.?" The verbal adjective "pistos," is translated, in the passive, as faithful, trustworthy, reliable, "God is faithful," Col.1v9.; in the active, as "believing, trusting." Surely in Gal.5v22., "pistis," can be interpreted, in both its active sense as "faith," and its passive sense as "faithfulness." In the Septuagint "pistis" is used both for faith and faithfulness; "Great is Thy faithfulness." Lam.3v23. "No faith." Deut.32v20.

1. FAITH IS THE ACTIVE PRINCIPLE IN RECEIVING SALVATION.

We are justified by faith, and have peace with God through faith. Rom.1v17. 3v21-31. 5v1,2. Gal.3v24. Saving faith is produced by a divine quickening of the human spirit, it is the gift of God. Eph.2v8,9. The end of faith is the salvation of our souls. 1Pet.1v5,9. Through our quickened spirits, the new birth, we have the ability to grow in faith.

2. FAITH IS THE ACTIVE PRINCIPLE IN SERVICE.

a. Faith to move mountains. Mt. 17v20,21.

We read of the heroes of faith in Hebrews eleven, "by faith" occurs 13 times, this was their secret of victory and endurance.

"And Stephen, full of faith and power, did great wonders and signs among the people. Acts.6v8., in the Majority Text. Barnabus was full of the Holy Ghost and faith. Acts.11v24. Remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father. 1Thes.1v3.

b. The unbelief that can stop us entering our spiritual Canaan.

This speaks of the believer who fails to claim their inheritance in Heb.3 and 4.; and fails to trust God for the miraculous. Ps.95. all. An evil heart of unbelief caused Israel to depart from the God. Heb.3v12.

c. The wonderful faith of Jesus, the pioneer of faith and perfecter of our faith. Heb.12v2.

Jesus did His miracles by faith in the Father. Jn.5v19,30. He pioneered and showed us the way of faith.

N.B. THE GROWTH OF FAITH AND SPIRITUAL STRENGTH.

Even men of God had to develop faith, power and strength of spirit. Elijah and Elisha. John Baptist. Lk.1v80. Even our Lord grew strong in spirit. Lk.2v40. All believers grow from faith to faith. Rom.1v17.

3. FAITH IS THE ACTIVE PRINCIPLE IN DISCERNING DOCTRINAL TRUTH.

Sound in faith. Titus.1v13. In Acts.6v7., A great number of priests were obedient to the faith. See 1Tim.1v15., This is a faithful saying, "pistos logos," and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief. Compare 2Thes.2v12., That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

4. FAITH IS THE ACTIVE PRINCIPLE BEHIND A TRUSTWORTHY LIFE.

a. Faithfulness in daily living.

In the home. Correct relationships between wives, husbands, and children. Eph.5v22-25. Col.3v18-20. Mal.2v14-17.

In our work situations. Col.3v17,23,24. Whatever we do, we do it in the name of the Lord and heartily as unto the Lord, and not unto men, for we serve the Lord Christ.

In our friendships. True friends are faithful to us in our difficulties. Prov.17v17. "A friend loveth at all times, and a brother is born for adversity." Prov.18v24. "There is a friend that sticks closer than a brother." Prov.19v4.

b. Faithfulness in evangelism and ministry to the body of Christ.

Paul informs us that Jesus counted Paul him as faithful and put him into the ministry; a former blasphemer and persecutor obtained mercy and ministry, to show a pattern of God's longsuffering mercy to encourage others. 1Tim.1v12-17. In 2Tim.2v2. Paul tells Timothy to teach the truths he taught him to faithful men who were able to teach others.

5. THE FAITHFULNESS OF GOD IS OUR SOURCE OF SECURITY, AND REASON FOR OUR FAITH.

a. God is faithful to us and will keep all His promises to us.

The Scriptures declare that God is faithful. He will not allow us to be tempted more than we can stand, but will make a way of escape for us. 1Cor.1v8,9. 10v13. God's promises are yea and amen in Christ. 2Cor.1v19,20. God can preserve our whole body, soul and spirit blameless, until the return of Jesus. He is faithful that promised. 1Thes.5v23,24. 2Thes.2v3.

b. Christ is the faithful and true witness. Jesus is The Faithful Witness. Rev.1v5. Jesus was the faithful and true witness to the Church at Laodicea, He told the Christians there the truth about their spiritual condition. Rev.3v14. In Rev.19v11., Jesus is called "Faithful and True" when He comes to make war with Antichrist, and destroy him and his armies.

God will faithfully fulfil ALL His prophetic promises to us, so trust Him.

God the Father states that the prophecies and promises in the book of Revelation are faithful and true. Christ's angel states the revelations to John are faithful and true and came directly from God the Father. Rev.21v5. 22v6. His promises to us are true, He will not fail us.

8. MEEKNESS. "Prautes." Strong 4236.

The noun "prautes" occurs eleven times; "praus," the adjective four times. "Prautes" speaks of the controlling power that makes strength gentle; our English words, meekness, gentleness, and humility, convey the incorrect thought of weakness. Meekness possesses great strength as well as merciful strengthening gentleness.

1. MEEKNESS POSSESSES CONTROLLED STRENGTH.

a. Moses. In Numb.12v3., we are told that Moses was the meekest man on the face of the earth; humble before God, and restrained and controlled by gentleness and humility before men. "Prautes" is used by Greeks to speak of an animal which has been broken-in and trained to obey and answer to the reins. There was no person in the world who was as strong, or more humble than Moses.

b. Jesus. Jesus is both the Lamb of God and the Lion of Judah. Rev.5v5,6. He has both gentleness and strength. His meekness is greatly misunderstood; meek does not mean weak, it is strength under control. It is gentle meekness that brings victory not arrogance.

2. A GENTLE MEEKNESS WAS AN ESSENTIAL PART OF CHRIST'S LIFE AND MINISTRY.

a. Meekness is one of the welcoming graces of Christ's character.

