

“And He Loved Her”

Meditations on Marriage
from the
“Christian Shepherd”

—2013—

January 2013

Aquila and Priscilla

The record in God's precious Word of this dear couple presents us with wonderful principles which ought to characterize a Godly, happily married Christian couple. May we follow their example!

"[Paul] found a certain Jew named Aquila, born in Pontus, lately come from Italy, with his wife Priscilla..." (Acts 18:2). The various mentions of Aquila and Priscilla are in themselves quite instructive. Sometimes Aquila is mentioned first and others, Priscilla is mentioned first. Here we have the couple introduced and the events that caused them to leave Rome, as well as the 'craft' by which they worked to provide for their needs. In all of these particular things in a marriage, it is the husband who rightly takes the lead/headship in where a couple lives as well as taking the lead in finding employment. Yet, even in the everyday necessity of work, these two dear ones *were together* for we read that **they** were tentmakers by trade (see v. 3). Aquila led, but he and his wife were one in spirit in their actions.

"...Paul...tarried...a good while, and then took his leave of the brethren, and sailed thence into Syria, and with him Priscilla and Aquila..." (Acts 18:18). Notice that Priscilla is mentioned first—the love and natural household service of a godly woman are treasures beyond compare. Perhaps her appreciation for the Apostle Paul was even greater than her husband's.

"[Apollus] began to speak boldly in the synagogue: whom when Aquila and Priscilla had heard, they took him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly" (Acts 18:26). Again we find the precious **oneness** of a Christian marriage. When it came to a matter of expounding the Word of God, Aquila took the lead. But we find that **they** brought him into their home and there **they** expounded to him what he lacked in understanding, eloquent though he was.

"Greet Priscilla and Aquila my helpers in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 16:3). Priscilla is given **first place in serving**.

"...Aquila and Priscilla salute you much in the Lord, with the church that is in their house" (1 Cor. 16:19). Aquila is given **first place in the assembly**.

"Salute Prisca and Aquila, and the household of Onesiphorus" (2 Tim. 4:19). When her loving care for the beloved apostle is considered, dear Priscilla ('Prisca') is given the first place. Paul was about to be martyred, but he remembered and valued Priscilla's loving service for him in their home.

February 2013

Divided Affections

"And Lamech took unto him two wives: the name of the one was Adah, and the name of the other Zillah."

Here, a few generations after Cain left the presence of God and built a city, naming it after his son Enoch, we find that lust and divided affections initially characterized that city in

which God was rejected.

Lamech was a great, great, great grandson of Enoch, Cain's son. During those decades of life after Cain had built the city and named it Enoch, the race of men that came from Enoch strayed further and further from Jehovah. Finally the time came when man was no longer satisfied with God's order of marriage, and multiple marriages (polygamy) began to be practiced in those patriarchal times.

We would desire to simply draw an important principle from this condition—a condition which though God allowed, He most surely did not intend for man to have multiple wives ("Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his **wife**: and they shall be **one flesh**" Gen. 2:24).

Of course now, in the light of Christianity which has revealed the glorious truth of the Lord Jesus Christ and His bride and body, the church, what may have been allowed by God in allowing multiple wives and concubines to a man in Old Testament times (though not ordained by Him), is now clearly direct disobedience to God. For marriage today in the day of grace which has fully revealed Christian truth, clearly shows that a marriage relationship between a man and his wife is meant to be a beautiful picture of the relationship between the Lord Jesus Christ and His church (See especially Eph. 5).

We would, however, make a moral application of the principle of these divided affections as seen in Lamech, and how they can so tragically destroy a happy Christian marriage. We do not speak only of immorality, adultery or such things. There are a host of other things that can bring about divided heart affections between husband and wife—things that may not always in themselves be necessarily wrong or sinful. We are reminded of the solemn warning given in Proverbs 4:23: "**Keep thy heart more than anything that is guarded; for out of it are the issues of life**" (JND Translation).

We have lovely examples of families and marriages that were of one mind, recorded in Scripture. Dear Husbands and Wives, see that no longing after anything is allowed to cause a division of heart affection between you and your beloved spouse!

