

The Meaning of Marriage

One way the Bible describes what God is up to in the world is through the figure of marriage. God is drawing mankind into a relationship with Himself by uniting us with His Son Jesus in Marriage, The kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who arranged a marriage for his son (Matt 22:2).

The most amazing thing about this is that by the time Christ's redeeming work is completed, the bride (redeemed humanity) is actually a suitable companion for Christ to marry (Rev 21:9-11). This is because the love of Christ transforms His bride. Paul explains this in the fifth chapter of Ephesians, "Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish" (vv. 25-27). In other words the sacrificial love of Jesus registers in the object of His love the church.

Husbands need to learn from this example. Too many husbands complain about their wives, but do nothing to help them become better. Contrast this attitude with that of Jesus, who had plenty to complain about, but instead went about purifying, cleansing and beautifying His wife by the power of His love for her. If, in the past, you have not loved your wife as Christ loves the church, then you have only been hurting yourself. Your wife is your own body, she is an concrete expression of your love. Live toward her in such a way as to nurture and cherish her and help her be what you and the Lord desire her to become.