Chapter 8: Honoring Mothers and Fathers, and Marriage: Part I (Written in 2013)

Life Application Verses:

EXOLUS 20: 12 (NASB). HONOR YOUR FATHER AND YOUR MOTHER, THAT YOUR DAYS MAY BE PROLONGED IN THE LAND WHICH THE LORD YOUR GOD GIVES YOU. <u>EPHESIANS 6: 1-3 (NASB).</u> CHILDREN, OBEY YOUR PARENTS IN THE LORD, FOR THIS IS RIGHT. HONOR YOUR FATHER AND MOTHER (WHICH IS THE FIRST COMMANDMENT WITH A PROMISE), SO THAT IT MAY BE WELL WITH YOU, AND THAT YOU MAY LIVE LONG ON THE EARTH. EPHESIANS 5:22-33 (NASB). WIVES, BE SUBJECT TO YOUR OWN HUSBANDS, AS TO THE LORD. FOR THE HUSBAND IS THE HEAD OF THE WIFE, AS CHRIST ALSO IS THE HEAD OF THE CHURCH, HE HIMSELF BEING THE SAVIOR OF THE BODY. BUT AS THE CHURCH IS SUBJECT TO CHRIST, SO ALSO THE WIVES OUGHT TO BE TO THEIR HUSBANDS IN EVERYTHING. HUSBANDS, LOVE YOUR WIVES, JUST AS CHRIST ALSO LOVED THE CHURCH AND GAVE HIMSELF UP FOR HER, SO THAT HE MIGHT SANCTIFY HER, HAVING CLEANSED HER BY THE WASHING OF WATER WITH THE WORD, THAT HE MIGHT PRESENT TO HIMSELF THE CHURCH IN ALL HER GLORY, HAVING NO SPOT OR WRINKLE OR ANY SUCH THING; BUT THAT SHE WOULD BE HOLY AND BLAMELESS. SO HUSBANDS OUGHT ALSO TO LOVE THEIR OWN WIVES AS THEIR OWN BODIES. HE WHO LOVES HIS OWN WIFE LOVES HIMSELF; FOR NO ONE EVER HATED HIS OWN FLESH, BUT NOURISHES AND CHERISHES IT, JUST AS CHRIST ALSO DOES THE CHURCH, BECAUSE WE ARE MEMBERS OF HIS BODY. FOR THIS REASON A MAN SHALL LEAVE HIS FATHER AND MOTHER AND SHALL BE JOINED TO HIS WIFE, AND THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH. THIS MYSTERY IS GREAT; BUT I AM SPEAKING WITH REFERENCE TO CHRIST AND THE CHURCH. NEVERTHELESS, EACH INDIVIDUAL AMONG YOU ALSO IS TO LOVE HIS OWN WIFE EVEN AS HIMSELF, AND THE WIFE MUST SEE TO IT THAT SHE RESPECTS HER HUSBAND. PROVERBS 6: 20-23. MY SON, OBSERVE THE COMMANDMENT OF YOUR FATHER AND DO NOT FORSAKE THE TEACHING OF YOUR MOTHER; BIND THEM CONTINUALLY ON YOUR HEART; TIE THEM AROUND YOUR NECK. WHEN YOU WALK ABOUT, THEY WILL GUIDE YOU; WHEN YOU SLEEP, THEY WILL WATCH OVER YOU; AND WHEN YOU AWAKE, THEY WILL TALK TO YOU. FOR THE COMMANDMENT IS A LAMP AND THE TEACHING IS LIGHT; AND REPROOFS FOR DISCIPLINE ARE THE WAY OF LIFE. COLOSSIANS 3: 20. CHILDREN, BE OBEDIENT TO YOUR PARENTS IN ALL THINGS, FOR THIS IS WELL-PLEASING TO THE LORD.

n July 12, 2013, my mom reached the golden and Blessed age of 80 years young¹. My dad, also in relatively good health, turned 81 in May of 2013. To celebrate this wonderful and gracious gift of long life from the Lord, we had a family reunioncelebration and invited anyone in the family who wanted to attend. Let me say this again: we invited anyone and everyone in the family to attend no matter who they were or what they might have done through the years. The group was large and I was able to visit with family members that I had not seen in nearly five years or longer, in some cases. Mom has two sisters, one older and the other younger. What is so amazing is that these three sisters are married to the same husband (make sure you read this as to the same, but different, husband ©) that they married in the 1950's. If you consider the ages of these sisters and their husbands, the time that they have devoted to each other is (the names have not been changed as these people are

