The Feast of Pentecost
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Rolling Meadows - 1967

Rev. Carl F. Thrun

IN NOMINE JESU

Acts 1: 8 You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses!

Galatians 5: 22 The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.

I Peter 3: 1-4 You married women should adapt yourselves to your husbands, so that even if they do not obey the Word of God they may be won to God without any word being spoken, simply by seeing the pure and reverent behavior of you, their wives. Your beauty should not be dependent on an elaborate hairdo, or on the wearing of jewelry or fine clothes, but on the inner personality - the unfading loveliness of a calm and gentle spirit, a thing very precious in the eyes of God.

THE CHRISTIAN MOTHER!

What is it that makes a Christian wife and mother? It is not just going through a marriage ceremony and saying, I Do. Pagan wives say the same thing. It is not just bearing children. Pagan mothers bear children too. It is not just being a little ole homemaker - cooking the meals, making the beds, washing the clothes, ironing the shirts, cleaning the house, caring for the children when they are sick or in need. Pagan women may do the same thing. Yet the Christian wife and mother is something special - she holds a special honor and distinction. If we were to try to put all that this means and involves into a single sentence, we might say, The Christian wife and mother lives in the power of the Holy Spirit of God. That is the difference, and that immediately makes her a witness for Christ. ~~That is the promise of Christ Himself~~: You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; said XP and you shall be My witnesses!

Aglow with the fire of the Spirit, the Christian mother will bring her children to Jesus where they too may receive the life and power of God and the gift of the Holy Spirit. She knows that all of the love and devotion, all of the care and affection, that she sinks into her children is for nothing unless they are alive with the life of God* THAT WHICH IS BORN OF THE FLESH IS FLESH, AND THAT WHICH IS BORN OF THE SPIRIT IS SPIRIT. So she brings her children to Jesus in Baptism, remembering the Word of Jesus: EXCEPT A MAN BE BORN AGAIN OF WATER AND THE SPIRIT, HE CANNOT ENTER INTO THE KINGDOM OF GOD. And then she continues day in and day out to nurture, and nourish, and feed this new life of the Spirit, such as Mother of the Word so that it does not die out.

Comes alone from the Lord & Giver of life

The Christian wife and mother does not nag, nag, nag - yell, yell, yell - grumble, grumble, grumble - complain, complain, complain. Rather she gives quiet testimony to the faith which is within her. Her whole life and behavior is one constant witness to the presence of the Spirit of Christ: THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT IS LOVE, JOY, PEACE, PATIENCE, KINDNESS, GOODNESS, FAITHFULNESS, GENTLENESS, SELF-CONTROL.

Sometimes the Christian wife and mother has to go it alone. Unfortunately, we live in a world that has come to think of the Christian Faith as something soft - all right for women and children - but quite unnecessary for all American He-men. This attitude seems to be patterned after the equally bad philosophy, Big boys don't cry! Big boys Like daddy who don't need God, or Christ, or Worship, or the Church. What a revelation that is going to be - when someday they stand before the judgment seat of Christ to discover how weak, and feeble, and insufficient they really were without God and without Christ. Sorrowfully a Christian wife told me not so long ago that it broke her heart every week to be a Sunday widow. My husband is a fine man, she said, whom I love dearly, but when I worship I have to go alone.

Little boys want to grow up to be

What should this woman, and others like her, do under these circumstances? Should she allow bitterness and resentment to break out, affecting the whole family relationship? If not, what can be done? Though the problem is modern, it is not new. The situation was common enough already in the early church for the apostle Peter to give this advice to women whose husbands had not yet found their way to Christ: YOU MARRIED WOMEN SHOULD ADAPT YOURSELVES TO YOUR HUSBANDS, SO THAT EVEN IF THEY DO NOT OBEY THE WORD OF GOD THEY MAY BE WON TO GOD WITHOUT ANY WORD BEING SPOKEN, SIMPLY BY SEEING THE PURE AND REVERENT BEHAVIOR OF YOU, THEIR WIVES. YOUR BEAUTY SHOULD NOT BE DEPENDENT ON AN ELABORATE HAIRDO, OR ON THE WEARING OF JEWELRY OR FINE CLOTHES, BUT ON THE INNER PERSONALITY - THE UNFADING LOVELINESS OF A CALM AND GENTLE SPIRIT, A THING VERY PRECIOUS IN THE EYES OF GOD.

It is becoming more and more clear, even to secular writers on the subject, that marriage is more than a sexual union. It is not really a marriage unless there is spiritual intimacy between the partners to a marriage. Without this

intimacy, something is missing that blending of two personalities which makes for a real marriage. Dr. Gladys Kleinschmidt, director of a district health department in the state of Michigan, writes: WHAT HAPPENS WHEN TWO PEOPLE LIVE IN CLOSE ASSOCIATION WITH ONE ANOTHER? FIRST, NO ONE CAN LIVE WITH ANOTHER PERSON WITHOUT LIVING AT LEAST PARTLY ON THE OTHER'S TERMS. EVEN CASUAL FRIENDS SHARING AN APARTMENT TOGETHER MUST AGREE ON SUCH MATTERS AS EATING AND SLEEPING HABITS, HOUSE-KEEPING PRACTICES, AND WHAT TV PROGRAMS TO WATCH. UNLESS THEY ARE COMPLETELY UNSOCIAL, THEY WILL ALSO SHARE SOME OF THE SAME FRIENDS. BESIDES THIS, THEY WILL UNCONSCIOUSLY INFLUENCE EACH OTHER WITH RESPECT TO THEIR TASTES AND BELIEFS. Here, Dr. Kleinschmidt, observes, a real dilemma exists for every believer whose obedience to God and to Christ really means something to him or to her. If children are involved, there is the additional responsibility of bringing them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. She says: IT IS DIFFICULT ENOUGH TO BRING UP CHILDREN THESE DAYS, LET ALONE WHEN ONE PARENT...IS PULLING IN THE WRONG DIRECTION AND EXERTING AN UNDESIRABLE INFLUENCE... SOME MAY WORK OUT A FAIRLY ACCEPTABLE ARRANGEMENT. OTHERS MAY BE FACED WITH SEEMING MARTYRDOM.

