

a sermon from GENESIS 2:22-24

ON THE NATURE OF MARRIAGE

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7/30/2007 AD

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I. A PRAYER FOR FAMILIES

“JESUS, our most loving Redeemer, You came to enlighten the world with Your teaching and example.” You came to buy back our lives and souls to Yourself by Your sacrificial Divine Love on The Cross for our sakes. O Love Incarnate, “Be pleased to protect, guard and keep... [our marriages and families] in sincere faith, in peace and in the harmony of Christian charity. By conforming ourselves to The Divine model of... [You, Who are Perfect Love,] may we all attain to [both earthly and] eternal happiness,” both now and forever!¹ In The Name of GOD The Father, The Son and The Holy Ghost. Amen.

II. A PROPOSITION – THE SANCTITY OF MARRIAGE

Marriage is a holy Sacrament instituted by GOD Himself between a husband and a wife, so that the two shall become as one before His ever-present Throne, and that therefore no man should pull apart!

III. A SCRIPTURE - GENESIS 2:24 – THE TWO SHALL BE AS ONE

Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.²

IV. INTRODUCTION - WHAT IS MARRIAGE?

What is marriage? Since GOD instituted marriage in The Garden as a central part of His creation, we should look to see what He declares about marriage. So we must go to The Holy Bible, The Words of Which are inerrantly recorded for us by GOD-fearing men under the hand of The HOLY SPIRIT. There we shall see “the goodness of marriage” in which is forever The Presence of CHRIST Himself.³ For whatever GOD makes and blesses, declaring it to be “good,” is indeed Good!

Moses records that the husband and wife, bound together in marriage, are as one before GOD in the most deep and mystical sense. Marriage is holy because it is ordained

¹ 1, Catholic Family Prayer Book, “Consecration of The Family,” p 318, paragraph 1-2.

² 2, KJV, GENESIS 2:24.

³ 3, Catechism of The Catholic Church, # 1613, p 450. On CHRIST’s presence at the marriage feast at Cana.

by GOD. It assures the welfare and happiness of men, women and children. It prevents sin and opens men and women up to the blessings of GOD in the deepest bond of love which reflects The Maker's Love for us. It is the means by which we fulfill The Divine Mandate of creation to subdue the earth as GOD's faithful stewards. It is the basic building block of a godly society. It is a channel of Divine Grace. And for all these reasons, marriage is a Sacrament administered by The Church to GOD's faithful people - that the two shall be as one in body, mind and soul – that the two shall be as one in love!

V. THE TWO SHALL BE AS ONE!

The institution of marriage, instituted and ordained by The Creator Himself in the Garden, is a most integral and essential part of creation. So by The HOLY SPIRIT, The Almighty inspired Moses to record for us the first marriage between Adam and Eve in Paradise in GENESIS 2:22-24, “And the rib, which The LORD GOD had taken from man, made He a woman, and brought her unto the man. And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.”⁴

Here The New Jerome Bible Commentary observes, “Not from earth but from the man's own self is the woman fashioned...” From the deep sleep which The Creator had placed Adam, He takes from the man's very flesh that which is needed to create the woman Eve to be his wife. “The man acknowledges the gift of the woman” from GOD and, as they are joined together as one before The Almighty, indeed the two become one. So we see that “GOD made marriage part of the creation” from the very beginning, ordained and brought into being by the hand of The King of The Universe.⁵ GOD forbid then, that we sinful men should pull apart what The LORD has made as one!

As all who have ever been married know full well, the preservation, keeping and growing of the marital bond between husband and wife requires much self-giving and

⁴ 2, KJV, GENESIS 2:22-24.

⁵ 4, New Jerome Bible Commentary, GENESIS 2:18-24, p 12.

watering with Christian love. What is the nature of such Divine Love to which we are all called, and to which husbands and wives are particularly called? Frank Duff observes, “No common love can conquer men thus. Neither will it be accomplished by a mediocre... [Christianity] which can hardly preserve itself. It can be done by a... [Christianity] which loves CHRIST its Lord with all its heart, and then sees Him and loves Him in all men of whatsoever description. But This Supreme... [Love] of CHRIST must be practiced on such a scale that they who look on are driven to admit that... [such self-giving Christian love] is indeed a [foundational] characteristic of The Church...”⁶

