

**Chapter 9: Honoring Mothers and Fathers, and Marriage:
Part II: Caregiver (Written in 2014, updated in 2016)**

Life Application Verses:

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.

In 2014, my mom and dad celebrated their 62nd Wedding Anniversary. All across One Nation Under God, husbands and wives are celebrating the longevity of being together. Even as my mother is experiencing the issue I noted in Chapter 8, my dad is right there by her side every single day. To talk to him about what she is going through brings unspeakable heaviness to his heart. My mom, though, is a tough and determined woman who has been through a lot in her younger days with a violent alcoholic father—which made her able to cope with life’s problems. To her, God is not some mystical being we talk about in meetings or in casual conversation; no, to her Jesus Christ is real! Let me give you an example: take one hand, clasp it into the other hand, then move both hands in a circular motion. Did you feel your hands moving; did you get the sensation of warmth from the friction; did you feel the strength in those two hands as they held each other? To my mother, Jesus Christ is that real! God is that real! And she is ready for her Heavenly Home when God finally says, “Mary, your room is ready. Come on in!” My dad is the same, but after 62 years together, he wants another 62 years together and the anticipation of her Home Going is hard for him. And me. And the family!

I want to speak from the Heart in this second part of a difficult bit of writing. As you read the Life Application Verses in Chapter 8 and Chapter 9, you will readily see what God thinks of husbands and wives. Let me preface this with something: I believe in the Biblical definition of one husband and one wife; one man and one woman. That is my belief, that is

what the Bible teaches, and I make no apology for my belief. If you have a variation on this, that is between YOU and GOD. The agreement between ME and GOD is settled. My Heavenly Minded, Earthly Good version of marriage is hereby firm and follows God's Word in my life—even after a divorce and having been remarried to my wonderful wife of soon-to-be 38 years. With much Prayer and Supplication, I have been forgiven and have accepted God's gift in the woman I have spent these past many years in sharing life with. Now, back to the topic at hand...

In today's world, there are billboards advertising the 30-second divorce (well, more like the 1 hour type). But, the point is that so many people just live and divorce and move on as if nothing is out of the ordinary. God has some very interesting things to say about marriage and divorce, so I am not making flippant comments on this subject; rather, having gone through divorce, it was a very hard time for me. There was no love in the marriage and both sides had issues that needed God's forgiveness. Then, as I Prayed for God to forgive my past, I saw her (Rita) in the choir at my mom and dad's church during leave from the Navy and the rest is Blessed History. For my mom and dad, Bill saw Mary standing at the bus stop when they were teenagers and the rest is Blessed History: fast forward to 62 years later...

My mom and dad, thank God for both of them, are like balanced glue. My dad wasn't able to finish the 10th grade, yet he was a pretty smart fellow with a set of work ethics so lacking in today's expectations. My mom, similarly, finished High School, but she too, was a work ethics guru. Both of them never lost sight of each other as their love grew in these past 62 years. They gave their three sons a home that was always there, even when things financially were tough and uncertain. When their sons were drafted for war, had drug issues, or were a practicing prodigal, they were always there for them. Let me say that again, they were always there for us! As my mom would say, "I may not like what you are doing and I would prefer that you didn't do those things, but I will not stop loving you and neither will your dad." And that love is what my dad is about today as he is a caregiver for his wife, my mom, and grandmother to many. His prayer is to live long enough to care for her through this illness to the end.

His day doesn't start early or end late. It is perpetual and around the clock. He refuses to consider that my mom will one day need 24-hour care, as that is—to him—his job until the Lord calls him Home. The family has arranged to have in-home care for about 8 hours a day, from

Monday – Friday. When I call to check on him and mom, he will tell me, “It’s just me and granny-ma, nice and quiet.” You see—he hasn’t forgotten the first time he saw her waiting for the bus and fell in love at that very moment. He lives what he has felt in his heart all these years and God is blessing him more these days than in his entire life by allowing my mom more time to be with him and to be better than expected. There’s no rulebook on this type of life in the latter years of marriage. But, there is God’s Hand of Mercy and Love and Grace; there’s Jesus Christ right in the midst of their relationship, holding them together and giving them Hope that is as real as the clasping of hands together. Their Heavenly Minded, Earthly Good lives are in being caregiver and being cared for as they share these final years together—still in love. Please read the Life Application Verses again, but this time read it to consider what your marriage is before God. Consider it from start to finish; think about what value God places on marriage and how He uses Jesus Christ as the cornerstone of this union:

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***.