I remember seeing a cartoon which showed a father and mother sleeping in on Sunday morning. A little boy stood at the bedroom door fully dressed and called out: Who's going to drive me to Sunday School? If there is humor in that cartoon, there is something mighty bitter-sweet about it. To that little boy it was not exactly funny. Many a little fellow, now grown to be a man, remembers such a scene all too well because it happened to him.

Directed and motivated by the Holy Spirit of God, the Christian wife and mother will do almost anything to keep her marriage from going sour and her home from breaking apart. If her husband happens to be a non-Christian, she will know how to handle the situation. She will adapt herself to her husband, so that even though he does not obey the Word of God he may be won to God someday without any word being spoken, simply by seeing the pure and reverent behavior of his Christian wife who never ceases to love him deeply in every possible way. This is the Christian way. Christian wives do not run out on their husbands. They obey God

by being good wives, not goody-goody, but good wives as their husbands want them to be. Every step of the way, however, they make their husbands aware of their faith in Christ by their own pure and reverent behavior. They practice their fai in such a way as to keep the respect as well as the love of their husbands. Thei children too observe the faith and love of their mother. THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT IS LOVE, JOY, PEACE, PATIENCE, KINDNESS, GOODNESS, FAITHFULNESS, GENTLENESS, SELF CONTROL. There is to be no nagging of the partner in marriage until he or she finally gives in - no needling for acceptance of the faith - no threatening to leave if he or she does not come around. Christians do not deliver ultimatums to the Holy Spirit of God by whose power they themselves have been won to faith in Christ. They know that the Spirit does His work through the testimony of the Word of God, even when it is given without any word being spoken, simply by the pure and reverent behavior of ~~the~~ Christian people.

Children sing to call them blessed

Christian people are a forgiven people. That is what makes them Christian. They know they are forgiven by faith in Jesus Christ. Christ died for them, as He did for the whole world. Forgiveness does something for a person - it transforms him from the inside out. What happens to a Christian inside you can see from the outside. So Peter wrote to Christian wives: YOUR BEAUTY SHOULD NOT BE DEPENDENT UPON AN ELABORATE HAIRDO, OR ON THE WEARING OF JEWELRY OR FINE CLOTHES, BUT ON THE INNER PERSONALITY - THE UNFADING LOVELINESS OF A CALM AND GENTLE SPIRIT A THING VERY PRECIOUS IN THE SIGHT OF GOD.

A Christian wife will try to be attractive to her husband. Not that attractiveness is everything, but appearance is important to a husband. Let no wife for get that!... It is said that American women spend 5 billion dollars every year in beauty solons and 2 billion dollars on cosmetics. 7 billion dollars ought to produce some results, shouldn't it? In some cases, it doesn't produce anything but a glossy look. Many a man, I can tell you, would prefer a wife with the light of faith in her eyes to one whose chief recommendation is that she never has a shine on her nose.

Wives - Mothers - how concerned are you to develop that inner beauty of spirit which comes from the Holy Spirit. The unfading loveliness of a Christian

personality takes some time and effort. It is not just a matter of powdering you nose. Christian personality has to bud and bloom - that process require cultivation. It calls for FAITH IN CHRIST lived out in the glaring light of every day when you fix breakfast, take the children to school, clean the house, and provide a home to which your husband can return with joy and anticipation after a day's work. That's real beauty - the unfading loveliness of a calm and gentle spirit, a thing very precious in the eyes of God.

You are My witnesses! said our Lord. Witnessing is not just something a Christian says. Often the best witness is not saying anything at all, but just being a Christian right up to the hilt, where it counts the most - right at home! When it comes to witnessing to Christ, there is no substitute for a Christian's attitude and action. Don't say to yourself, I am not going to church without my husband. I don't want to go alone, so I'll hold out until he is ready to go with me. That's no example. Why should your unbelieving spouse want to become a Christian and a member of the church, if it is easy for you to get along without going to church? Where does this leave your children?

Prove to your family that faith is important. It is important to you, and it is important to your family. Come to church yourself, whether anybody comes with you or not. Whenever you come, be sure to invite the rest of the family warmly and courteously to come along with you. Someday, when you least expect it, the invitation will be accepted. It won't be accepted if you act hurt, or go into tantrums. You will not get anywhere by pouting or sulking. The Spirit of God makes a person kindly, helpful, and persuasive almost without knowing it.

Be a living demonstration of the living Christ - a living demonstration of the Gospel of Christ. You are the best letter of recommendation that Christianity could ever have - if you are a genuine Christian living out your faith right at home. It may be that you have been specailly chosen to do for God what nobody else could do! - To be the instrument of His power, the channel of His glory, the bearer of a blessing from Him, who lives in your heart along with someone else in your home, who also lives in your heart. Amen.