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Miscellanea

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Miscellanea

John Gerhard on Marriage

[The following extract is not only an interesting illustration of the systematic exposition of a great dogmatician, but it is remarkably rich in its contributions for the pastor's preaching and counseling on Christian marriage. In keeping with Aristotelian logic, Gerhard distinguishes between the formal and material principle in marriage. This section presents extracts from *De Causa Formali Conjugii* (cap. VI of Loc. 25, *De Conjugio*, pars. 400 ff., in Berlin ed. of 1869 v.-7, p. 235 on basis of ed. 1857). To Gerhard, the material principle of marriage is the contracting parties themselves (*ibid.* cap. V, p. 101 ff.).—R. R. C.]

400. Some regard the formal principle of marriage to be the consent of the contracting parties. That opinion we have refuted above (cap. IV, par. 56) with four arguments. Hence we regard the form of marriage to be not the consent, but the lawful and indissoluble union of one man and one woman to one flesh, derived from the consent; or what is the same thing, that marital bond and obligation stemming from the mutual consent of each party unto one flesh. Three facts express this as the form of marriage: 1. *The divine institution itself*, Gen. 2:24; Matt. 19:5: *The two shall be one flesh*, from which words the Savior derives further inferences: hence *they no longer are two, but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, man shall not separate.* Before marriage the man and woman are two, but through the marriage and after marriage they are one flesh, joined together, namely by a most intimate and indissoluble bond each to the other, yes, one man by a joining not only of hearts, but also of bodies. For if it is rightly said of the unity of two souls, such as that which is set before us in David and Jonathan, 1 Sam. 28:3, that in two bodies they had one soul and heart, one soul in two bodies, one heart in two breasts, whence we have that aphorism:

Am I mistaken, or are these two people? They are two, and more than two;

These two, and these who are more than two, are nevertheless one man. Two as to body, one as to heart, since their union adds to their powers, they are three; thus they are three: two, and one man;

how much more can it be said of those who are wedded in piety and harmony that their heart is one in one body, since they are termed by the very mouth of God to be *one flesh*, that is, one person. For it has come from the idiom of the Hebrew tongue to speak of a pair wedded *unto one flesh*, that is, to be one flesh, . . . and what is called one flesh, that is, one person. Gen. 6:12: *All flesh had corrupted his way*, that is, every man. Deut. 5:26: *Who is there of all flesh*, that is, every man, etc.—2. *The definition of marriage handed down in civil law.* Justinian . . . : "Nuptials or matrimony is a joining together of a man and woman merging the individual mode of life into one." Modestinus . . . : "Marriage is the joining together of a man and woman and of all the life of the consorts, a sharing of divine and human privilege." . . .—3. The

same fact is approved by *plain reason*. The formal principle has three functions: to give a thing its essence . . . ; to distinguish one thing from another . . . ; and to give function to the whole . . . The lawful joining of one man and one woman to one flesh provides these three factors to marriage, through which therefore marriage is what it is, by which it is distinguished from other kinds of friendship and compacts, and from which stems the mutual obligation for the functions of marriage.

401. It is not valid that you retort that the Apostle 1 Cor. 6:16 asserts that *he who clings to a harlot is made one body with her*, and in support adduce the words of institution of marriage Gen. 2:24: *they two shall be one flesh*, from which would appear to follow that that which has been posited as the formal principle of marriage is identical with the cohabitation of fornicators. For in the first place we did not say without qualification that the form of marriage is the union of one man and one woman, but we add expressly: *lawful and indissoluble*. For just as the mingling of the fornicator and harlot is not a lawful union, since it is not in accord with the laws of marriage and with moral precepts, but directly contrary to them, so is it not an indissoluble union—according to law, that is; even though sometimes in actual fact it is not dissolved before death, but ought rather at the first possible moment be dissolved; just as contrariwise the union of man and wife is dissoluble in actual fact but not according to law (*de facto, de iure*), wherefore the Apostle commands: *Let not the wife depart from her husband; and if she depart, let her remain unmarried or be reconciled to her husband*. 1 Cor. 7:10-11. Secondly, therefore, the Apostle, as we see it, fails to assert concerning the mingling of fornication that it is that sort of union of two people to one flesh as is described in the primeval institution of marriage, which is in accord with the divine ordinance and hence also pleasing and acceptable to God, in accordance with nature, conformable to decent laws, helpful and necessary for the preservation and propagation of the human race; but rather does he inveigh against that lawless mingling with a harlot as a horrible perversion of the divinely instituted order, revolting to law and the ordinance of marriage, devised by the devil. The Apostle says this to the shame and confusion of fornicators, because they do not shrink in shame from being bound with a harlot in one flesh* and brazenly violating the most sacred laws of marriage upholding that decent and lawful union with a pious spouse. Thirdly, in the union of spouses the Apostle recognizes the mystery of the spiritual union between Christ and the Church, Eph. 5:32; but union of fornicators is a horrible misdeed, concerning which the Apostle expresses these solemn words 1 Cor. 6:15: *Know you not that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ and make them members of a harlot? Never!*

