

Marriages Made In Heaven — Article

By Jim Golden — (Re-written in November 2005)

"For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church. Eph 5:31 – 32 NKJV

God is a passionate God, eagerly waiting to pour His fiery, passionate, enabling love into each of us until it overflows to our spouses, our families, and our communities. The New Covenant is the ultimate marriage covenant. All of God's dealings with his creation start and end with a marriage. If you can accept that the reason the entire universe was created was to create a beautiful bride for the glorious Son of God, then you are a candidate for the message of this writing. A willing and passionate lover that could stand by his side equally yoked declaring his excellent glory throughout the ages was and is the goal of creation. This is the foundation for all of our lives as Christians.

If the fire has gone out of your relationship, or if you never had it, you are about to embark on a journey that will set you aflame with passion for his name. Jesus is our great Bridegroom King. No other revelation of the redeemed community has the ability to experience days of Heaven on Earth. None but the Bride has been set apart and anointed by the Father to actually enflame the Heart of Jesus provoking His return. It is the Spirit and the Bride that say come. It is this incredible mystery that is being revealed at the end of the age — the mystery of the Bridegroom and His lovely Bride. Get ready for your earthly human marriages to be filled with tenderness and fiery passion, for they are the God ordained examples of the New Covenant signed in our Savior's precious blood! **It is the Bride alone that can satisfy the passionate longing of the Bridegroom!**

Love and marriage go together like a horse and carriage, it's the truth my brother, you can't have one without the other. Or so the song says. Unfortunately the sit-com *Married With Children*, which uses this as its theme song, is probably very accurate when it comes to depicting the average marriage. Over 50% of marriages end in divorce. Of the 50% that don't, a good percentage of those are in a state of *silent* divorce. And the majority of married couples would agree that the thrill and passion has definitely left their relationship, except for their brief sexual encounters. Many would even admit that even these brief encounters bring little or no joy. Is there hope for the institution of Holy Matrimony? The scripture says yes, where there is love.

Love never fails. In today's failing economy it is nice to know that there is something out there that you can always count on for success. Love means many different things to many different people. To some love is erotic. To others it is friendship. To others it is how they feel about their possessions or pets. The list of definitions for love is as long as the list of names in a telephone book. One man defines love as *the unselfish choice for the greater good of another*. Jesus Christ declared different levels of love to exist when He said;

" Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends " John 15:13 NKJV

friends." John 15:13 NIV

If we want a true definition that doesn't ever change we must go to a reference source that doesn't ever change — The Bible. Most of us think of love as an action or feeling. While it is true that love is a verb, it is also true, according to Scripture, that love is a person.

"Whoever does not love does not know God, because *God is love.*"

1 John 4:8 NIV

"And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. *God is love.* Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in him." 1 John 4:16 NIV

In light of God revealing Himself to us as love, we can now see Love as our Constant Companion and Helper. He will never leave us or forsake us Romans 5:5 tells us that Love (God) is the reason that we will not be disappointed with the outcome of our lives and can have hope.

In so many of the situations that confront us daily or sporadically, it is hope that opens the doorway to a successful outcome. The principles I want to share with you will work in any relationship but I want to focus on marriage. If you will listen with your heart as you read, I guarantee that your marital relationship will change for the better. Even couples that are standing back to back will turn and face each other as they did the day they said, "I do." I must point out that these principles are meant for those who are Christians and believe in God's Word.

First, I want to allow the Scripture to reveal what our God is like. As you read the verses below, you will notice that I have inserted the word "I" for the word "love" and changed the tense so that you may read it as though God were speaking to you directly.

"I am patient, I am kind. I do not envy, I do not boast, I am not proud. I am not rude, I am not self-seeking, I am not easily angered, and I keep no record of wrongs. I do not delight in evil but rejoice with the truth. I always protect, always trust, always hope, and always persevere. I never fail."

1 Corinthians 13:4-8 NIV

Another definition of love is: the enabling presence of God within us that demonstrates His love through us. "Well Jim," you say that is all well and good but how does this apply to me and my marriage?" The Scripture says that we are *transformed* by renewing our minds. Scripture also declares that the power of life (God) and death (Satan) is in our tongue.

In our daily lives we are confronted with what we perceive as reality. When this happens we must not just blindly accept it as truth. We must weigh every situation in the light of God's truth and reject any contradictions. At first this is really a labor of "love." We have become so accustomed to allowing any thought to enter our minds, no matter who authored them.

Being spiritual beings we hear the words of spiritual beings. The Scripture declares that God is a Spirit. Satan and all his minions are spiritual beings as well. While God

that God is a Spirit. Satan and all his minions are spiritual beings as well. While God is the only one of His kind, being uncreated, He never the less needed a body like every other spirit to accomplish His desires and will. That body we call Jesus Christ. Through Jesus' body God was able to reconcile mankind to Himself.

Through our physical being God is able to declare His work of reconciliation in every generation. If Satan hated God then it only follows that he hates anyone in whom God lives.

Love is a creative force and so is hate. The former is edifying in nature while the latter is destructive. In Satan's desire to destroy what he hates, one of his most effective weapons is the language he speaks. Listen to what Jesus has to say about Satan's language.

"You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desire. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his *native language*, for he is a liar and the father of lies." John 8:44 NIV

Jesus gives us some real insight into how the devil works and how we respond to his schemes. First, Jesus says that their desire to kill Him wasn't their desire, but Satan's. He then implies that the way the devil was able to manipulate them was through *language*.

Satan's language is the language of lies. But let's not leave it so nebulous. Satan is called the Accuser of the Brethren. It only follows that his language is almost always accusational in nature.

