Marriage Devotional: The Meaning of Marriage

*That is why a man leaves his father and mother and is united to his wife, and they become one flesh. Adam and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame.* Genesis 2:24-25.

Marriage. Invented by God. Kindled when the Creator created man and woman, who leave parents to be united to one another to become one flesh. Marriage. Threatened by civil forces to redefine itself, when the One qualified to change the meaning of marriage is the One who never changes. Marriage. Tempted by the father of lies, Satan, to convince a husband and wife to give up before they really ever get started. To give in to the hard work of relational repair, seeking instead a phantom partner who will never exist. Marriage. When healthy - heaven on earth, when unhealthy - hell on earth. The meaning of marriage becomes defined in Paradise, before the fall and ends as a picture of Jesus Christ and his pure Bride of the Lamb – illustrating its eternal, holy nature.

Wedding ceremonies throughout Scripture celebrate the marriages of Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebekah, Joachim and Anna, Mary and Joseph, Zacharias and Elizabeth. Dramatically, Jesus affirms the meaning of marriage first and foremost when he performs His first miracle in turning the water into wine. The wedding celebration would not be disrupted, the host not embarrassed, but instead, the joyous occasion was extended with merriment of dancing and laughter. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, blessed and consecrated the marriage of a man and woman with His presence and provision.

“*What Jesus did here in Cana of Galilee was the first of the signs through which he revealed his glory; and his disciples believed in him.*” John 2:11

Scripture is clear to marriage’s intent. If a couple’s meaning of marriage does not align with the marriage Maker, they will miss out on true meaning in their marriage. Man and woman equal before God in a marriage covenant. Not just a piece of paper for legalities, but a commitment to the Lord, each other and to all wedding witnesses of a marriage submitted to God’s authority. Marriage is meant to be Christ centered and other centered. There is a giving up of self in order to serve the other in love.

Both husband and wife submit to Christ in reverence to God, and the husband is charged with the weighty responsibility to lovingly lead his wife. As a result of a husband’s humility and love, a wife gladly submits to and follows a man who follows Jesus. Marriage equality, but also the necessity of order in the home which requires a humble, loving leader – the husband and father. The husband is the head of the wife, as Christ is the head of the Church. Like Christ gave Himself up for the Church, so a husband is to give himself up for his wife. Marriage, a sacrament God blesses.

“*Submitting to one another in the fear of God. Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the Church; and He is the Savior of the body. Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave Himself for her.”* Ephesians 5:21-25

(referenced essay by Boyd Bailey)