

**GOD'S GIFT TO MANKIND—MARRIAGE**  
**MARRIAGE FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF A CHRISTIAN WOMAN**  
**Preserving the Christian Home**

While I am honored to be asked my perspective of marriage as a wife and mother, I do not want you to think that I am here to preach to you! God does not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man, but to learn in silence. (I Timothy 2:9-15) I am here to encourage the young women and I ask the men to be patient while I have this opportunity to do a good thing. I appeal to Titus 2:1-5.

But as for you, speak the things which are proper for sound doctrine: that the older men be sober, reverent, temperate, sound in faith in love, in patience; the older women likewise, that they be reverent in behavior, not slanderers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things—that they admonish the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, homemakers, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be blasphemed.

We are in sad times in that marriage is not taken seriously even among young Christian women. So this older woman would like to teach good things in love and admonish the young women to love their husbands, to love their children....., that the word of God may not be blasphemed.

“Will you live with him according to God’s Holy Word and love and honor him, and in good and evil days, keep only unto him as long as you both shall live?” (The Norwegian Synod Handbook of the Ministerial Acts)

May 27, 1975 I was asked this. I have to admit I was nervous about this. The good days were what I was looking forward to, but evil days?! I was focusing on Rolf’s ability to love me for the rest of my life. I was focusing on my ability to love him for the rest of my life. I had my doubts. How is this going to work? The answer came in the question that was asked me: “Will you live with him according to God’s Holy Word.....” I threw my worries and fears upon God and vowed to be determined to trust God and His Word. God works things for good for those who love Him. (Romans 8:28) The text for our Wedding was Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things will be added to you. (Matthew 6:33) I was determined and confident that God would take care of us.

The pastor pronounced that Rolf and I are husband and wife in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit: “Therefore, let no one separate what God has joined together.”

This is it! The commitment has been made before God, family, friends and soon in the legal public records. What tends to be over-looked with all the excitement in preparing for the wedding celebration with the dresses, the ceremony, and other wedding details is that GOD IS COMMITTED! Christ, our Lord and Savior, points this out in Matthew 19: 4-6 and Mark 10:1-9. As wedding vows are being made, it is as if God is taking a rib from the side of the groom, forming a woman and giving to the man his bride before the eyes of family and friends!

Let us ever walk with Jesus,  
Follow His example pure,  
Flee the world, which would deceive us,  
And to sin our souls allure.  
Ever in His footsteps treading,  
Body here, yet soul above,  
Full of faith and hope and love,  
Let us do the Father's bidding.  
Faithful Lord, abide with me;  
Savior, lead, I follow Thee

Let us suffer here with Jesus,  
To His image e'er conform;  
Heaven's glory soon will please us,  
Sunshine follow on the storm.  
Though we sow in tears of sorrow,  
We shall reap in heav'nly joy;  
And the fears that now annoy  
Shall be laughter on the morrow.  
Christ, I suffer here with Thee;  
There, O share Thy joy with me!

Let us also die with Jesus,  
His death from the second death,  
From our soul's destruction, frees us,  
Quickens us with life's glad breath.  
Let us mortify, while living,  
Flesh and blood and die to sin;  
And the grave that shuts us in  
Shall but prove the gate to heaven.  
Jesus, here I die to Thee,  
There to live eternally.

Let us gladly live with Jesus;  
Since He's risen from the dead,  
Death and grave must soon release us.  
Jesus, Thou art now our Head.  
We are truly Thine own members;  
Where Thou livest, there live we.  
Take and own us constantly,  
Faithful Friend, as Thy dear brethren.  
Jesus, here I live to Thee,  
Also there eternally. (ELH # 236)

Adam without question accepted God's gift of a woman to be his wife as his flesh. (Genesis 2: 18-24) The woman is the greatest gift to man. The woman was made specifically for man. Adam feared, loved, and trusted God above all things. Adam loved his wife as himself. Adam loved and honored her by naming her Eve. And Eve loved Adam as herself. Eve respected Adam as her husband. Adam and Eve feared, loved and trusted in God above all things and loved the other as oneself. God, the Father, created and loved Adam and Eve very much. God BLESSED them and told Adam and Eve to have children, become many, fill the earth and control it. (Genesis 1:28) This was all VERY GOOD. How romantic is that! BUT it was especially GOOD because Adam and Eve walked with God. (Genesis 3:8) And so would Adam and Eve's children for generations to come.

