

# Church of God, The Eternal

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## God's Laws Regarding the Sexes

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Dear Brethren:

As we draw closer to the time of the return of Jesus Christ, the children of God must be ever vigilant to resist the influences of this world under the sway of our archenemy, Satan the Devil. We all know God warns that Satan is very deceptive and often appears as an angel of light (2 Corinthians 11:14). Yet how many of us have truly recognized those deceptive forces playing upon our minds and seeking an opening to draw us away from God? Many of us have a tendency to be too smug in assuming we can always spot Satan a mile away, when in fact, he may already be in our very own backyard—spiritually.

There may be no greater opportunity to be caught off-guard than in those areas relating to male/female relationships. God gave very specific instructions to men and to women about proper conduct one toward another. The relationship of husbands and wives, parents and children, brothers and sisters, and brethren and ministry, all include symbols confirming God's plan for man's salvation in the antitype, and all include rules concerning the interaction of the two sexes. The husband was made the head of the wife for reason. Daughters were made subject to a father's authority for reason. The Church was also made subject to rules specifying proper roles for men and women for reason. And every one of these venues of life is under constant attack by that despicable being who seeks to destroy you and me and prevent us from sharing in God's eternal glory.

With that in mind, are you sure you are recognizing those insidious threats day-by-day? Or are you inadvertently absorbing the deceptive orientation of this world and allowing your behavior to become tainted by deadly influences?

## God's Commands in Synopsis

God made man first and then created woman afterwards, and He did so for a reason:

And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it. . . . And the LORD God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him. . . . And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; 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 (Genesis 2:15, 18, 20–24).

So God created woman to fulfill a critical role, and that role was to be a helper to man, to whom God gave responsibility over this earth. This same principle was later confirmed by Jesus Christ to the New Testament Church:

Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing (Ephesians 5:22–24).

Yet how popular is this concept in the world today? To even suggest that males have God-ordained preeminence over females today—and that they have had such from the beginning—will make many people furious and indignant. Is that how it strikes you as well? If so, why do you feel that way? Who is it that has indoctrinated you to believe men and women should be "equals" in all things? Since that is the overwhelming philosophy of the deceived elitists of this world—who are inspired every bit by their god, Satan—how comfortable are you—really—in joining them in their "sexual revolution"? If the introduction of this *Monthly Letter* has already fostered hostile feelings within you, concluding the writer is a patriarchal sexist and disrespectful to women, ask yourself from whence come those feelings. Is it really the Holy Spirit within you that recoils at this doctrine? It is God who made these rules, not man, if you believe the Bible is truly His inspired Word.

This same God also commanded children to be under the authority of parents. The Apostle Paul based the following statement upon the fifth commandment, found in Exodus 20:12:

Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honour thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise; That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth (Ephesians 6:1–3).

While this command applies to both minor male and female children, what most today do not realize is that unmarried daughters continue to be under the authority of fathers until they are married, no matter how old they become. Notice the difference in binding authority God made between the vows of young men and young women:

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. If a woman also vow a vow unto the LORD, and bind herself by a bond, being in her father's house in her youth; And her father hear her vow, and her bond wherewith she hath bound her soul, and her father shall hold his peace at her: then all her vows shall stand, and every bond wherewith she hath bound her soul shall stand. But if her father disallow her in the day that he heareth; not any of her vows, or of her bonds wherewith she hath bound her soul, shall stand: and the LORD shall forgive her, because her father disallowed her. And if she had at all an husband, when she vowed, or uttered ought out of her lips, wherewith she bound her soul; And her husband heard it, and held his peace at her in the day that he heard it: then her vows shall stand, and her bonds wherewith she bound her soul shall stand. But if her husband disallowed her on the day that he heard it; then he shall make her vow which she vowed, and that which she uttered with her lips, wherewith she bound her soul, of none effect: and the LORD shall forgive her (Numbers 30:2–8).

