



## SESSION FIVE

### Tremendous Trifles Hinder God's Building of a Marriage

Here's what we've covered thus far in the building process. He *prepares* this child as a person. That's the first step. He *guides* you to the right choice. That's the second *big* step! And so these two—knowing that *God* has led them together—they commit themselves to each other for life, not just because they love each other, but because they know *God* has brought them together. When God brings two people together, as I know He brought Mittie and me together, you wouldn't expect them to have any problems then after they get married, would you? Just because you're having serious problems does not undermine the fact that God has brought you *together*.

I got a letter several years ago from one of our students. When they were engaged at Columbia Bible College, they were one of those choice couples, you know. The fellow, he was one of the outstanding leaders. And the young girl, she was one of the outstanding girls on campus—very beautiful persons, deeply spiritual. And boy, when we saw that God was leading them together, boy it was one of those—you know—just the *ideal* couple! And boy, *everybody* was so excited. And they were married.

Six months after they were married I got a seven-page letter from him. This is one sentence out of it: “I don't want to be down on marriage; it's just that it's turned out to be everything I always feared, and nothing that I always wished.”

“You mean God brought them together and that's what it is?” Yes. Not always. But I'll tell you, there is something here that if you have not faced it when you get into that *intimate* relationship where the *masks* are down, and the *doors* are shut, and the *honeymoon* is over, and you begin the routine—if you have not come to grips with it before—it will raise its ugly head. It'll appear like what many authorities call as they write on marriage and family; they call it “A Tremendous Trifle.” And it'll *bug* you!

Do you know what a tremendous trifle is? Sounds like a contradiction of terms. Every marriage counselor who understands marriage, who talks about it—they'll tell you cases that will roll you in the aisles. And I could tell you about little old things my wife does that just send me up the wall. And then I'm a great psychologist and I try to analyze that: “Why does that little old thing bother *me*?” And then I begin to realize that that tremendous trifle is a tip of a tremendous problem. It's the tip of an iceberg. It goes deep down in the soul of every human being. And it's so serious I call it—. I hate to say “absolute,” but I tell you, if you cannot find an answer to this you will never be one. You'll be romantic, you can talk about it, you can preach about it, but you'll never be one until you basically come to grips with this *great* iceberg that shows its little old head sometimes. It's what I call The Great Barrier—The Great, Great Barrier to Oneness. And it's in every human being. We don't want to hide it. We don't want to cover it up, but we want to come to grips with it because if you don't understand it, and if you don't get God's answer—not just once, *all the way through*—this thing will rip. And as Galatians says, “Be careful lest you devour one another.”

You say a Christian can't do—! Yes, a Christian who knows Jesus Christ, who knows he's saved, who knows God has led them together, all of a sudden this thing can hit you. You know what it is? The Bible shows us where it began, and I want you to see what the Bible—how the *Bible* analyzes it. I will apply it to marriage and show you why you will never be one if you don't come to grips with it.

Turn with me to Genesis chapter 2 again. Verse 24 is our blueprint. And I'll say again that wrapped up in these three general principles is everything you need for a marriage that's like God. “*Leave* your father and mother”—*most* important. “*Cleave* unto your wife”—only permanent relationship. “And they shall be one.”

Now watch the next verse. I did not read it before. Often this verse is passed over. “They were both naked.” You see the moment I say that, then you get all kinds of confusing thoughts. “That’s like cannibals.” Oh, no. That’s beautiful. “And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.” And that’s all God shows us, but He gives you just a little, little picture of that marriage. You’ve got, on a human level, an *absolutely perfect* marital relationship. My understanding of that verse is this: That here is a young man perfect in body, in soul, in everything. With his walk with God, there’s no sin. And here’s a young woman, perfect, no sin, perfect with God. And they are perfect with each other. And they were absolutely what? *One*. So much so that there was nothing between them—not even clothing. So Eve could say, “I and Adam are one. We don’t have to hide, we’re not ashamed, we’re not covering up—just one, naked, no clothes. Nothing between us. Absolutely *one*.” They could also say—Adam could say—“I and my God are one. There’s nothing between God and me.” Eve could say, “I and my God are one. There is nothing between me and God. There’s nothing between us and God. God and we are one.” And Eve could say, “Adam and I are one.” And Adam could say, “Eve and I are one.” That is perfect. Don’t you wish it would have stayed that way?