March 2013

Kindness

"...thou hast comforted me, ...thou hast spoken friendly [kindly] unto thine handmaid..." (Ruth 2:13).

Dear Ruth was not yet married, but we see the perfect ordering of our blessed God in her coming to know and eventually becoming the wife of Boaz. Though perhaps the emphasis is on the way in which dear Boaz treated Ruth, his actions present beautiful moral examples and principles for Christian husbands **and** wives—those who would desire to enjoy a fruitful, joyful and strong marriage union.

What a need in this day in which we live, for the spirit of kindness to be shown in each believer's life, in every circumstance of their life. It is most certainly a time when that which we read in Matthew 24:12 is rapidly becoming the prevailing

spirit of our day— “*And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold*”. It might seem to a young married couple, especially, that nothing would ever cause them to be unkind to their mate. Yet, we all have the old nature, the flesh and all Christian couples must realize that it can still act in any situation if not kept, by faith, in the place that God has put it at the cross—the place of death.

At times, perhaps, things don’t go well at work and a Christian husband comes home frustrated and ‘out of sorts’ because of enduring a bad ‘work day’. In such a situation, if the husband is not much before the Lord, he might speak or even do something ‘unkind’ to his beloved wife even though he would not have intended to display that spirit to her. And a dear wife might have a particularly difficult day with a sick or naughty child. Without realizing or planning such a thing, she too might display unkind actions or speak unkind words to her husband when he comes home from work.

We see such a thing with dear Jacob and his wife Rachel. Rachel was rightly troubled because she had as yet, not had any children. Her sister had born several children and dear Rachel, in her frustration, speaks unkindly to Jacob. “...*when Rachel saw that she bare Jacob no children, Rachel envied her sister; and said unto Jacob, Give me children, or else I die*” (Gen.30:1).

Sadly, Jacob did not return her unkind words with kind words. He became angry at his loved Rachel and spoke harshly: “*And Jacob’s anger was kindled against Rachel: and he said...*” (Gen.30:2). Neither Jacob or Rachel were seeking to speak kindly to their mate! May it be that dear husbands and wives today, seek daily to show and speak kindness to one another!

April 2013 Rejoicing

“...*rejoice with the wife of thy youth. Let her be as the loving hind and pleasant roe; let her breasts [a ‘moral’ symbol of love/affection] satisfy thee at all times; be thou ravished always with her love*” (Prov.5:18,19).

Christians find many things in Scripture presented to us in which we are to *rejoice*. The most important, of course, is that we might spend our lives *rejoicing* in our blessed Saviour God: “*Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice*” (Php.4:4). “*Rejoice evermore*” (1 Thess.5:16). “*Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory*” (1 Pet.1:8). There are many more precious portions in God’s Word that encourage His beloved children to rejoice in Himself—in our blessed Lord Jesus Christ and all that is ours *in Him*.

We also find other things which we ought to rejoice in regarding our God’s loving kindness and grace in so perfectly meeting our needs—and that in such divine abundance! “*He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?*” (Rom.8:32).

The account of the prodigal son recorded in Luke 15 tells us that upon his return to the father’s house, *they began to be*

merry—we do not read that this wonderful merriment ever stopped! Further, when the elder son came in from the field he heard the rejoicing for we read; “*Now his elder son was in the field: and as he came and drew nigh to the house, he heard musick and dancing*” (Luke 15:25).

Rejoicing in the love of one’s marriage partner for themselves!! What a vital and wonderful principle for marriages—a principle which will grant a firm, joyful and lasting marriage union all of its days—a union where each spouse rejoices and remains, we may say, totally infatuated with the love of their spouse for them.

When first married, beloved young Christian couples may not think that their love for each other will ever wane. It surely will not if the rejoicing in *first love* continues! The joy of a husband and wife in love with each other (symbolized by the *musick and dancing*) will grow each day when a rejoicing spirit marks the union. We have known many dear elderly Christian couples whose love for each other is best described as being *ravished* with each other. Spouses who daily rejoice in each other with a growing love will find that the *wine* (joy) gets better and better as time goes on!