God gave a husband and father the authority to either confirm or annul both the vows of his wife and his unmarried daughter. This includes approving the man his daughter will marry:

And if a man entice a maid that is not betrothed, and lie with her, he shall surely endow her to be his wife. If her father utterly refuse to give her unto him, he shall pay money according to the dowry of virgins (Exodus 22:16–17).

This "dowry of virgins" was the earnest payment which was part of every binding contract. This dowry was paid by Abraham's servant to Rebekah's family (her father, Bethuel, and her elder brother, Laban, who had the birthright) to confirm the contract of her marriage to Isaac:

Then Laban and Bethuel answered and said, The thing proceedeth from the LORD: we cannot speak unto thee bad or good. Behold, Rebekah is before thee, take her, and go, and let her be thy master's son's wife, as the LORD hath spoken. And it came to pass, that, when Abraham's servant heard their words, he worshipped the LORD, bowing himself to the earth. And the servant brought forth jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment, and gave them to Rebekah: he gave also to her brother and to her mother precious things (Genesis 24:50–53).

A daughter was not forced by God to marry against her will. Notice that Rebekah had the option to refuse the marriage:

And they said, We will call the damsel, and inquire at her mouth. And they called Rebekah, and said unto her, Wilt thou go with this man? And she said, I will go (Genesis 24:57–58).

So there is no basis for forcing young women to marry against their will. But even if it is her personal will to marry, her own vow will never be binding if the father does not give his consent. This is exactly from where our tradition of the father giving away the bride at the wedding ceremony was derived. It was never intended to be just a courtesy as it is considered today. It is a reflection of the original command of God that a daughter's marriage vow will never be binding without the consent of her father. How different are the commands of God from the "enlightened" practices of men in Satan's society.

### **Man's Authority—a Serious Responsibility**

God did not give man authority over woman for the purpose of abuse or sadistic self-gratification. This is usually the assumption made when anyone begins to confirm God's laws concerning men and women. The knee-jerk accusation follows that we—the men—are just seeking justification to dominate women and take advantage of them, using God as an excuse for selfish ends. But God made it very clear that husbands and fathers have a serious responsibility to take care of those wives and children:

Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it . . . So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church (Ephesians 5:25, 28–29).

Is there any doubt what it means for Christ to be head of the Church? Do we not all acknowledge this means He carries real authority over that Church? This then is the very same authority husbands wield within their own families. Yet those men are duty-bound by God to use that authority as Christ uses His. Jesus Christ never uses His authority to dominate, abuse, take advantage, or demean the Church. Any man who behaves that way toward his wife is committing a serious sin, and putting himself in danger of the Lake of Fire. That is how serious it is. God gave all delegated authority to be used as a tool for a godly purpose. When human beings abuse any authority, there is a serious price to be paid, as we soon shall see.

### **Blessings of God's Way**

The Creator God, who made men and women, loves both equally and wants all—male and female—to have rich and rewarding lives. The very distinction between the sexes is only temporary anyway. Once born into the Family of God, there will be no men or women:

For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, *there is neither male nor female*: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus (Galatians 3:26–28) [emphasis mine].

But they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, *neither marry, nor are given in marriage*: Neither can they die any more: for they are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection (Luke 20:35–36) [emphasis mine].

Those angels Christ referenced—which we will be "like"—do not have a male or female sex. And neither will the children of God once born into that great eternal Family. But even in this temporary physical life, God gave His laws to be a blessing—to lead to happiness, success, and rich reward for all. It is only when human beings rebel against this perfect law that they suffer.

It is Satan's inspiration that has convinced so many today to believe that the "patriarchal tradition" is an evil thing, concocted by men to enslave women for millennia. So in casting off the "constraints" of this "primitive" and "discriminatory" tradition, they think they are being liberated to enjoy more rich and rewarding lives. This philosophy is strongly reflected in occult circles, where Mother Earth is worshipped, women have preeminence, and men are considered a necessary evil for procreation. Yet God promised:

Behold, I set before you this day a blessing and a curse; A blessing, if ye obey the commandments of the LORD your God, which I command you this day: And a curse, if ye will not obey the commandments of the LORD your God, but turn aside out of the way which I command you this day, to go after other gods, which ye have not known (Deuteronomy 11:26–28).