In these verses, God is speaking of husbands and wives and love and respect and becoming one flesh. He even says that this is a great mystery. My heart cries out to Almighty God in that I have seen/witnessed/lived this mystery! I’ve seen it work in my mom and dad for as many years as I can remember! That love, respect, give-and-take, compromise, stick-to-it-tiveness...I’ve seen it all! And, I can tell you Brothers and Sisters in Christ Jesus, IT WORKS! It may not always be Roses, but you know...as someone quoted once, “I can complain because rose bushes have thorns or rejoice because thorn bushes have roses.” AMEN! Life is a thorn

bush, don't you know that! In the Grace and Mercy of God in Christ Jesus, we are Blessed with Roses—wives, children, grandchildren, employment, health, and so much more. Look more closely at the verses. What do you see about the comparison that God makes by citing His Only and Begotten Son? Do you see it? Oh, God of Heaven, don't miss what's in this...

There are four key words I have highlighted for you. They are: **Christ**, **Love**, **Husband**, and **Wife**. The key element in this verse is that God stated for us the following: **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**.

These verses compare marriage to the relationship Christ has to the Church, Christ as Savior, the Glory of Christ Jesus Holy and Blameless, and as “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.” Do you think that my mom and dad in their 62 years have understood this Truth? I think so...they've figured out—in their love for one another and for their Love of God in Christ Jesus—that this marriage thing is pretty important! In fact, my dad as I write this, is living this Truth every day, hour, minute, and he is in love with his wife as when he first saw her. Then as a fledging young man, now as caregiver to his life-long love. He loves her as Christ loves the Church and that is a mighty Love indeed! For in Christ, His Holy Love will not fail, faint, or forget. It will be as a mystery—a mystery that is

nourished and cherished for Eternity. But that mystery is Heavenly Minded, and my dad lives it every day in his Earthly Good time with my mom as he will not leave her side, except to do what is needed to keep the home going—bills paid, groceries bought, and so forth.

How many husbands and wives today are living the truth of being caregiver NOW! Don't wait until it comes time to be a full-time caregiver because of health issues. Care for your wife or husband now, don't put this off! Care for that husband or wife as Christ cares for the Church, and if you study Scripture, you know how important the Church is to Jesus! Care and give to that woman or man you married as God intended; time is not our friend on Earth, but only after we arrive in Heaven does time become our friend because it matters no longer. As God noted, one day is like a thousand years. If you miss this, you will blink and it will suddenly be years or decades later. What have you done as caregiver for your spouse, children, grandchildren?

As I think of my mom and dad in these years before God calls them in from their labors, I am saddened by the knowledge that one day I will be required to attend their funerals. That's part of life, but Lord, it is a hard part of life. For those who have been Born Again in Christ, I ask that You grant to us Your Peace, Mercy, Grace, and Love as we children go through these hard times. May we remember that it's not the End, but the Beginning for our beloved mothers and fathers. May we also practice Honoring our parents now, not when it's time to give a Eulogy. My mom and dad, as many moms and dads, have lived an example that I can only hope to emulate. I thank you from my Heart, Father God, for their example and I know that if my dad had a wish on this Earth, in Your Will, he would like another 62 years!

A Question of Curiosity:

How do you Honor your Father and Mother? If you have trouble in responding to this question, don't you think it's time to consider that God has Blessed Marriage as an Honorable event in the lives of one man and one woman! Scripture is clear on this. And you say...

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What You Can Learn From the Marriage of Ruth and Billy Graham:

You can learn from the marriage of Ruth and Billy Graham that it is possible for a marriage between an independent woman and a man with a mission to last a lifetime. Even though Billy's travel schedule often kept them apart, he and Ruth were able to keep their marriage strong.