May 2013

Ed. Note: This month we have combined our two series on *Family* and *Marriage* into one article. The meditations are *excerpts* from an address by our late beloved brother Gordon Hayhoe and deal directly with these two subjects. May the Lord be pleased to use these excerpts for much blessing to our readers.

Eph.6:1 “*Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. (2) Honour thy father and mother; (which is the first commandment with promise;)...(3) That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth. (4) And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.*”

Here we find that which God has told us regarding home life. We see a tremendous breakdown of home life because Christians don’t follow the instructions found in God’s Word. Such disobedience or ignorance of God’s Word for families and marriages bring such sorrow among the people of God for the homelife is broken down. A happy Christian home is a place where the Lord has His rightful place, where the husband is looked up to as the head of the home, and the wife looks to him in that way, and where the children are in submission and obedience, while the father carries out discipline for their good and blessing. Isn’t that sure to result in a happy, stable Christian home?

The enemy is actively at work to break this divine order down. Sadly, very often people that have been useful or could be useful Christians, because of an unhappy home life reflects in their fellowship and public testimony, as well as in the assembly.

It is my responsibility as a husband and father to maintain love in my home. If love breaks down, God looks to you dear husbands, as *responsible* to maintain love. Solomon said if a man gave all the substance of his house for love it would

be utterly contemned. He says, as it were, I gave up everything but it doesn't matter, I gained what I really wanted ...love. So it the husband's responsibility to maintain the atmosphere of love.

This can be done by continually seeking to do those things that create a response in the heart of our partner and children. You may say "but they don't always appreciate what I try to do". Well have you always appreciated what the Lord has done for you? I haven't. But he keeps on loving me and daily bestowing 10,000 tokens of his continual love in spite of what I am. Our measure is as Christ loved the church.

Eph.5:22,25,28,33: "*Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord...(25) Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it...(28) So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself...(33) Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband*".

Wives are to submit to their husbands, not because he is always what he should be, but she submits *as to the Lord*. Accepting the place God has given her she looks beyond her husband, so to speak, and says "well I can do it for the Lord". How sweet that is.

Then the husband gave himself (V25). No sacrifice was too great. How beautiful! The lord Jesus wanted our hearts so much that He gave Himself. Am I willing to give myself? There is no such thing as a 50-50 marriage. If you want a happy marriage it must be the husband 100% for his wife and the wife 100% for her husband. If you want to have that kind of happiness give 100% in love to each another.

At times there might be difficulties between husband and wife, but has the church responded to the claims of Christ as it should? Can we say that as the church we have always responded to His love and His claims. But has he changed—No he hasn't changed!

Some are concerned because one seems to get a little more than their partner. Any man however, who truly loves his wife wants her to have the best of everything that love can provide for her. He can say "if I have less that's all right". The Lord gave Himself. He wanted His wife to have the very best so He gave himself. What a pattern beautiful for the home! A wife's love in Scripture is always looked at as *responsive love*.

Then the wife is to *reverence* her husband. In Peter the husband gives *honor* to the wife. We have heard husbands and wives talking about one another to other people. Oh! Don't do that! Never speak of the faults of your partner to someone else. If you really love your partner you will have a respect for them and will want to speak well of them!

Sarah obeyed Abraham calling him "Lord". But she didn't say that to his face. I wouldn't want my wife to address me that way. Sarah said it to someone else—she acknowledged his authority. We see sad breakdown of home life, but here is the pattern that God has given. Let us reject the world's changing standards and go only by God's unchanging pattern.

June 2013

A couple married for 15 years began having difficulties. They desperately wanted their marriage to work. They decided that for one month they would drop a slip of paper in each other's "Fault" box. This would be the place to let each spouse know of daily irritations. The wife was diligent in her efforts leaving such notes as "you leave the jelly top off the jar", "no wet towels on the shower floor", "dirty socks aren't to be put in the hamper", and so on until the end of the month. After dinner one evening at the end of the month, husband and wife exchanged boxes. The husband reflected on what he had done wrong that had irritated his wife and apologized, promising to change. Then the wife opened her box and began reading. Each note was the same. The message on each slip of paper read, "I love you!"

