

## The Miracle of Marriage in Christmas

Christmas is a time that brings emotions about. Sometimes these emotions are good and sometimes not so good. Let's face it: Christmas is a spiritual time and no one can truly experience God through the miracle of Christmas without an overwhelming flood of emotion. Still, the Spirit of the Lord bursts into lives all over the world on this celebrated occasion. Sometimes His presence is welcome, and at other times He comes intrusively, but always reaching out to us with every intention of loving us beyond that which we deserve. He drives straight for the heart with the intended purpose of making lives better.

God chose to send his Son Jesus Christ into this world looking for a bride—an obedient people desiring to live by his Word and keep his commands. Jesus deeply desired to have such a close relationship with all who would take his Name that he intentionally called us his bride. Revelation 21:2 & 3 says, *"I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, 'Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God.'"*

Nonetheless, God knew that the people of this world would condemn his Son to death. Imagine the emotional state that God must have been in. He must have been so happy to see his Son living on the earth among men, and yet so sad because He already knew what the outcome must be. He must have managed to handle it all by knowing his Son would one day be the bridegroom to a people cleansed by himself alone—a perfect marriage through and through.

And so it is with a man and a woman as they travel through an unknown journey that we refer to as marriage—unknown because no one has a clue where the journey will take them. Nonetheless, we all have our own thoughts and ideas as to how the marriage will play out. Perhaps that is why so many marriages today end in tragic demise. Shockingly, the divorce rate within the church is exceeding that without. Did God ever expect anything less in the relationship between a husband and wife than he expects of the relationship between His Son and each of them individually? Did He expect the marriage between a husband and wife to be as lasting though the fires and turmoil of life as that of His Son to His people?

Ephesians 5:30 & 31 informs us: *"For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh."* Marriage is the perfect simile of this wonderful Savior sent to an undeserving people. Just as each one of us is reborn into Christ and so become one with him, so is a man and women to become one flesh and live for his purpose under Christ as one. The two making the marriage are expected by God to begin a new life as one. Granted, the husband and the wife are two individual people, but God does not expect them to live as *individual* people any more than He expects them to live for him *without him*. We all know what happens when two come together under Christ—they are unstoppable.

God designed marriage this way. Marriage is not a contract—it is a covenant between a man and women under God. Covenants are for as long as both parties are living. Husbands and wives

must reflect upon that which God intended marriages within his church to be and reclaim the goodness that comes with the God-designed structure of such a union.

The miracle of marriage in Christmas is this: Just like when God sent his Son, He also rejoices when a man and woman come together—under Him—to be one. He comes into that marriage by invitation or intrusion with every intention of loving that couple beyond what they deserve. When two in a marriage give up their oneness and are willing to die to self, then God is able to do something amazing with that marriage. Christ came and laid down his life for each one of us. The question is this: Who is willing to lay down his or her life for their spouse? Are we willing to become a people within our marriages where God can use us mightily *as couples*?

God desires so much for every marriage to thrive—not survive. We can only do this as we turn to him—not as two individuals living in one household, but as a husband and wife. This year, take a few minutes to reflect on the miracle of Christ in Christmas. Afterward, thank God for your spouse and your family, and ask Him to make your marriage as wonderful and as singular as our coming King is to ourselves.

As my British friends say, “Happy Christmas to you!”

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