God intended women to be just as blessed as men in obeying His commandments. The living God who made both sexes is the One who knows what will bring happiness, and what will bring sorrow and misery. And if you believe He is truly a God of love, mercy, and compassion, then you cannot believe that any of His laws concerning proper roles for men and women were given to abuse or subjugate women with less fulfilling lives than men.

### **God's Intention for Families**

What does God really want human beings to experience in this life?

A Song of degrees. Blessed is every one that feareth the LORD; that walketh in his ways. For thou shalt eat the labour of thine hands: happy shalt thou be, and it shall be well with thee. Thy wife shall be as a fruitful vine by the sides of thine house: thy children like olive plants round about thy table. Behold, that thus shall the man be blessed that feareth the LORD. The LORD shall bless thee out of Zion: and thou shalt see the good of Jerusalem all the days of thy life. Yea, thou shalt see thy children's children, and peace upon Israel (Psalm 128).

The key to receiving those blessings is for both men and women to fulfill their proper roles as God designed it. What then is the role God ordained for wives and mothers?

But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine . . . The aged women likewise, that they be in behaviour as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things; That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, To be discreet, chaste, *keepers at home*, good, *obedient to their own husbands*, that *the word of God be not blasphemed* (Titus 2:1, 3–5) [emphasis mine].

Being keepers at home and obedient to husbands is not just a suggestion from God. It is an absolute requirement to avoid blaspheming God's Word. That is very serious indeed. Does this mean God intended women to have no opportunity to take on important responsibilities outside the home? Absolutely not. Notice God's description of the ideal wife and mother:

Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies. The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her, so that he shall have no need of spoil. She will do him good and not evil all the days of her life. She seeketh wool, and flax, and worketh willingly with her hands. She is like the merchants' ships; she bringeth her food from afar. She riseth also while it is yet night, and giveth meat to her household, and a portion to her maidens. She considereth a field, and buyeth it: with the fruit of her hands she planteth a vineyard. She girdeth her loins with strength, and strengtheneth her arms. She perceiveth that her merchandise is good: her candle goeth not out by night. She layeth her hands to the spindle, and her hands hold the distaff. She stretcheth out her hand to the poor; yea, she reacheth forth her hands to the needy. She is not afraid of the snow for her household: for all her household are clothed with scarlet. She maketh herself coverings of tapestry; her clothing is silk and purple. Her husband is known in the gates, when he sitteth among the elders of the land. She maketh fine linen, and selleth it; and delivereth girdles unto the merchant. Strength and honour are her clothing; and she shall rejoice in time to come. She openeth her mouth with wisdom; and in her tongue is the law of kindness. She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness. Her children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her. Many daughters have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all (Proverbs 31:10–29).

This is not the description of a wife who is abused and "kept down" by her husband. She uses her God-given talents and wisdom to manage the estate of her family under the authority of her husband, having great latitude to conduct business on his behalf. Because she is working within the boundaries of God's law, she has great opportunity to exercise her skills in many areas of life, and she reaps the rewards of praise, affection, and the reputation of a very wise woman.

### **Prophecy for the End Times**

But our Babylonian society under Satan's sway tells women they cannot really be fulfilled unless they have full "equality" with men: casting off all patriarchal shackles, pursuing careers outside the home, and demanding equal rights to make decisions for the family. Babylon tells us there is no real distinction between men and women at all, and it is discriminatory to believe men and women have defined roles within which they should fit. This same diabolical system is likewise teaching that children should have more of a say in their own lives, and parents have no rights of authority over them. Is it any wonder we are witnessing last-day prophecies come to pass before our very eyes?

Say ye to the righteous, that it shall be well with him: for they shall eat the fruit of their doings. Woe unto the wicked! it shall be ill with him: for the reward of his hands shall be given him. As for my people, children are their oppressors, and women rule over them. O my people, they which lead thee cause thee to err, and destroy the way of thy paths (Isaiah 3:10–12).