If you and your spouse are truly Christians then you have become something so wonderful and marvelous, through the work of Jesus that the angels desire to check you out. They are overwhelmed at the prospect that their awesome God could, or would, actually desire to live within one of these rebellious human houses. Yet the blood of Jesus Christ is so powerful that it cleanses and sanctifies anyone who receives Him as his or her sacrifice.

Scripture entreats us to stop perceiving each other as we used to, but to see each other, as God perceives us through His work of salvation.

"So from now on we regard *no one* from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer." 2 Corinthians 5:16 NIV

This is very important in learning to hear God's voice. We must realize that God declares that we are something we often find difficult to accept. Sometime it's easier to believe in His work in me than to *consider the treasure in my wife's earthen vessel*. If we agree with God's truth concerning our spouse, we must confess it with our mouth. Then He will release His powerful truth into their life. This truth will bring about the change we so desperately need.

The enemy's method of *transformation* uses our failed expectations, turning them into offenses, invariably bringing about the opposite result we desired. Charles Schmitt, in his article called *Offenses*, states that offenses are one of the enemy's main tools used to tear down the work of God. It's no wonder that marriages are high on Satan's "hit list." Marriage was designed by God to uniquely reveal the kind of relationship

"hit-list." Marriage was designed by God, to uniquely reveal the kind of relationship Jesus desires to have with His people.

Pastor Schmitt goes on to say that one of the Greek words translated, as offense is *skandalon*, from which we get our English word *scandalize*. It means, "a falling away," "stumbling block," or "guilt."

The dictionary defines offend in this way:

"To cause resentment, anger, displeasure; to hurt another's feelings, causing them to feel resentful, angry, displeased, insulted, wounded and affronted."

Sound like anyone you know? In my marriage it could have described at least 50% of my interaction with my wife. Charles Schmitt goes on to give us the keys of deliverance saying,

"First, we must always guard ourselves carefully so that we do not take up another's offense."

As I read this God suddenly began to tie a lot of loose ends together for me. He showed me a diagram, in my mind, of just how the devil works to destroy the work of salvation in our marriages.

Satan is highly offended at God and at us who are the tokens of God's redemption. The father of lies skillfully uses every negative situation in our marriages to get us to take up his offense against our spouse, and subtly cause us to "*fall away*" from God, by embracing his lies rather than God's truth. The remedy is simple:

"To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, 'If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.'" John 8:31-32 - NIV

When I first came to the Lord He told me this passage would become the motto for my life and ministry. I pray that its truth and power become the liberating power of your life also.

If you want your marriage and life turned around then you must first recognize the internal rebellion that you have allowed to go on in your life against God and His word. You must seek His forgiveness and repent from the way you handle the negative situations confronting you. You must submit every thought and circumstance to God and His word for acceptance or rejection.

I won't try to make you believe that this isn't work. As I said earlier, we are so used to receiving any thought that comes down the pike as acceptable, we have adopted a defiled method of dealing with our thought life. Unless we change this we will not see the salvation of God in our marriage. It is God's word not Satan's word that can produce the change we desire. Secondly, before we can hope for God to use us to bring about change in our spouse we must allow Him to bring about this change in us. Jesus said,

"Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? How can you say to

pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? How can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' when all the time there is a plank in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye. Mat 7:3-5 NIV

At first glance this is no fun at all. But the deeper we delve into the revelation of Jesus spoken of in John 8:44 the easier it becomes. Remember Jesus said that their desire to kill Him wasn't their own but the devils.

If you are a Christian and have the Spirit of God living in you, then what you truly want is what God wants. God has taken the old heart of stone out of you and put a new heart of flesh in its place. He has written His laws on your new heart and mind. This *new creature* truly longs to do God's will. It is imperative that you come into agreement with God concerning this. If you do not you will have absolutely no basis for change in your marriage.

When I began to say what God says about my wife in the middle of a heated argument it was awkward at first. In fact, it was possibly the hardest thing that I ever tried to do. Yet, as I began to agree with His Word we began to notice changes for the better. I showed her some of the things God showed me from the Scriptures, and together we decided to begin to agree with God.

It wasn't long before God revealed the wounds of rejection and disapproval in our lives that the enemy was using as a lens through which he filtered almost all of our perceptions of each other. Along with this revelation came two very powerful deliverances in my wife and myself.

Once we began to see what we were really like, as God's new creations, the accusational language of the enemy was exposed. We were able to distinguish between his feelings and our own. The power and authority to resist him forced him to flee. This does not mean that he won't return to test your resolve

Let me say again that this isn't an easy job. Nothing in life that is worth having comes cheap. Even salvation, though it comes to us as the free gift of God, should not be considered cheap because it is free. . It is all too easy to stop practicing these principles of testing your thoughts and return to your old ways. However, persistence will eventually evolve into a way of life!

The price that Jesus paid to restore us to His Father cannot be compared to the *labor of love* we will have to put forth to see our marriages restored. But the end result will definitely be worth it. Remember when you begin to agree with God the Holy Spirit is released to become your Helper.

I love my wife more today than I did before we were married. God is able to restore the most devastated marriage in the world. In fact, the greater the challenge, the greater the grace given to those who earnestly desire God's will. Love without passion or fond emotion and affection is lifeless duty. God desires so much more for the covenant of marriage.

It is nice to hold my wife in my arms and know that together we can overcome the world. In her I have a constant reminder of the wonderful love and salvation of our glorious God. It should be noted that while this writing is geared toward married

couples all the truths and principles can be applied to the dynamics involved in any relationship in our lives and in the Body of Christ, for everyone who calls on His name is part of the glorious Bride! (The Outline)