



Living Well

Marriages in the Bible



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The Greatest Marriage in the Bible ...

Check out these websites for more information:

- For more detailed information about the ministry - www.livingwellok.org
- Photos and writings about the ministry - www.livingwellok.blogspot.com
- Encouragement/culture on marriage - www.livingwellinmarriage.blogspot.com
- Marriage events in the state, resources for marriage - www.marriagenetworkok.net
- Making Marriage Memorable blog - www.marriagenetworkok.nblogger.com

A marriage made in heaven

"Hallelujah! For our Lord God Almighty reigns. Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory! For the wedding of the Lamb has come, and His bride has made herself ready." Revelation 19:7

The Bible begins with a marriage and ends with a marriage. In the beginning God provides man with another human with whom he could live in a loving, covenant relationship.

That marriage is to an earthly picture of the greatest marriage of all - the **marriage of Christ to the church**. The picture of Christ's love for the church is a described as a profound mystery (see below).

God the Father brought Eve to Adam in the first wedding. **In the last wedding,**

the Father brings a bride to His Son. The Bride of Christ is the Church.

In a Jewish marriage, the couple was betrothed first, similar to our engagement today, but with a much greater sense of commitment. During the betrothal the couple is actually entering into a covenant relationship.

A covenant in Bible times was serious, final, sealed in blood and legally binding. Once a couple entered into the covenant of betrothal, they were legally married in all aspects except for the physical consummation of the marriage.

At the betrothal ceremony, a marriage contract, was presented to the father of the bride. It consisted of all the

bridegroom's promises to his bride. **Our marriage contract is God's**

Word! It shows us all the promises in His Word for us.

Then the bridegroom would go to prepare a home for them.

The Bridegroom is faithful to prepare our new home.

In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. ³ And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am. John 14:2-3

We are to be faithful as we wait for Him to come for us. **We are eagerly awaiting the wedding and joining Him in our new home - heaven!**



The Mystery of Marriage

Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave Himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to Himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He

who loves his wife loves himself. After all, no one ever hated his own body, but he feeds and cares for it, just as Christ does the church—for we are members of his body.... This is a profound mystery — but I am talking about Christ and the church. Ephesians 5:25-30,32

Through this marriage teaching God is saying much more to us; He calls it a **"profound mystery."** He explains what Christ did for

the church and then, what that means in a marriage.

God didn't create marriage, and then decide to have Jesus model that through His relationship to the church. He did the opposite. First, He made a relationship between a Holy God and the people He loved. Then, He instructed us about how to live in a marriage by looking at ourselves compared to Christ and the Church.

On the reverse side:

What we learn from it

Picture this

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What we learn from it

It is possible (but not right) for baptized believers to act in their lives as though the gospel were not true. How many conservative husbands are outraged if some liberal preacher says that Jesus did not rise from the dead, when their daily treatment of their wives makes the same statement? At least the liberal only states his heresy occasionally. Douglas Wilson

We are not our wives' savior; Christ is. We are not her sanctifier; Christ is.

But Paul says to husbands: Watch how Christ loves his bride. Look at the cost. And look at the goal. The cost is his life. And the goal is her splendor—the splendor of holiness.

When we husbands know Jesus

so well, and love Him so deeply, that we can "greatly rejoice" that we decrease so that He increases, we will love our wives well. And we will not contradict the gospel by the way we treat them.

John Piper

The same principle holds true for the wife as well. **When we truly believe that the goal of marriage is to show the world the love of Christ, marriages will be different.**

The covenant relationship that we have in marriage is the portrayal of the covenant between Christ and His church.

Marriage exists ultimately to display the covenant-keeping love between Christ and the church.

Marriage is not primarily about making you happy or being in love. **We believe that you will be happy and you will be in love, when you live out that grace relationship.**

When I receive and understand **God's unconditional love for me, His acceptance of me, just as I am, His complete, unlimited forgiveness of my sins, then I will have a heart that loves that way, that accepts others, and that forgives again and again.**

God's intent for marriage is that we display **the most complete and purest form of all of those qualities.**

Seems like mission impossible?

It is. I can't love, accept, or forgive that way on my own.

God gave us the Holy Spirit as our engagement ring for the coming wedding. With the Holy Spirit in my life, He can live through me. **I can give up my desires for the desires and the good of another because those actions bring me great joy.**

In a word, live together in the forgiveness of your sins, for without it no human fellowship, least of all marriage, can survive.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer

Picture this

A husband who loves his wife as much as he loves himself:

He would want her needs to be met above his own needs. Maybe he would defer to her on what to eat, or what to watch on TV, or how to spend their time as a family, or getting the kids ready for

bed instead of watching the game, or taking care of the kids while she cooks or cooking while she takes care of the kids, or giving her some down time when she is exhausted. **He would put her comfort above his own.**

A wife who loves her husband in the same way she loves Christ:

She does not criticize or sabotage his decisions. Even if she disagrees with him, she will still respect and support him as a person. She would voice her opinion, respectfully and in love. **She would recognize the weight of his position, the burden he carries for her and the family.**