

S. N. May 5, 83 A.M.  
(Mother's Day)

"THE CHOICE OF A WIFE"

Judges 14:3

This is Christian Home Week, and also - a time when we remember and recall mothers. I found this interesting text to use, that we might try to stimulate and look some of the windows of motherhood. That we might develop some honest assessment of this.

Samson the giant, is here asking consent of his father and mother to marry one whom they thought unfit for him. He was wise in asking their counsel. But he was not wise in rejecting it.

He was captivated by her looks. And the big son wanted to marry a daughter of one of the hostile families. A deceitful creature. That afterwards made for him a world of trouble. Now in this text, when there are so many honest and beautiful maidens from your own country - (are) you so hard put for a life-time partner. That you propose to marry this foreign, unGodly girl. Is there such a lack of lilies in our own garden of Israel - that you must wear on your heart a Philistine thorn. (Do) you go and take a girl from a crabapple tree rather than a pomegranate. Will you go among these uncircumcised people and get a wife.

The thing was (excuseless) - he was making such a choice in such a land so celebrated with loveliness and moral work. Because he lived among the race of Deborah, Miriam, Esther, Ruth, and Mary. These (Godfearing) women. And there was beauty and gracefulness, in their lives.

Yet he is turning, as we would say in the modern, to a (worldly woman) who did not express any of the good things of womanhood. But here is a man who is reaching out to the world.

(Today) women have increased their opportunity, they have had more privileges and education, and they are better educated now I would say than the majority of men. And if they continue to advance, in mentality at the present ratio - (before) long, the majority of men will have difficulty in finding a wife who will have sufficient ignorance enough to make a marriage with him. But of course, this sort of dilution may not be adequate.

No man needs to marry (a fool) I think there is almost in every town, great city, and a lot of homes, and in the countryside, conscientious women - worshipful women, self-sacrificing women, holy women who will sit at the feet of Jesus. And there are Godly grandmothers like Lois, bending over their Bibles. And they have followed this from early girlhood. And there are a lot of women going out to address the world with good happy homes. And yet here is a man who is struck by a woman of moral decay. Samson in our text, is going to marry a fool. But some of you would say, well now, this is not too bad. It is a disaster. In the words of the text, 'is there never a woman among the daughters of thy brethren, or among all my people. That thou goest to take a wife of the uncircumcised Philistines.'

Now another thing by the way of introduction - marriage may (not be) for all. Some people have an idea that it is the destiny of every human being. Which may be a mistake. There are multitudes of people who will never marry.

And there are a multitude of people who are not fit to marry. As I understand it, there are (many) more women than there are men. In Great Britain and in America. But let us come and see about the choice here that he is going to make.

But I hope that we can lead somehow, some young person today - about finding a wife that will be honest.

In the early evening in one of our cities, the (T. V. program) from a local station was interrupted with an emergency bulletin. Someone had seen an adult scooping up two children, putting them in the trunk of the car. Speeding away. Check immediately, the bulletin said - to see if your children are at home. Look out, everybody for a car of this description. We advise the police - if you know any information about the kidnappers, please let us know.

Well the (whole) city went into a search. Parents, for any children that were not at home. And neighbors, for neighbors children. Many parents went that the thought of two precious children - being put and stuffed in the trunk of a car. The T. V. station was jammed with calls. Many parents called and said their children were safe.

(Later) on, relief arrived. About the 10 P. M. news, the announcement came - the apparent kidnappers were parents. Putting their own two children in the trunk of the car. So that they could drive into a drive-in movie without paying

for tickets for the two children. The car had been found in the drive-in movie with the entire family enjoying the entertainment. Including the two children - now untrunked, well, and happy.

Now the foregoing (true episode) is something about the society in which we are getting caught up in. That is why it is important to think with me this morning about this subject.

#### I. DIVINE DIRECTION

The majority of those who are listening to me this morning, will marry, or you will have the right to marry. But in your choice, I would say first of all, seek divine direction.