VI. LET NOT MEN PULL APART WHAT GOD HAS MADE ONE!

Saint Mark declares for us in MARK 10:4-7 the encounter between CHRIST and certain hardhearted religious teachers of The Law of Moses: “And they said, Moses suffered to write a bill of divorcement, and to put her away. And JESUS answered and said unto them, For the hardness of your heart he wrote you this precept. But from the beginning of the creation GOD made them male and female. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife; And they twain shall be one flesh: so then they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore GOD hath joined together, let not man put asunder.”⁷ Now The Saviour Himself quotes back and explains to these teachers of The Law The very Words He had inspired Moses, through The HOLY SPIRIT, to record for us in our opening Scripture verse from GENESIS 2:24, “Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh!”⁸

As He declared through Moses in The Torah, so now The Lord JESUS CHRIST - face to face with us - declares again that a husband and wife, by entering into holy matrimony, become as one in His eyes. As The New Jerome Bible Commentary notes, “JESUS basis His stress on the permanent union of the married couple on the original will of The Creator” – He Himself now Incarnate – as we have seen in GENESIS 2:22-

⁶ 5, Handbook of The Legion of Mary, p 79, paragraph 2. “4. In High Enterprise For GOD.”

⁷ 2, KJV, MARK 10:4-9. See also MATTHEW 19:3-6.

⁸ 2, KJV, GENESIS 2:24.

24.⁹ And then The Lord adds that, only because of hardness of heart, is there divorce. But GOD's people had begun to use divorce, not for the very rare allowable circumstances recorded by Moses, but like today for any whim of selfishness, lust of the flesh or sinful desire of the heart. So The LORD reaffirms to us in The New Testament the same design for a husband and wife to be as one which He has declared in The Old Testament, that the two in marriage become as one.

But now CHRIST explains further for us in MARK 10:8-12, “And they twain shall be one flesh: so then they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore GOD hath joined together, let not man put asunder... And He saith unto them, Whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery against her. And if a woman shall put away her husband, and be married to another, she committeth adultery.”¹⁰ So JESUS The Messiah rebukes the religious leaders of His day, and all GOD's people then and now, for ripping apart marriages so freely! He convicts us, “What GOD has joined together as one in holy matrimony, you shall not pull apart!” As The Catechism of The Catholic Church observes, “...JESUS unequivocally taught the original meaning of the union of man and woman as The Creator willed it from the beginning: permission given by Moses to divorce one's wife was a concession to the hardness of hearts” of sinful men! This is why “The matrimonial union of man and woman is indissoluble: GOD Himself has determined it...!”¹¹

VII. SPOUSES TO LOVE ONE ANOTHER AS GOD LOVES HIS PEOPLE

We see the same language in The Old Testament, in that GOD The Father as JEHOVAH loved ancient Israel His bride, even though she was repeatedly unfaithful to Him in thought, word and deed. As The Catechism of The Catholic Church summarizes from Holy Scripture, “Seeing GOD's Covenant with Israel in the image of exclusive and faithful married love, the prophets prepare The Chosen People's conscience [as Moses

⁹ 4, New Jerome Bible Commentary, MATTHEW 19:1-22, p 662. “A. Teaching About Divorce.”

¹⁰ 2, KJV, MARK 10:8-12. See also MATTHEW 19:7-9

¹¹ 3, Catechism of The Catholic Church, # 1614, p 450. “Marriage in The Lord.”

declared in The Old Testament] for a deepened understanding of the unity and indissolubility of marriage” that our Lord proclaims in The New Testament. ¹²

So the prophet Isaiah records The Divine Love of The LORD for His people Israel as in ISAIAH 62:5-7, and of His longsuffering and faithfulness towards them, though they – like us - were imperfect sinners, “For as a young man marrieth a virgin, so shall thy sons marry thee: and as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy GOD rejoice over thee. I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, which shall never hold their peace day nor night: ye that make mention of The LORD, keep not silence, ...till He make Jerusalem a praise in the earth!” ¹³ Though judgement was coming upon the heads of spiritually unfaithful Israel, even so GOD promises that – because His love endures forever for His saints – they would be restored to Him as His bride!