* Gerhard does not mention that St. Paul distinguishes between *σάρξ* and *σῶμα*.

402. From this form of marriage we draw seven principles, of which the first six pertain to marriage entered upon, the seventh to marriage still to be entered upon. Principle I, *the very intimate association of spouses*. Since spouses are one flesh, therefore their association, union, and connection is by far the most intimate possible. For what union can be imagined to be more intimate than that which is involved in the unity of souls and bodies? Wherefore even God Himself in the institution of marriage rates it above the association and connection between parents and children, Gen. 2:24: *The man will leave father and mother and cling to his wife*. For children are severed from the embrace of their parents, and when they undertake marriage, they form new families; but the union of spouses involves the communion of souls, bodies, families, abilities with one another. To the description of this most intimate marital association can be applied the fact that God, when He sets out to make the first spouse, formed her not of the dust of the earth, but takes a rib, that is, a part of the body, from Adam and constructs a woman of it, whom He joins later again through marriage to Adam as a part of his body, who exclaims with elation about it: *This is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh, and will be called woman*. Gen. 2:23. Hence the husband regards the wife as joined to himself by God as a part of his body, yes even as his own flesh, Eph. 5:28: *He who loves his wife, loves himself*, v. 29, *for no one ever had hatred for his own flesh*. This is what God says when He makes the woman, laying down a decree; Gen. 2:18: *It is not good, that man be alone; we shall make him a helper*, which is the same as another self, yet at the same time himself, with which he shares himself and everything that is his. If, accordingly, Pythagoras properly said of the intimate union of souls *a friend is another self to the other*, then we rightly say in the language of God Himself about the most intimate union of body and souls that a spouse is the very self of the other.

403. Principle 2: *The new consanguinity arising from marriage*. . . .

404. Principle 3: *The indissoluble character of marriage*. . . .

405. Principle 4: *The mutual rights of each spouse*. . . .

406. Principle 5: *The permanence of the love and benevolence between spouses*.

Since spouses are one flesh, therefore mutual love and benevolence should permanently flourish between them. This principle the Apostle deduces from the form of marriage Eph. 5:28-31. . . . The argument of the Apostle takes this course. Where there is unity of flesh, there mutual benevolence and love should flourish, for no one ever hated his own flesh. But between spouses, by divine ordinance, exists this unity of the flesh. Hence mutual benevolence and charity should flourish between them. Just as mutual and equable right over the body between spouses arises from the bond of the divine union and from the obligation derived from the consent to be one flesh, so likewise from that same principle should flourish continually and always between them mutual

love, mutual benevolence, mutual faith, forbearance for tolerating errors, mutual sympathy in adversity, mutual sharing of goods, in the education and rearing of children, in developing and conserving the common estate, especially the mutual activities in prayer and the exercises of piety, lest that which God instituted for a help result in an impediment for piety and happiness. Spouses are one flesh, that is, one person, therefore unity of wills and the zeal for a sacred harmony has forever priority between them, to which if that unity of true faith in Christ and sincere love flowing forth from it be added, one can imagine nothing more pleasing to God and useful to man; for by this means pious and loving spouses bring their grateful worship to God, display a praiseworthy example to others, and gain for themselves a temporal and eternal reward. *Ecclus. 25:1-2: With three things my spirit is pleased, and they are approved before God and men: the concord of brothers and the friendship of the neighbor and a man and a wife agreeing with each other, carrying each other about mutually, through mutual love bearing one another and being, as it were, girt about and held together by love. From this fount of conjugal love flow the functions of spouses, which are either those common to each spouse or specific for one or the other, that is, for the man or the wife, for in them conjugal love reveals and exerts itself. . . .*