We read in Exodus 21 one of the sweetest accounts of true love. A servant had faithfully served his master for six years. Jehovah's command was to let the servant go free from his servitude. What he brought when he began to serve he could take with him, but what the master gave him during his 6 years of service was to stay with the master—including his wife and his children. There was however, a beautiful option; "And if the servant shall plainly say, I love my master, my wife, and my children; I will not go out free: Then his master shall bring him unto the judges; he shall also bring him to the door, or unto the door post; and his master shall bore his ear through with an aul; and he shall serve him for ever" (Exo. 21:5,6).

We know, of course, that this is but one of the innumerable pictures of the beauties, glories and love of our blessed Lord Jesus Christ. But how many dear Christian husbands and wives can truly say before God, that in a feeble way at least, this has been the earnest desire and diligent effort of their lives. Those who had followed this precious Biblical account can no doubt attest to the joy and happiness they have found in their marriage. The servant in Exodus had such a heart love for his master, wife and children that he would endure the pain of having his hear bored through with an aul. Our blessed Lord Jesus perfect love to the Father, to His beloved bride the church, and to each of his children (saved souls) cause Him to endure the unspeakable pain of the cross. What dear husband and wife, have you endured in patient love for your spouse?

July 2013

"And He Loved her"

"And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh" (Gen.2:22-24).

From the very earliest pages of the Holy, living Word of God we find that He established the divine order for marriage as being *one man* and *one woman* who, when coming together as husband and wife, God Himself calls *one flesh*.

There are absolutely no other options, no other manner of human marriage. God's established marriage union, we see again, is *one man with one woman* who together become *one* in God's sight. We read this principle again in Gen. 5:1,2: "*This is the book of the generations of Adam. In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made he him; Male and female created he them; and blessed them, and called their name Adam, in the day when they were created.*"

When Noah was commanded by God to take two of every living creature (seven of 'clean creatures') on the ark we read this: "*Of every clean beast thou shalt take to thee by sevens, the male and his female: and of beasts that are not clean by two, the male and his female*" (Gen.7:2). Thus we see that even in the lower animal creation, God clearly established a male and female—and no other order or relationship even of animals.

Though there are few records of marriage abominations between same genders, etc., recorded in the Bible, the account of Sodom and Gomorrah is most solemn. We feel that God has placed it *very early* in His Word as a solemn warning. (see Gen.19).

The following verses in Romans 1 also show our blessed, Holy God's thoughts of the marriage relationship He established *only* for a man and a woman.

"*For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet*" (Rom.1:26,27).

August 2013

"*And there was a great famine in Samaria...an ass's head was sold for fourscore pieces of silver, and the fourth part of a cab of dove's dung for five pieces of silver*" (2 Kings 6:25).

"*But these, as natural brute beasts...shall utterly perish in their own corruption...Having eyes full of adultery*" (2 Peter 2:12,14).

The context of these verses both speak of very solemn, dark times. The *first* concerns a terrible famine in Israel (the ten tribes) that took place not long before they were carried into captivity. It was a time when the proper, godly worship and obedience to Jehovah had been given up in Samaria (the capitol and region of the ten tribes). The various kinds, such as Ahab, who ruled over the rebellious 10 tribes were often wicked men, idolators, who did not fear God.

The famine was a very real time of physical suffering and starvation. However, it also morally speaks of the great lack of true faith in God that satisfies in a world where all else ends in death.

The *second* verse in Peter speaks of a similar time, morally, but historically, long after the first. Peter speaks of the end of the Christian *day of grace*—that time which most obviously began after the cross of Christ, and was, we may say re-ignited very specially, during the time of Martin Luther (the *reformation*).

Serious Christians know that the *light* of Christianity—its blessings and principles—is fast fading from the world. There are many popular Christian religious leaders in the West who are not real believers, yet are successfully undermining the precious truths of God's Word, leading many astray. We are in a terrible moral famine—mankind is acting as *brute beasts without conscience* to satisfy their wicked lust.

Foolishness (*an ass's head*) and filthy immorality (*dove's dung*) have become highly sought after, highly valued, to bring supposed satisfaction to the human heart, and can be found in many forms.