Here the prophet foresees the restoration of GOD’s Old Testament saints Israel, which will join again GOD’s New Testament saints The Church together as the fully purged, sanctified and restored Bride of our Lord JESUS CHRIST. As Matthew Henry says here, Israel will again be given names of honor “...which signifies, ‘My delight is in her;’ ...a proper name for a wife, who ought to be her husband's delight... [For] it is The Church's Maker that is her husband: The Lord delights in thee. GOD by His Grace has wrought that in His Church which makes her His delight, she being refined, and reformed, and brought home to Him; and then by His Providence He does that for her which makes it appear that she is His delight and that He delights to do her good!” ¹⁴

We see the same language of Divine Love in The Words recorded by Jeremiah, that although GOD The Father was obliged to chastise and punish Old Testament Israel for her spiritual adultery and unfaithfulness to Him, yet Jerusalem and Judah would be restored again as the spouse of JEHOVAH. So the prophet wrote - even in the midst of

¹² 3, Catechism of The Catholic Church, # 1611, p 449. “Marriage under the pedagogy of The Law [of Moses].”

¹³ 2, KJV, ISAIAH 62:5-7.

¹⁴ 6, Matthew Henry, ISAIAH 62:1-5, II, v.4-5. “The Prosperity of The Church.”

the suffering, destruction and exile of Jerusalem at the hands of the Babylonian hoardes - These Words of The LORD's faithfulness and longsuffering towards His people in JEREMIAH 33:11, "The voice of joy, and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride, the voice of them that shall say, Praise The LORD of Hosts: for The LORD is good; for his mercy endureth for ever: and of them that shall bring the sacrifice of praise into The House of The LORD...!"¹⁵

Indeed, the marital bond between a husband and wife in holy matrimony is so unified in oneness as part of The Almighty's fabric of creation that Holy Scripture speaks of the Sacrament of marriage as a matrix in which we may understand The Divine Love of The Saviour to us His Church, first Old Testament, and now The New. It is This same Divine Love in which GOD Himself calls husbands and wives to love and honour one other in – a love of sacrifice and longsuffering – centered in the wellbeing of one another over and above the self! Husbands and wives are called to love one another sacrificially in The Divine Love which JEHOVAH has for Old Testament Israel and which JESUS The Messiah has for The New Testament Church. For did not GOD The Father, coming Incarnate as GOD The Son, give Himself up in His Passion, Death and Resurrection at The Cross to redeem us back to Himself from our sin, darkness and despair? Such is His love for us which is The Model for the love between spouses!

VIII. WIVES, HONOR AND LOVE YOUR HUSBANDS

To wives Saint Paul writes in EPHESIANS 5:22-29, "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto The Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as CHRIST is The Head of The Church: and He is The Saviour of The Body. Therefore as The Church is subject unto CHRIST, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing."¹⁶ Saint Paul records that wives are to submit in honor and love to their husbands sacrificially, as CHRIST submitted Himself to The Cross for us. But this is a two-way street, as we shall see. Husbands are to love and honor their wives sacrificially, as CHRIST gave His very Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity to redeem us at The Cross.

¹⁵ 2, KJV, JEREMIAH 33:11.

¹⁶ 2, KJV, EPHESIANS 5:22-24.

But how can a wife ever humanly hope to honor and love her husband in such a totally sacrificial and holy way? If we are saved in The Blood of The Lamb of GOD, He offers us the Grace necessary to live such a Divine Love for our spouses. As The Catechism of The Catholic Church declares, “By coming to restore the original order of creation disturbed by sin, ...[JESUS CHRIST] Himself gives the strength and Grace to live marriage in the new dimension of The Reign of GOD!”¹⁷ Such is the deep union between spouses, ordained by GOD, and consecrated by The Church. As The New Jerome Bible Commentary observes here, Saint Paul sees “...the true meaning of the Mystery of the two becoming one flesh that lies hidden in GENESIS 2:24 in the union of CHRIST and The Church, which... is the model for the union in one flesh between husbands and wives.”¹⁸

IX. HUSBANDS, LOVE, PROTECT AND PROVIDE FOR YOUR WIVES

To husbands, Saint Paul writes in EPHESIANS 5:25-29, “Husbands, love your wives, even as CHRIST also loved The Church, and gave Himself for it; That He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by The Word, That He might present it to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as The Lord [loves, nourishes and cherishes] The Church:”¹⁹ Husbands, love, nourish and cherish your wives as CHRIST does His Body!

