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GOD'S GIFT TO US

I have often preached and written about the institution of marriage and the married life. Now I want to say a few things in its honor.

Marriage is one of the most necessary topics to be preached in the church. All Christians should know what marriage is.

Although marriage is the most common institution of human life, it is, in fact, the most honorable one. All other institutions exist and are sustained by marriage.

***The church is Christ's
holy people***

This is why the holy apostles write about marriage and diligently admonish us concerning marriage in their letters (e.g., in 1 Cor. 7; Eph. 5; Col. 3; 1 Peter 3). In Hebrews 13, for example, the Apostle Paul states:

Let marriage be held in honor by all, and the marriage bed be kept undefiled. Yet God will judge the fornicators and adulterers.

In this verse the apostle is not addressing all people everywhere. Instead, he is teaching baptized Christians what they are to think about marriage.

Christians should not think that marriage is insignificant. They should certainly not treat marriage in a superficial or shameful way. This is what the world does now and has always done.

But up until now, the same thing was happening within Christianity! Virginity was greatly praised as the ideal, while marriage was disparaged as utterly worthless! By doing such a thing, it was thought that somehow the world would be made chaste. Instead, the world has simply become filled with the disgrace of fornication.

Christians should not disparage marriage. Rather, they should learn to honor and praise marriage as a Christian and blessed institution of human life.

Christians should also keep the institution of marriage free from fornication and wickedness. This is what the apostle calls *holding marriage in honor and keeping the marriage bed undefiled*.

But what else is meant by these words? The first thing is that everyone should be convinced of the fact that God himself has ordained and established the institution of

marriage and all similar institutions. So understandably the most-desired skill of married life is this: To learn to think of marriage according to the honor given it by God.

What is that honor? That God himself established the institution of marriage and speaks of it in his Word.

But marriage appears to be a common every-day experience. Each Christian thinks he can figure it out for himself.

Who needs a teacher for marriage? What Christian does not know that the institution of marriage was established by God in the Garden of Eden? That marriage was confirmed by God outside of Eden? Moses tells us all about it in Genesis 1, 2 and 9!

***Who needs a
teacher for
marriage?***

I myself have read these passages frequently and have even memorized them. Still, this most-desired skill of married life I have not yet mastered. Even though I am an old doctor of theology, I must not be ashamed to learn about marriage daily.

The words of Scripture about marriage are learned quickly. There it states plainly that marriage is an institution established by God.

Yet the main thing here is this skill to which I am referring in my own marriage and all others: We should be certain, and not doubt that the institution of marriage has been created, ordained and established by God. In fact, we should consider this institution to be God's gift to mankind.

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1. What is the most common institution of human life?

2. Why do the apostles write about marriage?
3. What should Christians learn to do in view of marriage?
4. From what should the institution of marriage be kept free?
5. What honor does God give marriage?
6. In view of marriage, of what should the Christian be certain?