And (English poet) urged men to pray before they decided upon marriage. And people laughed at him. And some of them have lived to laugh out of the other side of their mouth.

The first thing, (without) divine direction - you are going to blunder. A lot of strong and wise men that have blundered at this point. Think about Samson here - and this woman of Timmath. She practically wrecked his life.

Witness Job whose wife had nothing to prescribe for his carbuncles but only a dose of profanity. Forget God, she said.

Think about Ananias a liar. Who perhaps might have been cured if he had

a wife who was not as great a liar as he himself, Sapphira.

Think of John Wesley, one of the best men that ever lived. United to one of the most outrageous and scandless of women. She sat in the city rode chapel making faces at him while he preached.

There have been thousands of others who have blundered, and really by unworthy wives, they have had Hell on earth. Like a March Northeaster. She has been a spend-thrift, and put him through schemes to get money enough to meet domestic expenditures. Plus, there have been those who have lived on drugs or alcohol. Unreasonable women get married, married perhaps to good men.

## Second, Pitfalls.

Not only blunders - but there are pitfalls in this on the surface. If you do not seek divine guidance. I think our society is full of (artificial things). That men do not have sense enough, and are deceived by.

And sometimes they do not know who they are marrying. (After the dressmaker gets through with them, and the juror gets through, and the hair adjuster gets through, and the dancing master gets finished - and the cosenetic art have completed their work. How on earth can an unsophisticated man decipher and make accurate judgement of who it is that he offers his heart and his hand.

Now the goods is not delivered. It is so different from the sample - that simply he thinks he has been swindled. He mistook Jezebel for Esther.

An Indian chief boasts of the scalps that he has taken - and there are in society today many women who boast of men's hearts that they have captured. With this, or that, or the other. That is so much countered among womenhood abroad. You cannot tell the genuine that which is the real coin.

Do you realize that you need divine guidance. May I remind you that mistake is possible. That this is an important affair - and that there are many pitfalls.

Third, unhappily yoked together. With that divine deduction - you're being put together will be pulled apart more galling than a yoke. Now the minister might bring you up again, read to you the marriage ceremony backwards, he might put you on the opposite of the altar. He might take the ring off your finger. He might tear the marriage leaf out of the family Bible. Or try to re-marry you. But it is better not to make a mistake than it is to attempt to correct it. How are you to avoid committing this blunder and falling into this pitfall. There is only one being in the universe who can tell you whom to chose and that is the Lord God of Paradise.

You remember that he made Eve for Adam. Both for each other. Adam had not a large group of women from whom to select his wife. But it is very fortunate that it was Eve or nothing for him.

There is in all the world someone who was made for you. As certainly, Eve was made for Adam. And all sorts of mistakes occur because Eve was made out of a rib from Adam's side. Nobody knows which of his 24 ribs was taken - but if you depend entirely upon yourself in the selection of a wife, there are 23 possibilities to one that you will select the wrong rib.

By the fate of <sup>Ahab</sup> whose wife <sup>Jezebel</sup> inducted him to steal, by the fate of McBeth whose wife pushed him into massacre. By the fate of Furgeson, the philosopher, whose wife came into the room while he was lecturing - upset this stuff - and he turned and said, I have the misfortune of being married to this woman. By the fate of John Milton, who was married to a woman after he was blind, and someone called her Rose. And the poet said, I am no judge of flowers - but it may be so. But I feel the thorns daily.

Or by the fate of an English man - whose wife was so determined to dance on his grave, that he willed that his body be buried in the sea.

What I am employing you to be careful and cautious about is when you enter this state - you can have two Heavens. One here on earth. And one forever. Or you can have a Hell, and perhaps Heaven in the future.

Pliny, whose wife - when her husband was pleading in court, and had messengers coming and going. To inform her, what impression he was making.