How does CHRIST sanctify us His Church – past, present and future? By loving her so much, that He suffers and dies for her! As The New Jerome Bible Commentary says here, CHRIST is The Divine Bridegroom “...Who cleanses The Church, His Bride, in the waters of baptism so that, clothed in her dowry of holiness and purity, she may

¹⁷ 3, Catechism of The Catholic Church, # 1615, p 450. On the indissolubility of the marriage bond.

¹⁸ 4, New Jerome Bible Commentary, EPHESIANS 5:21-6:9, P 890. “Code of Conduct for the Household of GOD.”

¹⁹ 2, KJV, EPHESIANS 5:25-29.

now appear before Him.”²⁰ So the husband is to love his wife that - she as the sanctified bride standing always before her loving husband who loves, protects and provides for her – may give herself fully to him! This requires a husband to love his wife as CHRIST loves The Church in the most radical and self-giving way!

But how can a husband every humanly hope to love, protect and provide his wife in such a totally sacrificial and holy way? As The Catechism of The Catholic Church declares, “It is [only] by following CHRIST, ... [putting each other first], and taking up their crosses that spouses will be able to ‘receive’ the original meaning of marriage and live it with the help of CHRIST” day to day amidst life’s battles and struggles.²¹ Marriage is to be the pinnacle of human love after GOD’s own heart, as CHRIST declares in JOHN 13:34, “A New Commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another!”²² Christians, if we can not in CHRIST love our spouses, can we ever hope to learn to love others?

X. SPOUSES ARE TO LOVE ONE ANOTHER AS CHRIST LOVES THE CHURCH

And to both husbands and wives, Saint Paul writes in EPHESIANS 5:30-33, “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. This is a great Mystery: but I speak concerning CHRIST and The Church. Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband.”²³ And let us note again we read The Words of GENESIS 2:24, this time repeated by Saint Paul: “Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.”²⁴

²⁰ 4, New Jerome Bible Commentary, EPHESIANS 5:21-6:9, P 890. “Code of Conduct for the Household of GOD.”

²¹ 3, Catechism of The Catholic Church, # 1615, p 450. On the indissolubility of the marriage bond.

²² 2, KJV, JOHN 13:34.

²³ 2, KJV, EPHESIANS 5:30-33.

²⁴ 2, KJV, GENESIS 2:24.

How much are husbands and wives to love one another? As The Catechism of The Catholic Church observes, “The ...[marriage] Covenant between GOD and His people Israel [in The Old Testament] had prepared the way for The New and everlasting Covenant [in The New Testament] in which The Son of GOD, by becoming Incarnate and giving His life [for us], has united to Himself... [in an indissoluble] Way all mankind saved by Him...”²⁵

What then is the object of CHRIST’s Divine Love for us The Church, after which husbands and wives are called to love one another? Scofield makes these observations of This Perfect sanctifying and sacrificial Divine Love of CHRIST for us His Church - past, present and future: First, “For love He gave Himself to redeem The Church.” Second, “In love He is sanctifying The Church.” Third, “For the reward of His sacrifice and labour of love, He will present The Church to Himself in flawless perfection, ‘one pearl of great price.’”²⁶ As CHRIST loves His saints, so spouses are to love each other, giving themselves for the sake of one another!

Our Lord loves us so much that He willingly came to suffer and die for us His Church, that we might become part of Him as His sons and daughters. This is The Divine Love that husbands and wives are to imitate and live out in love for each other, which is reinforced and grows with the blessing of children within the confines of holy matrimony. As The Catechism of The Catholic Church says to both husbands and wives, faithfully declaring what GOD Himself has declared to spouses, the “...Grace of Christian marriage is a fruit of CHRIST’s Cross, the Source of all Christian life.”²⁷ Only if we follow CHRIST, taking up our own crosses daily in Him, may we hope to grow in the love for our spouses – and our children - that our Lord has for us!

²⁵ 3, Catechism of The Catholic Church, # 1612, p 449. “Marriage in The Lord.”

²⁶ 7, Scofield KJV Study Bible, EPHESIANS 5:21-33, p 1254-1255, footnote 1. “The married life of Spirit-filled believers as illustrating CHRIST and The Church.”

²⁷ 3, Catechism of The Catholic Church, # 1615, p 450. On the indissolubility of the marriage bond.

