

# Sisters All!

Dear Martha,

Ever since I received your letter asking for ideas for your talk on marriage to the young adult group, my mind has refused to consider any other theme but "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." This comprehensive commandment sounds deceptively simple. I have heard some repeat it glibly, with such superficial understanding that they even tried to improve on it by adding, "We should love our neighbor even more than ourselves." Whether or not this is either possible or desirable, there is certainly enough challenge in the statement as it stands to demand our highest Christian devotion and consecration.

You may ask what this has to do specifically with marriage. Simply this: that husbands and wives are "neighbors" in the truest, most intimate sense. Their relationship provides a laboratory where this principle can be tested to the ultimate, literal extreme, thus serving as one indicator of true Christian marriage.

To love another "as thyself"—what does this mean? There are four ways in which I find that I have an innate and irresistible concern for myself. Put in terms of "love," I must recognize that I "love" my own rights, my comfort, my freedom and my chance for self-realization. These are not things that I can be casual about. They are important to me in both large and small ways, every day of my life.

If I love my husband as myself, then, I am equally concerned for him to have these same basic advantages. My love is expressed by my willingness to work for these benefits for him with as much enthusiasm and determination as I seek them for myself.

Let's take these four values, one at a time:

1. Rights. Every human being has certain essential needs, such as food, shelter, personal property, and respect from others. No one questions another's right to three meals a day, but it requires a higher regard for another's rights to treat that person's property as carefully as we would our own—even if it is our husband's! Everyone needs to feel that he is respected as a person, and both John and I are the better for the other's respect and confidence.
2. Comfort. There is more to "home" than mere shelter from the cold. Home is where we can indulge ourselves in the small pleasures that ease life's rough places. At home we can show our affection for each other in a tangible way, by knowing and catering to each other's special likes with the same zest as if they were our own.
3. Freedom. There is in us all a basic urge to be free to choose our own way of life. We cannot completely guarantee liberty to anyone, but speaking as a wife, I can help to guard my husband from too restrictive family relationships. For here in such close quarters it is easy to enforce one's will on another, either by outright verbal demands or by the subtle pressure of voluntary martyrdom. Freedom to be oneself—what a boon that is for one's peace of mind! I shall always appreciate John's acceptance of me as I am, faults and all, with no attempt to "make me over."
4. Self-realization. We all are born with an insatiable thirst for a higher and better life. We yearn to make the most of our potential, in both a practical and a spiritual sense. One of the truest ways we can show our love to another is by encouraging his efforts toward self-realization. This willingness to let him be an independent soul in God's sight—no extension of ourselves nor in any way subject to us—this is a genuine test of unselfish love. Indeed, any other kind is actually self-love.

Perhaps the best advice you can give to your young husbands and wives, after all, is to love each other as themselves. This is no magic formula; it is a humble, day-

A Layman Writes:

## "I WANT MY PASTOR TO GO FIRST CLASS"

My pastor is a professional man. The years and money he spent in college and in the seminary could have been spent qualifying him as an attorney, an architect, an engineer, and could have sent him well on his way toward the practice of medicine.

But he didn't want to be an architect or a lawyer; he was called to the ministry. Heaven knows that money didn't attract him. His is a dedicated, selfless job of service that only a firm faith and a lasting devotion could support. He is my pastor because that faith and devotion wouldn't let him settle for anything but the Christian ministry.

I had a hand in hiring him; I help to pay his salary; and I have a voice in virtually everything he does where my church is concerned. Like my church, he is my responsibility; and I want him to go first class. I have never subscribed to the theory that ministers of the gospel should eat less, dress cheaper, or live more frugally than other professional men.

Since he is the chief representative of my church, I want my pastor to look like his people care about him. When he goes to the convention, I want him to have money in his pocket for all of his expenses. I don't want him to have to scrimp and save from his own allowance to accomplish the work of the church.

Whether he makes more money or less money than I do matters not a whit. What does matter is that he be compensated in a fashion commensurate with his training, his ability, and his responsibilities. If he chooses to give all of his money to the poor and go threadbare himself, that is his business. If he goes threadbare through my own parsimony, that's my business.

I am proud of my pastor and the work he does. I know he'll never be rich in material things. But when he attends my conventions, when he speaks publicly, when he makes the rounds of the ministry, I want all who see him to know that he has a congregation that loves him.

I want my pastor to travel first class.

—Jim Wiggins in the Texas Baptist Standard

## CANADIAN TEMPERANCE FEDERATION

The Canadian Temperance Federation will hold its Annual Convention in Ottawa, Dec. 4-5, at the Chateau Laurier Hotel. Important matters relating to name and program are to be discussed. A report on the World Conference on Alcohol and Road Traffic, which met last September in London, England, will be given in the form of a panel. The rapidly growing work of education in the schools will be prominently featured. At the closing banquet, John Park Lee, a leading layman of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. and serving on the National Council of Churches' Commission on Problems of Alcoholism, will speak on "Planning Alcohol Education in the Churches." A brief is being prepared to be presented to the Prime Minister of Canada and members of his Cabinet.

## THE FLAME FROM HEAVEN

Oh, the precious flame of God in the heart; the flame of God that comes to burn out sin and burn in holiness. I believe in a Saviour who does not only deal with the guilt and power of sin, but takes away the love of sin, and puts in its place a flame of passion for God, for charity, for holiness, for Jesus, for souls, for the world.

—Alan Redpath

by-day affair. Christ classed it, however, along with the commandment to love the Lord God Himself. "There is none other commandment greater than these," Jesus said.

Your loving sister,

Mary

The King's Highway