1 Heavenly Minded, Earthly Good: Ordinary Christians Living Ordinary [Extraordinary] Lives

¹ Homegoing: 16 January 2015; these dates/numbers are as of 2013; text updated in 2016 with original numbers.

proof of what God can do when we give Him our lives): 1) Janel (82) and Elmer (87), married 65 years; 2) Mary (80) and Bill (81), married 61 years; and 3) Beth (78) and Randy (79), married 59 years. In terms of time married, this is a whopping 185 years; if you consider that these people are individuals married to another individual, then the total collective of time in marriage rises significantly to 370 years. Relatively speaking, if you consider the 185 years, the equivalent time would go back to 1828², whereas the 370 years would take us back to 1643³. I don't think their lives together was such that they thought of their marriages like this—"all those years"— but, for perspective, I have taken a bit of liberty in showing you the relativity of their individual and collective marriages.

All of my aunts and uncles are saved by the Grace of God in Christ Jesus. These aunts and uncles are great grandparents, with many sons and daughters who are now grandparents themselves. When I consider these many kinfolk, I marvel at the longevity of my mom and her sisters. In terms of geographical considerations of the family, we have family systematically scattered across the Eastern United States. Most families in the US have similar 'scatterings.'

I can say before the Lord that for the greatest part, our families have been blessed. We've had some family with problems of various types, but we as a group have honored our moms and dads and watched them through the years as they stuck it out together—through thick and thin, for richer or poorer, in and through sickness and in health, in times of separation due to employment relocations, in the sorrows of losing family and in the joys of new family being born, and all other things that life brings. It hasn't always been easy as you know, but God has been a present help in our troubles and I believe that He has been active in our homes through all these years. There isn't a time that I can remember since I was a small boy that my mom wasn't reading God's Word or talking about Him or praying or encouraging us to attend Church. As I reflect on the years past, I give her Honor before God for what she has done for her family. It was because of her that I made a profession of Faith in Jesus Christ when I was eleven. While my dad was earning a living for the family, he too was saved because of my Mom.

² In 1828, Andrew Jackson was elected as the 7th President of the United States—note—that is the 7th. We are currently at the 44th President.

³ In 1643, Massachusetts Bay, Plymouth, Connecticut and New Harbor form United Colonies of New England; and, 1st recorded tornado in U.S. History (Essex County, Massachusetts).

The discussion here is about two things in our modern society that seem to have withered the Sanctity of Marriage with the passage of time. These two things are honor and marriage. In July 2013, the Supreme Court ruled on two issues that have impacted both of these things in our society. First, the ruling about the Marriage Act (Defense of Marriage Act or DOMA):

[The late] Justice Antonin Scalia accused his colleagues of a "jaw-dropping" overreach. And he hinted in a long dissenting opinion that the court's decision invalidating DOMA could have broader implications: "By formally declaring anyone opposed to same-sex marriage an enemy of human decency, the majority arms well every challenger to a state law restricting marriage to its traditional definition," he wrote ... Attorney General Eric Holder announced in 2011 that the Obama administration considered DOMA unconstitutional and no longer would defend it in court. (*Supreme Court strikes down Defense of Marriage Act*, Richard Wolf and Brad Heath, USA TODAY, 2:12 p.m. EDT June 26, 2013.)

Secondly, "in a pair of landmark decisions, the Supreme Court on Wednesday struck down the 1996 law blocking federal recognition of gay marriage, and it allowed gay marriage to resume in California by declining to decide a separate case" (*Pete Williams and Erin McClam, NBC News,* 26 Jun 2013 3:05pm, EDT). In both of these cases, the observation is that marriages between a man and a woman in the United States have come under attack as 'unconstitutional.' Wow, I can't even imagine what God might have to say on the subject. Well, in fact, I know what God has to say about it. He has not changed His mind since He guided the authors of His Holy Word. I am just a simple servant of God in Christ and I will not condemn anyone; I Pray for them and God will add the increase or decrease in His time and manner. Regardless of the Supreme Court ruling, my perception of the world is not skewed by these rulings—my world is shaped by the lives of my parents, and these aunts/uncles that I have alluded to earlier. They have remained together and offer a model of the value of Marriage. They have provided a Heavenly Minded example by which I have made every effort to live in my own marriage as Earthly Good as is possible. Marriage is hard work—make no mistake!