Grotius, whose wife delivered him from prison - under the pretense of having

books carried out. Less they be injurious to her health. She, sending out her husband unobserved in one of the bookcases.

You need to pray to God Almighty, morning, noon, and night. At the right time, at the right way, he will send you a good loving, sympathetic wife, or she if she is not sent to you - you may be sent to her.

## II. THINGS TO AVOID

Match-makers. I want to warn you - there are some celebrated match-makers in every community. Depending upon your own judgement.

There are some (brokers) of matrimony. They are always planning to put together some individual. How can any human being who knows neither of the two parties as God knows them. And who is ignorant of the future - give such direction as you require at such a crisis.

I can only say one thing - if you take the advice of an earthly match-maker instead of divine guidance, you are going to be like Solomon has expressed it in his own experience.

One day in his palace, with his great wide rooms, wide doors, and wide halls. It was too small for him. And the (loud tongue of a woman) - belaboring him about some of his neglects - retreated to the house top to get relief. And there he saw



a poor old man in the corner of the roof with a mattress for his only furniture. And the open sky, the only covering. And Solomon cries out - it is better to dwell in the corner of the house top than with a bawling woman in a wide house.

Now another thing about this match-maker business, Solomon one day during the rainy season leaking through the roof of the palace - began to drop in a pail. Or a pan set there to catch it. And at one side of him, all day long the water went drop, drop, drop. While on the other side, a female companion quarreled about this, and quarreled about that. And drop, drop as the water - he ceased his pen and he wrote - a continual dropping on a very rainy day, and a contentious woman are alike. If Solomon had been a prayerful man at the beginning of his life, as he was at the close - how much more domestic peace he would have had - and would have avoided these things.

But prayer about this will amount to nothing unless you pray soon enough. You cannot wait until you are fastened to some woman like a magnet, and then you answer your own prayers. And it would be a mistake.

And it will not be the voice of God leading you.

Second, avoid scoffers. That is avoid any woman who scoffs at the Christian religion. Christianity is what has given women freedom. Some women, who forget themselves, and they forget their God. And they scoff at the most sacred things of the soul. A woman who is not a Christian, you should avoid. If after all, what Christ has done for woman - she will be an unworthy companion in this life if

she scoffs at religion.

### III. TWO GREAT QUALITIES

Now, we have been speaking to you about the choice of a wife, and how that Samson was searching - and what you want is not a butterfly in the sunshine. Or a painted doll, or a gossipping gad-a-about. You want more than that when you strike out on the pathway of life. When your fortune fails you, you will want someone to talk to you.

Now as far as we can take time today to say to you what the essentials ought to be - I am going to very briefly state them. You need sincerity, earnestness. I think this is the foundation of all worthy women.

And I hope that you will get that - and get it all. If you fail to get that, then you are going to miss everything worthwhile.

Beauty has some aspects about it - but don't make the mistake that Samson made in the text. Of letting his eye settle the question. In which he should have looked for cool judgement. And for divine direction, in this all important thing.

Now, he who has no reason for his lively choice except a pretty face - is like a man buying a house. Because there are some flowers growing in the front yard. Beauty is a talent. Upon a woman's face.

At this point of preparing this sermon, my telephone rang. And a young lady on the other end said - "Is this the man of the house." And I asked her who she really wanted to talk too. Well, she said - I wanted to talk to the man in charge, of the house. Well, I said, "this is the church. And God is in charge - if you'd like to talk to him." And very politely she said, "No, that will be alright. Thank you very much."

*You Need to Talk to God About His Choice -  
Divine Guidance -*

What I am talking to you about now is that beauty is a human countenance - time will drive his chariot wheels across the brightest face, and leave the ruts and the gullies. But there is an eternal beauty on the face of some women, that they may be homey. And yet their features are glorious.