God told Adam not to eat the fruit from the tree of knowledge of good and evil. (Genesis 2:17) Adam told Eve not to eat the fruit of the forbidden tree. What was Adam thinking while he watched Eve talking with the serpent by the forbidden tree!?! Adam did not intervene to protect Eve from the deceit of the serpent. Adam did not rebuke the serpent. Adam did not pull Eve away from the tree or the serpent. Instead Adam did not bother with God or His Word. Adam failed to fear, love, and trust in God above all things. Adam did not keep Eve safe in God's Word. Adam listened to his wife. Adam feared Eve more than God. Adam had become a 'wimp'. Adam did not love Eve as his own body. Adam failed as a man. Adam failed his wife and their children for generations.

I understand the nature of Eve. Certainly the crafty serpent did. Here is all this wonderful fruit! We can't let all of this fruit go to waste! My husband surely misunderstood God. Surely God would not want all this good fruit to go to waste! And so begins the wonder of men: "If a man speaks in a forest where no woman can hear, is he still wrong?" The crafty deceiver caused Eve to doubt God and His Word and Adam's headship. Eve failed to fear, love and trust in God. Eve failed to respect her

husband. Eve failed as a woman. Eve failed her husband and their children for generations.

God, our Creator and heavenly Father, saw Adam and Eve disobey Him. Adam and Eve failed to love and trust in God above all things. Adam and Eve failed to love each other as one self. By this sin, they separated what God has joined together. When one fails to fear, love, and trust in God above all things, one cannot love another as oneself. Since Adam's fall into sin men and women have questioned God's gift of a woman to a man. How can one love another as one self if you encourage one to not fear, love, and trust God? Men and Women fear to love and trust in God above all things. Men and Women fear to love another as oneself. When husband and wife do not fear, love, and trust in God above all things and love one another as one self, they separate what God has joined together.

Eve had it all. She had a husband that loved and honored her. Together Adam and Eve feared, loved, and trusted God above all things. Their needs were provided. What a marriage! What a life! This harmony with God did not please Satan. Satan did not want God to be loved by Adam and Eve. Satan did not want God to be glorified with Adam and Eve loving one another as one self. The crafty deceiver caused doubt in Eve toward God. Because Eve doubted God, she did not respect Adam. Eve doubted Adam. So began the misery on earth beginning within marriage. Sin separated what God had joined together.

The tree of life with ev'ry good  
In Eden's holy orchard stood  
And of its fruit so pure and sweet  
God let the man and woman eat.  
Yet in this garden also grew  
Another tree, of which they knew;  
Its lovely limbs with fruit adorned  
Against whose eating God had warned.

The stillness of that sacred grove  
Was broken, as the serpent strove  
With tempting voice to Eve beguile  
And Adam too by sin defile.  
O day of sadness when the breath  
Of fear and darkness, doubt and **death**,  
Its awful poison first displayed  
Within the world so newly made.

What mercy God showed to our race,  
A plan of rescue by His grace:

In sending One from woman's seed,  
The one to fill our greatest need-  
For on a tree uplifted high  
His only Son for sin would die,  
Would drink the cup of scorn and dread  
To crush the ancient serpent's head!

Now from that tree of Jesus' shame  
Flows life eternal in His name;  
For all who trust and will believe,  
Salvation's living fruit receive.  
And of this fruit so pure and sweet  
The Lord invites the world to eat,  
To find within this cross of wood  
The Tree of life with ev'ry good. (ELH # 302)

After trying to pass off the guilt of their sin, God comforts them with a promise of a Savior from sin and death. (Genesis 3:15) After knowing they failed God and each other, Adam and Eve continue with their marriage in their sinful flesh. Let no one separate what God has joined together. Adam and Eve had to depend and take comfort in God's promise of a Savior from their sin and eternal death. This promise covers the repentant Adam and Eve's sin so that they are one flesh. God's promise of the Savior from sin and death can only unite them. With this promise we can walk with God through life. Keeping in mind God's mercy and grace through His Son and the Savior of the world (John 3:16), the husband and wife are reminded to be merciful to one another (Mark 11:25). Let no one separate what God has joined together.