Today, it is so easy to divorce by simply filing paperwork with an attorney and splitting sometimes violently—up the accumulation of material things and our dear and precious children. The lyrics of the song, *Restore*, by Chris August, gives us a secular and God perspective of "growing old together" in marriage (used with permission):

"Restore" by Chris August

Nobody's growing old together, we've made it easy just to quit Love has become a negative percentage, why do we bother to commit We've got a long list of excuses, ways we try to justify Well, I propose to you the truth is, marriage does not have to die

[Chorus:]

I know you're feeling like it's falling apart and it can't go on anymore But God is a God who knows how to heal so just give it up to the Lord And He will restore

He said with this ring I promise, and with I do she said forever But right now if they're being honest they don't know if they'll stay together Let's fast forward to the future after struggling on their own They finally figured out they needed Jesus in the middle Now I'm watching God rebuild their home

[Chorus]

The enemy tries to come and divide Trying to get us to give up the fight But darkness will always lose out to light 'Cause we've got the power of Christ on our side

> I see you growing old together I pray I find a love like yours

So if you're feeling like it's falling apart and it can't go on anymore God is a God who knows how to heal so just give it up to the Lord And He will restore

> Like it was before You may have strayed off course But He will restore

When I see these words and hear the song, I think of Mary, Bill, Janelle, Elmer, Beth, and Randy "growing old together." There have been some close calls in recent years: Elmer was on a tractor and hit a tree limb that almost took his life; Randy had heart issues; Mary has an illness that will one day call her Home (see previous note); and, there are other things through the years. But throughout these trials and difficulties, these couples have been together and serving Christ Jesus in their respective marriages. Will our "leaders" in Washington honor these years of dedication and togetherness? If our leaders have struck down DOMA, what's next? Will we one day get to the point that our fathers and mothers can no longer be honored because of the years they have spent living in the "controversial idea" of Holy Matrimony? Not I! I will honor my parents, my aunts and uncles, and all other married couples that have endured—through thick and thin! Marriage is a hard job! The Ford Motor Company used to have a slogan, "Quality is job one!" and so is a good marriage. Oh, you know, as well as I do, that there are also not-so-good marriages. Trying to survive a bad marriage is like when you were young and your mom made you eat your asparagus. Now, asparagus is good for you and it tastes okay—I mean really good! But, it can be tough to learn to eat that stuff.

What does it mean to honor your mother and father? Let's turn to the Greatest Author on the subject: God. If you read the Life Application Verses in: Exodus 20:12; Ephesians 5: 22-33 & 6: 1-13; Proverbs 6: 20-23; and, Colossians 3:20, you may have noticed something in those verses: FAMILY. I'm reprinting those verses here, less the Book and Chapter identifiers, from God's Word to <u>emphasize</u> something: (I would never change the Words of God for any other reason!)

"Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be prolonged in the land which THE LORD YOUR GOD GIVES YOU. CHILDREN, OBEY YOUR PARENTS IN THE LORD, FOR THIS IS RIGHT. HONOR YOUR FATHER AND MOTHER (WHICH IS THE FIRST COMMANDMENT WITH A PROMISE), SO THAT IT MAY BE WELL WITH YOU, AND THAT YOU MAY LIVE LONG ON THE EARTH. WIVES, BE SUBJECT TO YOUR OWN HUSBANDS, AS TO THE LORD. FOR THE HUSBAND IS THE HEAD OF THE WIFE, AS CHRIST ALSO IS THE HEAD OF THE CHURCH, HE HIMSELF BEING THE SAVIOR OF THE BODY. BUT AS THE CHURCH IS SUBJECT TO CHRIST, SO ALSO THE WIVES OUGHT TO BE TO THEIR HUSBANDS IN EVERYTHING. HUSBANDS, LOVE YOUR WIVES, JUST AS CHRIST ALSO LOVED THE CHURCH AND GAVE HIMSELF UP FOR HER, SO THAT HE MIGHT SANCTIFY HER, HAVING CLEANSED HER BY THE WASHING OF WATER WITH THE WORD, THAT HE MIGHT PRESENT TO HIMSELF THE CHURCH IN ALL HER GLORY, HAVING NO SPOT OR WRINKLE OR ANY SUCH THING; BUT THAT SHE WOULD BE HOLY AND BLAMELESS. SO HUSBANDS OUGHT ALSO TO LOVE THEIR OWN WIVES AS THEIR OWN BODIES. HE WHO LOVES HIS OWN WIFE LOVES HIMSELF; FOR NO ONE EVER HATED HIS OWN FLESH, BUT NOURISHES AND CHERISHES IT, JUST AS CHRIST ALSO DOES THE CHURCH, BECAUSE WE ARE MEMBERS OF HIS BODY. FOR THIS REASON A MAN SHALL LEAVE HIS FATHER AND MOTHER AND SHALL BE JOINED TO HIS WIFE, AND THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH. THIS MYSTERY IS GREAT; BUT I AM SPEAKING WITH REFERENCE TO CHRIST AND THE CHURCH. NEVERTHELESS, EACH INDIVIDUAL AMONG YOU ALSO IS TO LOVE HIS OWN WIFE EVEN AS HIMSELF, AND THE WIFE MUST SEE TO IT THAT SHE RESPECTS HER HUSBAND. MY SON, OBSERVE THE COMMANDMENT OF YOUR FATHER AND DO NOT FORSAKE THE TEACHING OF YOUR MOTHER; BIND THEM CONTINUALLY ON YOUR HEART; TIE THEM AROUND YOUR NECK. WHEN YOU WALK ABOUT, THEY WILL GUIDE YOU; When you sleep, they will watch over you; And when you awake, they will talk to you. For the COMMANDMENT IS A LAMP AND THE TEACHING IS LIGHT; AND REPROOFS FOR DISCIPLINE ARE THE WAY OF LIFE. CHILDREN, BE OBEDIENT TO YOUR PARENTS IN ALL THINGS, FOR THIS IS WELL-PLEASING TO THE LORD."

What did you glean from these verses? I would like to point out the keywords of: Honor, Husbands, Wives, Children, Obedience, Christ, Love, Peace, Family, and Endorsement. Now, in case you are reading those words to find the actual reference of Endorsement, you may not see it, but please note this—God Endorsed and still does—Marriage between a man and a woman in these verses, just as He Endorsed Honor in Marriage, Husbands and Wives in Love, Children in Obedience to Parents, the Sanctity of the Family, the Peace between Children and Parents, and so on. Something our Politically Correct society of today misses is whether our manmade laws regarding Marriage is Endorsed by God or by man? As I said a few paragraphs ago, I am not going to judge others because I desire not to be judged. But, I would walk softly and carry a humble heart if God is the Great Endorser of Marriage between a man and a woman. And, I leave it at that as God in and through Christ Jesus will give to each an accounting.

Without all the statistics that we could conjure up to bolster the idea of children dishonoring their parents today, let me just say that to me as an ordinary Christian living in the modernistic, legalistic, PC-world of today, I see a falling away of children honoring their parents. I think that our issues with education, crime, respect of authority, community service, work ethic, and many other issues, are the results of a noted number of children not respecting their parents. Now, this may be because the parents have not taught this in the home, have been poor examples of what is right, or they have been models that fostered disrespect. Again, I am not going to judge others because I desire not to be judged. Thus, this is a stated opinion.

What we as Christians can do and should do, is to help in these situations when and where we can—that is, be Heavenly Minded to help bring about Earthly Good in the lives of those who may not desire to honor fathers and/or mothers. Every situation is unique. Not every mother or father is present in the home. These parents have abdicated their responsibility to be the leaders and teachers for their children; thus, children have learned that Honor, Husbands, Wives, Children, Obedience, Christ, Love, Peace, Family, and Endorsement, are merely phrases without meaning. In other words, these families have not followed the Greatest advice ever given to parents: "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it" (Proverbs 22:6). These children may not even understand what it means to Honor Mothers and Fathers and Marriages and this is a tragedy in modern times!

