

Devotional Thoughts :: Keep Marriage Vows! -gothard

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Keep Marriage Vows!

by Bill Gothard

For many years I tried to solve a mystery: Why did a Godly man fail to achieve the level of success that I knew he was capable of? Significant opportunities presented themselves to him, but any resulting financial gains always seemed to be diminished by circumstances. No one could say that he did not try. It was as if a cloud of defeat followed him in whatever he did. Then one day I discovered the reason why.

“If a man vow a vow unto the LORD, or swear an oath to bind his soul with a bond; he shall not break his word, he shall do according to all that proceedeth out of his mouth” (Numbers 30:2).

Thirty-five years earlier this man had made a vow to God before many witnesses that he would be faithful to his wife, “For better or for worse, for richer or for poorer, in sickness and in health, till death do us part.” However, he had failed to keep this vow and had divorced his wife. Now he was married to another woman, and during all of this time he and his second wife had kept his first marriage a secret.

The seriousness of a vow is emphasized in the following passage: “When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it; for he hath no pleasure in fools: pay that which thou hast vowed. Better is it that thou shouldest not vow, than that thou shouldest vow and not pay. Suffer not thy mouth to cause thy flesh to sin; neither say thou before the angel, that it was an error: wherefore should God be angry at thy voice, and destroy the work of thine hands?” (Ecclesiastes 5:4–6).

There are significant consequences that come to those who sin by breaking their marriage vows. When the men of Israel divorced their wives and married foreign wives, God made it clear that He would not accept their sacrifices. Why? “Because the LORD hath been witness between thee and the wife of thy youth, against whom thou hast dealt treacherously: yet is she thy companion, and the wife of thy covenant. And did not he make one? ... He hateth putting away ...” (Malachi 2:14–16).

Marriage is not a contract between two people. Rather, it is a covenant between two people and a holy God.

The couple with the secret past learned the truth of Proverbs 28:13: “He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy.” Seeking the Lord’s mercy, the husband confessed his sin of breaking his marriage vow. There were continued consequences from the divorce, but God’s blessing for his repentant spirit became obvious.

God holds a man to the words of his mouth. “For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned” (Matthew 12:37). If we have failed to keep a vow, let’s confess it to God as sin so that we can experience His forgiveness and blessing and return to keeping our vows.

For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh ... What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder” (Matthew 19:5–6).

Re: Keep Marriage Vows! -gothard - posted by consecrateme, on: 2007/12/11 12:28

Hi,

I was just thinking about this today.

But i have a sincere question.

What if the other person does not keep the marriage vows and forsakes the family and on top of that commits adultery? what happens then? (The person that broke the covenant of marriage was and is not born again)

i am not trying to debate..just sincerely asking..

c