Zechariah prophesied, "Behold thy king cometh unto thee, meek and sitting upon an ass." Zech.9v9. Mt.21v5. Jesus said, "Come unto me for I am meek and lowly in heart." Christ is meek ("praos") and lowly ("tapeinos") in heart, and we find rest in His gentle and kind humility. Mt.11v29. Jesus does not break the bruised reed, or quench the smoking flax. Is.42v1-3. Mt.12v15-21. In 1Cor.10v1., Paul appeals to the Corinthians by "the meekness ('prautes') and gentleness ('epieikeia') of Christ. "Epieikeia" means "fair, reasonable, equitable and lenient, when applied to those in authority; and a humble, patient steadfastness, and submissive trust in God in injustice, disgrace and ill-treatment, and freedom from malice, hatred and bitterness under this abuse and mistreatment. Both are perfectly fulfilled in Christ. In the only other place where "epieikeia" occurs in the New Testament, Tertullus uses it in flattery to Felix at the trial of Paul in Acts.24v4., in this case it could not have been more inappropriate.

b. Meekness was part of Christ's dealings with broken people.

The mark of Christ's ministry was an uplifting merciful gentleness. The bruised reed He did not break, the smoking flax He did not quench, He imparted strength and purpose to broken lives. Mt.12v18-21. Jesus showed gentle tenderness to the fallen, not criticism. Jesus manifested gentle strength with the sinner, and with the sick.

We see from 1Cor.4v21., that meekness is the opposite of strict and stern justice. Paul speaks of the alternative of him coming with a rod, or in meekness and love. A fallen Christian must be aided and restored in a spirit of meekness. Gal.6v1. Power controlled by delivering gentleness.

c. Meekness was part of Christ's healing ministry.

When Jesus healed people He did not show off, in fact He often strongly commanded people not to make it known. Our Lord's gentle touch released great healing power and resulted in astonishing miracles. The man with leprosy. Mt.8v1-4. Peter's mother in Law. Mt.8v14,15. Many sick. Lk.4v40,41. The daughter of Jairus. Mt.9v18,19. The widow of Nain's son. Lk.7v11-16. All these and many more could all sing:
"He touched me, oh, He touched me; And, oh, the joy that filled my soul;
Something happened, and now I know; He touched me, and made me whole.

3. MEEKNESS POSSESSES HUMILITY OF MIND AND TEACHABLENESS OF SPIRIT.

Receive with meekness the Word of God. James.1v21.
Show meekness to all men. **Titus.3v2.**

4. MEEKNESS MANIFESTS CHRISTIAN GENTLENESS TO OPPONENTS.

In meekness instructing those who oppose. 2Tim.2v25.
In meekness giving a reason for the hope. 1Pet.3v15.
The wise man is always meek. **James.3v13.**

5. MEEKNESS BRINGS ENTRANCE INTO THE KINGDOM.

Meekness is a manifestation of one of the characteristics of God's kingdom. "Blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth." Mt.5v5. Ps.37v10,11. A meek and quiet spirit is of great price in the sight of God. 1Pet.3v4.

CONCLUSION.

Let us come to Jesus, He can impart His gentle meekness to us and transform our lives, homes and marriages. Mt.11v28-30.

9. SELF-CONTROL. "Egkrateia," Strong 1466.

"Egkrateia," pronounced "enkrateia," is derived from "en" and "kratos," which means "strength to control," or "power to conquer or rule;" it speaks of mastery. It only occurs 3 times in the New Testament. In Gal.5v23., of the fruit of the Spirit. In Acts.24v25., when Felix trembled as Paul preached to him about righteousness, self-control and judgement. In. 2Pet.1v6., "Add---to knowledge self-control; and to self-control patience." Other fruits had spoken of certain aspects of self-control, "makrothumia," "longsuffering;" "prautes," "meekness;" and indeed "agape," "love." Jesus is changing spiritual wrecks to disciplined and loving sons and daughters of God. The whole of Heaven marvels at the self-control of the Trinity; the Seraphim of Isaiah.6v1-3. (the living creatures of Rev.4v6-8.), worship in eternal amazement at the longsuffering holiness and self-control of God towards a rebellious creation. The verb "egkrateuomai" occurs twice. In 1Cor.7v9., where Paul advises those who cannot control their sexual desires to marry; and 1Cor.9v25., where Paul speaks of his own determined self-control. The adjective "egrates" occurs once. In Titus.1v8., where it says that an overseer, or bishop must have self-control.

1. GOD OFFERS CHRISTIANS SELF-CONTROL OVER DESIRE.

a. In 1Pet.1v4, Peter tells us of the corruption in the world through lust. "Epithumia," "strong desire, uncontrolled desire, lust, passion." We escape the corruption through the exceeding great and precious promises of God, and the new-born spirits that make us partakers of the divine nature. Peter also makes it clear that fleshly lusts make war against the soul. 1Pet.2v11.

b. In 1Jn.2v15-17, John tells us, v15. "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If anyone love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. v16. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes (Mt.5v28.), and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. v17. And the world passeth away and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever. In all places "lust" is "epithumia," "strong desire, lust, passion." "Pride," is "alazoeia," boasting arrogance, braggart talk, from "alazon," the empty boaster. Only in 1Jn.2v16. and James.4v16. See Rom.1v30., for the verb "alazoneuomai," to act the "alazon," the empty boaster.

c. The Christian's body is a temple of God. This is in sharp contrast to the teaching of the heathen philosophers, who called the body evil, and said it was a contaminating prison in which the soul is housed.

2. SELF-CONTROL IS ESSENTIAL, PARTICULARLY IN LEADERS.

Self control is essential in spiritual leaders. Titus.1v8. Elders must be masters of self. Paul says that athletes "exercise self control IN ALL THINGS," for a corruptible crown; whereas we exercise self-control for an incorruptible crown. 1Cor.9v25. If we concentrate on just one aspect of self-control we can well miss other areas where self-control is essential. Christians may preach against drunkenness and immorality, and yet fail to curb equalling dangerous works of the flesh, like bad temper, covetousness, slander and lying. We have to make sure that the defences of our soul are strong at all points.

3. THE DIFFERENT AREAS WHERE SELF CONTROL IS NECESSARY.

Self-control is needed in many different areas of the personality

A. SELF-CONTROL IN THE AREA OF DESIRES OF THE FLESH.

Paul likens the mastery of the body to the strenuous all-out efforts of the athletes in the Greek games. 1Cor.9v24-27. Paul uses the picture of a runner first and then follows it with the picture of a boxer, he tells the Corinthians of his determined subjugation of the flesh. Paul says he is not a shadow boxer with an imaginary opponent, who beats the air; but he beats and keeps under his body, "hupopiazō," the present indicative active, "to strike under the eyes, to beat black and blue;" from "hupopion," from "hupo" and "ops," the part of the face under the eyes. It is only used here and in Lk.18v5., of the persistent widow who wore out the unjust judge, with a verbal beating. Paul said he disciplined his body, and so must we, this is the meaning of the word disciple, one who follows the disciplines and pattern of life of Christ.

a. The desire for food and drink.