In a nation such as the United States, we have become so secularized that whatever is within the structure that exists, we call the family. Again, I am not going to judge others because I desire not to be judged. Thus, this is a stated opinion. Because of my experience in the Family that God has Blessed me with, I only know that my mother and father and aunts and uncles were there for their children. They provided opportunity—even at the personal cost of working long hours—to provide for their Families. We had first-hand knowledge of Honor, Husbands, Wives, Children, Obedience, Christ, Love, Peace, Family, and Endorsement because in our homes, we loved each other and Christ Jesus was the center of our existences. Don't get me wrong—it wasn't *Living in the Land of Nirvana*—it was Living in the Land of God-Centered Marriage and Family. Our families practiced: "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it" (Proverbs 22:6). And, today, the children in these families Honor their parents because we have come full-circle into the Teachings from which we were raised throughout our lives. **Please read again God's Words below and concentrate on every word as you Honor your Mother and/or Father or make amends, if that is needed:**

"HONOR YOUR FATHER AND YOUR MOTHER, THAT YOUR DAYS MAY BE PROLONGED IN THE LAND WHICH THE LORD YOUR GOD GIVES YOU. CHILDREN, OBEY YOUR PARENTS IN THE LORD, FOR THIS IS RIGHT. HONOR YOUR FATHER AND MOTHER (WHICH IS THE FIRST COMMANDMENT WITH A PROMISE), SO THAT IT MAY BE WELL WITH YOU, AND THAT YOU MAY LIVE LONG ON THE EARTH. WIVES, BE SUBJECT TO YOUR OWN HUSBANDS, AS TO THE LORD. FOR THE HUSBAND IS THE HEAD OF THE WIFE, AS CHRIST ALSO IS THE HEAD OF THE CHURCH, HE HIMSELF BEING THE SAVIOR OF THE BODY. BUT AS THE CHURCH IS SUBJECT TO CHRIST, SO ALSO THE WIVES OUGHT TO BE TO THEIR HUSBANDS IN EVERYTHING. HUSBANDS, LOVE YOUR WIVES, JUST AS CHRIST ALSO LOVED THE CHURCH AND GAVE HIMSELF UP FOR HER, SO THAT HE MIGHT SANCTIFY HER, HAVING CLEANSED HER BY THE WASHING OF WATER WITH THE WORD, THAT HE MIGHT PRESENT TO HIMSELF THE CHURCH IN ALL HER GLORY, HAVING NO SPOT OR WRINKLE OR ANY SUCH THING; BUT THAT SHE WOULD BE HOLY AND BLAMELESS. SO HUSBANDS OUGHT ALSO TO LOVE THEIR OWN WIVES AS THEIR OWN BODIES. HE WHO LOVES HIS OWN WIFE LOVES HIMSELF; FOR NO ONE EVER HATED HIS OWN FLESH, BUT NOURISHES AND CHERISHES IT, JUST AS CHRIST ALSO DOES THE CHURCH, BECAUSE WE ARE MEMBERS OF HIS BODY. FOR THIS REASON A MAN SHALL LEAVE HIS FATHER AND MOTHER AND SHALL BE JOINED TO HIS WIFE, AND THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH. THIS MYSTERY IS GREAT; BUT I AM SPEAKING WITH REFERENCE TO CHRIST AND THE CHURCH. NEVERTHELESS, EACH INDIVIDUAL AMONG YOU ALSO IS TO LOVE HIS OWN WIFE EVEN AS HIMSELF, AND THE WIFE MUST SEE TO IT THAT SHE RESPECTS HER HUSBAND. MY SON, OBSERVE THE COMMANDMENT OF YOUR FATHER AND DO NOT FORSAKE THE TEACHING OF YOUR MOTHER; BIND THEM CONTINUALLY ON YOUR HEART; TIE THEM AROUND YOUR NECK. WHEN YOU WALK ABOUT, THEY WILL GUIDE YOU; WHEN YOU SLEEP, THEY WILL WATCH OVER YOU; AND WHEN YOU AWAKE, THEY WILL TALK TO YOU. FOR THE COMMANDMENT IS A LAMP AND THE TEACHING IS LIGHT; AND REPROOFS FOR DISCIPLINE ARE THE WAY OF LIFE. CHILDREN, BE OBEDIENT TO YOUR PARENTS IN ALL THINGS, FOR THIS IS WELL-PLEASING TO THE LORD."

