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To Wives and Mothers

by Rick Duggin

Happily married couples are a dying species. The blame for this unfortunate situation must usually be borne by both husband and wife. But God has given women greater powers than most realize to build a happy marriage. "Every wise woman buildeth her house; but the foolish plucketh it down with her hands" (Prov. 14:1).

A wise woman will build her house by treating her husband properly. She will be in subjection. She will refrain from nagging. She will conduct herself with godliness. Her emphasis will not be upon material things but upon the true, inner beauty. Her meek and quiet spirit will convince her husband that she is serious about serving God and being the best wife she can be. Carefully study 1 Peter 3:1-6.

A wise woman will build her house by treating her children properly. Older women were to teach the younger women to love their children (Tit.2:4). A wise woman knows that love includes proper discipline, and that the failure to discipline will produce shame (Prov.29:15). She will use her uncanny ability in communicating with children to ground them in the word of God (2 Tim.3:15; 1:5), knowing that the seed sown in young hearts will produce a spiritual harvest in years to come.

A foolish woman will tear down her house by neglecting her God-given role in pursuit of her own fulfillment. How utterly unfulfilling it will be for her in later years to discover that her life-long pursuit yielded nothing but fool's gold.

Why Call Jesus Good?

Doy Moyer

Mark 10:17-31 tells of a rich, young ruler who approached Jesus and asked, "Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?" He was interested enough to seek and find the right source for answers, but the issue was whether he ready to listen and act. There is something important here to consider. He calls Jesus, "good teacher." Why would this be significant? While it shows the inadequacy of being able to keep the law based on personal goodness, more fundamentally, it shows a misconception of who Jesus is as divine.

Though he seemed to be complimenting Jesus as first, this man's conception of Jesus was off the mark. Jesus responded, "Why do you call me good? No one is good except God alone" (Mark 10:18). To this man, Jesus was a good teacher. He may have even seen himself as one good man asking another good man an important theological question. For him, Jesus had some wisdom to share, but would he accept Jesus as God and the ultimate authority over his life? The answer to that is a resounding, "no." The man heard what Jesus said, but it was more important to him to keep his stuff than it was to follow Jesus. The authority of Jesus is paramount here, and this is seen in His words, "come, follow me." That man wouldn't do it, no matter how sorrowful he was over the answer Jesus gave him.

Likewise, our answer to what we think of Jesus is found in whether we will follow Him. Jesus does not give the option of accepting Him as good if we do not accept Him as God. We don't get to say that Jesus is a good teacher with good wisdom if we aren't willing to hear Him and obey. If we aren't willing to follow Him, then we are essentially saying that no matter how important His teachings are, they are not important enough to us to cut out of our lives what gets in the way to follow Him. We think we are the exceptions.

Jesus did not leave heaven for earth just to be a good person and do good things. While He certainly is a powerful example in His life and behavior (1 Pet 2:21-25), and He surely knew no sin, all of which is good to perfection, His point was not just to live a good life. With Jesus, there is far more going on.

This young man apparently thought Jesus to be a great moral teacher, but not really God. One can accept that someone leads a good life without recognizing that such a person is the authority over all of life. We can consider that someone does good things without necessarily feeling like we need to follow that person. People might think Jesus was good, but not Lord. But we do not have that option. Jesus doesn't allow it.

How can Jesus say that no one but God alone is good? Was Jesus, as some think, denying that He Himself was God? Hardly. In fact, His point shows that calling Him good without the recognition of His divine authority is pointless. By calling Jesus a good teacher while not accepting Him as divine puts us in the seat of defining goodness, something for which we are woefully insufficient. This leads us to think of at least two vital truths:

1. Our conception of God.

God is good in the absolute and most perfect sense and it is from His nature that goodness flows. "Good and upright is the LORD..." (Psa 25:8). There is no flaw in Him. There is no defining good in a watered down way with God. He is the God who needs nothing else to be greater than He is (Acts 17:25). When we think of God as good, are we thinking of Him as morally excellent, faithful, and righteous in the greatest of senses? Only God is good because only He can be that perfect standard. He is not amenable to a higher standard of goodness than Himself, for He alone is that standard to whom all else is amenable. "Good" is not just something that God does. It is not an occasional description. It is who He is, all the time, and perfectly so. This is Jesus.

2. Our conception of ourselves in relation to God and the problem of sin.

When we, even in the smallest of ways that our finite minds can grasp it, begin to understand something of God's absolute goodness, then we will be forced to see ourselves in the light of God's perfection. What that means is that we will be brought to our knees in humility. As Isaiah said upon seeing his vision of God, "Woe is me, for I am ruined!" Only then was he ready to serve (Isa 6:1-8).

When we see ourselves as good enough, we are seeing ourselves as righteous in our own eyes instead of sinners who need Jesus. The real question for us is this: who do we think Jesus really is, and what will we do with Him? He is surely good, but He is also the God who has authority over our lives.