407. Principle 6: *The community of all things between spouses. . . .*

408. Principle 7: *The great need of carefulness of those about to contract marriage.*

Gustavus Adolphus and Freedom of Conscience

In *Bibliotheca Sacra* (October—December, 1947) Harold J. Ockenga, under the heading "The Reformation and Gustavus Adolphus," directs the attention of its readers to this great Lutheran hero, who saved the cause of the Reformation in Central Europe, though when he landed in Pomerania, in 1630, he was only 36 years old; and when he died at Luetzen, in 1632, he was a mere youth of 38. And yet, as the writer says, "the life of Gustavus Adolphus proves that a single man is able to set his stamp upon an age." There are two paragraphs in the article which might be of interest also to our readers. The first concerns the person of the youthful king; the second, his outstanding work on behalf of freedom of conscience.

About the first we read: "The picture of Gustavus Adolphus personally riding to Brandenburg incognito so as to meet and win the hand of Princess Maria Eleanora in spite of the firm opposition and dislike of the Electress Anna, is representative of the man. Anna, a proud Prussian Duchess, had rebuffed the intentions of Gustavus almost to the stage of insult by correspondence. Nothing daunted, the Swedish king with a small group of noblemen merrily set foot on German soil under the pseudonym of Adolph Karlsson

and proceeded to Berlin. The recalcitrant Electress dowager refused to grant the king a private audience, but did allow Gustavus to be presented to herself and daughter along with the rest of the visiting cavaliers. The lovely princess was immediately won over to Gustavus by his broad joviality, radiant personality, handsome appearance, elegant manners, and intellectual superiority. Soon afterward the Electress Anna summoned him to her presence, where with irresistible persuasiveness and confiding modesty he pled his cause and completely captivated the Electress dowager, who henceforth totally capitulated to the Swedish youth. Thus in countless situations the personality of Gustavus Adolphus changed the events of history, for had Maria Eleanora married the Catholic son of King Sigismund of Poland, Brandenburg would have given no occasion for Gustavus' intervention in the Thirty Years' War." One wonders just what might have happened had Protestant Brandenburg been joined with Catholic Poland through the marriage to which Dr. Ockenga refers.

The other paragraph concerns us as citizens of our own free country. We read: "Remarkable is the fact that Gustavus Adolphus embraced the concept of freedom of conscience through his observations of the effect of intolerance in the religious wars. Gustavus' alliance with Catholic France helped to bring him to this conclusion. In the Treaty of Baerwalde (January, 1631) he engaged himself not to molest German Catholics in the exercise of their faith. He never held the goal of exterminating Catholicism, but of winning toleration for Protestantism. In winning this he wished it granted also to Catholics. Ahnlund says: 'Everything tends to show that it represented his sincere conviction, that it was part of a conscious philosophy. He felt convinced that it was the only policy for a statesman who aimed not only at defensive, but constructive action.' He uttered this principle in language as follows: '. . . to do no wrong unto and to inflict no persecution on any man for the sake of his creed.' To Oxenstjerna in October, 1632, one of his last letters was addressed concerning regulations for religion in the conquered territories. He closed it with a warning not to infringe on any man's freedom of conscience or his right to exercise his religion, 'leaving others undisturbed in their conscience and service, wherever they are established already.' Gustavus Adolphus held in principle that great view of religious liberty guaranteed to Americans in constitutional law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.' Swedish blood, German blood, Dutch blood, Scotch blood, English blood, Danish blood have been prodigally spilt to win that right and to establish that principle. Of it you who read this are the heirs. Gustavus Adolphus was ahead of his age. Only 150 years later did this principle become a reality. But we salute Gustavus Adolphus the Great and pledge the continuance of his cause."

JOHN THEODORE MUELLER

Can We Trust the Modern Versions?