For example, there might be some circumstances that would come - and you would discover that this wife, this mother, is certainly a queen. Here is a man who returns home one evening - he says, I am ruined, I am disgraced, forever. I cannot - whether I live or die. He begins to tell his story. The furniture must go, the house must go. All that we have worked for seems to be gone. After he ceases talking - his wife has heard all of this in silence. And she says, is that all. Well, you had nothing when I married you. And we have only come back to where we started. If you think that my happiness, and that of the children, depend upon these things - you do not know me. Though we have lived together for 30 years. God is not dead - the National Bank of Heaven, has not suspended payment. And if you don't mind, I don't care a cent. What little we need of food and clothing - the rest of our lives we can get. I don't purpose to sit down here and groan. And then she says, "Mary, hand me the darning needle. I declare, I have forgotten to set the rising for those cakes." And while she is busy, the man hears her humming. Newton's old hymn - "Tomorrow".

It can bring with it nothing,  
But he will bear us through,  
Who gives the lilies clothing,  
Will he clothe his people too.

Beneath the spreading Heavens  
No creature but is fed  
And he who feeds the ravens  
Will give his children bread.

Though vine nor fig tree either  
Their wanted fruit should bear  
Though all the fields should wither  
Nor flocks, nor herds be there.

Yet God the same abiding  
Shall tune my voice  
For while in Him confiding  
I cannot but rejoice.

The husband looks up in amazement and he says - well, well. You are the greatest woman I ever saw. I thought you would faint dead away when I told you. And as he looks at her - in all of her glory, he knows that he has something that is not just a modern fashionplate. But someone who is sincere. And somebody who is earnest.

The matter of sincerity and earnestness are things that mean much in the choice of a wife. And if you chose the right one - it will be like Sam Jones - the Methodist Evangelist said. When he arrived in Heaven and the angels came out to congratulate him for getting there - he was going to say to them - hunt up my precious Mother. Who took me by the hand and walked with me until I was 8 years old. And then she said to me when she died, son, I cannot come back to you. But you can come to me. If your Mother has gone on to Glory - you can't bring her back. But if you live for her Christ, someday you will see her again in the land of the fadeless day. The land where we never grow old. Where sorrow never comes. And where God wipes away the tears from our eyes.

*Presbyterian Tabernacle*  
There is another true story of a man who selected the plainest wife - and she was a queen of beauty in more ways than one. She had done the work of life. She has reared her children for God in Heaven. And though some of them may be a little wild - they will yet come back, for God has promised. She is dying and her husband stands by. They think over all the years of their companionship, the weddings, the burials, the ups and downs, the successes and the failures. They talk over the goodness of God and the faithfulness, to children's children. She has no fear about going. The Lord has sustained her so many years - that she would not bear to distrust Him now. The lips of both of them say "Goodbye" and encourage each other about an early meeting in a better world. The breath is feeble and soon stops. And you are sure of it - she is gone. As one of the (neighbors) takes the old man by the arm gently, and says come - you better go to the next room and rest. He says, wait a moment - I must take one more look at that face and those hands. "Beautiful, beautiful!"

I hope in the choice of a wife, my friends, that that will be something of your experience through life. I hope that you will not call it death - but sunset -

just entering upon the crystal sea. It would be just like being overpowered by the Hallelujah Chorus.

Talmadge said, that is the way my father stood at 82. And my mother departed at 79.

And so will your choice made that way. Is there never a women among the daughters of thy brethren, what among all my people. That thou goest to take a wife of the uncircumcised.

Let us thank God for our mothers. Let us thank God for the choices. Let us thank God for their faith. And most of all, let us live our lives for our Mother's Saviour and our Saviour.

You owe a great debt today to the goodness of God and to the guidance of God.

May Jenkins said, somewhere I have seen a tombstone with the word "Mother". Carved upon it. And above it a hand pointing upward. And that is just what a Godly mother is - a Mother pointing her children to God in the Heavens. The wrong kind of mother pointed them in the other direction. Are you the right kind?