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A Tribute to Mom and Dad¹

As my hair grows grey, I am grateful to God,
For parents who loved, spared not the rod;
You made a home, three sons you raised,
Taught God's Love, to Him be Praised;
Without those Prayers, our paths unknown,
In God you Trust, In Christ we've grown;
A Tribute to Mom and Dad.

In times of need, you gave your best,
Now let God be, Your Holy Rest;
For in the day, He calls you Home,
Our hearts will break, Our Spirits groan;
No words can say, how Blessed we be,
In Christ our Lord, now *Clear* to me;
My mom and dad, two Souls of God,
No better folk, Have walked this sod;
A Tribute to Mom and Dad.

In Mom, her needs, are grave indeed,
In Dad, he cares, she has no need;
For God in Christ, gives strength to him,
To be caregiver, no guise, no whim;
Their Love a bond, no break is found,
For in their God, He is solid ground;
Two and sixty, and more I pray,
Oh Lord I Plead, my Mom to stay;
For Dad will break, upon her loss,
As surely as wind, the tree limbs toss.
A Tribute to Mom and Dad.

I Honor them now, as I Honor God,
For parents who loved, spared not the rod;
My path made straight, yet broken I'll be,
When God calls home, this Mom to me;
So to Christ Jesus, I bow to knee,
Salvation for them, and hear my plea;
Before The Father, I ask of Thee,
Grant my Mom, more time to be,
With Dad in Love, for soon to see;
Their Heavenly Home, Their tears now gone,
Three sons they Blessed, Saved and Grown.
A Tribute to Mom and Dad.

¹ By Ken Scott & Read at my mother's Homegoing on 16 January 2015. To God Be The Glory!

My Prayer For You:

Father God, of All Things: I know in my heart that one day, You will require my mom and my dad to Go Home. As I think on this, my Heart breaks even before that day arrives. While I am deeply saddened by these events, I also know that **You have Promised** those of us who Believe in Christ Jesus as our Savior, a Heavenly Home where we will never be sick, fear, or cry. And I too Believe that Heaven is a place where we will know our loved ones, in our Spiritual Bodies. For those who have lost their parents and that person has a Broken Heart, or they have lost children or close friends, I ask You, Oh God, to be that Comfort to them that no other can provide. We are but from the dust and to dust we will return. While we are here in these Earthly bodies, when we need that Comfort and Love through hard times like losing our parent or child, we need You more than we know and if You hold from us Your Mercy and Grace and Comfort, are we not the most retched of all creatures that walk upon this Earth? We have no other that we call for Help but You. Be Merciful on us as we struggle with our hurts, loss, and pain. You are Almighty God, and NO OTHER has our interest at Heart as You do. Open Heaven to our eyes when we hurt and send Your Angels to stand by our side. You raised Christ from the dead, and He sits at Your Right Hand; it is in the Name of Christ Jesus that I ask You to be like the clasping of hands to those who hurt from losing parent or child. Our Hearts are mortal and when they are broken, it must be YOU that heals them. In Christ, the Risen Son of God, Amen!

Something To Ponder

If you have a loved one that has already gone to be with Christ as He promised, consider this:

God has stated that one day is like a thousand years with Him, Christ Jesus, and The Holy Spirit;
My mom has been gone at this writing (22 February 2016) since 16 January 2015;
In our time, that is one year and 37 days or $365+37 = 402$ days;
1000 years is 365,000 days;
So, how long has my mother been in Heaven? Are you ready for this...

1 day in Heaven	1000 years	402 days	402,000	
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1000 years		365,000 days	1	365,000,000

- That is .00110136986 Days in Heaven or in our Earthly time:
- 1 day is 24 hrs. and $.00110136986 \times 24 = .02643287664 \times 60$ minutes =

1 Minute and 58 Seconds as of 22 February 2016

In Heavenly time my mom arrived less than 2 minutes ago in Eternity, even while we grieve her being gone. Marriage may seem like it lasts for a LONG time, but in terms of Heavenly time, we are married for a short time and then we are with God in Christ Jesus for the rest of our Eternities!