

Hearts of Love

Tom & Debbie Tillman "to touch the world for Jesus Christ"

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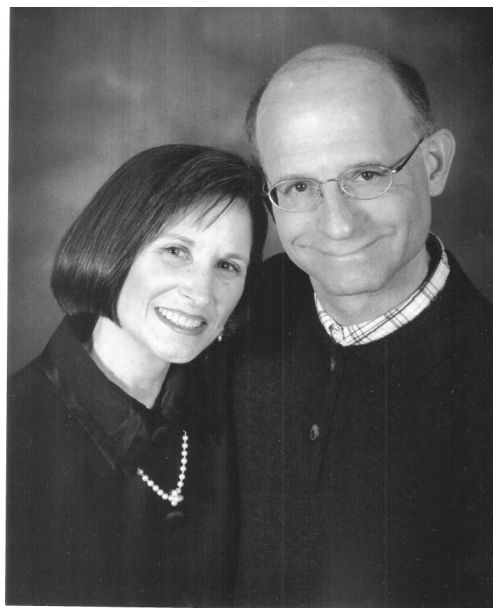
***May God richly
bless you!***

Tom & Debbie

A Marriage that Honors God (part 2)

Yes, I know it's December and this should be about Christmas... but it really is. If you want to give your spouse the best gift ever... pay attention to what I've written here along with what I wrote last month. Peter wrote, ***'Husbands, likewise, dwell with them with understanding, giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers may not be hindered.'*** 1 Pet 3:7

To dwell with understanding means to know her intimately, knowing her likes, her dislikes, her fears and what she hates and it means seeking to know her so intimately that you understand where her likes, dislikes and fears originate... being willing to know her so intimately that you understand the ***why*** for all of these and that you choose to make accommodation for ***all of them***. Then it means that you seek to strengthen, encourage and reinforce every part of her makeup that is Godly... and that you seek to discover how to draw her closer to God and to His will for her and for the both of you. It means to understand that she is your equal in every way except for those areas where she surpasses you and then being willing to encourage and support her in those areas also, rather than feeling the need to compete with her. The only area where a wife is likely weaker is in physical strength. Therefore, when she has things for us to do, of a physical nature, rather than complaining or deeply sighing... we should see it as an honor,



*He has committed to
us the word of
Reconciliation.
Therefore, we are
Ambassadors for Christ.
2 Corinthians 5:19,20*

from God, to be able to display our great manly strength in this exciting new opportunity to honor her.

As a Godly wife is called to submit to her husband in God's directed chain of authority, a Godly husband is called to submit not only to God as the true head of their home, but also to submit to God's requirement to love, honor and care for his wife with the same self sacrificial love that the Lord Jesus Christ has for His Bride, us, the true Church.

We are commanded to honor her, to honor her at all times. If we are complaining or yelling... we definitely are not honoring her. Giving honor is sometimes difficult to explain but we both know when I am honoring her and we both know when I am not honoring her.

Here is an important clue for wives. Do you remember how we guide our children and grandchildren? We **reinforce good behavior**. Do you want him to be more honoring? Recognize when he does honor you; recognize it with thanks... Not like... Finally!! A little bit of honoring...! And husbands... that doesn't mean

recognizing it yourself... like... 'I honor you... don't you remember that time last month, when people were watching... I opened your car door... from the inside after I got in first? Sheesh! What more do you want!!'

Never forget, husbands... this is God's command and His warning. If we are not faithful to honor our wives, God will not hear or answer when we pray. God says, 'If you stubbornly refuse to honor your wife **at all times**, I will close My ears to your prayer. I will not hear you. Your prayer will be hindered. God said the same thing through Isaiah: **'When you spread out your hands, I will hide My eyes from you; Even though you make many prayers, I will not hear.'** Isa. 1:15

The Greek word Peter uses for our prayers being hindered is: ek-kopto ... it even sounds mean... ek-kopto... your prayers will be ek-kopto. The word means, **cut down, sliced off at the roots**. It is the same word Jesus used when He said: **'Every tree that does not bear good fruit is ek-kopto cut**

Thank you for your prayer and support. As we approach the end of 2019 and look forward to the ministry opportunities of 2020, please prayerfully consider a special year-end contribution to join with us as we take the Gospel to the lost in our short time remaining. Your 2019 tax deductible contribution must be post marked by December 31st Merry Christmas!



down and thrown into the fire.'

