The Lord Is My Helper

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Date: 11 March 2024

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[0:00] Last week we did begin our study of the final chapter of the book of Hebrews.

! We talked about loving our brothers and sisters, loving the lost, having sympathy for those who are hurting.
We're going to continue to examine that theme this evening, but with a little twist. Instead of examining others, we are going to look at Christian behavior in relation to ourselves.
Our Scriptures today are as follows. I'm starting in chapter 13, verse 4 through verse 9.
Verse 9. Verse 10. Let marriage be held in honor among all, and let the marriage bed be undefiled.
[1:19] Verse 10. For God will judge the sexually immoral and adulterous. Keep your life free from love of money and be content with what you have.

For He has said, I will never leave you nor forsake you. So we can confidently say, the Lord is my helper. I will not fear.
What can man do to me? Remember your leaders. Remember your leaders. Those who spoke to you the Word of God. Consider the outcome of their way of life.
And imitate their faith. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever. Do not be led away by diverse and strange teachings.
For it is good for the heart to be strengthened by grace, not by foods which have not benefited those devoted to them.
[2:26] Kind of an interesting passage there. According to this passage, we have a responsibility to ourselves.

We're to be sexually pure, satisfied with what we have, and steadfast in our faith. And the first thing mentioned in this section of Scripture is that marriage is to be honored.
I know there's some single guys in here. I understand that. And God talks about that. And favorably. But God has created marriage.
And He intends for it to be an honorable thing. Marriage was actually established within a few days or weeks of the creation of planet Earth.
Marriage was intended to be honored throughout the ages. In our day, the marriage between a man and a woman is anything but honored.
[3:38] Even among heterosexual couples, marriage is often done for convenience.

It is treated more as a social requirement than a divine appointment. People sign contracts today. And they say, why would someone sign a contract? Well, they assume that someday their marriage will dissolve.
They'll get in a fight. They'll get to arguing. And to protect property, rights for both pairs, they sign a contract.
When the book of Hebrews was written, there was something else that was impacting the church. It's interesting.
[4:42] But it was celibacy. It was being heralded as a holier state than was marriage.

Some men, including at least one of the church fathers. Do you understand what the church fathers were? They're not in Scripture. These are the guys that came after the apostles.
And they're the church fathers around 100 A.D. to about 300 or 400 A.D. And there's a lot of those guys. Tertullian and different guys like that.
But at least one church father, Origen, was a staunch believer in being celibate.
In other words, don't ever have a relationship and never get married to a woman or anyone else. Those guys that really held fiercely to that, many of them had themselves castrated.
[5:53] Well, that would have left me behind. I'm not going to do that. But they had themselves castrated, believing they could better serve God in that condition.

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They thought they could focus more on God and more on His work and more on His Word. And Paul even warns us that in the last days apostate teachers will come and forbid marriage.
Now, I don't know if we're in those days, but I can tell you this. There's apostate teachers that will support and enthusiastically sponsor homosexual marriage within the church.
The church is marrying off homosexuals all the time. And we're probably all aware, and I like Alistair Begg, but we're all aware of the advice he gave a church member to go to her granddaughter's homosexual or lesbian marriage.
And he got hammered by some of the great pastors. Votie Bauckham didn't like that. John MacArthur didn't like that. And they took him to task.
[7:10] Steve Lawson really didn't like it. And Justin Peters. But they thought it was a way, if they were celibate, they could focus more on God.

But we are to regard marriage on the same level as God does. And He says it is something that is honorable.
Marriage is honorable. The Trinity honors marriage. God the Father honored marriage by establishing it all the way back in the Garden of Eden.
Jesus honored marriage by performing his first miracle at a wedding in Cana.
Remember that? Change the water into wine. The Holy Spirit honors marriage. The Holy Spirit honors marriage by comparing it to the relationship between Christ and His church.
[8:14] Well, how can that be? Well, because that's to be a fierce love relationship. That is, we are to love the church as Christ loved the church and gave Himself for the church.