What I wanted in this life on earth was to die a Christian and I still do. I wanted to drown the Old Adam daily. (Romans 7:18) I wanted Christ to renew me daily through His Word. I wanted to always go to a church with a faithful Pastor rightly administering the Word and Sacraments to keep me in the true faith until God calls me from this sinful earth and my sinful flesh to eternal life. If I would be so blessed to marry, I wanted my husband to want the same so I could respect him and be safe in God's Word. I wanted to spend the rest of my life on earth with Rolf. I wanted to respect Rolf as a wife should respect her husband. Rolf was raised Lutheran. I knew Rolf and I would get encouragement in our marriage to be faithful to God's Word from Rolf's family. I knew I was a sinner. I did not fear, love, and trust in God above all things. I knew I didn't love

Rolf as myself. I wanted to and still do. I knew Rolf was a sinner. Rolf did not fear, love, and trust in God above all things or love me as himself. Rolf wanted to and still does.

One thing needful! This one treasure  
Teach me, Savior, to esteem;  
Other things may promise pleasure,  
But are never what they seem;  
They prove to be burdens that vex us and chafe us,

And true lasting happiness never vouchsafe us;  
This one precious treasure, that all else exceeds,  
Gives joy above measure and fills all my needs.

I have naught, my God, to offer,  
Save the blood of Thy dear Son;  
Graciously accept the proffer:  
Make His righteousness mine own.  
His holy life gave He, was crucified for me;  
His righteousness perfect He now pleads before Thee;  
His own robe of righteousness, my highest good,  
Shall clothe me in glory, through faith in His blood.

Hence forth Thou alone, my Savior,  
Shalt be all in all to me.  
Search my heart and my behavior,  
Cast out all hypocrisy.  
Restrain me from wand'ring in pathways unholy  
And throughout life's pilgrimage keep my heart lowly;  
I'll value but lightly earth's treasure and store:  
Thou art the One needful, and mine evermore!  
(ELH 182 verses 1, 6, &10)

God created woman for man. (Genesis 1:27; 2:21-25) Husband and wives daily separate what God has joined together because of their own sin. In Luther's explanation of the sixth commandment, he describes what are necessary between husband and wife.

Thou shall not commit adultery. What does this mean? We should fear and love God that we may lead a chaste and decent life in word and deed, and each love and honor his spouse.

Alfred Kinsey, a gall-wasp zoologist!, taught at the Indiana University from 1920 until his death in 1956. In the book *Sexual Anarchy: The Kinsey Legacy* by Judith A. Reisman, PHD and Mary I McAlister, ESQ tells how Kinsey claimed the Biblical view was 'repressive'. In 1953, Kinsey claimed that this 'repressive' sexual legacy was responsible for socio-sexual ills like divorce, rape, illegitimacy, venereal disease, juvenile delinquency, promiscuity, homosexuality, adultery, and child sexual abuse. Kinsey "claimed the legal and Biblical view was hypocritical and causes socio-sexual ills. Kinsey argued that if we Americans would admit that we really were engaged in widespread licentious conduct, instead of hypocritically denying it, then these socio-sexual ills would be dramatically reduced." Kinsey claimed 'free-love' would eliminate socio-sexual ills. Aw....can't you hear the serpent: "You won't die. You will be like God." (Genesis 3:4-5) This 'free-love' was the downfall of King Solomon, the wisest man that ever lived.(I King 11) Christians are accused of being hypocritical. A Christian is hypocritical when he hides his sin(s) from the church and does not repent of his sin(s). Hypocrites fear man not God. Hypocrites judge what is good by their desires. Hypocrites will judge what is right and wrong determined on popular consensus of what sin is and what sin is not. The children of Israel thought the same thing when they convinced Aaron to build a golden calf. (Exodus 32) Is it not wise to know what sin is according to God's Word? Even if the sinner fools himself sin is not sin, it is crucial the church knows and identifies sin for what it is for the sake of the sinner. (Proverbs 1:7) Where there is forgiveness of sins there is life and salvation.

I pray Thee, dear Lord Jesus,  
My heart to keep and train.  
That I Thy holy temple  
From youth to age remain.  
Turn Thee my thoughts forever  
From worldly wisdom lore.  
If I but learn to know Thee,  
I shall not want for more. (ELH 178)

The American Law Institute Model Penal Code that had based "Common Law" sexual standards on Biblical authority changed in 1955 for "Scientific law" based on Kinsey's allegedly "objective data". The ALI trivialized rape, fornication, cohabitation and adultery as common, normal and harmless. Reisman and McAlister point out: "Like cancer spreading throughout the body, sexual anarchy has spread throughout the fabric of society, affecting every aspect of American life and every man, woman and child." The wages of sin is death. (Romans 6:23) Kinsey's assertions on free-love eventually led to the mind-set of no-fault divorce which was first passed into law by California in 1970. By 1985, 49 states had passed no-fault divorce into law. In her book, *The*

Divorce Revolution: The Unexpected Social and Economic Consequences for Women and Children in America, Lenore J. Weitzman, sociology professor, Stanford University says that the no-fault divorce is a civilized veneer that comforts adults, but not children. There are consequences for separating what God has joined together. When the sinner is comforted in his sin without repentance, there are always consequences. Not only to the sinner but the lives that surrounds him.

