



Tying the Knot and Teaching Obedience



*Keller Household
Established Saturday,
May 5, 2007*

"For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother, and be joined to his wife; and they shall become one flesh." Genesis 2:24

Dear Friends and Family,
May 5th, that long-awaited day, turned out in such beauty- the glory and blessing of the Lord were present in so many ways. Our vows were exchanged with the joy and confidence of two hearts' love, and the farewells later said with the affection of one new-joined voice. Now, as the dresses are packed away, the last few crumbs of cake eaten, and the honeymoon-car windows (finally) cleaned, we can reflect on all that our loving Father has done for us...

HiM

I've always wanted to get married and raise a family. But to be honest, I often wondered if meeting the right kind of woman, who suited missionary life, was even possible. I suppose many of my friends and relatives also wondered the same thing.

The Bible is clear about not being unequally yoked (II Cor 6:14-15). Though this is certainly applicable to believers who would want to marry unbelievers, this is also true for those whom the Lord has called to specific service. Marriage isn't easy, and when facing all the difficult circumstances of the mission field, it doesn't get any easier. I would have to find someone who has exemplary character; who loves the Lord more than anything else; who would be content with the insecurity and discomfort the mission field offers. I would have to find someone who likes adventure, someone like Ashley. Yes, Ashley. I can't even write her name on this paper without grinning from ear to ear.



Her

When I first came to Africa in the summer of 2001, I never dreamed that the Lord would call me here again. When He sent me back in the summer of 2006, I never dreamed that it would be a call to a lifetime in Africa- a lifetime serving with Timothy, a man who seeks after the Lord with all his heart.

I guess I never really expected to find my special someone. You know, that someone who could appreciate my off-beat sense of humor, quirky habits, and "unique" skills. Deeming myself to be the ostrich in the turtle dove world of romance, I mastered the art of cooking for one (can I have fries with that please?) and moved on.

"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." Jeremiah 29:11

As it turns out, I am not *particularly* abnormal, merely the flip-side of a coin, the missing rib, and now the happy wife of a *particularly* amazing man. (And he loves me!)



Them: And the Two Shall Become One

After a productive and blessed ministry trip in the States, and a lovely honeymoon in Colorado, we returned to Africa on May 16th. We are now learning how to serve the Lord together as one, seeking to bring glory to Him through our relationship with each other. Our approach to ministry has improved as we grow in our strengths together. Timothy is the leader and thinker, Ashley is the helper and doer. With God's grace, we will be an example of His love for His people.

We pray for the grace to raise a family that will glorify the Lord.



Leading Leaders

Our next project will be the Biblical Worldview Summit and Great Commission Course, which will run from 29 June – 18 July. The BWS is a discipleship/leadership training camp for people looking to deepen their faith and strengthen their understanding of the Biblical worldview. From all over the world, pastors, teachers, leaders, families, and students join us in Cape Town, South Africa as we study God's commands, and learn how they apply the Lordship of Jesus Christ to every area of our lives.



Discussions and practicals enable students to develop a thorough understanding of the lectures.

Each day begins with intense PT (physical training) long before the sun even considers coming over the horizon. A variety of lectures that look at world religions, evangelism techniques, life in the field, and the lives of other missionaries help the students understand the work involved in missions. Outreaches, rallies, prayer vigils, film showings, and other practical events prepare them to be more effective in their walk with Lord- whether at home or abroad.

Each day begins with intense PT



Night hikes demonstrate the conditions in which missionaries serving the persecuted often face in the field.... and test one's commitment!

A Better Worldview Makes a Better World

Often when people come to our courses, they want to know why we spend so much time looking at worldviews when training for missions. The truth is, much of the problems faced in the missions field, such as disease, starvation, poverty and a host of others, are related to how people view the world and whether they live their lives consistently in light of God's Word or according to their own folly. If a missionary is to be effective in seeing these things changed, it is imperative that the problems be recognized at their root.

God's Word tells us that our chief problem is sin, our rebellion to His holy Laws (Rev. 21:8; I John 3:4). Just as consequences are present when God's natural laws are broken (ie attempting to violate gravity can break a neck), so it is when His moral Laws are violated (Rom 6:23). Poverty is one such common outcome of His moral laws being violated. Since this is the case, one must wonder, what the solution is to overcome poverty? Does the Gospel affect economics and poverty? If a third world culture were to collectively surrender to Christ, would they remain in their poverty, or excel in blessings?