This is happening while the only One who can really satisfy—our Lord Jesus Christ (and the Word of God)—is despised. What a terrible spiritual famine exists!

The effect of this famine in life-styles, culture, and all areas of the natural realm, can quickly harm Christian marriages if both husband and wife are not watchful. Dear ones, a strong, happy marriage requires watchfulness by both partners and a commitment also to reject the habits and ways of a morally famine stricken world.

September 2013

"*Let thy fountain be blessed: and rejoice with the wife of thy youth*" (Prov. 5:18).

"*Now his elder son was in the field: and as he came and drew nigh to the house, he heard musick and dancing*" (Luke 15:25).

"*Rejoice evermore*" (1 Thessalonians 5:16).

These precious verses present an infinite wealth of wonderful moral principles. Perhaps we may gain helpful benefit by thinking of them in their application to the marriage relationship.

Joy is very prominent in all these verses—joy regarding and provided by the *wife of thy youth*, joy (*musick and dancing*) regarding the return of the prodigal son, and joy regarding the work of our precious Saviour at Calvary and all the blessings that belong to us because of His love, obedience and divinely perfect faithfulness to His Father in all His ways. These are precious beyond our ability to describe, but what joy comes in meditating on them.

They also provide a wonderful and simple basis for a happy, exciting and joyful marriage relationship. Our blessed God and Father instituted marriage between one male and one female, and that God-given institution is meant to provide a right and wonderful natural joy to mankind. Sin, has of course, caused man to twist, defile and degrade this precious institution, but where man honors it as God intends it to be honored there is the promise of joy and delight for life.

Much emphasis is put on youth—the prime of life. And marriage (as God intends marriage to be) is one of the very most precious, exciting, and fulfilling times that a young man and a young woman will experience. But the joy that characterizes those first years of marriage is not intended by God to wane. Rather He desires that the *rejoicing* continue and grow—

and it will as the husband specially maintains the joy of the *wife of thy youth*.

A truly happy marriage ought to always exhibit *music and dancing*—that is, joy and delight in each other. There will be difficult times, but love, joy, delight between husband and wife ought never diminish.

It is not the mind of God the marital love fade. The *rejoicing* ought to continue on, growing, changing with the growing years, but growing stronger, happier in its various aspects and more solid. Our blessed God desires that this union be marked by rejoicing. Oh! May it be so with Christian husbands and wives!

October 2013

“And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you” (Eph 4:32).

It is easy to understand how important kindness is in a marriage union. By the same token, it may seem strange that married couples need to be reminded to be kind to each other. Yet sad to say, it seems that all too often spouses forget the importance of kindness, tenderheartedness and forgiveness, leading to tragic marital breakups.

Perhaps we can see the sad effects of these in two accounts in Scripture. The first—2 Sam.6:16 and 1 Chron.15:29—is of Michal, the wife of King David. In both passages we have the grievous words that Michal *“despised him [David] in her heart”*. How very solemn to read of this for earlier we read that *“... Michal Saul’s daughter loved David”* (1Sam.18:20).

What happened to cause such a shocking and sad turnaround in Michal’s heart towards her husband? Without going into detail we may say that as long as David was looked up to as a hero (having slain Goliath) by the Israelites, Michal loved him. She could bask in his glory and know that the people would look at her as being very important to be David’s wife. In a word, poor Michal was very *self-centered*.

When David had to flee from her father Saul’s attempts to kill him, Michal did not flee with him. She valued the *place* that was hers, rather than the *person* of David. Such self-centeredness takes many forms in marriages and when it does, one spouse begins to look at themselves as the most important. Kindness and a tender heart towards another puts another first. This is as it should be in marriage. If one partner begins to think of themselves first in the marriage union, the spirit of kindness will quickly begin to dull and sad difficulties will begin to mark the marriage.

There is another sad record of selfishness found in the account of Nabal and Abigail in 1 Sam.25. Perhaps this verse contains the reason for Nabal’s sad condition: *“...Abigail...was a woman of good understanding, and of a beautiful countenance: but the man [Nabal] was churlish and evil in his doings...”* (1Sam.25:3).