XI. WHAT THEN OF DIVORCE?

Having seen that marriage is Divinely ordained by The Creator Himself as between one man and one woman, divorce being a sad result of our hardheartedness, what of those who are divorced? What of those who are living in sin, the man and woman who are not married for whatever reason? What of those who, having divorced, are then remarried? What of those who are widowed or abandoned? Is there no hope of marrying again? Is there no hope of forgiveness of our sins? Is there no chance of marital love again for us? GOD forbid, for CHRIST is ever waiting for us with open arms of Grace and Mercy at The blessed Cross!

XII. TO THE UNMARRIED AND THE WIDOWED

Let us consider GOD's loving guidance as revealed to us through Saint Paul. To the unmarried, the widow and the widower, we read in I CORINTHIANS 7:8-9, "Now to the unmarried and the widows I say: It is good for them to stay unmarried, as I am. But if they cannot control themselves, they should marry, for it is better to marry than to burn with passion."²⁸ For most of us, GOD has created the joys and blessings of marriage, that we may serve Him and our fellow man with our spouses as one. And having been called to marriage, The Lord commands us to be faithful to Him and to our spouses. So to those who are single and wish to be married because they were never married, or are widowed, GOD declares, "Go, be married!"

To some men and women, GOD gives the spiritual gift of perpetual celibacy, that they may become only His servants within The faithful Church. But to most men and women, GOD calls to marriage. As Saint Paul observes in I CORINTHIANS 7:32-33, "...He that is unmarried careth for the things that belong to The Lord, how he may please The Lord: But he that is married careth for the things that are of the world, how he may please his wife" first.²⁹ We are all called in CHRIST to serve Him according to GOD's will, some to serve in The Kingdom of GOD on earth perpetually celibate, but most others to serve within the bonds of holy matrimony.

²⁸ 2, KJV, I CORINTHIANS 7:8-9.

²⁹ 2, KJV, I CORINTHIANS 7:32-33.

XIII. TO THE MARRIED AND THE DIVORCED

To the married and the divorced, we read in I CORINTHIANS 7:10-11, “To the married I give this command (not I, but The Lord): A wife must not separate from her husband. But if she does, she must remain unmarried or else be reconciled to her husband. And a husband must not divorce his wife.”³⁰ Let us note again the indissolubility of the marriage bond is GOD’s Standard, and this is what we are called to seek as closely as possible. Matthew Henry observes here of Saint Paul’s Words, that “...marriage, by CHRIST’s Command, is for life; and therefore those who are married must not think of separation. The wife must not depart from the husband..., nor the husband put away his wife... This I command, says the Apostle; yet not I, but The Lord. ...Whatever... [Saint Paul] commanded was The Lord’s Command, dictated by His [HOLY] SPIRIT...”³¹ We are bound to obey what The Almighty has decreed.

XIV. TO THOSE MARRIED TO AN UNBELIEVING SPOUSE

To those who are married to an unbelieving spouse, we read in I CORINTHIANS 7:12-14, “To the rest I say this (I, not The Lord): If any brother has a wife who is not a believer and she is willing to live with him, he must not divorce her. And if a woman has a husband who is not a believer and he is willing to live with her, she must not divorce him. For the unbelieving husband has been sanctified through his wife, and the unbelieving wife has been sanctified through her believing husband. Otherwise your children would be unclean, but as it is, they are holy.”³² This is a spiritual and daily consequence of the two being as one.

Matthew Henry continues, observing that in that “The Lord Himself, with His own mouth, had forbidden such separations... Man and wife cannot separate at pleasure, nor dissolve, when they will, their matrimonial bonds and relation. They must not separate for any other cause than what CHRIST allows. And therefore the Apostle advises that if any woman had been separated, either by a voluntary act of her own or by

³⁰ 2, KJV, I CORINTHIANS 7:10-11.

³¹ 6, Matthew Henry, I CORINTHIANS 7:10-16, I, v.10-11. “The Inviolability of The Marriage Bond.”