So God says our human leaders today—elitists who are supposedly moving our societies out of the dark ages and into the enlightenment of true wisdom—are actually causing us to err! They scoff at anyone who uses a Bible standard to define the proper roles of men, women, and children. With that error is great heartache and sorrow, and the continuation of the destruction of the fabric of society—the family unit.

### **Babylon's Effect on the Church**

What is the real point of rehearsing these fundamental principles that most of you accept as part of the faith once delivered? Many will consider it merely a reinforcement of doctrine we all claim to support. But beware the subtleties of Babylon that may be affecting you without your being aware.

The truth is, even within God's true church, there are too few experiencing the rich and rewarding lives God really intended. Within this very remnant are the manifestations of many broken homes—families shattered and members suffering under curses from violation of cardinal spiritual principles. In many cases it is a fulfillment of Christ's very words:

Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household (Matthew 10:34–36).

How did Christ send a sword to divide families? By calling some members into the true church and not others. How many have been left alone because the church became a contentious issue for an unconverted mate? Even if that mate has chosen to stay, how many families are struggling because husband and wife do not both think according to God's laws? How many children are being torn between Mom and Dad, receiving mixed signals from parents who do not share the same philosophy? These are issues that were forced upon many by virtue of their calling, and since it has not been God's will to call the other mate, it is a trial and a burden we cannot solve on our own. For those who were called after being married, you have had no choice. But for those who married outside the church after

knowing better, you are paying the price for your rebellion, and not only you, but your children are suffering as well.

But there are many problems within families in the church that have nothing to do with unconverted mates. Even among those families where both husband and wife are converted, how many families are truly experiencing the abundant life God intended? And if your family is one of those that is not really happy, why not? In many cases it is because one, two, or many of these cardinal principles regarding the proper relationship of men and women are being violated. In those families with unconverted members, there may be no way to solve it (although there is much you can do to make it better), but for the rest of us, we have no excuses.

### **Sin Results in Curses**

Women are not nearly as accountable as men are for the curses we bear today. Why is this so? Because if men were fulfilling their God-ordained roles as proper husbands and fathers, many fewer women would be inclined to rebel against that authority. God always holds one with authority more accountable, even as He castigates the pastors and teachers far more for the apostasy of the church (Jeremiah 23). Do not think this means the laymembers are exonerated for following them into error. They are not. They both suffer God's wrath for rebellion, but the leaders who destroy and scatter God's flock are singled out for special condemnation.

So, too, are men who fail to fulfill their proper roles as husbands and fathers. How many wives and children have been subjected to the selfish dictates of patriarchs who have never manifested the wisdom of Christ's Spirit in the confines of their own homes? God said:

Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them. . . . Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged (Colossians 3:19, 21).

Yet men—with that selfish carnal nature—have always perverted their God-given offices and abused the authority that was intended for the edification of families. And once children become victims of a father's mismanagement, they seem to repeat those very same mistakes with their own families:

. . . for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me (Exodus 20:5).

What mean ye, that ye use this proverb concerning the land of Israel, saying, The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge? (Ezekiel 18:2).

Yes, human families perpetuate sins generation after generation. And much of it is due to poor leadership in the home. How can young men learn to properly love and care for their own wives and children if they have not been taught by the example of wise fathers?

But those men who have been called out of the world into God's church have the opportunity finally to receive that missing training and stop the cycle of curses. It requires the determination to break bad habits of youth, but with the power of God's Holy Spirit that absolutely should be possible. Therefore, converted husbands and fathers in God's church are being held accountable for learning to lead with the benevolence and wisdom of Jesus Christ. And failing to learn to be living sacrifices for those families puts them in danger of eternal damnation.

He that troubleth his own house shall inherit the wind: and the fool shall be servant to the wise of heart (Proverbs 11:29).

But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel (1 Timothy 5:8).

