

Marriage and the Mystery of Christ and His Church

by Michael Flowers

Marriage is a sacramental union between Christ and His church, and it is a means of transformation and growth in Christ.

Duration: 17:10

Scripture: Genesis 2:24, Proverbs 27:17, Mark 10:9, 1 Corinthians 12:12, Hebrews 10:24-25, 2 Peter 1:3, Revelation 19:7

Topics: "Marriage"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of marriage as a sacred union between a man and a woman. He refers to the Gospel of Mark, where Jesus quotes Genesis 2, affirming that God created humans as male and female. The preacher highlights the relationship between Eric and Joanna Blossom, who started attending morning prayer together and eventually became a couple. He draws a parallel between their relationship and the relationship between Christ and the church, stating that Christian marriage can preach the good news of Jesus' sacrifice. The preacher concludes by offering a prayer for God's blessings and protection on the couple.

Transcript

The Holy Scriptures begin and end with a wedding, earthly and heavenly. In today's Gospel, Mark 10, Jesus quotes Genesis 2, right from the beginning of creation. God made them male and female.

And for this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife. And the two shall become one flesh. They are no longer two, but one.

Therefore, this is Jesus' commentary on Genesis 2. This is not written in Genesis 2, this is his commentary. Therefore, what God has joined together, let no one separate. What God has joined together, let no one separate.

We at St. Aidan's have all had the joy and the privilege and the honor of seeing this relationship between Eric and Joanna blossom. Just, you know, coming to morning prayer, these guys come to morning prayer at 7 a.m. in the morning and they came just as friends at first. Those who pray together, get together.

Amen. That's the message here. You want the key, right? Start praying together.

Things happen, right? Yeah, it's called intimacy. Into me, see, that's right. They initiated this kind of new relationship when they came to the altar.

And it is a new relationship. It's something that God did when they came to the altar, whereby God joined, God himself joined them together. That is, those whom God has joined together.

God has married. You see, if anybody asks you who married you, you know what to say. God married us.

Right. It's a supernatural act. Whereby God does something in making two people one, this unity and diversity.

It's a beautiful thing. And so for this reason, the church considers the union of man and woman in holy matrimony sacramental. It's sacramental.

How? You came to the altar as two individuals, but you left completely ontologically changed as one, one flesh, so much more than a physical union or a contract or an agreement. Something inside of you changed. You were bound together by God.

You were united as one flesh. Your marriage is a visible sign to the church and to the world of the coming wedding banquet of Christ in his church. We could have read Ephesians 5 today as well, where it states that.

And the demands, the demands of maintaining this gift of union, maintaining the unity of the spirit, something you don't have to create, but maintain. And a lot of us don't like maintenance, right? I mean, I like creating things. I don't like maintaining things.

That's my temperament. Maintenance is the key, though, because we can't create what you're looking for and you can't create what you're looking for. Only the creator himself can make you one flesh, but you have to maintain it.

And that's the beauty of marriage. So the demands of maintaining this, it's a gift of union, that union that you're experiencing it's a gift. Maintaining the unity, the oneness of body and soul, that will be the means of transformation in your lives.

That will be the means of your conformity into the image and likeness of Jesus Christ. Your whole marriage will progress and deepen and broaden to where it would begin to proclaim the unity that's in the Holy Trinity himself. God, the Father, God, the Son, God, the Holy Spirit, one God in perfect unity, because you're dwelling in that love communion of Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

God, the Father has outpoured his love into your hearts by the Holy Spirit whom he has given you. It's outpoured love. That's what Christianity is.

It's experiencing the love of the Father and that outpoured love for what? So that we can love him back. We can give it back to him, but we can't give him what we haven't received. So he loved us first, right? He loved us first.

Therefore, we return that love. It's a reciprocal love, all coming from God in that love communion. It's a beautiful thing.

And that truly is the intimacy of your relationship, that in to me see. And you both will have to say that to one another. And that's going to be the challenge of growing in that.

I've got to take off my fig leaves. We run a lot of times and we hide and we put those fig leaves on because Genesis 2 speaks of a pre-fall relationship there. That was marriage before the fall.

But guess what? We're not married in that condition, are we? And so the bride is making herself ready even for the son in that great wedding feast of the Lamb. And we're making ourselves ready by being conformed and transformed into the image of Jesus Christ. And you can't do that alone.

There's no solitary saints. We can't grow in Christ alone. We need each other as iron sharpens iron and encourage one another daily while it's still today.

We need all of that positive, prophetic input into our lives because we forget who we are. I forget who I am and I have to be reminded sometimes by someone coming up and putting their arms around me or inviting me out to breakfast or something. And we have this great conversation.

And then all of a sudden I realize, oh, wow, this is holy church. This is yeah, we're sons and daughters of God. You know, we've been born of God.

It's a supernatural reality that we're living in, but it's so easy to forget. So we have to remind each other, we have to encourage one another. And that's what marriage can be, right? Encourage one another daily, right? It's reciprocal.