³² 2, KJV, I CORINTHIANS 7:12-13.

an act of her husband, she should continue unmarried, and seek reconciliation with her husband, that they might cohabit again.”³³

XV. TO THE ABANDONED SPOUSE

To the abandoned spouse, we read in I CORINTHIANS 7:15, “But if the unbeliever leaves, let him do so. A believing man or woman is not bound in such circumstances; GOD has called us to live in peace.”³⁴ And to all, we read in I CORINTHIANS 7:16, “How do you know, wife, whether you will save your husband? Or, how do you know, husband, whether you will save your wife?”³⁵ Matthew Henry says further, “...Husbands and wives should not quarrel at all, or should be quickly reconciled. They are bound to each other for life. The Divine Law allows of no separation. They cannot throw off the burden, and therefore should set their shoulders to it, and endeavour to make it as light to each other as they can.”³⁶ CHRIST paid the ultimate price on The Cross in His love for our lives and souls. GOD forbid that we should cast away so lightly our spouses when the whims of the world, the flesh and the devil tempt us to do so! As The Lord’s longsuffering Love for us, so must we have longsuffering love for our spouses!

XVI. AND IN WHATEVER WAY WE HAVE SINNED

And in whatever way we may have sinned in the violation of GOD’s design for marriage – promiscuity, fornication, perversions, polygamy, abusiveness, abortion, adultery, homosexuality, cohabitation, divorce, abandonment, lack of CHRIST-like love, hardheartedness and all such things - we are called to confess, repent and make amends. So Saint John declares to us in I JOHN 1:7-9, “But if we walk in The Light, as He is in The Light, we have fellowship one with another, and The Blood of JESUS CHRIST His Son cleanseth us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and

³³ 6, Matthew Henry, I CORINTHIANS 7:10-16, I, v.10-11. “The Inviolability of The Marriage Bond.”

³⁴ 2, KJV, I CORINTHIANS 7:15.

³⁵ 2, KJV, I CORINTHIANS 7:16.

³⁶ 6, Matthew Henry, I CORINTHIANS 7:10-16, I, v.10-11. “The Inviolability of The Marriage Bond.”

the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”³⁷

XVII. IN CONCLUSION

We have journeyed together briefly from The Words of Moses, to CHRIST Himself, to Saint Paul. From GENESIS 2:22-24 we see that GOD instituted marriage as a holy Sacrament as an integral part of His creation between one man and one woman, and that the two are one in the eyes of GOD. From MARK 10:4-9 we see that our Lord JESUS CHRIST declares that divorce arises from hardness of heart and that, as GOD Himself joins a husband and wife together as one in holy matrimony, men should not pull marriages apart.

From EPHESIANS 5:22-33 we see that husbands and wives are to love each other sacrificially, imitating The Divine Love which CHRIST has for us. How much does GOD love us? So much that He, The King of The Universe Incarnate, came to suffer and die for us on The Cross, that we might be saved and in this life and in eternity as His very sons and daughters! From I CORINTHIANS 7:8-16 we see repeated in various cases the inviolability of the marriage bond, the breaking of which is a sin, which itself often leads to other sins.

If we are married, no matter if our spouse is a believer or not, we are to stay married to our spouse. If we are separated or divorced, we are to seek to reconcile with our spouses. If we, being divorced and unable to reconcile with our spouses - excepting certain circumstances fully evaluated by The faithful Church, such as abandonment by an unbelieving spouse, and ecclesiastical permission has been then given to marry again to the abandoned spouse - we are to remain single and celibate. If we are unmarried, abandoned or widowed, we may seek the love of a spouse within the confines of holy matrimony.

³⁷ 2, KJV, I JOHN 1:7-9.

And from I JOHN 1:7-9 we see that, if we confess and repent of our sins to our Loving Saviour JESUS CHRIST, He is always there to forgive us and draw us back into The Light of His righteousness, healing and peace. Such is the love and honor that The Almighty has for us. And such is the love and honor that husbands and wives are called to show and live out to one another in the blessed bonds of marriage. If we follow GOD's prescription for marriage rather than the world's, we place our feet on The Firm Foundation of The Solid Rock of GOD's Word and not upon the slippery sand of man's hardhearted foolishness!

So we end then as we began, recalling The Words of Moses recorded for us in GENESIS 2:24, "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh."³⁸ For marriage is a holy Sacrament instituted by GOD Himself between a husband and a wife, so that the two shall become as one before His ever-present Throne, and that therefore no man should pull apart! May it ever be so with all of GOD's people! In The Name of GOD The Father, The Son and The Holy Ghost! Amen.

³⁸ 2, KJV, GENESIS 2:24.

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