Do you know what happened? Let’s read it. You know the story in Genesis 3. God had told them not to do certain things, not to eat of this particular tree. “Everything else is yours, but this you shall not . . .” and the serpent came, and the devil came, and tempted Eve. She took and gave to her husband and he did eat and they disobeyed God.

Now pick it up quickly in verse 7 for the results. *There are two drastic results!* And all through Scripture God continually deals with these *two* things. I’ll show you the two, and then I’ll show you the one that is of concern to us. Here’s the result of their disobedience—verse 7: “And the eyes of them both were opened.” What do you mean, “their eyes were opened”? Do you mean they were blind? He’s not talking about the physical eye. He’s talking about the eye of the heart, the understanding. And now they began to understand; “the eyes of them both were opened and they *knew*.” Knew what? That they were naked. They looked, and for the first time they are mentally aware that they are naked.

“And they sewed—” Forget that old proverbial picture of Adam and Eve and one fig leaf on a certain part of his body. He didn’t take a fig leaf! He took a lot of fig leaves and made him an apron and he covered himself. People have been doing that ever since—*covering up!* Now, don’t get tied up on nudity! This is deeper than that. Now, don’t go out and say, “On the other hand, Hatch said it’s alright!” I’m just saying it is deeper than the prudish thing that we talk about, just running around without clothes on. That’s tied *in* with this, but it’s deep! “And they heard the voice of Jehovah God walking in the garden in the cool of the day; and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of Jehovah God among the trees of the garden.” They did the same thing to *God*. God came down and wanted to talk to him. You know what he did? Went behind a tree and hid. Why? You see the two results? What happened between Adam and Eve and God?

Now the theologians—you can look at it from many different angles. You can explain it in different *words*. You might be saying the same thing. I don’t want to just hook on to certain *words* and insist that you say it in a certain *way*. But I do want to get the reality here. God and Adam were what before he sinned? God was right there talking with him and he wasn’t afraid of God, and Adam was talking to God, and they were *one*. When Adam disobeyed, what happened? And God warned him that “if you take of this fruit you will” what? “You’ll die.” What is death? Death is . . . *separation*. He didn’t lie down and die! He and God, who had been one, they were separated. And now he looks up there and he said, “God is not me and I’m not God. I’m scared of Him and I’ve got to hide.” And he ran behind a big oak tree and hid himself. Now that’s clear. Everybody talks about that and you *dare* not ignore it! Man has been separated from God. It is your sin that has separated you from God.

But here is what has *not* been emphasized. Do you know what happened to Adam and Eve? When it says all of a sudden they realized they were naked, and they had to cover up. Adam and Eve were what before that? *One*. And when they disobeyed God the effect of sin is not only to separate them from, God but to do what? *Separate them from each other*. And at that moment, they who were one, had nothing between them. They were naked and were not ashamed. Now they were *ripped* apart! And Adam looked to himself and he said, “Look, I’m naked. I’ve gotta cover it.” And Eve looked at herself. “I’m naked.” She’s got to cover it, because they’ve been *ripped* apart!

They are separated—and psychologically. There is a theological consequence. There is an awful psychological consequence. For the first time in human experience, human beings are now *separated*. And they know there is something wrong. And so they try to cover up. And he covered himself. He's not covering his genitals. He's covering himself. And she's covering herself; and ever since men have tried to cover themselves before God, and from each other. Something happened to man that day and God came and said, "Why did you run away?" "Because we were naked." God said, "Who told you you were naked?" And do you know what Adam said? "That woman." "That woman You gave me. She gave me the fruit." And it's been that way ever since. That is where it began. It had left us psychologically with something askew. Modern psychology ignores it. And I'm awfully afraid that some evangelicals are breathing the mood of the day and seem to ignore it. There is something wrong psychologically in human beings. And I can show you what it will do to your marriage. And it is The Great Barrier. And it can come out as a little tremendous trifle. It gets worse and worse and before long he blows his stack.

Boy, I had a couple—both of them graduates of Columbia Bible College. He was working in Columbia. They came to me. They'd been married nine years. And he confessed to me openly, "I'm sorry. I got so mad at my wife, I really physically abused her. I don't know what's happening. My marriage is falling apart." I talked to her and I talked to him. I was a little afraid. It looked like they were going to end this thing, get a divorce. I didn't know what God was going to do, but I just shared with them simply what I'm going to share with you. And I saw God turn her around and God turned him around, and they got back together. And I've seen them several times since. And they say, "Oh, Mr. Hatch, it's like heaven on earth." Do you know what was ripping them? It's that great iceberg that is in the soul of every human being. Let's not abstract it, and I'll try with all that's in me to ignore the theological labels. I want to deal with reality.