It is important to realise that God has given us the taste buds to enjoy food, and have the pleasure of eating. But God condemns gluttony and drunkenness. Gal.5v21. 1Pet.4v3. Prov.23v29-32. Gal.5v21. Eph.5v18. Jesus warns that in the last days, many Christians will allow their hearts to be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness, and they will, as a result, be blind as to the prophetic time, and not be prepared for those evil days, or for our Lord's return. Lk.21v34. Mt.24v12,44-51.

b. The desire for sex.

Sex is a gift of God and must be accepted with gratitude and not be despised, God saw that His human creation was "very good." Gen.1v27,28,31. Marriage is honourable and precious, and the bed undefiled. Heb.13v4. God looks upon unlawful divorce as adultery, and He hates it. Mal.2v14-17. Mt.5v31,32. 19v3-9. Mk.10v2-12. Lk.6v18. However, there is mercy and free forgiveness with God to the fallen, or no one would stand, for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. Rom.3v9-12,21-28. The mercy of God to people with sexual and marriage problems is revealed by His instructions to Moses in Deut.24v1-4., for wives divorced for immorality to remarry. The ministry of our Lord to the Samaritan woman, the woman taken in adultery, and the Tax collectors and sinners, show Jesus as the true and kind friend and Saviour of sinners. John.4v6-26. 8v1-11. Lk.7v34-50. N.B.v34,37,50. 15v1-32. N.B. v1,2,7,10,32. Mt.11v19. 1Cor.7v15,27,28.

The Scriptures condemn pre-marital sex, and extra-marital sex; for the reason that they destroy the basis of a happy society and home. Society today is infatuated with sexual promiscuity, and this has led to the spread of incurable diseases, like aids, etc.. These are a great warning against sexual promiscuity and proof of the wisdom of Biblical sexual holiness and purity.

There is the need for spiritual surgery in the realm of desire. Mt.5v27-30. It is wrong to trifle with sexual desire, it has to be dealt with very firmly; things that produce temptation and incite the flesh, like erotic books, dirty films, and worldly flirtatious necking and heavy petting, are characteristics of the old life and have to be put off and the new man put on. Col.3v5-14. It is also a sin to dress in a way that will cause others to fall into temptation, and it should be repented of before God.

Sexual lust and desire are quite distinct from true Christian love. True Christian sexual love is dominated by agape love and consideration of our partners; this produces growth of character and true worship of God. The only true control of sex is agape love; sublimation by satisfying occupations and ministry can help, but agape love that seeks not its own is the real secret of Christian self-control in sexual matters.

B. SELF-CONTROL IN THE AREA OF DESIRES OF THE MIND.

Christian self-control is not just in the area of the flesh, it extends to the area of the mind and of the spirit, there are desires of the mind as well as desires of the flesh. Eph.2v3. The beautiful things of life, music and the arts, philosophy, and other intellectual pursuits, can be corrupting; for people can fill their lives with them to the exclusion of all else; and exclude spiritual realities and God. In Eph.2v1-3., Paul warns us that Satan uses the desires of the mind to enslave the souls of men. In Acts.24v25., Felix was a prime example of lust and lack of self-control. It is from the hearts of men that evil thoughts arise. Mt.7v21. The battle against evil thoughts is in the mind, evil thoughts have to be brought in captivity to Christ. 2Cor.10v4,5.

C. SELF-CONTROL IN THE AREA OF THE TONGUE, AND ANGER.

a. Let us control the anger that leads to abusive and dirty talk.

The tongue has to be controlled; for it can be full of deadly poison James.3v1-18. N.B. v2-9. So let us be longsuffering and defer our anger. Prov.19v11. Those who control their spirit are greater than they who take a city. Prov.16v32.

Let us dispense with dirty or filthy talking. Sin is not amusing. Eph.4v29.

b. Let us dispense with the slander that leads to character assassination.

Let us dispense with slander and lying, and tell and live the truth. Eph.4v25. Remember all liars end in Hell. Rev.21v8. 22v15. Those who slander partake of the character of the Devil, the slanderer and accuser of the brethren, and for it he ends in Hell forever. Rev.12v10-12. 20.v1-3,10. Anger can also send us to Hell. Mt.5v21-22.

We have to speak the truth in love, and this will always be manifestly kind, humble and meek. Eph.4v15. Gal.5v25 to 6v1. Let us watch our lips, slander and evil talk wreck Christian homes and fellowships. Ps.141v3. Gal.5v14,15.

D. SELF-CONTROL IN THE AREA OF AMBITION.

Jesus made Himself of no reputation, and was despised and rejected of men. Is.53v1. Phil.2v6,7. Paul counted all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Jesus. Phil.3v4-14. Ambition has often destroyed those who have conquered all else. Ambition in worldly things is very destructive, seeking power and influence in church structures can be even more dangerous. It was religious leaders, who loved power, who killed Jesus. Ambition ruined Satan. Is.14v12-20. Ez.28v12-20.

E. SELF-CONTROL IN DOUBTFUL MATTERS.

There is abstinence in love over doubtful matters which cause another to stumble. Rom.14v21.

4. THE SELF-CONTROL OF CHRIST. In every area of His life the Lord Jesus was victorious in His self-control.

a. When He was opposed at Nazareth. Ps 69v7-12. with Lk.4v20-29. N.B. v22. Mk.6v1-6.

b. When He was attacked by the flesh, He chastened His soul by prayer and fasting. Ps.69v10. Jesus was tempted in all points like us, but He exercised perfect self control and overcame all sexual, emotional, worldly, and spiritual temptations. Heb.4v15.

c. In the enormous spiritual demands of His ministry, His self-control was complete.

d. When He endured the cross and the violent contradiction of sinners. Heb.12v2,3. "When He was reviled, He reviled not again; when He suffered, He threatened not; but committed Himself to Him that judgeth righteously." 1Pet.2v23.