In the 1993 April Issue of Atlantic Monthly, Barbara Dafoe Whitehead, A research associate at the Manhattan-based Institute for American Values, reasons that no fault-divorce is responsible for growing child poverty, declining school achievement, increasing youth criminality, and mounting juvenile anti-social behavior. If the state does not require parents to keep their word to each other and be accountable for breaking their word, then how does our culture expect children to learn and respect accountability of right and wrong, commitment, and being trustworthy? Train up child in the way he should go. And when he is old he will not depart from it. (Proverbs 23:6) Even outside the church this can be seen, though they may not understand that it is that God joins together a man and a woman.

So how do sinful man and woman fear and love God so they may lead chaste and decent lives in word and deed, and love and honor their spouse? Lutherans take for granted what treasures they have. The Bible may be an over-whelming task to read, but Luther's small catechism with the explanations simply teaches the Bible so a sinner can simply learn what God has to say to a sinner. One can read through the explanations of the Ten Commandments and understand how a sinner fails to fear, love, and trust in God above all things and to love his neighbor as himself. One can read through the explanations of the Three Articles of the Apostles Creed and understand how mighty, merciful and comforting God is to a sinner. One can read through the explanations of the Lord's Prayer and understand God knows a sinner's every need. One can read through the explanations of Baptism, the Office of the Keys, and the Lord's Supper and understand how the forgiveness of sins is a gift and comfort from God to a repentant sinner for every day the sinner lives on earth. Where there is forgiveness of sins there is life and salvation!

There are so many sins that damage the family. Sinning against the 8th commandment probably causes the beginning of most conflicts between husband and wife and their children.

Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor. What does this mean? We should fear and love God that we may not deceitfully belie, betray, nor defame our neighbor, but defend him, speak well of him, and put the best construction on everything.



In thought, words, or/and deeds husband, wife and children will fail to defend one another, speak well of one another or put the best construction on everything. We may not always control our thoughts, but as Luther said, 'You can't control a bird to fly over your head, but you can prevent the bird from building a nest in your hair.' How many mothers have advised, 'If you don't have anything nice to say, don't say it?!' The husband doesn't understand the way the wife thinks nor does the wife understand the way the husband thinks. So it goes as well with the children. The sinful flesh thinks one knows better than God and his neighbor. The sinful flesh does not want to put the best construction on everything because the sinner does not want to defend and speak well of his neighbor. The sinful flesh wants to look better to himself, before the world, and God in thought, word, and deeds above his neighbor's needs. (Genesis 4:6-7) Jesus confronted the lawyer with this very sin when He told the lawyer the Parable of the Good Samaritan. (Luke 10: 23-37) Within the family, sin is best confronted. When husband, wife, and their children confront one another with a sin, they are following the guidance of Jesus. (Matthew 18: 15-35) Jesus wants to preserve the family. When sin hurts the family, the Church hurts. When family members excuse or ignore sin like the priest and the Levite, the family will suffer as well as the Church. When a sin is repented, the family has succeeded in winning over a brother and the angels rejoice. (Matthew 18:1-14; Luke 11:33-36) Where there is forgiveness of sins there is life and salvation!

Lord, keep us steadfast in Thy Word;  
Curb those who fain by craft and sword  
Would wrest the Kingdom from Thy Son  
And set at naught all He hath done.

Lord Jesus Christ, Thy pow'r make known,  
For Thou art Lord of lords alone;  
Defend Thy Christendom that we  
May evermore sing praise to Thee.

O Comforter of priceless worth,  
Send peace and unity on earth,  
Support us in our final strife  
And lead us out of death to life. (ELH 589)

Husbands and wives that are adopted into God's family through the washing away of sin through Christ's baptism are children of God. (Titus 3:4-8)

God' own child, I gladly say it:  
I am baptized into Christ!

