

## Thoughts on Ministry of Healing

### (29) The Builders of the Home (pages 356-362)

#### Summary:

The focus of this chapter is on marriage: how to choose a spouse, what to do when the romance wears off, and how to build a love that will last a lifetime.

#### Thoughts:

Christ specially honored marriage in two ways; by performing His first miracle at a marriage festival and making marriage a symbol of the union between Him and His redeemed ones (Eph 5). (356)

Marriage was designed to be a blessing to the whole human race, so it should be entered into with great care and thoughtful consideration. The first step in this consideration is to make the best possible choice, considering the potential partner's attitudes, character, physical and mental vigor, and relation to God. Where available, parents should be consulted. (356-359)

While love is not a feeling, but a principle (358), a marriage with no passion isn't much fun. So this statement needs to be combined with the thoughts on page 360, which indicate that feelings do matter. We need to study how to advance each others happiness (a feeling) and continue "the early attentions."

Having made a choice and entered into marriage, the next key step is dealing with the disillusionment that inevitably comes when the romance wears off and the two parties are seen in their true character. At this point it is critical that each party focuses on the excellencies discovered in each other rather than the defects and weaknesses. Love needs to be expressed over and over in kindness, sympathy and the self-sacrificing forgiveness of Christ. The kind of focus on each other that lovers give naturally during the romance stage, needs to be exercised in the long run by choice. (359-361)

But even the best of marriages can get stuck in a focus on each other. Ultimately, happiness is found when the couple reaches out to others in unselfish service. (362) Service is an important component of a sound marriage.

An important part of the world view that is implied in this chapter is that there is a lot of continuity between this world and the world to come. The present is not completely annihilated when Jesus comes. The bodily resurrection means that what we do with the body (and by extension our homes and relationships) matters for eternity. There is continuity. This world view explains the Adventist ability to combine social action in this world with an apocalyptic pessimism about where the world is going. What we do now matters for eternity.

A brief comment on 360, "Let neither husband nor wife harbor the thought that their union is a mistake or a disappointment." She does not say, "never entertain the thought" or "never allow the thought to enter your mind," but do not "harbor the thought." In the real world such thoughts may come to mind, but they are not to be "harbored" or dwelt on.

### **Quotable Quotes:**

“The family tie is the closest, the most tender and sacred, of any on earth. It was designed to be a blessing to mankind. And it is a blessing wherever the marriage covenant is entered into intelligently, in the fear of God, and with due consideration for its responsibilities.” (356-357)

“Those who are contemplating marriage should consider what will be the character and influence of the home they are founding. As they become parents, a sacred trust is committed to them. Upon them depends in a great measure the well-being of their children in this world, and their happiness in the world to come. To a great extent they determine both the physical and the moral stamp that the little ones receive. And upon the character of the home depends the condition of society; the weight of each family's influence will tell in the upward or the downward scale.” (357)

“The choice of a life companion should be such as best to secure physical, mental, and spiritual well-being for parents and for their children--such as will enable both parents and children to bless their fellow men and to honor their Creator.” (357-358)

“Love is a precious gift, which we receive from Jesus. Pure and holy affection is not a feeling, but a principle. Those who are actuated by true love are neither unreasonable nor blind.” (358)

“Let those who are contemplating marriage weigh every sentiment and watch every development of character in the one with whom they think to unite their life destiny. Let every step toward a marriage alliance be characterized by modesty, simplicity, sincerity, and an earnest purpose to please and honor God. Marriage affects the afterlife both in this world and in the world to come. A sincere Christian will make no plans that God cannot approve.” (359)

“Let a young woman accept as a life companion only one who possesses pure, manly traits of character, one who is diligent, aspiring, and honest, one who loves and fears God. Let a young man seek one to stand by his side who is fitted to bear her share of life's burdens, one whose influence will ennoble and refine him, and who will make him happy in her love.” (359)

“Love cannot long exist without expression. Let not the heart of one connected with you starve for the want of kindness and sympathy. Though difficulties, perplexities, and discouragements may arise, let neither husband nor wife harbor the thought that their union is a mistake or a disappointment. Determine to be all that it is possible to be to each other. Continue the early attentions.” (360)

“Make Christ first and last and best in everything. As your love for Him becomes deeper and stronger, your love for each other will be purified and strengthened. The spirit that Christ manifests toward us is the spirit that husband and wife are to manifest toward each other.” (361)

“Neither the husband nor the wife should attempt to exercise over the other an arbitrary control. Do not try to compel each other to yield to your wishes.” (361)

“But remember that happiness will not be found in shutting yourselves up to yourselves, satisfied to pour out all your affection upon each other. Seize upon every opportunity for contributing to the happiness of those around you. Remember that true joy can be found only in unselfish service.” (362)

### **Tweets of Healing:**

The family tie is the closest, the most tender and sacred, of any on earth. (356)

Those considering marriage should consider the character and influence of the home they will be founding. (357)

Upon the character of the home depends the condition of society. (357)  
It is only in Christ that a marriage alliance can safely be formed. (358)  
Love is a precious gift that we receive from Jesus. (358)  
Pure and holy affection is not a feeling, but a principle. (358)  
A sincere Christian will make no plans that God cannot approve. (359)  
Continue the early attentions after the marriage as well as before. (360)  
Let not the heart of one connected with you starve for the want of kindness and sympathy. (360)  
Never harbor the thought that your marriage is a mistake. (360)  
When it comes to marriage, let each give love rather than exact it. (361)  
Make Christ first and last and best in everything. (361)  
As your love for Christ becomes deeper and stronger, your love for each other will be purified and strengthened. (361)  
The spirit that Christ manifests toward us is the spirit that husband and wife are to manifest toward each other. (361)  
True joy can be found only in unselfish service. (362)