

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VILLA RICA, PCA

The Marriage Psalm

By

Rev. Todd W. Allen

Villa Rica 05/23/04

Psalm 45:1-17

A farmer's boy decided to get married. His father said to him, "John, when you get married, your liberty is gone."

The boy said he did not believe it. The father said, "I'll prove it to you. Catch a dozen chickens, tie their legs together and put them in the wagon. Hitch up the two horses to the wagon and drive into town. Stop at every house you come to, and wherever you find the man is boss, give him a horse. Wherever you find the woman is boss, give her a chicken. You'll give away all your chickens and come back with two horses."

The boy accepted the proposition and drove to town. He had stopped at every house and had given away ten chickens when he came to a nice little house and saw an old man and his wife standing out on the front lawn. He called to them and asked, "Who is boss here?"

The man said, "I am" Turning to the woman, the boy said, "Is he boss?" The woman replied, "Yes, he's boss." The boy asked them to come down to the street. He then explained his reason for asking and told the man to pick out one of the horses. He said he would bring the horse back to him that afternoon. The old man and the old lady looked over the horses carefully, and the husband said, "I think the black horse is the better of the two."

The wife then said, "I think that bay horse is in every way the better horse. I would choose him."

The old man took a careful look at the bay horse and said, "I guess I'll take the bay horse."

The boy smiled and said, "No, you won't; you'll take a chicken." --James S. Hewett, Illustrations Unlimited (Wheaton: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc, 1988), p. 336

I guess we could say that in the very first marriage Eve was the boss in that momentous decision to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil but God held Adam responsible..

God determined that it was not good for man to be alone and so he provided a wife for Adam. She would be a helpmeet for him and therefore God made the woman to complement and complete the man. Without Eve Adam was not all that he could be and should be. They did make a terrible mistake when they turned aside from the Word of God.

But Adam's wife was meant to be the other half of the moon. He needed a wife in order to reflect the full beauty and glory of the image of God in him and to fulfill his destiny. And she would find her fulfillment in her husband. She was told that her desire would be for her husband and that he would rule over her.

Marriage in a fallen world is never perfect but it is still the best relationship for man and woman to know love and companionship this side of heaven.

God uses marriage to express the sublime relationship that will exist between Himself and the saved sinners that were to be given dominion over all that he has made. John in his heavenly vision saw the climactic marriage event that will finalize God's holy purpose for the Lamb who sacrificed himself for his Bride, which is the Church. **Rev. 19:7-9 "Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come and His bride has made herself ready." ⁸It was given to her to clothe herself in fine linen, bright and clean; for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.**

⁹Then he said* to me, "Write, 'Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.'" And he said* to me, "These are true words of God."

Clearly, marriage is intended to be a solemn and sacred institution. The 45th psalm speaks of the royal marriage in which Christ is the Bridegroom and the Church is his heavenly bride. But this Psalm may also be used as a divine guide for a maid seeking a suitable husband and a man looking for a bride. The excellent character qualities of the Messianic Bridegroom ought to be the qualities she looks for in her future husband and those of the heavenly bride ought to be what he looks for in his future wife. She may not find a man in this fallen world who perfectly meets

the qualifications and he may not find the perfect bride but they should look for the sublime qualities recorded in this Psalm.

As time permits we will speak first of the character qualities of the bridegroom and then look at the qualities to look for in the bride.

The Psalmist writes of this messianic king, **You Are fairer than the sons of men; Therefore God has blessed You forever.**

A woman should look for excellence in her bridegroom. He must first and foremost be a genuine Christian, one who has the imputed righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ. He is to be a reflection of Jesus Christ who is the fairest of ten thousand.

Jesus has all the beauty of holiness and righteousness. In Him dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. His human nature was perfect and His character was beautiful in every respect. He had love in fullest measure. He had righteousness in the purest sense possible. His mercy was beyond degree, for he came to redeem those who were his enemies.

We are warned in the scriptures not to be unequally yoked with an unbeliever. Surely the first consideration of unwed ladies should be that her future husband be a professing, committed Christian and likewise the man looking for that special lady to be his wife.

We read in verse 2 **Grace is poured upon Your lips; Therefore God has blessed You forever.**

Ladies, in looking for a life companion look for a man of attractive speech. You will not be happy with a man of vulgarity or a foul tongue. Avoid a man who speaks unkind, cutting words. Find for yourself a man of a gracious and pleasing speech. Flee from a man with a dirty mouth and harsh words of criticism. If he uses bad language to put other people down it should be a warning to you. If he speaks ill of others he will no doubt do the same in your marriage and you may well be the one he speaks ill of; you will probably end up being the butt of his jokes and unkind remarks.

Jesus has in his mouth the blessings of heaven. He has mercy beyond degree. His words are merciful toward the sinner. In his lips are words of forgiveness of sin and eternal life. He is the great Trustee of all mankind's blessings; therefore God has blessed him forever. As Paul wrote to the Ephesians: **³Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, Eph.1:3**

Ask yourself, is this man I am considering marrying blessed of God? Does he have the evidences of heavenly spirituality? Does he attend church and attend upon his Word? Is he a man of prayer?