CONCLUSION. THE MEANS TO SELF-CONTROL IN THE CHRISTIAN.

a. Through strength of purpose. They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh. Gal.5v24. 1Cor.9v24-27. Paul's example.

b. Through the fullness and presence of the Holy Spirit, the law of the Spirit and life in Christ. Rom.8v1-3. Gal.2v20,21.

c. Through the means of grace, fasting, prayer, fellowship and God's Word.

d. Through legitimate fulfilment of proper desire. Let them marry. 1Cor.7v2,7-9.

e. Through active service that fulfils and satisfies.

f. Through considering the end of life and future reward. Lest by any means, after that I had preached to others, I myself should be rejected." "Adokimos," "disapproved," used of metals, not sterling silver. 1Cor.9v24-27.

APPENDIX 1. IN GEN.3V16., GOD DID NOT CURSE WOMEN.

Several mistranslations of Gen.3v15,16., twist and distort God's statement about women.

THE FIRST MISTRANSLATION. "I will greatly multiply thy sorrow." Gen.3v16. _

According to Katherine Bushnell, an outstanding Hebrew scholar, "I will greatly multiply thy sorrow," in Gen.3v16., is incorrectly translated, she writes in paragraph 117 of her book, "God's Word To Women:"

"We hold that verse 16 should have been rendered, "Unto the woman He said, A snare hath increased thy sorrow," - the word "snare" being, literally rendered," "a lying-in-wait." Instead, it is rendered, "I will greatly multiply thy sorrow." The difference between the two in Hebrew lies wholly in the interlinear vowel-signs of comparatively recent invention. (Footnote) The difference is between HaRBeh, AaRBeh, "multiplying I will multiply," and HiRBah AoReB, "hath caused to multiply, (or made great), a lying in wait." - the verb, as usual preceding its nominative. The capital letters, alike in both phrases, alone constitute the original text. This participle form, ARB, occurs fourteen times in Joshua and Judges. It is translated "ambush," and "liers-in-wait," or "in ambush." It is possible that we should read here, "A lier-in-wait (the subtle serpent) hath increased thy sorrow."

Bushnell informs us why the Jews added the vowel letters to the Hebrew text in paragraph 6.of her book, she writes:-

"Hebrew ceased to be spoken by the common people during the Babylonian captivity. It was practically a "dead language" as early as B. C. 250. In the absence of expressed vowels, its pronunciation was likely to become lost. So the Scribes took four consonants, "a h v and j," and inserted them into the text to indicate the vowel sounds. While this device helped to some extent, in the end it led to confusion, often raising the question: "Is this letter a consonant, belonging to the original, or is it a vowel-letter, added by the Scribes?" Moreover the insertion of these vowel-letters did not prove sufficient; then, as late as 600-800 A. D., a whole system of vowel-signs was

added, most elaborately indicating the vowels of each word as tradition had preserved it. These vowel-signs were interlinear, and therefore did not confuse the text, as did the vowel-letters." End of quote.

The rendering in Gen.3v16., "Unto the woman He said, I have greatly increased thy sorrow," is against both the context and character of God, it should be translated, "Unto the woman He said, A snare hath increased thy sorrow," the word snare being literally, "a lying in wait," Satan, in the form of a serpent. Rev.12v9.

WHERE DID THIS ATTACK ON WOMEN AND THE CHARACTER OF GOD COME FROM?

1. FROM "THE DAYS OF MINGLING."

The time between the Old Testament and the New Testament has been called "the days of mingling." The Jews tried to adopt Hellenistic ideas from the Greek cities which surrounded Palestine. Greek kings were in control in Syria and Egypt so the Jews decided to obliterate the ideas of Jewish life and religion which were offensive to these Greeks. F. W. Farrar, and others say, "This semi-faithless epoch was described as the days of mingling." This was the time when the Jews mingled freely with the heathen population, F. W. Farrar says that they were "fascinated by the attractions of Greek life and literature, they wished to adopt Hellenistic ideas and to obliterate the most essential distinctions of Jewish life and religion."

Some think that it was during this time that women were given the badge of inferiority and servility. Before this the woman had a place in the tabernacle services as priestesses and Levites, and this is proved by the technical term used in Exod.33v38. and 1Sam.2v22., which is translated as "serving women." It was during those days that the blame was shifted from Adam to Eve, she was linked with the heathen teaching of Pandora, and Eve was blamed as the one who opened Pandora's box on the world. The city of Alexandria led the way in reconciling the Scriptures with pagan Greek teachings.

2. FROM THE TALMUDIC TEACHING.

a. This taught, "From a woman a beginning of sin and because of her all die." Ecclesiasticus.25v24.

The wisdom of Ben Sira, and many others, said the same dreadful theology, and greatly disparaged women.

b. The Ten Curses of Eve in a Talmudic commentary on Genesis.

In Lesson 13 of her book, "God's word to Woman," Katherine C Bushnell quotes the outrageous and disgusting 10 curses of Eve, from Dr. Hershon's, "Genesis With A Talmudic Commentary." (Bagster London). Bushnell states that some of the details were so obscene and filthy that she was unwilling to print them.

- 1) "Greatly multiply" refers to catamenia, etc.
- 2) "Thy sorrow" in rearing children.
- 3) "Thy conception."
- 4) "In sorrow shall thou bring forth children."
- 5) "Thy desire shall be unto thy husband." (This is followed by language too coarse and vulgar for reproduction leaving no doubt of the Rabbinical interpretation of desire: it was gross physical lust).
- 6) "He shall rule over thee." (More, and even fouler language)
- 7) She is wrapped up like a mourner, that is.
- 8) Dares not appear in public with her head uncovered.
- 9) Is restricted to one husband, while he may have many wives. 10) Is confined to the house as to a prison.

N. B. 1. Those who teach that woman is under a curse like this, are really putting themselves under a curse for misinterpreting the Scriptures in this fraudulent, contemptible, and insulting way. Those who believe, teach and practice these outrageous and evil doctrines can expect severe censure on judgement day. James.3v1.

N. B. 2. God certainly did not ordain women's servitude to man. We read in Gen.21v12., that God told Abraham to obey Sarah. See 1Cor.7v4., where Paul states, "The wife's body does not belong to her alone but also to her husband. In the same way, the husband's body does not belong to him alone but also to his wife. (NIV)

3. FROM CHURCH LEADERS WHO WERE INFLUENCED BY THE TALMUD.

Many Church leaders have been influenced by the Talmud, and by heathen ideas about women.

a) Tertullian twisted the Scriptures when he said that God visited Eve's sin and guilt on all women.