He, because I could not pay it  
Gave my full redemption price.  
Do I need earth's treasures many?  
I have one worth more than any  
That brought me salvation free  
Lasting to eternity!

Sins disturb my soul no longer;  
I am baptized into Christ!  
I have comfort even stronger  
Jesus' cleansing sacrifice.  
Should a guilty conscience seize me  
Since my Baptism did release me  
In a dear forgiving flood,  
Sprinkling me with Jesus; blood?

Satan, hear this proclamation:  
I am baptized into Christ!  
Now that to the font I've travelled,  
All your might has come unraveled,  
Drop your ugly accusation,  
I am not so soon enticed.  
And, against your tyranny,  
God my Lord unites with me!

Death, you cannot end my gladness;  
I am baptized into Christ!  
When I die, I leave all sadness  
To inherit Paradise!  
Though I lie in dust and ashes  
Faith's assurance brightly flashes:  
Baptism has the strength divine  
To make life immortal mine.

There is nothing worth comparing  
To this life long comfort sure!  
Open-eyed my grave is staring;  
Even there I'll sleep secure.  
Though my flesh awaits its raising,  
Still my soul continues praising:

I am baptized into Christ;  
I'm a child of Paradise! (ELH 246)

As children of God, husband and wife have power to forgive. Daily the child of God drowns the old Adam and clings to God's promises through His Word. What God has joined together let no man separate. The husband and wife are to love and honor each other. How do the husband and wife love and honor each other? With God, all things are possible. (Mark 19:27)

And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. What does this mean? We pray in this petition that our Father in heaven would not look upon our sins, not on their account deny our prayer; for we are worthy of none of the things for which we pray, neither have we deserved them; for we daily sin much and indeed deserve nothing but punishment. So will we also heartily forgive, and readily do good to those who sin against us.

The husband and wife are to heartily forgive each other, and readily to do good to each other. St. Paul teaches how to love. Love does no harm to the neighbor. (Romans 13:3-10) St. Paul teaches what love is. Love is patient. Love is kind. Love isn't jealous. Love doesn't brag. Love doesn't get conceited. Love isn't indecent. Love isn't selfish. Love doesn't get angry. Love doesn't plan to hurt anyone. Love doesn't delight in evil. Love is happy with the truth. Love bears everything. Love believes everything. Love hopes for everything. Love endures everything. Love never dies. (I Corinthians 13:4-8)

St. Peter describes the power of love. Above all, continue to love one another fervently because love covers many sins. (I Peter 4:8) King Solomon also describes the power of love. Hate stirs up quarrels, but love covers every wrong. (Proverbs 10:12) St. John describes how only children of God can love in I John. St. John tells us why we love: We love because God first loved us. (I John 4:19)

God created a man and a woman. God created marriage for the man and woman to love and honor each other. St. John describes that the love for one another glorifies God, because God is love. (I John 4:8) God created marriage. God BLESSES a marriage with children. (Genesis 1:28) God gives children so we can love one another. The more God's children love one another, the more glorified God is.

A wife wants to honor her husband with her body. The wife has a womb that can honor her husband with children. This is the way God made the woman for the man. The wife wants to build a nation with their children to honor her husband. The wife can only honor her husband when she is safe in God's Word. Eve wanted to honor her husband with her womb. Eve wanted to be safe in God's Word. Eve thought her womb would

bring the Savior that would take away their sin and restore eternal life. (Genesis 4:1) God's time was not to be directly from her womb, but from her womb through future generations.

Sarah knew God had promised her husband, Abraham, that He would make him a great nation. (Genesis 12:2) Sarah believed and trusted God's promise. Time passed on. Sarah knew her womb was too old to bear a child. Sarah wanted to honor her husband. Sarah wanted to be safe in God's Word. Sarah did not understand how God was going to make a great nation from her womb. Sarah wanted Abraham to have a son to glorify God. Sarah thought she would help God fulfill His promise by giving to Abraham her maidservant's womb. Abraham did not bother with God or His Word. Abraham listened to his wife! Abraham did not make Sarah safe in God's Word. Sarah's maidservant, Hagar, despised Sarah for not being able to conceive a child to honor her husband. Hagar apparently thought she would make a great nation for Abraham by her own doing and not in God's promise. (Genesis 16) When the Lord appeared to Abraham, He told Abraham that Sarah will have a child. Sarah laughed. (Genesis 18: 1-19) And Sarah did laugh with joy that God kept his promise by giving her a child to honor her husband for a great nation. (Genesis 21:1-8)