Sometimes it'll be when you don't feel like reciprocating, just receive it because there will come a time where the other will not feel like reciprocating and just receive it. OK, it all works out. It balances out over time.

So just take those fig leaves off and say into me, see into me, see the two becoming one speaks of the mystery of Christ and his church. What is this mystery? Through the redemptive mission of Jesus Christ, and here's echoes of Genesis to get this leaving his heavenly father to cleave unto his wife, the church. It's not only a man shall leave his father and mother.

Christ himself left the father to cleave unto his bride, the church. See, so there's this double signification going on in your relationship. It's preaching the gospel of Christ and his church.

It's what marriage, Christian marriage does. It can preach the good news. We want to help you do that.

We want to encourage you in that as you encourage us. It's mutual. And so through that redemptive mission of Jesus leaving his heavenly father to cleave unto his wife, the church, his bride, all who place their trust in Jesus are united to him, are married to him.

It's all about marriage. You see, Christianity is all about marriage. It's all about union in Jesus, union in Jesus Christ, which is marriage.

We brought into union through the mediation of Jesus Christ and we've been restored to the father, and that is really paradise restored right there. This great act of Christ is inaugurated on the cross. He stretched out his arms upon the cross, embracing the whole world.

And on the night that he was handed over to suffering and death, he illustrated it before it happened when he took bread and broke it and he gave it to his disciples and said, Take it. This is my body given for you. You see, that's marriage language.

Christ, the bridegroom giving himself to his church. This is my body given for you. St. Augustine proclaimed this.

He said Christ came to the marriage bed of the cross and united himself with the woman, the church, his bride, and consummated that union forever. And so, Eric and Joanna, may your relationship proclaim that gospel, that it may be Christ centered, Christ has died, Christ is risen, and Christ will come again. Many will see and many will fear, Psalm 40 says, and put their trust in the Lord.

And that's our prayer today for you, that your marriage will be an evangelical witness, be a witness, be a sign and a symbol of drawing people closer to Christ because they see you doing it, living it, not only speaking it, but living it and embracing them in it. And that outpoured love just goes all over your friends and your neighbors and your family in Christ Jesus. Amen.

We need tender hearts to stay there, don't we? We need faith and grace to do that. And you have it. He's giving you everything you need for life and godliness.

We're here today to bless a marriage, you guys. We're here today to bless something that God has already done supernaturally, and we're going to put our amen to it, our blessing, and we're going to get to stand with this couple and we're going to say amen to that. Let's have you guys come up.

Page nine. Eric and Joanna, you have come here today to seek the blessing of God and his church upon your marriage. I require, therefore, that you promise with the help of God to fulfill the obligations which Christian marriage demands.

Eric, will you take Joanna to be your wife? Do you promise to love her, comfort her, honor and keep her in sickness and in health and forsaking all others to be faithful to her as long as you both shall live? I do. I believe that. Joanna, you have taken Eric to be your husband.

Do you promise to love him, comfort him, honor and keep him in sickness and in health and forsaking all others to be faithful to him as long as you both shall live? To the congregation and all of us standing here, will you who have witnessed these promises do all in your power to uphold these two persons in their marriage? We will. And that's an honor. That's a privilege.

OK, I'm going to have you extend your hands out to me with your rings. Bless, O Lord, these rings to be a sign of the vows by which this man and this woman have bound themselves to each other through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Those whom God has joined together, let no one put asunder.

Let us pray. Eternal God, creator and preserver of all life, author of salvation and giver of all grace, look with favor upon the world you have made and especially upon this man. Give them wisdom and devotion in the order that each may be to the other a strength in need and a companion.

Grant that the bonds of our common humanity by which all your children are united one to another and the living to the dead may be so transformed by your grace that your will may be done on earth as it is in heaven, where our father with your son and Holy Spirit live and reign in perfect unity now and forever. Amen. Amen.

Most gracious God, we give you thanks for your tender love in sending Jesus Christ to come among us to be born of a human mother and to make the way of the cross to be the way of life. We thank you also for consecrating the union of man and woman in his name by the power of your Holy Spirit. Pour out the abundance of your blessing on this man and this woman.

Defend them from every enemy. Lead them into all peace. Let their love for each other be a seal upon their hearts, a mantle about their shoulders and a crown upon their foreheads.

Bless them in their work and in their companionship and in their sleeping and in their waking, in their joys and in their sorrows, in their life and in their death. Finally, in your mercy, bring them to that table where your saints feast forever in your heavenly home through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns one God forever and ever. The blessing of God, Father, God, the Son, God, the Holy Spirit, bless, preserve and keep you, the Lord, mercifully with his favor, look upon you and fill you with all spiritual benediction and grace that you may faithfully live together in this life and in the age to come, have life everlasting.

May the peace of the Lord be always with you. Let's stand together and share that peace with one another as husband and wife do the same.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/28/SID28665.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/michael-flowers/marriage-and-the-mystery-of-christ-and-his-church/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net