He stated, "Do you not know that you are an Eve? God's verdict on the sex still holds good, and the sex's guilt must still hold also. YOU ARE THE DEVIL'S GATEWAY, you are the avenue of the forbidden tree. You are the first deserter from the Law divine. It was you who persuaded him (Adam), whom the devil himself had not strength to assail. So lightly did you esteem God's image. For your deceit, for death, the very Son of God had to perish." End of quote.

What a male chauvinist twisting of the facts, and perversion of the truth! Tertullian fails to mention that Jesus was born of a woman and that the Scriptures ascribe the transgression to Adam. Adam is mentioned in Job.31v33. and Hosea.6v7. ("men" can be translated as Adam), and he is the one who gets the blame. Paul also states that Adam is to blame for the fall, in 1Cor.15v22., and seven times in Rom.5v12-19.. In 1Tim.2v14., Paul says that the woman was completely deceived, "exapatheisa," the aorist passive indicative of, "exapatao," "to deceive completely," or "to deceive successfully," and states that Adam was the one "who stepped over the boundary," "parabasis," and transgressed.

In 2Cor.11v3., "beguiled," is "exepatesen," the aorist indicative active of "exapatao," the preposition "ex" in the compound is perfective, and so means to completely deceive. Here we see Satan as the active agent in deception, in 1Tim.2v14., we see Eve as the passive deceived one. God says in Ezek.18v1-32. N.B. v2,20., that guilt cannot be transferred from parent to child.

b) Calvin said that God cast Eve into servitude to men.

This is the same as saying that God made men a curse to women, but God has decreed the very opposite, for the husband who does not treat his wife properly will have his prayers "cut off" by God. In 1Peter.3v7. "egkoptesthai" the present passive indicative of "egkopto," means, to cut in on, and so to hinder, to impede, to detain. Christian men are commanded, "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the Church, and gave Himself for it." Eph.5v25.

THE SECOND MISTRANSLATION ABOUT "CONCEPTION."

In the Hebrew of Gen.3v16., the word translated as "conception," is HRN, but this not the correct Hebrew for "conception," which is correctly spelt as HRJWN in Ruth.4v13. and Hosea.9v11., it occurs nowhere else in the Hebrew Old Testament. Even though some Hebrew scholars say HRN is "an abnormal formation which occurs no were else in the Old Testament," and the lexical authorities Brown, Briggs, and Driver say that it is a "contraction or erroneous," the Septuagint translators, who were outstanding Hebrew scholars, decided that the correct translation of HRN was, "thy sighing." The sentence means, then, "a snare hath increased thy sorrow and thy sighing." Many ancient authorities agree with the Septuagint.

THE THIRD MISTRANSLATION "DESIRE." "TESHUWOAH" OR "TESHUQA." Strong 8669.

"Teshuqa," only occurs 3 times in the Old Testament, in Gen.3v16. 4v7. and The Song of Solomon.7v10..

In paragraphs 124 and 127, of her book "God's Word To Women," K. Bushnell states: "The correct rendering of Gen.3v16. is this: "Thou art turning away to thy husband, and he will rule over thee," - not as it has been rendered, "Thy desire shall be to thy husband." This assertion, as to the correct meaning of the phrase we shall now prove. As we have said before, a misinterpretation of Scripture can be proved by the misfit. The usual construction put upon the language of this verse fits accurately nowhere, the correct interpretation fits all around." End of quote.

Bushnell continues, "Thus we see that the context does not prove that this "shall be" of the sentence translated, "thy desire shall be to thy husband" is imperative. We can assert positively that this sentence is a simple future or present, warning woman of the consequences of her action. So it is rendered in all the ancient versions; never as an imperative. As a prophecy it has been abundantly fulfilled in the manner which man rules over woman, especially in heathen lands." End of quote.

According to Bushnell, "teshuqa" is derived from the verb "shuwq," its simplest meaning is, "to run," the prefix "te," "gives "teshuqa" an abstract meaning and corresponds to our termination "ness," as in "goodness," or "kindness," etc.. The ending "a, " is added to give the feminine form (of the verb), it can mean, "to run repeatedly," that is to run back and forth," and so have the derived sense of "turning," which most ancient versions give it. In Gen.3v16., Eve's turning. In Gen.4v7., Cain's turning, or sins turning, or crouching ready to pounce like an animal. In Song of Solomon.7v10., the woman states she is her beloved's, and his turning is towards her. Bushnell says, (para. 126): "No verbs are expressed. The conjunction is one for all and also the preposition. This is true of the Hebrew original also. In fact there is no variety in the three sentences, excepting in the proper nouns implied in the pronouns used. The sense of the three passages must be similar."

THE TRANSLATIONS OF TESHUQA IN THE MOST ANCIENT VERSIONS.

The Septuagint. Translates "teshuqa," as "turning" in the three places where it occurs; as "apostrophe," "turning away," in Gen.3v16. and 4v7., and as "epistrophe," "turning to," in Song of Solomon.7v10. God said that the consequence of Eve turning away from God to her husband, was that her husband would rule her. Nearly every quotation of the Old Testament in the New Testament follows the Septuagint, which tradition says was a translation of the Hebrew Old Testament into Greek by 72 Jewish scholars in Alexandria in about B.C. 285. The Septuagint was much favoured by the Jews until Christians used the translations of its prophecies to prove that Jesus was the Messiah.

The Syriac Peshitto. Which some say was translated from Greek manuscripts as early as A. D. 100 to 200, renders Gen.3v16., as "thou wilt turn;" and Gen.4v7. as "will turn;" and the Song of Sol.7v10. as "turning."

The Samaritan Pentateuch. About A. D. 100. Only has Gen.3v16. and 4v7. readings and translates both as "turning." _

The Old Latin. About A. D. 200, reads "turning" in all three places, in Gen.3v16. 4v7. and Song of Sol.7v10..

The Coptic Sahidic. About A. D. 300, translates "teshuqa," as "turning," in Gen.3v16. and 4v7., but being fragmentary it lacks any reading of the Song of Sol.7v10..