We may say that in Nabal, rather than being self-centered, Abigail’s husband was very *selfish* and *unkind*. What sorrow both

Michal and Nabal experienced! May dear Christian couples seek to walk in *God’s loving kindness* towards each other!

November 2013

“Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.” (Mtt.19:6).

The following account sends a powerful message which we trust will be specially noted by Christian parents. This is a solemn situation which Satan is very effectively using to destroy what our blessed God has ordained—the marriage union.

The story is told of a teacher who had a student whose parents had separated and were pursuing a divorce.

The student was a small boy, an only child. He had always been happy, cooperative, and an excellent student. The teacher’s desire was to show his father and mother that his recent failing grades and actions showed.

When the parents arrived, the teacher gave a detailed account their son’s behavior and schoolwork. Though the teacher was a Christian and longed to get the parents to see what their terrible decision was doing to the child they both love, the right words did seem to come to her.

Neither parent would look at the other nor acknowledge the other’s presence. It was then the teacher had an idea. She thought that if they saw one of his smudged, carelessly done papers the solemnity and wrongness of their actions might finally break through to them. Looking through his papers she found a crumpled, tear-stained sheet stuffed at the very back of his desk. A single sentence, scribbled over and over, covered both sides of the crumpled, tear stained paper.

Smoothing it out she handed it to Tommy’s mother who read it slowly. With a trembling hand but without a word she handed the paper to her husband. As he read it, his face began to frown, then soften. He studied the scrawled words for a long time. Finally, carefully folding the paper he reached for his wife’s outstretched hand. Wiping the tears from her eyes, she looked at him for the first time, took his hand and smiled. That dear family was, by the grace of God, reunited in that moment, using a sheet of yellow copy paper which was covered with the anguished, penciled outpouring of a dear little boy’s troubled heart. On the paper, written over and over were the words, “Dear Mommy...Dear Daddy...I love you...I love you...I love you”.

“[Love] Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things...[Love] never faileth...” (1 Cor.13:7,8).

“...see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently...” (1 Pet.1:22).

December 2013

Trustworthy

“Behold, here I am: witness against me before the Lord...whose ox have I taken? or whose ass have I taken? or whom have I defrauded? whom have I oppressed? or of whose hand have I received any bribe to blind mine eyes therewith? ...

And they said, Thou hast not defrauded us, nor oppressed us, neither hast thou taken ought of any man's hand (1 Sam.12:3,4).

It may seem strange to quote the above verses in our meditations on marriage. Yet, we believe there is a wonderful and vitally important principle found in this passage—one which if put to use in characterizing the marriage union will provide it with strength and joy.

Israel had displeased Jehovah by asking for a king when He was their rightful and only king. Samuel was well aware of this and it broke his heart, causing him, no doubt, much grief in his older years.

In 1 Samuel 12 the people were gathered together at Gilgal. There had been victory over Nahash and there was joy in Israel. But Samuel was to deliver a solemn rebuke to the people for their sin in asking for a king. It is striking to read how he begins this rebuke—and this provides the valuable principle that beloved couples need to strive for in their marriage union.

Dear Samuel's life was one of wholly following Jehovah in leading the people of God. His faithfulness was very apparent (some, sad to say, that his sons did not display in their lives before the people). He spoke God's Word, lived a holy life and his moral power with the people was evident. So much so, that even his presence at times caused the people to tremble. (*"And Samuel did that which the Lord spake, and came to Bethlehem. And the elders of the town trembled at his coming, and said, Comest thou peaceably?" -1Sa 16:4*).

Such a positive moral effect was not because dear Samuel never made any mistakes. Only our blessed Lord Jesus Christ, as Man, walked through this life in absolute perfection in all His ways before God. Yet still we may say, the 'tenor' of dear Samuel's life was one of a consistent, upright, godly walk and that gained and carried moral power with the people.

Husbands and wives are not perfect in their marital roles. Mistakes, unintentional actions, inconsistencies and more will mark each partner. However, how precious and wonderful when each spouse has lived a life that is open, honest, upright, tender and loving. Such a life produces increasing love and confidence in one another, as well as a strong, joyful marriage.