So with such an array of support, I don't think there's any room for anyone to ever disparage marriage God's way.
And God's way is what? One man, one woman, forever. Until death removes them.
Now, the Bible mentions three compelling reasons for marriage. First, it is for the propagation of the human race.
It's through marriage that we have children. We don't want to run out of kids because kids grew up to be adults.
[9:19] And then they get married and they have kids. Second, it is a means to prevent sexual sin. Second, that is done between one woman and one man.

Third, it is done for companionship. The Lord said it's not good for man to be alone. And there are a number of ways that marriage can honor God.
First, it is appropriate that the man be the head of the household. Mark it down, fellas. He is not a dictator.
And if you find some guy that's a dictator, that's a pitiful marriage. That's not a Christian marriage. If he's not a dictator, what is he? He's a protector.
He's a protector. He will protect his wife and he will protect his children even at the cost of his own life if that is necessary.
[10:26] And dare I say, and you can disagree with me, that's okay, but even if it costs the life of someone else, if a guy breaks into our house, I'm going to do everything I can to protect my wife.

And actually, we have a plan worked out probably because of my background in law enforcement. She knows where she's supposed to go and after she gets there, then she's got to go to where actually she's supposed to go because there's going to be a period of panic.
I remember asking her one time, I got her a little gun, or her father's gun, a little five shot, and I said, now what are you going to do if I'm not home and someone breaks in? She said, I thought of that. I'm going to shoot two shots up into the ceiling and then if he keeps coming, I'm going to do what I have to do. I said, well, let's talk about that. First of all, you've wasted two bullets.
That thing only has five and you've wasted two. Secondly, secondly, now we need a new roof. So whatever else happens, we're going to have to get a roof repaired.
[11:33] So don't waste any ammo. But he's to protect his wife and his children. The Bible says you're worse than an infidel if you don't do that.

The husband is to model Christ in the home as Christ is the head of the church, so the man is head of the home and such a home honors God.
I told Diane one time that she was to submit to me and we were brand new believers and I'm reading and I didn't say that. Let me look at that.

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I read it to her and she said, what else does it say? No, no, you don't need anything else. No, you read the rest of it. She grabs that Bible from me and says, oh, it says here, you're to honor your wife as Christ honors the church.
You're to love your wife as Christ loved the church. She said, when you do that, I'll do the other. She had me. She had me. But the woman is to place herself under the headship of a husband.
[12:48] There's to be mutual respect and love. Husbands are to be understanding, which is one of our worst traits. But we are to be understanding.

The husband is to work to make his wife happy. She is to work to make her husband happy. And when they're both working together, they're both happy. They're both happy.
I'm glad she's not here. She'd have a whole lot to say tonight. As part of this, the marriage bed is to be undefiled.
God is very serious about sexual purity among His children. And the world might play around with such sin, but judgment is coming.
We are to flee immorality. The Greek word for immorality is pornea. We get the English word pornography from that. But it's way beyond that.
[13:48] It's any sexual sin. Fornication, adultery, I meant to list them all. There's like ten that you can plug in there. But we've got to be honest, guys.

We live in a world that's obsessed with sex. It's just obsessed. I mean, I remember, I don't watch, surprisingly, I don't watch a lot of television. But I remember when I used to, and oh my gosh, you know, you had girls in bikinis selling hammers for Ace Hardware.
She didn't know what that thing was used for. Do you understand the term Madison Avenue? That's where all the advertisers are at in New York. I've been there. I've been up and down that road, street.
And in Madison Avenue, they understand a man's hot button. A man's hot button is lust. And they play on that in advertising.
They play on it tremendously. So we live in a world that is obsessed with sex. Sex outside of marriage is considered the norm.
[14:52] A lot of that comes from Hugh Hefner. Sex is treated as no different than any other bodily function. We must eat, sleep, and drink.

And the rule says you also have to have sex. Of course, Hugh Hefner has now gone to his reward. Whatever that is. He's no longer with us.
Where has this led us as a society? We have seen a quantum leap in extramarital pregnancies, forcible rape, illegitimate children, sexually transmitted diseases, and abortion.
all connected. All connected. As a result, we as a society are suffering mightily under the judgmental hand of God.
No nation, mark it down brothers, no nation can kill 4,400 babies a day and not be under the judgment of God.
[16:08] Can't be done. That was vastly more than ever happened under Baal worship. Or they killed babies as a matter of practice.