When we look at the Bible, we can see that God uses poverty to restrain evil (Gen. 3:22-23). ***"You do not have, because you do not ask God. When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures."*** (James 4:2-3)



Economic progress in Africa is often difficult and demanding.

Wealth does not lend itself to humility, and God resists the proud, but He gives grace to the humble (Prov. 3:34). Wealth can encourage arrogance, selfishness, a false sense of security, materialism, and indifference to the needy. Money can easily become a god, demanding our devotion and commitment.

Although money can easily be used for evil (I Tim. 6:10), wealth in and of itself is not evil. God promises economic blessings for obedience. ***"Now it shall come to pass, if you diligently obey the voice of the Lord your God, to observe carefully all His commandments... the Lord will open to you His good treasure, to give the rain to your land in its season, and to bless all the work of your***

hand. You shall lend to many nations, but you shall not borrow.” (Deuteronomy 28:1-2, 12)

That being said, God also promises economic curses for disobedience. “But it shall come to pass, if you do not obey the voice of the Lord your God, to observe carefully all His commandments and His statutes... that all these curses will come upon you and overtake you. The Lord will send on you cursing, confusion, and rebuke in all that you set your hand to do, until you are destroyed and until you perish quickly, because of the wickedness of your doings in which you have forsaken Me.” (Deuteronomy 28:15, 20)



Righteousness is always preferable to riches. Yet, God often gives financial success to those who seek righteousness (Prov. 24:3-4). Seeking financial success through obedience to God’s Law is good (Prov. 13:22) and can enable one to better serve God’s Kingdom.

So what are God’s commands concerning economics? The Bible demands clear and distinguished private property & the Sanctity of Contract (Ex. 20:15-16; Lev. 19:11-13, 35-36). The opposite of this is seen in Africa’s dead capital. According to *Shackled Continent* by Robert Guest, as of 1997, approximately 970 billion dollars of informal properties in both urban and rural communities have no title deeds. Legal title deeds are not issued in Africa, they replaced them with communist-approved “99 year leases”. That means almost one trillion dollars of assets that could be used for the creation of wealth are unutilized, simply because the eighth and ninth Commandments are not obeyed.

God’s Word also instructs us to have a strong, moral work ethic and to maintain a healthy family unit. Laziness and sexual immorality destroy economic progress (Ex. 20:8, 14; Prov. 6:26, 10:4). AIDS hits people in their most productive years; it affects skilled workers and teachers, who are hard to replace. On the family level, if the breadwinner is infected, the family is impoverished twice over because the main source of income has vanished while incurring the added expense of medication and later funeral arrangements. Many families go from prosperity to survival as a result of laziness and sexual immorality.

The Biblical role of government in economics is simply to enforce contracts and preserve private property, thus protecting those who deal righteously (Romans 13). When the government goes beyond their Biblically-appointed role, a number of consequences result (1 Kings 21). Many examples of unbiblical, government manipulation of economics can be seen throughout Africa. Racial Favoritism is prevalent in South Africa. The ANC (ruling party) excessively taxes the productive middle classes and uses the proceeds to create dependence in other non productive communities according to their racial preference. Although this may keep the votes coming in, it economically strangles those who produce. Zimbabwe is another prime example of how government interference can mess up an economy. In April 2007, inflation stood at a record 3,700%! The country is heading toward a complete economic collapse as a result of farm confiscations and other violations of the eighth Commandment. Meanwhile, Robert Mugabe (Zimbabwe’s President) continues in his destructive leadership. Last week he presided over the handover of 25 million US dollars worth of farming equipment as a supposed remedy to Zimbabwe’s growing economic crisis. As far as could be established, the recipients of this equipment were all politicians. At the same time, the government of Zimbabwe is short of funds to provide rations for their army.

The fight against poverty, in many ways, is a fight against injustice. Old Testament prophets like Amos and Isaiah fought



against injustice in the forms of dishonesty, fraud, bribery, and exploitation of the weak, poor and powerless. All of such evils had economic consequences for God’s people. “[The Prophets] never suggest that the remedy for such injustice is therefore an economic redistribution conducted in some sort of spiritual vacuum. They invariably pinpoint the root cause of the trouble as spiritual: the nation has departed from God and economic injustice is one result. The priority, therefore, is not socio-economic reform, but spiritual repentance. In this they showed great insight. Massive redistribution of wealth and complex laws to coerce the rich to divest their properties would be of no avail whatever if there were not a simultaneous commitment on the part of those involved to change their values and behavior. It was this that the prophets saw as a basis for society.” (Brian Griffiths, *The Creation of Wealth*)