God's promise was passed on to Abraham and Sarah's son Isaac. (Genesis 25:7) Isaac pleaded with the Lord for his barren wife, Rebekah, to conceive a child. Rebekah had a difficult pregnancy. Rebekah prayed to God for comfort. Indeed, God comforted Rebekah by revealing how He was to continue with His promise of a great nation through the 2nd twin in her womb. (Genesis 25:23) Isaac was going to give his blessing to carry on God's promise. Rebekah had to respect Isaac by not preaching to him. Rebekah trusted God by deceiving Isaac into giving the blessing to Jacob instead of Esau as God said. It is good to obey God rather than man. (Acts 5:29) Rebekah insisted that Jacob find a wife that would support God's promise for future generations. Rebekah wanted her family safe in God's Word. (Genesis 27:46)

Faithful Leah was blessed with a fruitful womb by God because He saw in her sorrow that Jacob did not love her. God made Leah the mother of Judah so that she honored her husband Jacob in passing on God's promise of a great nation. (Genesis 29:31-

Hannah wanted children to honor her husband. The first child she had, Samuel, she gave to God in thanksgiving not knowing if she would have more children. (I Samuel 1)

Elizabeth was barren and beyond the age of childbearing. God gave Elizabeth a child to bear to honor her husband Zacharias. This child, John, would be a great preacher, making ready the people with the promise to prepare for the Lord. (Luke 1)

Mary, our Lord Jesus' mother, believed in God's promise of a Savior from sin. Mary was to marry Joseph. God made her with child, God's only begotten Son, Jesus, Savior of the world. God told Joseph Mary's womb would be fulfilling His promise in giving a Savior from sin and death. Joseph kept Mary safe in God's Word. (Matthew 1:18-25)

The women that God tells us about in the Bible were very influential in my life as a wife and mother. God made me a woman. I am not ashamed of this. God made woman for man. I am not ashamed of this. God made the wife to respect her husband. I am not ashamed of this. God made the husband to be the wife's head. I am not ashamed of this. God made husband and wife to have children. I am not ashamed of this. God made me Rolf's wife. I am not ashamed of this. I respect Rolf as my head. I am not ashamed that I respect and depend on my husband to keep me faithful and safe in God's Word. God blessed our union with 12 children. I am humbled. In humility, we gave our children to God in Christ's baptism. In humility, we taught and nurtured our children in God's Word. Christian wives honor their husbands by bearing children and faithfully teaching God's fulfilled promise in His only begotten Son, the Savior from sin and death. If the children are not taught God's Word and God's standards of right and wrong, then the womb does not honor the husband. The family is nothing more than a clan that judges right and wrong according to their own standards. That is what Satan deceived Eve into. This is why we must rely on God's Word. In God's Word we are given Jesus, God's fulfilled Promise, to His children. A real MAN keeps his wife and children safe in God's Word. Then the man is loved, honored, and respected as the head of the home.. A real WOMAN honors and respects her husband when she confidently and faithfully nurtures their children in God's Word. This is how what God joins together stays together. This is true love and honor. Where there is forgiveness of sins, there is life and salvation!

In the Western World, Christianity has enjoyed much freedom and wealth. Christians have had freedom to go to church, study the Bible, and teach the Bible for centuries. So why are the memberships and attendance in faithful Lutheran churches shrinking? It is because Christian parents have not been going to church. It is because Christian parents have not been studying the Bible. It is because Christian parents have not been taking their children to church. It is because Christian parents have not been teaching the Bible with confidence and joy to their children. A wedding ceremony is establishing a 'mission station' by God the Father, Almighty Maker of Heaven and Earth. What God has joined together let no one separate. When God blesses a marriage, God Himself is giving a 'divine call' in the union of Man and Woman within her womb that is one with her husband.

God's Word is our great heritage,  
And shall be ours forever;

To spread its light from age to age  
Shall be our chief endeavor.  
Through life it guides our way;  
In death it is our stay.

