

Monday

Eph. 5:32 This mystery is great; but I am speaking with reference to Christ and the church.

We do a grave disservice to God when we separate our religious life from *any* other part of our life. Jesus is Lord of all. It is a great betrayal when we seek to separate our devotion to Christ from our interactions at home. "Husbands, love your wives" or "wives, submit yourself to your husbands" is not pop psychology. It is not what Dr. Phil prescribes. It is biblical instruction. It is a test of faith. It has everything to do with your relation to Jesus. That it works to bring you joy and fulfillment is secondary. That it makes for a great marriage is beside the point. It is a matter of your devotion to Jesus, your walk of faith, your genuine Christianity.

Tuesday

Eph. 4:13 until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ.

It is a common misunderstanding that leads to heartache and brokenness. Marriage is not *primarily* designed to make you whole, happy, or fulfilled. Marriage is God's intensive course in making you like Jesus. No wonder Paul said it is easier to remain single. Where else are we so put to the test in our patience, so often called to love and sacrifice? Where else are we more fully called to bear with one another or forgive? Where else are our faults more illuminated or our intentions laid bare? Marriage is the sculptor's shop where the chisel works constantly and best.

Wednesday

Matt. 18:15 "If your brother sins, go and show him his fault in private; if he listens to you, you have won your brother.

It just makes sense. If you have a problem with someone, go and talk *to them*. Going to someone else and talking *about them* is childish, foolish, and biblically disobedient. Why is this principle so easy to explain when we are speaking to our children, yet so hard to practice as adults? Is it our maturity? Is it our disobedience? The word of God is very clear. If you have an issue with another, you are to go and speak to them, discuss the issue, and see if you *two* can work out the situation. To go speak to others is neither mature nor spiritual. It is disobedient. It is sinful. It is immature. God's way builds friendship, true fellowship, brotherhood, and peace.

Thursday

1Pet. 4:11 ...so that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belongs the glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

Such is the overarching goal of the believer's life: that God may be glorified in all things. When such is your personal goal, it changes every interaction, even at home. It is no longer "How can I win?" or "Why won't he/she listen?" or "How can I get even?" It becomes, "How in this moment can I best glorify God?" "To what biblical principle am I to be obedient?" "How is Jesus seeking to shape me in this?" "What is Jesus seeking to teach me in this?" Easy? No! How is Jesus shaping you?

Friday

Phil. 4:2 I urge Euodia and I urge Syntyche to live in harmony in the Lord. Indeed, true companion, I ask you also to help these women who have shared my struggle in the cause of the gospel...

Among the believers of the local church and in the relationships of the home: these are the two places where our Christianity is most tested and our maturity (or lack of) is most evidently revealed. Church and the imperfect relationship inherent among us are as necessary to the maturing believer as the interactions at home are to the maturing marriage. Learning to resolve issues in a Christ-like manner, making sure to personally bring glory to God in each situation, learning to bear with and be subject to others, allowing God to control: these are God ordained.