

## WHAT DO YOU DO WHEN YOU GET MARRIED?

Last week, on the campaign trail for his wife in South Carolina, on a day filled with sparring with reporters, former president Bill Clinton was asked the most imposing (and ironic) question of the day, not by a seasoned reporter, but by a 5-year old. McKenna Chance asked Clinton, "What do you do when you get married?" In light of the many known "indiscretions" by Clinton, the room erupted with laughter—a sad commentary within itself. However, the question is indeed most profound...and vitally important. *When you get married...you make a vow to God, your spouse, yourself and all others.*

You pledge your life to your mate. You vow that you will have no other in an intimate way. You pledge that you will keep yourself for your mate alone, providing his/her needs in every avenue. You promise your allegiance to one, and only one, as long as you both shall live. (cf. Matthew 19:3-9; Romans 7:1-3). *When you get married...you declare a separation from mother and father (Genesis 2:24; Eph. 5:31).*

This is not to say, of course, that you have no more association with them, stop loving them, stop asking for occasional advice from them or refuse to care for them in their old age. It does say, however, that a new home has been formed and that it must survive on its own. The confidences of the new home should remain as such. Father and mother have no authority over the home of son or daughter.

The authority of the home is first Christ's (I Corinthians 11:3), and then the husband's (Ephesians 5:23). If one is not prepared to leave the home of mom and dad, he/she is not yet ready to form his/her own. *When you get married...you promise to think of another more than of yourself.* Paul's message in Ephesians 5 emphasizes this very thought. Wives are to submit to and reverence their husbands (Ephesians 5:22, 33).

Husbands are to love, sacrifice for and be willing to lay down their loves for their wives (Ephesians 5:25, 28, 33). Selfishness is at the center of most marital problems. *When you get married...you pledge a life of love, devotion, care and concern for a lifetime, regardless of the troubles that come your way.* Most wedding vows include the traditional "for better, for worse; for richer, for poorer; in sickness and in health." However, for far too many marriages that is all these are—tradition! Regardless of whether these or similar words are in one's wedding vows, the pledge made by these is inherent within marriage itself.

Trials and troubles will come our way in life (cf. Job 14:1). ...Married? But, within the marriage relationship these troubles must be gotten through, lived with or overcome. With but one exception (Matthew 19:9), marriage is for life...including all the troubles it may bring. These and a host of other things are what you do "when you get married."