

## Warning to the Discontent – Heb 13:4-5

### *The Glorious Mystery that is Marriage II*

**Introduction** – When a series on marriage is announced and introduced, there are many reactions. The unmarried wonder if any of this will apply to them. Some couples, eager to grow and generally healthy, find deeper and more glorious truths to contemplate and apply. Other couples who are struggling wonder if *their spouse* will really listen this time. There are some who will take instruction on marriage and use it to fuel the fire of their own sin. They are the discontent and that is their sin; and for them, nothing taught on marriage will help their marriage if they do not take this particular message to heart.

**Contentment** (Heb 13:4-5) – Sex and money: two of the most powerful marriage-busting topics. But there is something far deeper as we work through the text. First of all we are told that marriage is an honorable estate and to be honored among all (this alone has far reaching applications for us today). Second, we are told that the marriage bed is undefiled. Sexual intimacy is at the center of the marriage covenant and it is a good gift from God along with all the marital intimacy which is to be freely given and received in that covenant. Fornication and adultery are judged by God, not because He hates sex but because He hates sexual vandalism. They are the enemies of true sexuality. Continuing on, marriage as an estate tends to provide physical and financial security, but that does not mean that we are to be *"money-lovers"* or covetous people.

Intimacy and prosperity are gifts from God and regularly are a part of His blessings to a married couple and family, but discontentment over whatever situation God has given you will ruin it all – and simply learning how to get more of either will not take away the discontent. Therefore, we are to be first of all people who are *"content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, 'I will never leave you nor forsake you.'"*

**Warning #1 – Discontent People are the Most Unteachable People** – This is because the discontent person looks at circumstances and believes God has said the opposite, "I have left you and forsaken you." Discontentment looks at a bank account or a spouse (or lack thereof) and says, "I will not rejoice and rest in God's sovereign care in the midst of this!" This is a theological position and until this heresy is repented of, the discontent will refuse to obey God's commands – especially commands to sacrifice themselves.

**Warning #2 – Discontent People Take Good Teaching and Use it to Fuel Their Discontentment** – In marriage, discontent people are discontent with their imperfect spouse. Any teaching on how we should live in our roles as husbands and wives will only be used by the discontent to justify their discontentment.

**The Rare Jewel of Contentment** (Phil 4:10-13) – Paul explains that his joy in receiving a gift from the Philippians was not predicated on their meeting his need. Something else had contained his joy; Someone else had given him contentment. It was a fruit given by God through a process of learning and so his rejoicing is *"in the Lord."* This means that Christians learn to receive everything from the providence of God with quietness of soul, enabling them to submit to and rejoice in God's dealings. Biblical, Spirit-given contentment is never connected to our circumstances. Discontentment abounds whenever our joy is based upon our immediate circumstances.

**Warning #3 – Discontent People Remain Discontent Because it is "Safe" and Feeds Their Flesh** – Their theology drives them to look for safety away from God's promises. They feel sorry for themselves (not rejoicing in the Lord) and feeling sorry for oneself is comforting when life doesn't seem fair. Their inverted pride causes them to say, "you don't understand – my situation is really bad – it is extremely unique and special – God's Word doesn't apply here – or - it won't work here – or – I tried that once..."

**Warning #4 – Discontentment is Addictive and Contagious** – *"In the Lord"* contentment grows and spreads. But in the false theology that leads to discontentment, that fruit also grows and spreads and feeds on itself from one area of life to another and even gets passed on to other family members.

**Marital Thanksgiving in Everything** (Eph 5:17ff) – Teaching on marriage does not begin in verse 22. It begins with v18, *"be filled with the Spirit,"* v19, *"singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord,"* and v20, *"giving thanks always for all things to God."* This sets up a culture of mutual submission (v21) with special emphases to the wife and husband in their roles. But discontent people cannot be filled with the Spirit; they are grieving the Spirit with their theological lies. They have a hard time seeing or admitting to themselves, but at the heart of it all, they are discontent with their idol, a god they have fashioned in their minds.

**Good News, Not Good Advice** – What does a discontent person need to solve all of their problems? They do not need good advice; they need good news. As discontent as you are, know this: In Jesus Christ, God is very content with you (Eph 1:6). As imperfect as you are, in Christ, God delights over you with singing (Zeph 3:17). As hard-nosed in your discontentment as you are, Jesus thanks God the Father for giving you to Him (John 6:37, 10:11). As hard as you clutch at your false ideas, God is still going to grab you away because He loves you. Where do you learn contentment? Look to Jesus who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross.