







**REV. DR. TALMAGE.**  
**THE EMINENT DIVINE'S SUNDAY DISCOURSE.**

**Subject: "Make Home Happy"—The Door of the Dwelling House is the Foundation of Church and State—Let Christian Love Abide Therein.**

**Text: "The disciples went away again into their own home."—John xx, 10.**

A church within a church, a republic within a republic, a world within a world, is spelled by four letters—Home! If things go right there, they go right everywhere; if things go wrong there, they go wrong everywhere. The door of the dwelling-house is the foundation of Church and State. A man never gets higher than his own garret or lower than his own cellar. Domestic life overarches and undergirds all other life. The highest house of Congress is the domestic circle; the rocking chair in the nursery is higher than a throne. George Washington commanded the forces of the United States, but Mary Washington commanded domestic life. Christy's mother made his pen for him. If a man should start out and run seventy years in a straight line, he could not get out from under the shadow of his own mantle piece. I therefore talk to you about a home, and an eternal moment when I speak of your home.

As individuals we are fragments. God makes the race to parts, and then He gradually puts us together. What I lack you make up; what you lack, I make up; our defects and surpluses of character being the cog wheels in the social mechanism. One who has the patience, another has the courage, another has the piety, another the enthusiasm; that which is lacking in one is made up by another, or is made up by all. Buffalo birds in herds, grouse in broods, quails in flocks, the human race in circles. God has most beautifully arranged this. It is in this way His balance society; this conservative that radical keeps things even. Every ship must have its mast, cut-water, taffrail, ballast. Thank God, then, for Princeton and Andover, for the opposites. I have no more respect for a man for being different from me than a driving wheel has a right to blame the iron shaft that holds it to the centre. John Wesley believed Calvin's Institutes. A cold thinker gives to the strong bones of theology; Dr. Guthrie clothes them with a throbbing heart and warm flesh. The difficulty is that we are not satisfied with just the work that God has given us to do. The water-wheel would to come inside the mill and grind the grist, and the hopper wants to go out and dabble in the water. Our usefulness and the welfare of society depend upon staying in just the place that God has put us, or intended we should occupy.

For more compactness, and that we may be more useful, we are gathered in still smaller circles in the home group. And there you have the same variety again; brothers, sisters, husband and wife; all different in temperaments and tastes. It is fortunate that should be so. If the husband be all impulse, the wife must be all prudence. If one sister be sanguine in her temperament, the other must be sympathetic. Mary and Martha are necessities. There will be no dinner for Christ if there be no Martha; there will be no audience for Jesus if there be no Mary. The home organization is most beautifully constructed. Eden has sons; the angels are all broken down; the animals that Adam stroked with his hand that morning when they came up to get their names have since shot forth tusk and sting, and growl and gnaw; the birds, with their wings and eyesockets the twin come whirling down from under the sun in blood and fire. Eden has gone, but there is just one little fragment left. It is the marriage institution. It does not, as at the beginning, take away from man a rib. Now it is an addition of ribs.

This institution of marriage has been defamed in our day. Socialism and polygamy, free-loveism, have been trying to turn this earth into a Turkish harem. While the pupils have been comparatively silent, not only their cheapness only equalled by their nastiness—are trying to educate this nation in one of the most heinous crimes which makes or breaks for time and eternity. Oh, this is not a mere question of chastity or wardrobe! It is a question charged with gigantic consequences, and heaven or hell. Alas for this new dispensation of George Santal! Alas for this mingling of the nightshade with the marriage garlands! Alas for the venom of spiders spit into the marriage institution, which was intended for the happiness and elevation of the race, and make it a mere commercial enterprise; an exchange of houses and lands and equities; a business partnership of two stuffed up with the stories of romance and knight-errantry, and unfaithfulness and feminine angelhood. The two after a while have roused for to find that the paradise they dreamed of, they have got nothing but a Van Amburgh's menagerie, filled with tigers and wild cats. Eighty thousand divorces in Paris in one year, and the most revolution that France ever saw. And I tell you what you know as well as I do, that wrong notions on the subject of Christian marriage are the cause at this day of more misery before God and man than any other cause.

There are some things that I want to bring before you. I know there are those of you who have homes set up for a great many years; and then, there are those here who have just established their home. They have only been in that home a few months or a few years. Then there are those who have a wife, set up for themselves a home, and it is right that I should speak up upon these themes.

My first counsel to you is, have God in your new home, if it be a new one, and let Him who was a guest at Bethany be in your household; let the Divine blessing drop upon your every hope and plan and expectation. The young people who begin with God and with heaven, and the crown of your right hand the engagement ring of the Divine affection. If one of you be a Christian, let that one take the Bible and read it every verse in the evening time, and then kneel down and commend yourselves to Him who setteth the solitary in families. I want to tell you that the destroying angel passes by without touching or entering the door-post sprinkled with the blood of the everlasting covenant. Why is it that in some families they never get along, and in others they always get along well? I have watched such cases, and have come to a conclusion. In the one case, although there were hardships and trials and some things that had to be explained, still things went on pleasantly until the very last. Why? They started right.

My second advice to you in your home is, to exercise to the very last possibility of your nature the law of forbearance. Prayers in the household will not make up for everything. Some of the best people in the world are the hardest to get along with. There are people who stand up in prayer meetings and pray like angels, who at home are uncomprehending and cranky. You may not have everything just as you want it. Sometimes it will be the duty of the husband and sometimes of the wife to yield, but both should occasionally on your rights, and you will have a Waterloo with no blower coming up at night-fall to decide the contest.

that be a law of your household. The best thing I ever heard of your grandfather, whom I never saw, was this: That once having unrighteously rebuked one of his children, he himself having lost his patience, and, perhaps, having been misinformed of the child's doings, found out his mistake, and in the evening of the same day gathered all his family together, and said, "Now, I have one explanation to make, and one thing to say. Thomas, this morning I rebuked you very unfairly. I am very sorry for it. I rebuked you in the presence of the whole family, and now I ask your forgiveness in their presence." It must have taken some courage to do that. It was right, was it not? Never be ashamed to apologize for domestic inaccuracy.

On the other hand, the husband ought to be sympathetic with the wife's occupation. It is no easy thing to keep house. Many a woman who could have endured martyrdom as well as a martyr, and a Scotch girl, has actually been worn out by house management. There are a thousand martyrs of the kitchen. It is very annoying, after the vexations of the day, to find the stove or the register or the table, or the nursery or parlor, to have the husband say, "You know nothing about trouble; you ought to be in the store half an hour." Sympathy of occupation! If the husband's work cover him with the soot of the furnace, or the odors of leather or soap factories, let not the wife be easily disgusted at the beginning of the day's savory aroma. Your gains are one, your interests are one, your losses are one; lay hold of the work of life with both hands. Four hands to fight the battles; four eyes to watch for the danger; four shoulders on which to carry the trials. It is a very sad thing when the palmer has a wife who does not like pictures. It is a very sad thing for a pianist when she has a husband who does not like music. It is a very sad thing when a wife is not suited unless her husband has what is called a "gentle business." So far as I understand a "gentle business" it is something to which a man goes at ten o'clock in the morning, and from which he comes home at two or three o'clock in the afternoon, and gets a large amount of money for doing nothing. That is, I believe, a "gentle business," and there has been many a wife who has made the mistake of not being satisfied until the husband has given up the tanning of the hides, or the tanning of the hats, or the building of the walls, and put himself in circles where he has nothing to do but smoke cigars and drink wine, and get himself into habits that upset him, going down in the gutter, and taking his wife and children with him. There are a good many trials running from earth to destruction. They start all hours of the day, and all hours of the night. They are the freight trains; they go very slowly and very heavily; and there are the accommodation trains going on toward destruction, and they stop very often and let a man get out when he wants to. But gentle business is an express train; Satan is the stoker, and death is the engineer; and though one may come out in front of it, and swing the regulator, or "blangor," or the jacket, or God's Word, it makes just one shot into perdition, coming down the embankment with a shout and a wall and a shriek—crash, crash! There are two classes of people sure of destruction; first, those who have nothing to do; secondly, those who have something to do, but who are too lazy or too proud to do it.