Turn with me to some familiar verses that will tell us the reality without using the abstract terms. Isaiah 47, verse 8. He's talking about a man; he's talking about the king of Babylon whose name was Nebuchadnezzar. And he's just analyzing the psychology of Nebuchadnezzar and as I understand humanity, he's no different than me or you. He had a little more position than I do, a little more status. He was a king of an empire! "Now therefore hear this, thou that art given to pleasures, that sitteth securely . . ."—that's Nebuchadnezzar, head of that great empire of Babylon—" . . . that sayest in thy heart, 'I am, and there is none else besides me.'" Do you know what that is? My friend, there's the reality. There is the psychological—. The New Testament analyzes and uses all kinds of expressions and terms and they become abstractions for us. But down in the depths of every human heart is this whisper, this drive, this push saying to me, "I am, and there is none else beside me." Now you can label that. Let's don't label it. Let's just touch the reality. "I am and there is none else beside me." Do you know what that is? That will *tear* you to pieces. That, my friend, is the barrier to oneness. That is the iceberg that comes up as a little tremendous trifle and sends me up the wall. It is not the tremendous trifle; it's this thing in my heart that sends me up the wall because "*I am, and there is no one else but me.*"

Turn over to the familiar passage, Isaiah 53:6. This is the word that brought me to Jesus Christ. My brother shared it with me as he led me to the Lord. "All we, like sheep, have gone astray." We have turned everyone to adultery. True or false? We have turned everyone to murder? We have turned everyone to stealing? No. The root is what? We have turned everyone to *his own way*. What's that? I just do what *I* want to do.

When I come home at night, do you know what I *want* to do? I want to sit down and I want to read the newspaper. I want to read the sports section first. And I don't want anybody to mess it up. Now what's wrong with that? Is anything wrong with reading the sports section and wanting it first? That's not wrong, is it? Nowhere in the Bible does God say, "Thou shalt not read the sports section!" Do you realize divorces come just because she takes it and gets it all out of order and throws it away? *Cuts coupons out of the sports section*. Why does that bug people? Because they are tremendous trifles that keep me from having what I want.

May I share one of my tremendous trifles? I don't know why my wife does it; I mean anybody who is normal wouldn't do it this way. When she puts the toothpaste back in the cabinet, for some reason she always lays it so the cap faces this way. When I come in in a hurry, I want to grab it *this* way, and I want the cap facing *this* way. And so that bugs me. Why does it bug me? It's because that is what *I* want. The Bible says you have turned to your own way. My friend, this is deep.

May I show you what it does to marriages? Here is a husband. Here is a wife, and they're good persons. You can give me the most normal developed person; he doesn't have any hang-ups. He's learned how to relate to people. He's learned all of this, but I'll guarantee you, I don't care who he is, the Bible gives a sweeping statement. There is no exception. We're all alike; there is no sexual distinction. But here is the male, and here is the female, and here is the husband, and here is the wife. And deep down inside is this awful iceberg.

He might have a personality like mine that's white washed it. I'm a typical southern gentleman. And I have personality because of my personality struggles. I will do *anything* to please somebody. I'm the kind that will carry out the garbage and I'll do anything nobody else wants to do. I am one of those sweet guys—so sweet it stinks. But I'll tell you the same thing is true of us southern gentlemen who are so sweet. Deep down inside the motivation is "That's what I want." Do you know why I want it? Because I found early in life the best way I could get people to like me was to carry out the garbage. And deep down underneath this is what I'm saying. It is very, very strong: "I am, and there is nobody else but me. And you'd better please me. Give me the sports page. Give me eggs like *I* want. Give me sex when *I* want it, because *I* am, and there is none else." If I am painting too dark a picture, you'd better go to the Scripture and see. "I am." There is only one person in all of the universe who has a right to say that: the great I Am. And when I rip myself from God by sin then I say, "*I am*, and there is nobody else but me."

The other thing here, "I want". What do I want? *I* want the sports page. What does she want? She wants what I want. Now you can apply this to all the things as you read articles in the paper and in the journals about what rips marriages. The three biggies are: Money. Do you know why? Because he says, "*I* want a new *boat*." Do you know what she says? "*I* want a new *coat*." Ah, you say, "It's a matter of money!" It is not a matter of money. If you pull this out, your *money* you can work out. Do you know the other one that breaks them? You say, "It's sex." It's not sex. It's this: It's what I want. You get rid of that. I don't mean get rid; I mean you deal with that as God shows you. Do you know what the other—? Children. "I want my children disciplined. I don't want my child—."

