

Wedding Notes*(From Tom & Sarah's Wedding)*

Before the Vows

We are witnesses today to the marriage of Tom and Sarah. We stand witness not only to their marriage, but because they are sincere, to the whole rest of their married life. Sarah will truly kiss Tom, willingly submitting her life to him. Because Tom truly loves Sarah, he will even physically lay down his life for her. Therefore, the way they regard one another today is how they will always be. If the beginning is good, then what comes from it will be good. Today Tom and Sarah are setting their lives on a course. This day is now the highest standard of knowledge they have in their conscience. To treat each other in any other fashion will be sin of which they must repent.

They will have glory about them as they fulfill for the rest of their lives all they say to each other today. The glory that is in a man or woman is the joy that he has because he knows he is doing right. Tom will have the very glory of God about him as he loves Sarah as Messiah loves the church. He will have the joy of being a husband as he cares for and guards her life. Tom is going to stand between Sarah and anything — any spirit, thought, or person — that would harm her. That is what every husband is. Anything less is less than what a husbandman is.

Sarah will have glory about her as she pours out her life to build up, support, and encourage this man who loves her. She will be completed as she completes him. There will be no other enduring source of joy for her apart from this. This is her purpose in creation.

These are the conditions of unity between them. Apart from Tom loving Sarah and Sarah submitting to Tom, neither of them can have security in this new relationship. Apart from such unity there is no purpose to being married. It would be a curse and not a blessing. Their love for one another must take priority over every other human relationship. If the woman's desire is not for him, it *will* turn elsewhere. If a man does not rule over his wife, it is because he does not love her. As the years go by, you will be able to see just what Tom is like by looking at Sarah. An excellent wife is the crown of her husband (Pr 12:4). You will see what kind of crown Tom desires by the beauty of Sarah.

Now, don't look at Sarah's outward appearance for she will age, her hair will gray, and her body will grow old. No, to see the evidence of Tom's rule, you will have to see Sarah's gentle and quiet spirit, the inner beauty of a loved woman who has found peace and total security in her husband's love. This kind of beauty is precious in the sight of our God. Every hidden thing will one day be revealed and brought into the light. If what is precious to our God is precious to Tom, then that will be obvious.

Tom and Sarah are truly man and wife today, and all this blessing will come upon them. If the beginning is good, then the fruit will be good.

The goodness of the sexual relationship of a man and wife points to the goodness of the fruit of it. The delightfulness of the baby points to the goodness of the child. The tenderness of the child points to the goodness of the adult. If the seed is good, the fruit will be good.

To bring about that good fruit, which is the weighty responsibility of the parents, they have been given authority. Even in the nations the authority of parents is the widest, most comprehensive control human beings are allowed over others. This reflects the eternal consequences of the proper use or misuse of parental authority. If the children can please their parents, they will grow up believing they can please God. If the parents punish evil and reward good, the children will see God that way. If the parents are in unity, they will believe God is one. If mommy and daddy are divided, they will believe God is, too. They will believe that God's purposes and standards can change, that he can be persuaded to change his mind just like mommy persuaded daddy to change his mind. They will believe that God is distant and uncaring if daddy withdraws from the family and fails to exercise authority. In all these things, the children will be greatly deceived about who God is and it will be the parents' fault. In this they will bear a weighty, eternal responsibility.

The reason parents can be given such great authority over their children's lives is because in the marriage relationship they have the greatest possibility of expressing the unity that characterizes the Creator, God. In the mutual love and high regard they have for one another, they have the best chance of expressing the nature of

God. God is authority (Rom 13:1). God is one. In Him there is no division at all. It is God who gives husbands authority over wives and parents authority over children. If you hate authority, you hate God.

Just as the basis for a husband's authority over his wife is his love for her, the basis of parents' authority over their children is their unity. The highest expression of that love and unity is the one flesh sexual union of a man and wife. This establishes and continually strengthens the bonding between them which allows them to stand in the face of every temptation (to divide).

When a man and woman come together in physical intimacy, it is the most *profound* statement by the two, "that my life is yours, that just as I give my body to you, so I give my whole being and all my love to you." This is the absolute standard in every person's conscience. If the moral nature of man breaks, the physical nature follows — the conscience is inseparable from the immune system. That is why there are STD's in the world today. But if there is a good beginning, then the life and fruit from such union will be good. That is what the body has judged about Tom and Sarah. That is why we are here to bless their marriage. This is what every parent everywhere is consenting to when they allow their child to marry.

And so you will see the natural outcome of such union — a happy married life; wanted, desired children who grow up to be moral, responsible adults who respect other human beings. This is the basis on which human society exists. Apart from this foundation human society will crumble as it is doing today.

Our Master said (Mt 7:17), "Every good tree bears good fruit, but the bad tree bears bad fruit." The wanted and the unwanted child are both marked for life. They will live lives in accordance with the security and authority they have either known or not known. The lack of good fruit inevitably points back to the bad beginning — that the sexual intimacy between the parents was less than the highest expression of love between them. Selfishness fathers selfishness, insecurity mothers insecurity. How hard it is to straighten a tree that has been bent in its youth.

So how serious is disunity in the sexual relationship? How serious is it that a child would not even know his father because he didn't love his mother enough to marry her? How serious is it that a man and woman would have other loves? How serious is it how a child sees God?

So, there is another reason we are celebrating here today — forgiveness. By the love of our Master, the guilt of our sins has been washed away. Because we have known that love we have surrendered everything to him in gratitude for saving our lives. We do not stand here as men and women who have lived righteous lives. Most of us would have had our lifeblood poured out when the King returned. How great is His salvation! Tom and Sarah stand before you forgiven because Yahshua died and rose again on their behalf. Since he died, they don't have to die for their own sins. Since he rose again they can have a new life in Him. Since he was their beginning they will be like him. They will lay down their lives for each other as he did for them. We are witnesses of a new thing, that men and women are being remade in the image of their Creator and their Savior. We can do nothing less than give him all we have. That is how Tom and Sarah will always be with one another. That is marriage.