This royal king is a man of valor and courage. We Read in verse 3, **Gird Your sword on Your thigh, O Mighty One, In Your splendor and Your majesty! And in Your majesty ride on victoriously, For the cause of truth and meekness and righteousness;**

The Psalmist says this Bridegroom is a noble protector and he is willing and ready to take a stand for truth, righteousness and justice. He will never fail in his battle for truth. So look for a man who has that protective character quality, who would be willing to fight if necessary for what he believes is right, a chivalrous man, a man who will take a stand for God, family and country.

The sword at his thigh is the symbol of authority. You will want a man who can preside in your home with loving authority and justice, a man who puts truth as his watchword, a man of honesty and integrity. Look for a man who follows God in humility and right living as the Messianic King does.

⁷ You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness;

Therefore God, Your God, has anointed You With the oil of joy above Your fellows.

⁸ All Your garments are fragrant with myrrh and aloes and cassia; Out of ivory palaces stringed instruments have made You glad.

Because he loves righteousness he is a pleasant to be around. He has the oil of gladness upon him, both in his walk and in his talk. Do you want to marry a grouch or would you prefer a cheerful mate? The royal bridegroom radiates fragrant speech and is uplifting to be with. His company is desirable and full of joy. Life is good with this

husband. Look for a man of gracious words and acts of kindness. Martin Luther observed, ***“To have peace and love in a marriage is a gift that is next to the knowledge of the gospel.”***

The bride of this royal king is wonderfully blessed. She is gorgeously dressed in the finest apparel. On her wedding day she has the attire of a queen placed upon her. In her entourage are virgin companions. Thus we see hints of wedding customs in present day weddings.

The royal king has a bride who has left her father’s house to place herself under his care and support. He is a husband who provides for his wife and family. She does not have to be the breadwinner. She can rely on him to work for her and their family. He is not slothful or evasive of his responsibilities. She can depend on him to do his very best to provide for his household.

What this bridegroom looks for in his bride is fidelity and loyalty. He wants a wife who is faithful and true. She is submissive to this husband because he excels all others in her life. He has won her heart and she has eyes for none but him.

This bridegroom delights in his bride because she is pure of heart and mind. She is all glorious within, meaning she is sanctified and been made holy before she is presented to him as his virgin bride. The royal bridegroom will have such a perfect bride because he makes her so. She is redeemed by him and sanctified by him before that wedding day takes place in heaven. But it is fair to say that the earthly man looking for a bride has these same qualifications in mind when he looks for a wife. He wants a virtuous wife, a trusted companion.

I recall a case I know of in which a young lady began living with an army officer overseas. She had high hopes of marrying this man when the war was over and they both got back home. He had promised her that they would marry. But when he got back to the states he dumped her and found another woman to marry. Her heart was broken.

The lesson in that is this. This army officer wanted for a wife one who had not given herself to him outside of marriage. He wanted a virtuous wife he felt he could trust and she wasn’t it.

In verse 10 the Psalmist says that she is willing to forget her people and leave her father’s house in order to cleave to him. When we marry we establish a new family unit and the person you marry will become your immediate and familiar family. This does not mean that you no longer have any tie to your birth family and pre marriage associations but it does mean that you will recognize the priority of your married status as a new covenant relationship that takes priority over former family relationships. This principle applies to both husband and wife. But happy marriages do not ignore or disregard those premarriage family ties. There are certainly occasions when both sides of the family can be visited and fellowshiped with without violating the new covenant relationship.

V. 11 The bride in this psalm has beauty that attracts the groom to her. She undoubtedly cares for her person and shows it by her carefulness in her dress and her conduct. Because she is one of Christ’s handmaidens she seeks to please Christ and that is her driving force. And that motivation only makes her more attractive to her suitor.

V12 She is showered with gifts and her status goes up because of whom she is marrying. He wants a wife he can show off and gladly introduce. She wants a husband who can promote her status and improve her welfare. They are a complement to each other and others recognize it. When you see one you think of the other. They are joined in a oneness of favoritism and bliss.

V. 15 He is enthralled with her person and delights in being with her. He wants to spend his life cherishing her and caring for her and having her as a queen in his palace.

V. 16 He sees her as the mother of his children and there is great promise for future joy and happiness together. These are the delightful fruits of a good marriage.

Let me leave you with these thoughts.

1. Look before you leap. Ask yourself, what thoughts and attitudes are in my heart about getting married? By all means look for a husband or wife who will have such Biblical qualifications? You will find the same qualifications we have noted in this Psalm in the New Testament.
2. Don’t make the mistake of thinking you can convert your future mate after you marry. Either avoid marriage with that unbelieving person or at least wait until you know he or she has already become a committed Christian and has become active in a Bible believing church before you marry. There are enough adjustments in marriage without yoking yourself to an unbelieving soul mate.

3. Lastly, for those of you who are already married I urge you to review your marriage and see if there are things you can do to more closely meet the qualifications of Psalm 45. We are all a work in progress. We can ask our heavenly bridegroom to work the grace of sanctification in us and promise him our fullest cooperation as he does that work of grace in us. You will have a happier and better marriage if you will strive to do that.

The paper and sermon manuscripts from **Pastor Todd W. Allen** are made freely available for review and distribution. We only request that proper web page attribution be provided if distributed for any reason. Please be gracious to forgive typos and errors of expression. These notes are faithful approximations of what has been preached. May God be glorified in the preaching of His Word.

**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VILLA RICA
519 MAIN STREET
VILLA RICA, GA. 30180
770-459-5276**

Developed and Maintained by: eAirCommunications