You can take any of them. The root of it is "It's what *I* want." Now let me ask you. Can those two ever be one—when he wants this, she wants this? It'll rip them apart. You know what the Bible calls this? I'll tell you just so you'll know what I'm talking about. But I charge you; don't get hung up on abstractions that are becoming meaningless as we flip them around so commonly. The Bible calls this the root of sin. "Oh," you say, "sin . . . well, *I* never murder." When the Bible talks about sin and the root of it, the great principle of sin is going and doing what *I* want. It's not *sins*, it's not *acts*. It's the *root!* The New Testament sometimes calls it "the flesh." "They that walk after the flesh." Sometimes the New Testament calls it "the old man." The New Testament goes *deep* into these things.

I just want to tell you if I had not found—and mine is *awfully* strong! Any child who has been deprived in his childhood, you know what this thing will be like? It'll be like this (shows two fists together in conflict). And boy it won't be much to set him off. But if he's been satisfied, you know, and he's had a normal family experience and he's not, you know, hung up. But I'll tell you deep down inside he's got it. Now you can call it "selfishness." You can call it "seeking your own thing." You can call it "living for yourself." Call it whatever you want to. Let's face the reality that when Adam sinned he was separated, not only from God, but from each other. And ever since, men have been going around with this thing in them, trying to get together. And they knock each other and devour each other. And you expect people, because they are "in love," to get together? Never, until you get God's answer. I call this The Great Barrier to Oneness. But I do thank God that he has shown me a little of how to deal with it. If I hadn't tasted a little of God's answer, I couldn't have gone on. There is an answer. There is good news. May I tell you the gospel of Jesus Christ, if it does not take care of this in some sense, would it be good news? The *gospel* deals with this. The gospel is not *just* to give me a ticket to heaven! The gospel is complete and full, so that it deals with *all* that I need!

I want to just drop three little suggestions for you—the provisions of God. Three things He's given us to care for this—lovingly. We had no right to expect that a loving God would come to such rebels as we and say, "I still love you. And because you've turned away and you've blown it, and you've got the result in you, then I will now give you the answer for it." But He did.

Turn with me to Matthew chapter 7, verse 3. Now this is just one little expression of it. The whole Scripture is full of it. This will be a good verse just to get us on it, and I'll just apply it to the marriage relationship. "Why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy wife's eye?" "Do you know what she does? She puts fatback in the beans!" Now I use that because I *love* fatback. Look: "Why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy wife's eye?" Do you know what mote, m-o-t-e means? That's not m-o-a-t. It's a speck, like a speck of sawdust. Have you ever gotten a speck of sawdust in your eye? That's a mote. Do you know what that is? That is a tremendous trifle that bugs you. Why beholdest thou the speck in your husband's eye? You know what he does? He throws his dirty socks, leaves them right on the floor. "He could at least put them in the hamper." "Why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy wife's eye and considerest not the beam—the two-by-four?" My friend, that's exactly what He says: "The beam that is in thine own eye." First, cast out the two-by-four, or the four-by-four—or for me, it is a ten-by-ten—in thine own eye. Then you'll see clearly how to deal with your wife.

I've never had a married couple come to me with any difficulty except they all say this. I talk to the wife and do you know what she says? "Do you know what he does?" Then I talk to him and do you know what he says? "Do you know what she does?" They *always* are looking at this (refers to diagram on blackboard) and she will look at that. I have never had one yet come and say, "Mr. Hatch, there is something wrong with me. Can you help me?" I never found one like that, because when you get there the problems go. Do you know what God has done? God has simply said—in this completely self-centered, indulgent culture—He has said, "Stop! That is *not* the way to live." God has lovingly given you His law that says, "That is not the way to live." The way you are living in America, the whole thing is, "You've got to get your own fulfillment. You've got to stroke me right and I'll tell you how to—." The Bible says, in the middle of an indulgent, self-centered culture, "Stop! That is *not* the way to do it." And the law of God comes upon us as Christians. You watch the Lord Jesus as He goes before His disciples. And He knew He came from God, and that He was going back to God, and that He had possessed all things. And do you know what He did? He knew He was going to the cross, and He laid aside His garments and He washed their feet. You do the same.