In the *Moody Monthly* (February, 1948) John Mostert, who wrote his doctor's dissertation at Northern Baptist Theological Seminary on the merits of the Revised Standard Version of the New Testament, publishes, under the title given above, an analysis and review of seven modern Bible versions: Weymouth's, Moffatt's, Goodspeed's, Montgomery's, Williams', Verkuyl's, and Way's.

The versions of Weymouth, Moffatt, and Goodspeed are so well known that they require no further explanation. The Montgomery translation was prepared by Helen B. Montgomery and published in 1924, by the Judson Press, on the occasion of the hundredth anniversary of the American Publication Society "to signalize the completion of a century of work in Bible distribution, translation, and publication by the Judson Press." The Williams Translation was produced by Charles B. Williams, professor of Greek in Union University, Jackson, Tenn., and published in 1927. The full title of the work is "The New Testament: A Translation in the Language of the People." The Verkuyl translation was made in 1945 by Gerrit Verkuyl, New Testament fellow of Princeton. The work is titled: "Berkeley Version of the New Testament," with the additional phrase: . . . "from the original Greek with brief footnotes." The Way translation was published, at first in part, in 1901, at London, Engl., by Arthur S. Way, an extensive translator of the Greek and Latin classics. The second edition, produced in 1904, was a revision of the first and included the letter to the Hebrews. The work is now in its seventh edition.

There is much good that the writer has to say about these new translations. For one thing, they endeavor to speak in the language of the people of today. Furthermore, they are based upon a better revised Greek text than is the Authorized Version of over four hundred years ago. They are, moreover, prepared by scholars who have taken into consideration the great advance made in Biblical and grammatical research and who were free from the manifold limitations with which the producers of the King James Version had to cope.

But the versions have brought also paraphrase, interpretation instead of real translation, the use of readings which depart from the Authorized Version, often in serious ways, and, in general, hopeless confusion. The author closes his article with the words: "We do not advise any student of the New Testament to limit himself to any one translation, regardless of its excellent qualities. Use a standard version as the main text and the others as aids to clarity of understanding and variety of expression." But this can be only if the reader is able to check the translation with the original and is able to understand fairly well the use of the modern very complex critical apparatus; otherwise it will be impossible for him to discover just what the Greek text says. To the writer it seems that the student of the New Testament is more greatly benefited by the use of the *Interlinear Literal Translation of the*

Greek New Testament, which, while following the received text, nevertheless, has a fairly good critical apparatus, though it must be admitted that at times the translation is almost painfully literal. Yet it generally gives the student the exact thought of the Greek original.

The last words of the article read: "Modern translations can be used in private and family reading to good advantage. To many young people and new Christians unfamiliar with the archaic style of the King James Version, modern translations will be of decided value. Then, of course, every minister should have several at his disposal as an aid to his Bible study and preparation of sermons." The writer is not as optimistic about the use of the modern versions by laymen, unless, perhaps, they be students of college standing and thoroughly know what underlies the various translations. Otherwise they will receive the impression that the Bible is an obscure book which even the learned Greek scholars cannot translate clearly and accurately.

A few instances may render clear what we mean to say. Weymouth, for example, translates the famous passage Rom. 5:1-2 as follows: "Acquitted then as the result of faith, *let us enjoy* (italics our own) peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have been brought by our faith into the position of favour in which we stand, and we exult in hope of seeing God's glory." This translation is by far not as clear as is the Authorized Version, and besides, its use of the subjunctive *ἔχωμεν* instead of the indicative *ἔχομεν*, adopted also by Nestle and other modern text critics, disturbs the Apostle's sequence of thought, as he describes the blessed fruits of our justification by faith: we have peace with God, we have access by faith to this grace, we rejoice in hope, we glory in tribulations. At any rate, for the Christian unacquainted with Greek this translation presents a rather serious problem, especially as he views it in the light of the Authorized Version.

Of Moffatt the writer says: "Moffatt treated the text as one would render any piece of contemporary Hellenistic prose. He took pride in the fact that he had found 'freedom from the influence of the theory of verbal inspiration,' and used a good deal of liberty in his treatment of the text." Moffatt's translation, the writer continues, contains inaccuracies. "These are especially apparent in the great doctrinal passages, in which the modernism of the translator is often reflected. Textual evidences concerning the deity of Christ are reduced to a minimum (cf. John 1:1-5; Phil. 2:5-8; Col. 1:15-19; Heb. 1:3). Flagrant inaccuracies are seen in Matthew 1:16, where, contrary to the best textual evidence, Joseph is represented as 'the father of Jesus,' and Luke 3:22, which Moffatt has rendered: 'Thou art my son, the Beloved, *today have I become thy father.*' In both of these passages Moffatt has made use of inferior readings as a basis for his translation."