Matt 7:19

I don't want my prayers to be cut down and thrown into the fire.

If you don't want your prayers to be a complete waste of time... honor your wife. In other words... God says, 'If you choose to honor your wife, I'll make a special point of hearing all your prayers and I will answer every one. However, I will answer according to My will. It won't necessarily be what you asked for but I will hear and I will answer.'

What Debbie and I have learned over the past 46 years and especially over the past 30 years is that we are no longer 2 separate people living in the same house, desperately trying to put up with each other's annoying differences... pondering how bad a mistake we made, 46 looooong years ago... marrying this... person... anxiously waiting for the Rapture to put us out of our misery, but rather, we are, 2 parts of one whole; where one is weak, the other is strong; where one is inadequate, the other is more than adequate. We are one unit, tasked with glorifying God in all that we do... each of us strengthening and encouraging the other as we look forward to His coming, looking forward to His changing our physical bodies into perfect bodies like His own... looking forward to having a perfect, special relationship with Him forever and also with each other forever... not dreading the possibility of perhaps having a home in the New Jerusalem next door to each other. Together, we both are walking toward Heaven, day by day. The greatest blessing anyone can

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have is in having one's first priority knowing and glorifying God and then having a spouse whose first priority is the same.

Here's one of my older songs:

The closer we get to Jesus, the closer we'll be together

As we move more and more in line with His Word

The more completely we can love each other

*When He's the Lord of our lives
Then He can be the Lord of our home*

That was written back in the bad old days... I guess it was prophecy.

I do try to honor Debbie in all that I do but one of the ways we are different is that she likes everything to be neat, clean and tidy whereas I don't even notice when things are cluttered. She grew up in a real tidy home, I grew up in clutterishness.

As long as I can walk from one side of a room to the other... it's good enough. The kitchen, on the other hand, is different. I keep it to be neat, clean and tidy... I want everything in its place when I start to cook a meal. I might have left the dinner dishes overnight, but before I begin again, the first thing I do is clean the kitchen completely.

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We've reached a comfortable balance. She leaves me alone in my office, which always looks like a tornado just went through, but I usually have a pretty good idea where something is... I just have to dig a little. She never complains about my office but I try to keep all the rest of the house neat, clean and tidy... for her sake, to honor her.

I almost never say no to her.

Almost nothing is so important that her way isn't the best way... or at least good enough. I never want to have my way, just to have my way. If there is the rare instance that I don't think her way is the best way, and that it is important enough to disagree, after praying and being sure that I am understanding God's will in the matter, I will say no and she will submit to that. We don't fight and we don't argue. Almost always... her way is best, or at least, fine by me... 'Yes dear... whatever you think is best, dear.'

Then, in vs 8, Peter writes, 'Finally,

all of you be of one mind, having compassion for one another; love as brothers, be tenderhearted, be courteous; ⁹ not returning evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary blessing, knowing that you were called to this, that you may inherit a blessing.

That is our calling, all of us... to love each other... to love other Christians.

In Eph 5, Husbands are commanded to love their wives with the same love that Jesus Christ loves the Church and laid down His life for us. John writes, in 1 John 3, that we all, as Christians, are to love each other... husbands, wives and every other Christian with that same sacrificial love.

John says that this is how unbelievers will know that we are Children of God... that we all love each other, that we all forgive each other, that we prefer one another and look to each other's welfare. This is God's calling on each of our lives. That is the best gift we can give each other and give back to God, Himself, loving as He loves.

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The Harvest is Great, but the laborers are few. Matt 9:38

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