To be Continued...in the next Chapter...but first, visit the Some Interesting Ideas on the next Page. You might be shocked at what you find...

Some Interesting Ideas

Full Definition of MARRIAGE BY -

1a (1): the state of being united to a person of the opposite sex as husband or wife in a consensual and contractual relationship recognized by law (2): the state of being united to a person of the same sex in a



relationship like that of a traditional marriage <*same-sexmarriage*>*b*: the mutual <u>relation</u> of <u>married</u> persons: <u>wedlock</u> *c*: the institution whereby individuals are joined in a marriage

2: an act of <u>marrying</u> or the rite by which the married status is <u>effected</u>; *especially* : the wedding ceremony and attendant festivities or formalities

3: an intimate or close union *<the marriage of painting and poetry — J. T. Shawcross>*



"Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be prolonged in the land which the Lord your God gives you. Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. Honor your father and mother (which is the first commandment with a promise), so that it may be well with you, and that you may live long on the earth. Wives, *be subject* to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of

THE CHURCH, HE HIMSELF BEING THE SAVIOR OF THE BODY. BUT AS THE CHURCH IS SUBJECT TO CHRIST, SO ALSO THE WIVES OUGHT TO BE TO THEIR HUSBANDS IN EVERYTHING. HUSBANDS, LOVE YOUR WIVES, JUST AS CHRIST ALSO LOVED THE CHURCH AND GAVE HIMSELF UP FOR HER, SO THAT HE MIGHT SANCTIFY HER, HAVING CLEANSED HER BY THE WASHING OF WATER WITH THE WORD, THAT HE MIGHT PRESENT TO HIMSELF THE CHURCH IN ALL HER GLORY, HAVING NO SPOT OR WRINKLE OR ANY SUCH THING; BUT THAT SHE WOULD BE HOLY AND BLAMELESS. SO HUSBANDS OUGHT ALSO TO LOVE THEIR OWN WIVES AS THEIR OWN BODIES. HE WHO LOVES HIS OWN WIFE LOVES HIMSELF; FOR NO ONE EVER HATED HIS OWN FLESH, BUT NOURISHES AND CHERISHES IT, JUST AS CHRIST ALSO DOES THE CHURCH, BECAUSE WE ARE MEMBERS OF HIS BODY. FOR THIS REASON A MAN SHALL LEAVE HIS FATHER AND MOTHER AND SHALL BE JOINED TO HIS WIFE, AND THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH. THIS MYSTERY IS GREAT; BUT I AM SPEAKING WITH REFERENCE TO CHRIST AND THE CHURCH. NEVERTHELESS, EACH INDIVIDUAL AMONG YOU ALSO IS TO LOVE HIS OWN WIFE EVEN AS HIMSELF, AND THE WIFE MUST SEE TO IT THAT SHE RESPECTS HER HUSBAND. MY SON, OBSERVE THE COMMANDMENT OF YOUR FATHER AND DO NOT FORSAKE THE TEACHING OF YOUR MOTHER; BIND THEM CONTINUALLY ON YOUR HEART; TIE THEM AROUND YOUR NECK. WHEN YOU WALK ABOUT, THEY WILL GUIDE YOU; WHEN YOU SLEEP, THEY WILL WATCH OVER YOU; AND WHEN YOU AWAKE, THEY WILL TALK TO YOU. FOR THE COMMANDMENT IS A LAMP AND THE TEACHING IS LIGHT; AND REPROOFS FOR DISCIPLINE ARE THE WAY OF LIFE. CHILDREN, BE OBEDIENT TO YOUR PARENTS IN ALL THINGS, FOR THIS IS WELL-PLEASING TO THE LORD."

DO YOU KNOW WHY THESE VERSES ARE REPEATED SO MANY TIMES IN PART I OF HONORING FATHERS AND MOTHERS, AND MARRIAGE? IF YOU ARE SERVING GOD IN CHRIST, YOU SURELY DO!

PLEASE CONTINUE ON PART II