Speaking of Goodspeed's translation, Dr. Mostert says: "A good example of Goodspeed's free and interpretive style is seen in his

rendering of Phil. 3:4: 'If anyone thinks he can rely on his physical advantages, still more can I' . . . This work is affected by liberal theological bias. Passages of Christological significance have been modified and 'toned down' without adequate textual warrant. John 1:1 is rendered, 'the word was divine.' . . . In Rom. 1:17 Good-speed speaks of 'God's way of uprightness.' . . . The emphasis is placed on moral character, in this way strongly suggesting the teachings of liberalism, which reduce Christianity to an ethical system and robs it of that important aspect of the atonement in which we see Christ as our righteousness."

Of Mrs. Montgomery the writer says: "Mrs. Montgomery has dealt faithfully with the Greek text, and, for the most part, has guarded against undue interpretation. . . . Doctrinal passages have been handled with due reverence and care, and with no attempts to minimize the great Christological truths."

Of the translation of C. B. Williams, the writer says: "The translator has made a sincere attempt to convey the meaning of the Greek text faithfully." . . . As to doctrinal passages, there appears no undercutting of the great supernatural truths. For its practical use to the New Testament student, I consider this translation invaluable."

Also for the translation of Verkuyl the writer has much praise and little criticism. "Dr. Verkuyl has made use of the best Greek texts and most reliable ancient manuscripts. The language employed is a clear idiomatic English . . . and, although he has not been slavishly literal in his translation, the sense of the text has been followed with a high degree of accuracy." Nevertheless, we find also this: "An interesting example of the use of the modern idiom is found in his treatment of Matt. 1:18-21. In this account, which deals with the relationship between Mary and Joseph before the birth of Christ, Mary is represented as being 'engaged' to Joseph, and Joseph represented as Mary's 'fiacé.' The word 'married' is not used to describe their relationship until verse 25: 'He married Mary.'" Anyone who compares this translation with the Authorized Version or the Revised Standard Version, or also his Greek Testament, will see that Verkuyl here has not dealt honestly with the Greek original.

Of Way's translation the writer says [quoting only what is characteristic]: "It comes close to being a paraphrase of the text, instead of just a translation. For example, 1 Thess. 5:20, translated in the King James Version, 'Quench not the Spirit,' reads: 'In your church gatherings do not repress manifestations of the Spirit's gifts.' Phil. 3:3 is rendered: 'Put no trust in a sign scored on the flesh.' . . . Phil. 2:5 is made to read: 'Let the same purpose inspire you as was in the Messiah Jesus.'"

The writer does not take into consideration the Revised Standard Version, which, while having many advantages, also has many inaccuracies and even wrong translations, as has been shown in previous articles in this periodical. But what the article clearly demonstrates is that there is today a pronounced dissatis-

faction with the Authorized Version and a demand for a translation of the Scriptures into modern English. The matter, therefore, deserves study by all who are interested in the Bible. So far none of the various translations has been satisfactory, especially not for those who desire, not a paraphrase of the Greek, but a true, accurate Bible translation. Several years ago our Church was memorialized to consider bringing out a modern translation of the Bible by Lutheran scholars. So far the Lutheran Church has not had a translation made by its own members. It has patiently used the translations of the Reformed. Has not the time arrived that we follow in Luther's footsteps and produce our own? Several years ago Catholic scholars produced the *Catholic New Testament*, which in many respects is very good. The objection that we Lutherans should not use a Bible translation different from that of others no longer holds, since today the various churches are divided in the use of various translations. Would it, then, not make for unity, rather than disunity, to have a reliable Lutheran Bible translation? Meanwhile, considering the confusion caused by the various versions now on the market, the writer is convinced that it is a matter of wisdom for us in our public ministry to adhere to the King James Version until that new and better Lutheran translation has been produced.

JOHN THEODORE MUELLER