I'll challenge you the next time your wife does something that sends you up the wall, instead of getting mad and jumping on her, you go aside and say, "Lord, deal with this." That's the law. The law is *good*. And you ought to thank God for it. But if that is all He'd given us, it would have killed us because we can't do it. But here is what He did: Lovingly, He not only gave us His law that says, "Forget this, forget the little ole trifles; deal with yourself!" He also lovingly gave us His Son.

And God says, "They've run away and they split. They not only separated themselves from Thee, but they separated themselves from each other. And they are fighting each other. And if I don't do something they are going to kill each other. And so I'll send My Son." I'm talking as a foolish man. He turned to His Son: "Son, would You go down and take it for them?" And He said, "Yes." And so He came down and became one of us. And He died—*for our sins*.

I won't have time to even turn to it, but in the second chapter of Ephesians there are two great paragraphs. In the first ten verses God is explaining what happened—to *us Christians*! Do you know what happened on the cross? "Do you not know once you were dead in trespasses and sins, but now He has raised you from the dead?" At the cross He took you and He brought them back together, and made them one again. That's the good news. Do you realize you've been brought back to God and you and God are one? Say it with me in your heart: "I and my Father are *one*."

The second part of Ephesians 2 says this. "Ye who once were far off . . ." Far off from what? "Ye who once were far off from each other . . ."—talking about Jews and Gentiles—" . . . in Jesus Christ are made *near*." How near? It goes on to say: "For He is our peace who hath made both *one*." It's already been done. Do you realize that you and your wife—in Christ—you're *one*? That's the good news. My wife and I are *one*—in Christ.

The war is over; not only between you and God, but between you and each other. It is settled! Do you know what God has done? He has given you lovingly your law that says, "Don't live that way." He has given you His Son to set you free from sin. And that's not all! He has given you the Holy Spirit. In Romans 8, verses 1 through 4, I won't take time to turn to it; He says, "There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For what the law could not do because we were weak, God, sending His own Son in the likeness

of sinful flesh, condemned sin in the flesh.” Listen: “. . . that the requirements of the law . . .” Do you know what the requirements of the law are? Don’t let the tremendous trifles bother you. “That the requirements of the Law might be fulfilled in those who walk in the Spirit, and not after the flesh.” He’s given you the Holy Spirit, and verse 2 says, “The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus sets me free from the law of sin and death.” Do you know that? Now, I am not presenting anything that you can touch and be forever free. Every time it rears its ugly head. And oh, how many times I have to cry out to God, “Lord, I am just a miserable, self-centered—! Just like the king of Babylon, I want my own way. I want to be it. I want everybody to stroke me and think I am the greatest. But Lord, I want to turn from that and I turn again to You.”

And I have tasted just a *little*—that the Holy Spirit comes and sometimes He will lift me above and keep me above and I won’t be irritated, even when my wife turns the toothpaste the wrong way. “The law of the Spirit of life sets me free from the law of sin and death.” That’s God’s provision. Lovingly He has given you His law, and lovingly He has given you His Son to pay the penalty. Lovingly He’s given you the powerful Holy Spirit to enable you to do it. The only thing left is for you to respond to it. Is Jesus your Lord? Is that what you want? Will you trust Him on the basis of this: “I believe God. I’m going to trust Him to do this in me”? That’s your response. You do this every time it kicks up. If she does it, he does it, do you know what will happen? Do you reckon they could be one then? Ah, you’ll begin to taste—. And I’ve seen Him do it.

My wife and I had supper with a married couple in Columbia. He was at school and graduated some years ago. When he took Marriage and Family Life he brought his wife in. “She’s got a lot of problems. In fact, she is not even sure she’s saved.” He still jokes about this—with a heavy heart. So I began talking with her and spent a lot of time with her. And God set her free. Then it began to come clear that it wasn’t primarily her; it was him. And he was cutting her down. He didn’t think she was worth—. She couldn’t give him *anything*. And boy, when I was dealing with this in class, God put His finger on him and broke him. And he fell like a little child before the Lord.

The next day in class he gave his testimony of how God had shown him that for all the nine years they had been married he was just sitting up there trying to get from his wife everything he wanted. And God began to set him free. And oh, what a change took place in their marriage!

This is not a push button thing that you can get once and for all. It is not one great experience; it is a constant process. Every time I need it I call on Him and it’s available. You’ll never be one until you deal with the barrier. *God* has provided. Will you take it?