Learning From The Mistakes Of Others (Part Two): Marriage and Parental Support – Discussion Notes
(Pas. Baines, Jr. 4/2018)

Read: Judges 3:5-7 --- 5 The Israelites lived among the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites. 6 They took their daughters in marriage and gave their own daughters to their sons, and served their gods. 7 The Israelites did evil in the eyes of the LORD; they forgot the LORD their God and served the Baals and the Asherahs.

Introduction: A possible benefit of knowing history is that we can learn from the mistakes of others. In our text, we should learn from the mistakes of those who married outside their faith and those who supported the sins of their young people. This discussion centers around how “We should avoid ungodly marriages and sinful parental support.”

Key Points:
1. The Christian faith has several denominations. Notice in Romans 12:8 that Christians from all denominations are members of the same body. On one hand, we - Baptists, Methodists, Pentecostals, Presbyterians, Episcopalians, and more - gravitate towards various sets of teachings and practices. And some couples do well being in different denominations and churches. But on the other hand, most married couples would do better being members of the same denomination and church. It is good for both spouses to receive the same feeding and leading. The issue is not sin but possible stress. Let’s help married couples use wisdom regarding church membership.

2. Being members of the same church is no guarantee. Notice Matthew 7:20-21 teaches that we can tell the tree by its fruit, not just what is said. A husband and wife can be members of the same church and still have trouble. If one is growing in their discipleship and the other just have their name on the membership roster, there can be stress. We should strive to be disciples who marry disciples. We can tell who is a disciple by their lifestyle, more than what one says. Think about all the stuff that we say in our church covenant compared to what we do. Marriage is challenging enough with two people trying to live for Jesus. When a disciple is married to a carnal Christian, there is often stress. Disciples should strive to marry only those who are disciples as well.

3. Marrying outside the faith is still sin. Passages like II Corinthians 6:14; John 14:6; and I John 5:11-12 teach that Christians should only marry Christians. As it was sin in Judges 3 for God’s people to marry outside their faith, it is still sin for Christians to marry outside the Christian faith (e.g., Jehovah Witnesses, Muslims, Jews, Buddhists, and others). A danger of marrying outside of your faith is that you will begin to act and believe like them more than they act and believe like you. It is easy enough to stop giving, serving, and attending worship without your spouse pulling

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1 Prepare to discuss the following: What is the point, what scripture supports the point, what is the application sentence, and what is an example of living by the material? After the material is covered, be prepared to answer the following: Which point do you want to spend extra time on, why do you think this point is so important, and what tips do you have for living by this material, in spite of the challenges? What is one thing you will take from this session and work on, in regard to your discipleship goals?
you in that direction. *Let’s help Christians marry only Christians.* The Pastor only performs weddings for saved men marrying saved women.

4. **Our young people have a mind of their own.** Notice Ezekiel 18:2-4 teaches that the parent and child will be held accountable for their own actions. After our best efforts, our young people still have a mind of their own. Sometimes they use their minds to do great things. And sometimes, they use their minds for evil things (e.g., sex outside of marriage, drug abuse, drifting from the church, wasting time and money, being irresponsible with family duties, etc.). As painful as it is to see our loved ones make mistakes, we must learn to trust that the same God who took care of us and is taking care of us (see Ps. 90:1) will do the same for our young people (see Ps. 100:5). *Let’s work on accepting that our young people have a mind of their own.* When we nurture a worrying spirit, we are behaving as if we have not accept this idea.

5. **But we don’t have to support evilness.** Notice in Luke 15:11-32 that the father had tuff and soft love. Besides the sins of interfaith marriages in Judges 3, there were the sins of the parents and elders who supported the sins of the young people. As disciples of Christ, we should “Stop supporting the evilness of our children.” We may not be able to stop our young people from being sorry (i.e., lazy), but we can stop them from being lazy in our homes. We may not be able to stop them from being irresponsible with their children and spouses, but we can stop supporting their irresponsibility. We cannot stop them from abusing drugs, but we can stop them from doing it in our homes and with our money. God shows some tuff love in passages like Matthew 27:46 and II Corinthians 5:21, but He also shows soft love in passages like Philippians 2:9-11. *Let’s seek God’s wisdom and strength to exercise tuff and soft love, as appropriate.*