"Providing for his own" means a lot more than just making a living through physical work. Even more important is the requirement for providing love and emotional support for that family. Any man allowing himself to be detached and failing to serve his wife and children in these critical ways might as well stop making any pretense of seeking God. Such a man is worse than an infidel to God.

Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; *that your prayers be not hindered* (1 Peter 3:7) [emphasis mine].

His prayers are worthless. His attendance at solemn services is worthless. His fasting and Bible study counts for nothing. Until that man makes his wife and family a priority and turns to finally start acting in the example of Jesus Christ—a living sacrifice—everything else about his religion is absolutely vain and worthless. Gentlemen, it is high time we take another long look at our attitudes and start expunging that selfishness from our lives. It matters not that your wife has made mistakes. God says, "be not bitter against them." If you are bitter, it is time to admit it and purge it out! Stop sulking like an immature child and act like a real man.

## The Results of Broken Laws

There are many women God has called into His church who have suffered traumatic experiences at the hands of men who should have defended and cared for them. Some grew up in families with abusive fathers who left serious scars upon their daughters. Others have been victimized by men/husbands who have never known anything but brutality and selfishness. Still others (and this one also includes the men) have been abused by ministers in God's church over past decades who should have known better, but still used the very gentile form of rulership which Christ condemned (Matthew 20:25–26). In all of these cases, when authority is abused, it causes serious repercussions for the weak and defenseless.

As noted in 1 Peter 3:7 above, God made women to be the weaker vessels. The feminists cry foul at this, but God is the One who said so! That being the case, there are serious curses that result when those weaker ones become the victims of men's abuse of authority.

But for you ladies in God's church who have experienced such abuse, what does God expect of you now? Are you beyond help because the scars are too deep? Are you consigned to misery and mental disability? Is it impossible for you to recover from the effects of those curses?

For the hurt of the daughter of my people am I hurt; I am black; astonishment hath taken hold on me. Is there no balm in Gilead; is there no physician there? why then is not the health of the daughter of my people recovered? (Jeremiah 8:21–22).

Is it really hopeless? Not if you are truly converted and called into the light of God's benevolent way of life. "And Jesus looking upon them saith, With men it is impossible, but not with God: for with God all things are possible" (Mark 10:27).

Most of the people of this world will not come out from under those curses until the return of Jesus Christ:

The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD,

and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn; To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that he might be glorified (Isaiah 61:1–3).

But for Christ's firstfruits, you have the priceless opportunity to come under the healing power of God's loving care *right now!* And there is nothing that cannot be accomplished through the power of His Holy Spirit.

. . . If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the LORD thy God, and wilt do that which is right in his sight, and wilt give ear to his commandments, and keep all his statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians: for *I am the LORD that healeth thee* (Exodus 15:26) [emphasis mine].

Many of us need mental and emotional healing as much as physical healing. This is part of that which your benevolent Heavenly Father has offered. All we have to do is put Him first and seek Him diligently, and He promises to be close at hand to help us. It is a promise upon which we can count.

### **Warning for Converted Women**

Ladies (and even gentlemen), in spite of what you may have suffered in the past, be careful of fostering residual bitterness in your lives. If you are not very careful, you can allow Satan room to work upon those weaknesses and cause you to defy God's will.

How might this be manifested? You might be holding on to a deep-seated animosity toward men in general. It might be something you can subjugate on the surface, but if it is not addressed at the root, over time it can become a spiritual threat that might ultimately result in your loss of salvation. Do not, under any circumstances, underestimate the deceptive power of your adversary who is seeking to take advantage.

Such weakness—resulting from the scars of past abuse—can manifest itself in subtle disrespect for husbands, male brethren in the church, and maybe most especially the ministry. It has certainly happened in the past, and is likely present to one degree or another *at this very moment* within this remnant body.