We've killed more babies than Hitler ever killed of Jews or gypsies or any other of the undesirables. He killed 15 million. We're up to 70 million babies now.
And you know, the governor of Ohio or Illinois, I can't remember, just a few years ago, he was giving a talk and he said, you know, I don't know what has happened to America. America, our tax base has eroded.
We're missing millions of adults that should be in the workforce paying taxes. Where'd they go? Well, I could tell him. I could tell you where they're at.
They were put in a commercial garbage disposal at a hospital and they went into the sewer system. I'm sorry to be that blunt, but that's what happens. That's what happens.
[17:16] We're to be satisfied. We're to be satisfied with what we have. Keep your life free. This is Hebrews 13, 5 and 6. Keep your life free from the love of money and be content with what you have.

I don't know why I love money. I don't have any. How can you love something you don't have any? He said, be content with what you have for you said, I will never leave you.
I'm not going to forsake you. So we can confidently say the Lord is my helper. I will not fear. What can man do to me? Spurgeon said that he'd had thousands of people come to him and share with

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him how they had sinned in one way or another.
But he had never had anyone come to him and confess the sin of covenantness. That they were sinning by coveting something of their neighbor or a relative or whatever.
I heard MacArthur in my own ears say no one had ever come to him and said, you know, I am totally satisfied. I'm satisfied with life.
[18:37] I'm satisfied with the provisions God has given me. God has provided our family with a nice home. It's a safe home. It's not a mansion. We didn't want a mansion.

But I am totally satisfied. He said, I've never had somebody say I'm totally satisfied. Wealth is not the issue. Wealth isn't the issue.
Because people, they covet. They want more money. They want a bigger house. They want a newer car. We want a trophy wife or a trophy husband.
One Christmas, I gave Diana a huge coffee cup and it said, presented to you by your trophy husband. She didn't use that. She put it up. Anyway, I'll ask her about that tonight.
But as Christians, we should be free of coveting because we know that all things come as grace gifts from God. He's Jehovah Jireh, isn't He?
[19:39] God who provides. So wealth is not the issue. Many people are wealthy. We've got some guys in this church that have done well.

They work hard. They've done well. Money's not the issue. The love of money is the issue. God never condemns money.
He condemns the love of money. That's the issue. That's the issue. Why would I love something that is not even around very long? When we love our money, it displeases God.
In fact, when people love their money, they are hard-pressed to give it away. We're to be content with what we have.
Wouldn't you love to go up to the pastor and say, well, I'm really content. Ever had anyone do that for you, pastor? Ever? Many in the Hebrew congregation had lost everything.
[20:49] That was the price they were paying for following Jesus. You know, I wonder how many people would really follow Jesus if the price was to lose everything.

Lose your job, lose your home, perhaps lose your children. They tried to pass a law in California not too long ago that, you know, you could lose your child that raising a child in an evangelical environment is a form of child abuse.
It didn't go through. The federal court said that ain't going to happen. This is why people cried out that the Lord was their helper.
So what could man do to them? Well, nothing. So how do we enjoy contentment? First, embrace the goodness of God.
God's good to His children. He's good to us. And if we really trust Him, then we must believe that He knows our circumstances. He knows our needs better than we do.
[22:07] Think in terms of what you need. And don't ever confuse needs and wants. They're two different things.

Think in terms of what you need. Don't think in terms of what you deserve, what you think you deserve, or what you want.
What do we need? What do we want? And what do we deserve? You've got to overcome a couple of those.
Thinking in those terms really puts things into perspective. Every believer is already rich with the blessings of God. Can you imagine? I mean, do you ever thank Him for the simple things?
You know, He gave us oxygen today. And He's still doing it. And I didn't have to stay awake last night to remember to breathe. He's got that built into us, doesn't He?
[23:10] We're already rich. And when we think in terms of wants and needs, remember, God is sovereign. He knows before we do what we need, what we want, what we desire.