The Coptic Bohairic. About A. D. 350, is more reliable than the Coptic Sahidic, but being fragmentary it lacks Song of Sol.7v10., but translates Gen.3v16. and 4v7. as "turning."

The Ethiopic. About AD 500, renders all three passages by words meaning "turning". These ancient versions deny that Eve was under a curse from God, and was driven by lust after her husband.

The reason for the mistranslations of "teshuqa" in Jerome's Vulgate.

The Vulgate is a translation from the Greek Scriptures into Latin made by Jerome in about A. D. 382. Jerome went to Palestine and studied Hebrew under Jewish rabbis and appears to have been to some extent poisoned by their Talmudic traditions. He translated Gen.3v16., "Thou shalt be under the power of a husband and he will rule over thee;" which is no in no way a correct translation of the original. In Gen.4v7., Jerome translates "teshuqa," as "his appetite," which is another strange translation. In Song of Sol.7v10., Jerome gets to the truth when he translates "teshuqa," as "his turning."

Wycliffe's Version. Made in A. D. 1380, was translated from the Vulgate not the Hebrew, Wycliffe followed the Vulgate in all three places as did the Douay version of 1609.

N. B. 1. The disproportionate unscholarly influence of the Italian Dominican Monk Pagnino.

Bushnell records in paragraph 142: "After Wycliffe's version, and before any other English Bible appeared, an Italian Dominican monk, named Pagnino, translated the Hebrew Bible. The "Biographie Universelle," quotes the following criticism of his work, in the language of Richard Simon: "Pagnino has too much neglected the ancient versions of Scripture to attain himself to the teaching of the rabbis." What would we naturally expect, therefore? That he would render this word "lust," - and that is precisely what he does in the first (Gen.3v16.) and third place (Song of Sol.7v10.); in the second (Gen.4v7.), he translates, "appetite."

Pagnino published his translation of the Hebrew Bible in 1528, and it influenced every older English version in their translation of Gen.3v16., for they render "teshuqa," as "lust," or "desire." What would we expect from the polluted Babylonian Talmud, and those who follow it, but the word "lust;" it is sad that this source and Pagnino had such a bad influence on the English translations of Gen.3v16.. Cranmer's Bible of 1539 first translated "teshuqa" as "lust" in Gen.3v16., and the Geneva Bible and the Authorised Version and the Revised Version softened the idea to "desire."

Bushnell states in paragraph 145: "Following him (Pagnino), to the neglect of ancient versions, the English translators have not, in regard to Gen.3v16., set forth the proper sense of "teshuqa." Lewis in "Lang's Commentary," states, "The sense of this word (teshuqa) is not "libido," or sensual desire." It is striking fact, that Tyndale, Coverdale, Matthew, (John Rogers) and Cranmer all translated "teshuqa " in Song of Sol.7v10. as "turning."

N. B. 2. The influence of some Church Fathers."

Bushnell states that Church Fathers translate "teshuqa," as "turning." Clement of Rome who died A. D. 100. Irenaeus who died A. D. 202. Tertullian who was born A. D. 160. Origen who was born A. D. 186. Epiphanius who was born A. D. 310 in Palestine. Ambrose who was born A. D. 340. Augustus who was born A. D. 354. Theodoret who was born A. D. 386. All translate "teshuqa" as "turning," in one, two or all three passages. The famous Philo, a Jew of Alexandria who died in A. D. 50 also translates "teshuqa," as "turning."

There can be little doubt that Gen.3v16. should be translated; "You are turning away to thy husband and he will rule over thee." This was not a curse, but a prophecy of the domination of women by men, something which has, tragically, been fulfilled not only among the Heathen, but also, all too often, in the Church as well.

"Rule," is "mashal," to rule, to reign, to have dominion, to manage, to rule over. It occurs 83 times in the Hebrew Old Testament, God uses "mashal," to tell Cain that he could rule over and master the sin that was taking hold of him. It is used of Eliezer managing all of Abraham's house Gen.15v2. 24v2. It is used of Joseph's brothers not entertaining the thought of Joseph ruling over them. Gen.37v2. (44v8,26.) It is used of the rule of an oppressive king, as in Isaiah.19v4. Of higher justice in Exod.21v8. Deut.15v6. Of the powerful ruling rich. Prov.22v7. Of political leadership. 1Kings.4v4-21. (Rom.13v1-7.) Of self rule and self control. Prov.16v32. And of God's overruling providence. Ps.89v10.

THE FOURTH MISTRANSLATION, "BRUISE." "Shuph."

"Shuph," occurs 3 times in the Old Testament, in Gen.3v15. it is translated as "bruise," in Job.9v17. as "breaking," and in Ps.139v11. as "cover." "Shuph," is used to mean "bite" (serpent bite on heal), crush, break, and cover." The serpent will bite the heal, and the seed of the woman will crush the serpent's head. Ps.72v9. Rom.16v20. Gal.3v16. Eph.2v14-18. Col.2v15. Heb.2v14. 1Jn.3v8. 5v18. Rev.12v7-12. 19v11. 20v1-3,10. Some think that "shuph" means the seed will be in wait for the serpent's head, for some of the ancient versions translate "shuph" as "lying in wait," or a kindred idea, and the Revised Version gives this as an alternative meaning in the margin. This could mean that God, in Christ, would be "lying in wait" for the serpent to crush his head, just as the serpent had lay in wait for Eve and Adam to deceive and destroy them.

THE WOMAN AND HER SEED HAS ALWAYS BEEN A THREAT TO SATAN.

This prophecy has been like a sword over Satan's head from the day that it was uttered. Christ partly fulfilled this in His life and atoning death, and will fulfil it in great measure, when Satan is cast into the Abyss at our Lord's second coming. It will finally be completely fulfilled, when Satan is cast into the lake of fire, at the end of the Millennium. Heb.2v14. Rev.20v1-10.

THE LESSONS WE CAN LEARN FROM THE TEMPTATION AND FALL IN EDEN.

1. Trust God and obey His word. Adam and Eve failed to trust God, and believed Satan's lies. They failed to be open with God, and refused to admit sin and failure, and so missed forgiveness and restoration.