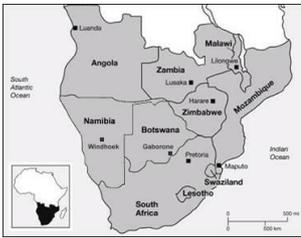
“Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this, to visit orphans and widows in their trouble and to keep oneself unspotted from the world.” James 1:27

live righteous lives will be given the Covenant blessings promised in Deuteronomy 28. The solution will take place as people develop a solid work ethic, and fair business practices. On a collective scale, we could then expect to see the development of Biblical governments that serve to protect their people from injustice and corruption. We would also see the clear, distinguishable contracts and title deeds that enshrine the eighth & ninth Commandments both in law and in practice. The

Lord will also raise up godly men and women with wisdom and moral backbone that can lead His people into a new age of prosperity that glorifies God. In short, a Biblical worldview makes a better world.

“Now it shall come to pass, if you diligently obey the voice of the Lord your God, to observe carefully all His commandments... that the Lord your God will set you high above all nations of the earth... The Lord will command the blessing on you in your storehouses and in all to which you set your hand, and He will bless you in the land which the Lord your God is giving you... The Lord will establish you as a holy people to Himself... Then all peoples of the earth shall see that you are called by the name of the Lord... The Lord will open to you His good treasure, the heavens, to give the rain to your land in its season, and to bless all the work of your hand. You shall lend to many nations, but you shall not borrow. And the Lord will make you the head and not the tail; you shall be above only, and not be beneath, if you heed the commandments of the Lord your God... and are careful to observe them.” (Deuteronomy 28:1-14)

“Look at the nations...” (Hab. 1:5)



Zimbabwe, a country made up of 7 major peoples and diverse languages, has truly experienced “the best of times and the worst of times.” Led by the violent, communist dictator Robert Mugabe, this once prosperous, agricultural nation (then Rhodesia, the “bread basket of Africa”) has become a wasteland of scorched earth policies and human rights abuses. The gradually rising chaos was exacerbated in the 1990’s by the government “redistribution” of thousands of farms, especially commercial farms owned by whites. Hundreds of thousands of people, of all races, religions and walks of life, have been torn from their homes, their lives shattered in the wake of Mugabe’s storm of violence and greed (over 700,000 people had homes & businesses destroyed by the government in 2005 because they voted for the wrong party.) Thousands face starvation, as the unemployment rate rises to 80% and the GDP crashes to \$260 per capita. In this economic disaster the Zim dollar has become virtually worthless. In 1998, one US dollar was worth 24 old Zim dollars. Last month the US dollar was worth 60,000,000 old Zim dollars or 60,000 new Zim dollars (street exchange rate.) In Harare, a roll of toilet paper costs around Z\$414,000. It is actually cheaper now to use the Z\$500 notes than it is to use toilet paper. In the wake of this economic disaster, Zimbabwe is experiencing -4.4% population growth and an average life expectancy of 39. While a partial knowledge of God is present in Zimbabwe, there is a desperate need for discipleship and practical aid. Please pray that the Lord will call the Zimbabweans to Him, and deliver His people from their oppressors.

Heading North

After the GCC we will be heading north to do field work throughout several countries in Africa. While in the field we will be discipling pastors and other Christian leaders, holding seminars, organizing evangelism outreaches with local churches, delivering Bibles and relief aid, and teaching/assisting in various school programs. Timothy has been working with several pastors in Zambia for some time now, and they have been able to launch successful evangelism programs in their own churches.

Thank you so much for your continued prayers and encouragement. We love to hear from you! Please continue to pray for us as we serve the Lord together in Africa.

Please pray...

- For all the transitional adjustments of a new household.
- For the upcoming BWS and GCC.
- For restored order in Zimbabwe.
- For wisdom and strength throughout upcoming field trip preparation.



It's happily ever after time folks!

Pro Rege,

Timothy & Ashley Keller

Praise be to the Lord, for He has heard my cry for mercy. The Lord is my strength and my shield; my heart trusts in Him, and I am helped. My heart leaps for joy and I will give thanks to Him in song.
Psalm 28:6-7

Any gifts can be sent to: The Keller Household, c/o ITMI, PO Box 7575, Tempe, AZ 85281
To receive a tax receipt, cheques can be made out to “ITMI” and designated to “The Kellers”.