I have one more word of advice to give to those who have a happy home, and that is, let love preside in it. When your behavior in the domestic circle becomes a mere matter of calculation; when the earnest voice to guard the result of domestic study of the position you occupy, happiness lies stark dead on the heart-stone. When the husband's position as head of the household is weakened by loudness of voice, by strength of arm, by fire of temper, the republic of domestic bliss has become a despotism that neither God nor man will abide. Oh, ye who promise to love each other at the altar, how dare you count on a divorce? Let no shadow of suspicion come on your affection. It is easier to kill that flower than it is to make it live again. The blast from hell that puts out that light, leaves you in the blackness of darkness forever.

Here are a man and wife; they agree in nothing else, but they agree they will have a home. They will have a splendid house, and they think that if they have a home they will have a home. Architects make the plan, and the mechanics execute it; the house is cost one hundred thousand dollars. It is done. The carpets are spread; lights are hoisted; curtains are hung; cards of invitation sent out. The horses in gold-plated harness prance at the gate; guests come in and take their places; the flute sounds; the dance is up and down; and with one grand whirl the wealth and the fashion and the mirth of the great town whirl amid the pictured walls. But this is happiness. Flout it on the smoking viands; sound it in the music that whirls it in the dance; cast it in the snow of sculpture; sound it up the brilliant stairway; flash it in the chandeliers. Happiness, indeed! Let us build on the corner of the parlor floor a throne of Happiness; let all the guests, when come in, bring their flowers and pearls and diamonds, and throw them on this pyramidal throne; let a throne; and then let Happiness, the queen, mount the throne, and we will stand around, and all chivalries lifted, we will say, "Drink, O queen! live forever!" But the guests despair; the flutes are breathless, the last clasp of the impatient boots is heard in the distance, and the twain of the household come back to see the Queen of Happiness on the throne amidst the parlor floor. But, alas! they come back, the flowers have faded, the sweat odors have become the smell of a charnel-house, and instead of the Queen of Happiness there sits there the gaunt and Abgush, with bitten lips and sunken eye, and ashes in her hair. The romp of the dancers who have left seems rambling yet, the jarring chatters that quake the floor and rattle the glasses of the feast ring the rim. The spilled wine on the floor turns into blood. The wreaths of plush have become wriggling reptiles. Terrors catch tangled in the canopy that overshadows the couch. A strong gust of wind comes through the hall and the drawing-room and the bed-chamber, in which all the lights go out. And from the lips of the wisest of the guests come the words, "Happiness is not in us!" And the arches respond, "It is not in us!"

And the silenced instruments of music, thrummed on by invisible fingers, answer, "Happiness is not in us!" And the lips of Anguish break open, and, seated on the throne of wretched flowers, she strikes her bony hands together, and groans, "It is not in us!"

That very night a clerk with a salary of a thousand dollars a year—only one thousand—goes to his home, set up three months ago, just after the marriage day. Love nests him at the door; love sits on him at the table; love talks over the work of the day; love takes down the Bible, and reads of Him who came our souls to save; and they kneel, a while they are talking—right in that plain room, on the plain carpet—the angels of God build a throne, not out of flowers that perish and fade away, but out of garlands of heaven, wreath on top of wreath, amaranth on amaranth, until the throne is done. Then the harps of God sounded, and suddenly there appeared one who mounted the throne with eye so bright and brow so fair that the clerk knew it was Christal Love. And they knelt at the foot of the throne, and putting one hand on each head, she blessed them, and said, "Happiness is with me!" And that throne of celestial bloom withered not with the passing years; and the queen left not the throne till one day the married pair felt themselves in years—felt themselves called away, and knew not which way to go, and the queen bounded from the throne, and said, "Follow me, and I will show you the way up to the realm of everlasting love." And she they went up to sing songs of love, and walk on pavements of love, and to live together in mansions of love, and to rejoice forever in the fruits that God is love.

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