2. God can still bring our marriage partners to us; "He who finds a wife finds what is good, and receives favour from the hand of the Lord." Prov.18v22. "A prudent wife is from the Lord." Prov.19v1. God provided a helper suitable for Adam. Gen.2v18. God's unsearchable wisdom can direct us in marriage. Rom.11v33-36. However, don't leave it all to God, the decision is yours. In Ps.32v8-11., God tells us to use sanctified common sense, and not to be like a horse or mule which have no understanding; He wants to throw away the reins, He does not want to dominate our choices. Be glad and rejoice in the guiding mercy of God, He will guide us with His eye, and warn us, where necessary, of possible dangers.

3. God can make our marriages a new creation in Christ. 2Cor 5v17. As Paul states, "Love always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always endures, love never fails." 1Cor.13v7,8.

ANOTHER MISTRANSLATION, "RIB."

We read in the Authorised Version of Gen.2v21. that God took a rib out of Adam and made Eve, however, "rib" is not the correct translation. The Hebrew word translated as "rib," in Gen.2v21. (Strong 6763), occurs forty-two times in the Old Testament, in most cases it is translated as "side," or "sides," and elsewhere as "corners," or "chambers," but the only place where it is translated as "rib," is in Gen.2v21,22., which describes the creation of Eve from Adam. If the Lord had meant "rib," He would have used the word for "rib" that He uses in Dan.7v5., (Strong 5967), which means "rib," and nothing else. In the Septuagint version, the word is "pleura," which is invariably translated as "side" in the New Testament, where it is used of the side of Jesus into which the spear was thrust, Jn.19v34. and 20v20,25,27., and of the angels smiting Peter on the side to wake him up, when he was asleep in prison, in Acts.12v7.. "Pleura is also used to speak of a person's side in the Greek of Homer and Herodotus. Adam stated, "she is flesh of my flesh," not just, "she is bone of my bone." God made a female clone out of the flesh and bone of the side of Adam, a truly remarkable miracle.

IN GEN.3V16. GOD DID NOT CURSE WOMEN.

This is a summary of the teaching of the Scriptures that we have just considered. Some use a mistranslation of Gen.3v16., which twists and distorts God's attitude to women, to justify the domination of women by men.

It was not God, but Satan "the liar in wait," who increased the sorrow and pain of women..

According to the outstanding Hebrew scholar Katherine Bushnell, the translation, "Unto the woman He said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow," in Gen.3v16., is incorrect. Bushnell states in her book, "God's Word To Women," that it should have been translated, "Unto the woman He said, A snare (literally, "a liar-in wait) hath increased thy sorrow." The participle form, ARB, occurs fourteen times in Joshua and Judges, and is translated as "ambush," and "liers-in-wait," or "in ambush," so Gen.3v16., could be translated, "A liar-in-wait (Satan in the form of a serpent) hath increased thy sorrow."

The Hebrew HRN has also been incorrectly translated in Gen.3v16., as "conception."

However, HRN is not the correct Hebrew for "conception," which is correctly spelt as HRJWN in Ruth.4v13. and Hosea.9v11.. HRN occurs nowhere else in the Hebrew Old Testament, however, the Septuagint translators, who were outstanding Hebrew scholars, decided that the correct translation of HRN was, "thy sighing," "tu stenagmos autes." "Stenagmos," means "groanings," or "sighings," and is so translated in Exod.2v24. 6v5. Job.3v24. etc. Many ancient authorities agree with the Septuagint. The A.V. rendering in Gen.3v16., "Unto the woman He said, I have greatly increased thy sorrow and thy conception," is against both the context and character of God, it should be translated, "Unto the woman He said, A snare (literally "a liar-in-wait") hath increased thy sorrow and thy sighing." That ancient serpent, Satan, being "the liar-in wait.." Rev.12v9.

The Hebrew "teshuqa," in Gen.3v16., has also been incorrectly translated, as "desire," or "lust."

In paragraphs 124, 127, of her book "God's Word To Women," Bushnell states: "The correct rendering of Gen.3v16. is -- "Thou art turning away to thy husband, and he will rule over thee," - not as it has been rendered, "Thy desire shall be to thy husband."

Bushnell later continues, "Thus we see that the context does not prove that this "shall be" of the sentence translated, "thy desire shall be to thy husband" is imperative. We can assert positively that this sentence is a simple future or present, warning woman of the consequences of her action. So it is rendered in all the ancient versions; never as an imperative. As a prophecy it has been abundantly fulfilled in the manner which man rules over woman, especially in heathen lands." End of quote.

Lewis in "Lang's Commentary," states, "The sense of this word (teshuqa) is not "libido," or sensual desire." "Teshuqa," occurs 3 times in the Old Testament, in Gen.3v16. 4v7. and The Song.7v10.. Bushnell states that the Church Fathers translate "teshuqa," as "turning." Clement of Rome (died A. D. 100). Irenaeus (died A.D. 202).

Tertullian (born A.D. 160). Origen (born A.D. 186). Epiphanius (born A. D. 310 in Palestine). Ambrose (born A D. 340). Augustus (born A. D. 354). Theodoret (born A.D. 386). All translate "teshuqa" as "turning," in one, two or all three passages. The famous Jew, Philo of Alexandria (died A.D. 50) also translates "teshuqa," as "turning."

Tertullian twisted the Scriptures when he said that God visited Eve's sin and guilt on all women. He stated, "Do you not know that you are an Eve? God's verdict on the sex still holds good, and the sex's guilt must still hold also. You are the Devil's gateway, you are the avenue of the forbidden tree. You are the first deserter from the Law divine. It was you who persuaded him (Adam), whom the devil himself had not strength to assail. So lightly did you esteem God's image. For your deceit, for death, the very Son of God had to perish." End of quote.

What a perversion of the truth! Paul states seven times in Rom.5v12-19., and once in 1Cor.15v22., that Adam is to blame for the fall. In 1Tim.2v14., we see we see Satan as the active agent in deception, and Eve as the passive deceived one. Paul says that the woman was completely deceived, "exapatheisa," the aorist passive indicative of, "exapatao," "to deceive completely," or "to deceive successfully," and states that Adam was the one "who stepped over the boundary," "parabasis," and transgressed. In 2Cor.11v3., "beguiled," is "exepatesen," the aorist indicative active of "exapatao," the preposition "ex" in the compound is perfective, and so means to completely deceive. God says in Ezek.18v1-32. N.B. v2,20., that guilt cannot be transferred from parent to child.