Symptoms to be aware of for your own personal introspections: Be careful of allying into cliques with other victims of past abuse, where interaction can lead to a "girls' club" mentality. It is one thing if such friendships are constructive, edifying, and uplifting. It is quite another if they become the breeding ground for anti-male sentiments. The result is often a secret society—even within God's own church—where women acknowledge on the surface their requirement to submit to male authority, but believe down deep that men are mostly "buffoons" that must be tolerated. Women who have unconverted husbands, women in troubled marriages, widows—including those whose husbands are dead as well as "spiritual widows" who are divorced and living alone—and women who have scars from past male abuse, should be very careful about this tendency. The example of Miriam is a warning for all of us:

And Miriam and Aaron spake against Moses because of the Ethiopian woman whom he had married: for he had married an Ethiopian woman. And they said, Hath the LORD indeed spoken only by Moses? hath he not spoken also by us? And the LORD heard it. (Now the man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth.) And the LORD spake suddenly unto Moses, and unto Aaron, and unto Miriam, Come out ye three unto the tabernacle of the congregation. And they three came out. And the LORD came down in the pillar of the cloud, and stood in the door of the tabernacle, and called Aaron and Miriam: and they both came forth. And he said, Hear now my words: If there be a prophet among you, I the LORD will make myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream. My servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all mine house. With him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches; and the similitude of the LORD shall he behold: wherefore then were ye not afraid to speak against my servant Moses? And the anger of the LORD was kindled against them; and he departed. And the cloud departed from off the tabernacle; and, behold, Miriam became leprous, white as snow: and Aaron looked upon Miriam, and, behold, she was leprous (Numbers 12:1–10).

Both Miriam and Aaron were guilty, but God singled out Miriam with a special curse. It indicates she must have borne the greater part of responsibility in God's eyes; that is, if we believe God is truly fair in His judgments. Of what was she guilty? A whispering campaign which impugned Moses' reputation and undermined his authority. She knew Moses was given authority, but she felt he was ill-equipped to be any better leader than she or someone else. She felt comfortable in discussing her perception of his sins with others in secret. Have any of you been guilty of the same thing? There is no doubt that Moses was

guilty of sin and weakness in his life, as are all human beings. But he was still fulfilling his responsibilities with God's rich favor.

Brethren, if you think it could never happen to you, you are more of a potential target of Satan than anyone else. But those who see themselves clearly and recognize the real potential of falling into this trap, are the ones who are truly wise and armed to avoid deception.

### **Steps for the Future**

Gentlemen, you cannot demand respect for your God-given authorities and force others to submit, any more than the ministry can force a laymember to submit to its authority. Real authority can only be wielded when the one with authority is willing to use it properly, and the one under authority is willing to submit. If your wives and adult children insist on rebelling, God is allowing that to happen for the present. The best you can do is set the right example by emulating Jesus Christ, whether you receive appreciation for that example or not. If you are doing it for the right reason, you will not demand immediate recompense, but will wait to be rewarded by God.

Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me (Matthew 19:21).

If you have been failing to live up to your husbandly/fatherly obligations, and your family has been devastated by your incontinence, it is still not too late to begin to change your behavior. Do not expect immediate acceptance if your abuses have been chronic over the years. You will likely be met with much skepticism. Be willing to endure that doubt and realize it was probably of your own making. You must be willing to make a *long-term* investment to repair the breach. But even if you never recapture that lost respect in this life, God will reward you for your sincere repentance.

Ladies, even if you have been the victims of serious abuse of authority by males in your lives, you must never allow bitterness to rule you. You have access to God's Holy Spirit. There is no greater power in all the universe. No matter how scarred you may be at this moment, do not give in to hopelessness. God is offering you the miracle of healing. Do not allow man's misuse of authority to make you rebellious toward those God-given offices. It is still a glorious and perfect master plan that is intended to produce great happiness and joy for both men and women.

If we keep these principles in mind, we will be better prepared to avoid the traps that have befallen too many of our beloved brethren in times past.

May God continue to guide and inspire you in all aspects of your lives.

Yours with brotherly affection in Christ,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jon W. Brisby". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned centrally below the text "Yours with brotherly affection in Christ,".

Jon W. Brisby