Lord, grant, while worlds endure  
We keep its teachings pure,  
Throughout all generations. (ELH 583)

The 'Mission Statement' of this institution that God has made is to fear, love, trust in God above all things and to love one another as oneself. This was established before the fall into Sin. (Genesis 1&2) After the fall into Sin, the world became a mess! Christian parents especially should humble themselves knowing that Adam and Eve had children and grandchildren and many of their descendents until Noah were destroyed by the flood, because God was so disgusted with all the sin that had filled the earth He had created. (Genesis 6) Christian parents cannot take for granted their children will know Jesus as their Savior from sin unless they TALK, TEACH, and LIVE Jesus with humility, joy, and zeal! So how is this done? In the Christian home the law of God is taught. We should fear, love, and trust in God above all things. We should love our neighbor as ourselves. Husband and wife fear, love, and trust in God above all things. Husband and wife teach their children to fear, love, and trust in God above all things by God's Word and their example in the home. The husband and wife love one another as themselves. The husband and wife love their children as themselves. The husband and wife teach their children to love one another as one self by God's Word and example in the home. Above all the husband and wife teach their children about Jesus, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. (John 1:29) The husband and wife forgive one another. The husband and wife forgive their children. The husband and wife teach their children to forgive one another. The husband and wife take their children to Divine services where God's Word is faithfully taught and the forgiveness of sins is given from the faithful Pastor, who is Christ's servant and steward of the mysteries of God. Where there is forgiveness of sins there is life and salvation! In the forgiveness of sins, the sins that separate husband and wife are gone. God is committed! Husband and wife are free to love, honor, and serve one another. Husband and wife are free to love their children and to serve them. Husband and wife's children are free to love one another and show love, honor, and to serve their parents. In this way, the family, God's 'mission station,' glorifies God. In this way, the family shines the light of God's love through His precious Son, our Savior from sin, Jesus Christ. (Ephesians 5) If God so decides, He will start new 'mission stations' through the husband and wife's children.

I was always troubled by St. Paul declaring women were saved in childbearing. He seemed to be teaching women earn eternal life by having children. When my children were small, I would read Bible Stories and say prayers with them before kissing them good night. I helped them memorize their Bible verses and Luther's small catechism. I taught them to pray before and after meals. It occurred to me that I was not only nurturing them in the Word of God, but myself as well. A Christian mother wants to teach about the Savior from sin and death to her children. No Christian mother wants to bear a child to grow up an unbeliever or murderer any more than Eve did. (Genesis 4) Christian mothers want to continue in faith, love and holiness, with self-control because they want their children to have eternal life. (I Timothy 2:15)

Lord, thou hast called both man and wife  
To live as one on earth,  
To serve each other in this life  
And thereby give us birth;  
The two become in flesh but one,

May husband as our Savior laid  
His life down for His bride  
And took the load that on her weighed  
On Him when once He died  
Give to his wife his strength and life  
And see her pure and spotless.

May wife as, the church, receive  
The gifts our Lord hath giv'n  
That we no more for sin need grieve  
But look to joy in heav'n  
Seek from her man a tender hand  
For guidance in affliction.

Lord God, our Maker, hear us now,  
As we on Thee rely,  
This pair with every gift endow  
Who for Thy grace now cry!  
For Thou hast giv' the gift of heav'n  
In Jesus Christ, our Savior!

Through one man, Adam, we were dead  
And walked in darkest night.

By one man, Jesus, we are led  
Into Thy righteous light.  
Thy Son made flesh, makes pure and fresh  
What died and was decaying.

Lord Jesus, who hast cleansed Thy Bride,  
And washed her in Thy blood,  
Grant that this man and wife confide  
In Thee for every good.  
Lord, Grant this pair Thy love to share  
Till death shall part them. Amen. Text: Mark Preus, 2004

Sin continues to separate what God has joined together. Sin threatens to diminish the light that honors God through Christ our Savior from sin to the world. Husband and wife struggle with their sinful flesh, the sinful world and the devil. Husband and wife's children struggle with their sinful flesh, the sinful world and the devil. The sinful flesh, the sinful world, and the devil want to dishonor God by destroying God's 'mission stations'. As God saw Adam and Eve's sin, He comforted them with His Promise of a Savior. As God still sees sin, He still comforts His children with His fulfilled Promise of a Savior. God is committed!

I walk in Danger all the way;  
The thought shall never leave me  
That Satan, who has marked his prey,  
Is plotting to deceive me.  
This foe with hidden snares  
May seize me unawares  
If e'er I fail to watch and pray;  
I walk in danger all the way.

I pass though trials all the way,  
With sin and ills contending;  
In patience I must bear each day  
The cross of God's own sending.

Oft in adversity I know not where to flee,  
When storms of woe my soul dismay;  
I pass through trials all the way.