Calvin said that God cast Eve into servitude to men. However, God has decreed the very opposite, for husbands who do not treat their wives properly will have their prayers "cut off" by God. In 1Peter.3v7. "egkoptesthai" the present passive indicative of "egkopto," means, to cut in on, and so to hinder, to impede. In Eph.5v25., Paul commands Christian men, "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the Church, and gave Himself for it." God certainly did not ordain that women should be in servitude to men.

It a great pity that some theologians and translators have been too influenced by the perverted ideas of the Babylonian Talmud, and the Italian Dominican monk Pagnino, (who published his translation of the Hebrew Bible in 1528), and as a result have translated "teshuqa," as "lust," or "desire." The "Biographie Universelle," quotes the following criticism of Pagnino's work, in the language of Richard Simon: "Pagnino has too much neglected the ancient versions of Scripture to attain himself to the teaching of the rabbis." The Samaritan Pentateuch, the Old Latin, the Coptic Sahidic and Bohairic, and Ethiopic, translate "teshuqa," by words meaning "turning". The Syriac Peshitto, renders Gen.3v16., as "thou wilt turn;" and Gen.4v7. as "will turn;" and the Song of Sol.7v10. as "turning." The Septuagint, translates "teshuqa," as "turning" in the three places where it occurs; as "apostrophe," "turning away," in Gen.3v16. and 4v7., and as "epistrophe," "turning to," in Song.7v10. Nearly every quotation of the Old Testament in the New Testament follows the Septuagint, which tradition says was a translation of the Hebrew Old Testament into Greek by 72 Jewish scholars in Alexandria in about B.C. 285. The Septuagint was much favoured by the Jews until Christians used the translations of its prophecies to prove that Jesus was the Messiah. These ancient versions deny that Eve was under a curse from God, and was driven by lust after her husband.

In Gen.3v16., "Your desire will be to your husband, and he will rule over you," should be translated; "You are turning away to your husband and he will rule ("rule," is "mashal," to rule, to reign, to have dominion) over you." This was not a curse, but a prophecy of the domination of women by men, something which has, tragically, been fulfilled not only among the Heathen, but also, sadly, in the Church as well. The glorious Gospel of Jesus reinstates women to a position of equality with men, as Paul states in Gal.3v26-28., v26. For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. v27. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. v28. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, **there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.** (KJV)

APPENDIX 2. POLYGAMY.

Polygamy was tolerated and not prohibited under the Law.

Polygamy was strictly regulated, any favouritism or neglect gave the injured wife the right of divorce, Exod.21v10,11., the despised wife's children had to have their proper dues. Deut.21v15-17. The Lord Jesus said in Mt.19v3-8., that it was not God's intention for men to have more than one wife. Some famous Bible characters were polygamists, however, kings were forbidden under the Law to multiply wives, and the high priest could not be a polygamist. Deut.17v17. Lev.21v13. Polygamy often resulted in the most tragic unhappiness, quarrels and jealousy. Gen.16. 21v8-16. 29v21-35. 30v1-23. 1Sam.1v4-7. We see the troubles of David and Solomon were directly attributed to polygamy. 2Sam.5v13. 12v7,8. 1Kings.11v1-8. The Old Testament ideal is clearly seen from Gen.2v24. and Lev.21v13., one man having one wife, and domestic happiness is associated with this. Prov.31v10-31. Ps.128v3. Polygamy continued among the Jews until well after 1,000 A. D. in many European countries, and still continues among them in certain Moslem countries.

God said the Law was perfect, right, pure, holy, just and good, Ps.19v7-12. with Rom.7v12., if polygamy was not God's perfect will, but only His permissive will, why did He not condemn it under the Law? We can assume that it was for the same reason that God allowed divorce, because of people's hardness of heart, God took into account human frailty, God knew that His ideals would only work where His grace, love and self-control were operative,

and that people's hardness of heart would frustrate His perfect ideals. The question arises, Why did God authorise polygamy in the Law?

1. Was it that God thought that Polygamy was to be preferred to immorality?

If two unmarried people agreed to have intercourse together outside of marriage, the man was forced to marry the woman. Ex.22v16. The fact that a man could have several wives obviously cut down, even if it did not stop, fornication and harlotry.

2. Was it that God thought that Polygamy was to be preferred to the pain of divorce?

A man who was strongly attracted to a woman could marry her and the home remain unbroken. Deut.21v10-13. In many cases polygamy was more desirable than the injury, and misery caused to children and mothers by the disruption of divorce. However, the fact that there was divorce under the Law proved that this did not work in many cases.

N. B. The New Testament strongly advocates and insists on monogamy for Christians.

Both Christ and Paul say that a man should have only one wife, and a woman only one husband. Gen.1v27. and 2v22-24. with Mt.19v3-9. Eph.5v31-33. 1Cor.7v1-5. Notice "the wife," "his wife," all singular. Elders were to be the husbands of one wife, this showed us that it was recognised that polygamy caused domestic and Christian instability. God's New Testament ideal is no co-habitation outside of monogamous marriage.

It is obvious from reading 1Tim.3v2,12. and Titus.1v6., that there were Christians in the early Church, who had more than one wife, there were obviously people converted who had several wives before they became Christians, and so they had to take proper care of them and not send them away. However, in Britain we have to realise that:-

1. Polygamy is definitely against the New Testament ideal of marriage, and Christians should follow the pattern set down by Christ, not what God permits for the worldling.

2. Polygamy breaks the vows taken before God by Christians, we should not defer to pay our marriage vows. Deut.23v18-23. Ps.50v14,15. Prov.20v23. Eccles.5v4-6.

It is against the law to have more than one wife, and we have to obey the Law of the country, we cannot have more than one wife. Rom.13v1-14. Titus.3v1,2. 1Pet.2v13-17,21,22. With the law of the country as it is, having two wives cannot come up to the Old Testament or New Testament standard of polygamy, which was the public and legal taking of a wife. Another woman is looked upon as a mistress in the eyes of the law and world, and Christians who practice this immorality, like the church at Corinth, give a very bad testimony to the world, and give the enemies of the Lord cause to blaspheme. Such a situation is unworthy of any Christian who wants to follow their Lord, Paul said that those who do such things and practice immorality, will not inherit the kingdom of God. 1Cor.6v9-11.

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