Never confuse wants and needs. He knows what is best for us. It is the Lord who makes one man poor, the other man rich. In that regard, what are true riches?
In God's world, the poor are rich and the rich are poor. You can read about that in the seven churches in the book of Revelation chapter 2 and 3. Because He'll say in there, you think you're poor, but you're rich.
And then later, you think you're rich, but you're poor. Laodicea. Disasterous church. What are true riches?

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Because in God's world, the poor are rich and the rich are poor. And besides, our real treasure is in heaven. Store up in heaven those things that will last eternity.
[24:24] They're not going to rust. Moth isn't going to eat them. May I say that everything we accumulate on earth is going to burn up in fervent heat.

I mean, that's hot. That's hotter than an Oklahoma summer. It's really hot. And that is why we're told, focus on things above.
We are content when we stay focused and in touch with God. Well, how do we do that? Prayer and Bible study. We read the Word.
We pray. True contentment is the confidence of knowing that God is on our side and He will help us throughout life.
And we're also to be steadfast in faith. Hebrews 13, 7-9. Remember those who led you, who spoke the Word of God to you, and considering the result of their conduct, imitate their faith.
[25:41] Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever. That's pretty good news. When you talk about the attributes of God so often we leave out that He's immutable.

He never changes. He changes not. Don't be carried away by varied and strange teachings.
John MacArthur did a series a few years ago called Strange Fire. It's right over there if you want to borrow it. Strange Fire Conference.
Went for hours. And it was a great conference. Don't be carried away by varied and strange teachings for it is good for the heart to be strengthened by grace, not by foods.
through which those who were so occupied were not benefited. I had open heart surgery a few years ago and more than that.
[26:42] And as a result, now every so often I have to have a nuclear scan of my heart and I have to have an echocardiogram. And I had both of those two weeks ago.

And I got a perfect clean bill of health right up until I got my bill. $9,126. I've set up a little violin case over here if you want.
And actually it said the amount I owe, zero. It was all paid by Medicare or the hospital or whomever.
This is another one of those passages directed at Jewish people that were considering a return to the Old Covenant.
We've talked about that in here throughout our study. The New Covenant in Jesus has standards, very high standards. But they do not involve ceremonies and rituals and holy days and formalities.
They are internal and not external. We are to cling to sound doctrine. If we do not, we're in danger of being drawn into false teaching.
[27:55] And guys, there are more false teachers on earth today than at any time in history. They plague us. They're everywhere. Including in some churches that are, one time, were built solidly.

This has been the blight of the church since the early days. Paul and the other apostles fought against false teachers. And they still abound in the church today. You know, one danger of false teachers, they can be likable.
They can be, they can come off as sincere. No one is more sincere than the young Mormon elder that knocks on your door. I mean, clean.
He's sincere. He's sincerely wrong on doctrine. Paul issued warnings to the Galatians, to the Ephesians, to the Corinthians, and so on.
These churches were lacking discernment. They could tell what was good and what was bad, or what was true and what was false. They'd lost all that.
[29:11] When believers hang out in immaturity of faith and do not go on to maturity, they are ripe candidates for false teachings. The Jews of the Hebrew church were being urged to guard against legalism.

They had lived under the yoke of religious regulations. It was now hard to adjust to the freedoms they found in Christ. They were even warned against being carried away by certain foods.
Legalists put great stock in certain foods. Teachings will make you more spiritual. But God has opened up freedom to us when it comes to food.
It is there to keep us alive, but the real life in Christ is not defined by what we eat. It's defined by righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit.
food is there to strengthen our bodies, but our hearts are to be strengthened by the grace of God, and that happens through prayer and His Word.

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[30:29] So be in the Word. The time is short. The time is short. Let's close in prayer, brothers. Thank You, Father, for Your love, Your grace, Your mercy, Your peace, the contentment and happiness that we're supposed to have in You.

You've given us all things, Lord. You've given us a crown. May we one day place that at Your feet as we approach You on our knees.
Lord, You are our helper, and we will not fear what can man do to us. Thank You for these men, Lord, in this church.
I pray all this in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen.

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