Death doth pursue me all the way;  
No where I rest securely.  
He comes by night, he comes by day,  
And takes his prey most surely.  
A failing breath, and I In death's strong grasp may lie  
To face eternity for aye.  
Death doth pursue me all the way.

I walk with angels all the way;  
They shield me and befriend me.

All Satan's pow'r is held at bay  
When heav'nly hosts attend me.  
They are my sure defense,  
All fear and sorrow, hence!  
Unharm'd by foes, do what they may,  
I walk with angels all the way.

I walk with Jesus all the way;  
His guidance never fails me.  
Within His wounds I find a stay  
When Satan's pow'r assails me,  
And, by His footsteps led,  
My path I safely tread.  
In spite of ills that threaten may,  
I walk with Jesus all the way.

My walk is heav'nward all the way;  
Await, my soul, the morrow,  
When thou shalt find release for aye  
From all thy sin and sorrow.  
All worldly pomp, begone!

To heav'n I now press on.  
For all the world I would not stay;  
My walk is heav'nward all the way. (ELH 252)

May God grant us many more 'mission stations' with the comfort that God is committed!  
With this comfort may the husband and wife with humility, joy, and zeal always be

faithful in shining like the angels in Heaven always proclaiming: Glory be to God in the highest And on earth peace, good will toward men! (Luke 2:14)

#### CONCLUSION WITH A SUMMARY

Kinsey made a big impact in the Western World. I don't understand why Kinsey was taken seriously as having any wisdom on human behavior. Kinsey was able to convince many that sexual sins were not sins. The itching ears were ready. The sly devil puts to use many technical devices which entice the sinner to satisfy his wants and needs. One cannot casually pick up a book to read, choose a TV episode, or a movie without having the character involved in casual sex outside of the marriage bed. Even the commercials appeal to such sexual casualness! As the electronic devices improve, the more our culture is exposed to the encouragement of judging right and wrong according to our emotional needs and wants, giving the impression that it is acceptable behavior. Young women are encouraged to take lightly what makes them so unique. God made women different from men. God made the woman for man. God did not make the woman for men's pleasure. God made the woman for the man to comfort him. God made one woman for one man to be joined together as one flesh. (I Corinthians 6:13-7:17)

The woman was made special. She was made with a womb to love and honor her husband. The husband is to love and honor his wife as a precious gift from God. Sin destroys this beautiful institution. For the sinful man and sinful woman to have a marriage as one flesh, they must in humility bow to God's Wisdom. In God's Word the marriage is safe, that is God pleasing. When we trust in the Promise of God we look on the marriage as He did when He created Adam and Eve and said 'this was good'. (Genesis 1) The Christian husband treasures his wife's body as if her body is his very own. The Christian wife treasures her husband's body with respect as her very head. In this way, the Christian husband and Christian wife glorify God as our Creator. And if God chooses, He will bless this union, entrusting them with a child. Every child is God's creation formed in the woman's womb by the man's seed. What an awesome and humbling experience for a woman, knowing God, the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth is knitting together a child in her womb! What an awesome and humbling experience for a man knowing God, the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth is knitting together a child from his seed in his wife's womb! (Psalm 127: 3-5) What a merciful God to consider the man's needs! (Psalm 8) What an awesome responsibility to be entrusted with God's creation! (Genesis 1 & 2)

A young Christian girl needs to understand that she must protect her womb even when she does not know who she will marry. She must protect her womb to honor her husband. She must protect her womb to show respect to her husband. She must protect her womb so their children will hold her husband in high esteem. A Christian woman must protect her womb by seeking a Christian man to be her husband so that

the family will be safe in God's Word and Promise for the sake of their children. In this way, her children will rise up and call her blessed. (Proverbs 31:28) What God has joined together, let no man separate. God is committed!

The

Christian husband and the Christian wife bring their child to the Baptismal Font to wash away the sins of the child. In this promise in Baptism, Christ, the Redeemer of the World, glorifies God. The Christian husband and the Christian wife nurture their child in the Word of God trusting the Comforter to instill a right spirit in the child so that God is glorified. The child is safe in God's Word and Promise. Where there is forgiveness of sins, there is life and Salvation! God is committed!

On my heart imprint Thine image,  
Blessed Jesus, King of grace,  
That life's riches, cares, and pleasures,  
Have no pow'r Thee to efface.  
This the superscription be: Jesus, crucified for me.

Is my life, my hope's foundation,  
And my glory and salvation.(ELH # 593)

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