

St. Matthew 19:1-6  
The Marriage of Mitchell Daniel Meyer and Sarah Marie Braden  
The Eighth Day of June, 2019 A. ✠ D.

In the Name of the Father, and of the ✠ Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

“For this reason”, saith the Lord, “a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.” “For this reason...” The Lord said. For what reason? For unity. For consolation. For procreation. For companionship. Because without her he is not complete. Without him she is not complete. So God makes the two complete. He makes the two one.

Before God made them male and female, all the days of creation were good. But none were very good. Then on the sixth day, God made man. Male and female made He them. And God blessed them. So while sun and moon and stars and oceans and mountains and all the beasts of the earth were good, they were not very good until man and woman were made as the climax of the creation.

God made man first. And the truth is as God declared: “It is not good that man should be alone.” So from the man God brought forth woman. She was brought forth from him, taken out of him, two fleshs from one. It was then that God declared “For this reason... a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.”

Man would not be alone. The two would be joined. The two would be one again, but in a better way. The Church would be filled. Only then did God pronounce all things “Very Good.” So, Mitchell and Sarah, what you intend to do today is good. Indeed, it is very good. It is ordained by God. For it is not good for you to be alone. You who are two will soon be made one. And you will do so as did the first man and woman, before God, by His Word, and with His blessing.

As at the first, so now this day - your union can't be good without the proclamation of God. That's why you're here this day. That's what the Christian wedding is - to hear God's Word, to receive His blessing, that you be joined before Him and by Him in thanksgiving, that your union be sanctified by the Word of God and prayer, that your life together be sanctified by the same, beginning here, as you stand before God and this congregation.

Only then will your marriage be very good, because by God's grace it will be an earthly reflection of a heavenly truth: the love of the True Bridegroom, Christ, for His Bride; the boundless, self-sacrificing love of Christ for His Church, the reverent, constituting love of the true Bride, the Holy Church, for Her Bridegroom, Her Head. Inasmuch as that is true of your union, then it is Holy Matrimony indeed, marriage as God intends marriage to be.

Everyone present this day prays that you will live out your lives in God's grace, blessed by Him, provided for and protected and kept by Him, basking in His love, reflecting that love one to another, receiving His forgiveness, and extending that forgiveness to one another, until death parts you. Marriage is for this life only. But death will not part you from God.

The Pharisees tested the Lord with a purpose: they wanted to divide what God has made one. They wanted to take what God had made one and make it two again. Truth be told, what they really wanted is to be like God, to have power and authority to decide what is good, to undo what

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God has done. That sinful impulse isn't new. It overcame the first man and woman. So it is with all fallen men, not satisfied with what God has made, unconvinced by what God has said, sinfully desiring to remake all things in their own image, according to their own likeness.

And the same forces that work in this fallen world to divide you from God will seek to break your union with each other. Selfishness, jealousy, doubt, pride, greed, hubris, living as the fallen world entices, these dark temptations will seek to take the part of the Pharisees in your lives – to divide what God has joined. And left to your own devices, like all fallen men, you could not overcome them.

But thanks be to God, in love, in mercy, One overcame them for you: the True Bridegroom. That you be One in the truest and eternal sense, Christ became one Flesh with you. And while it is not good for man to be alone, the God Man was left alone – having given His disciple and mother away, forsaken by the Father, Christ the Man was alone on the cross.

That He suffered, that He died, that He was alone, is very good for you, and for all men. It was very good that He was alone, for there He won the forgiveness of all your sins. There He paid your debt. There He earned your reconciliation with God, that what sin had divided, God joined together again.

So, Mitchell and Sarah, you are not alone. Christ is with you. He took up His life again that you be declared Holy, by faith in Him, simply by believing. And you are not alone, because baptized, believing in Christ, reconciled to God, it has pleased the Lord of the Church, the True Bridegroom, to join you two together as one.

In Christ it is not the harmful desires of the world that you will succumb to. Rather by the work of the Spirit who fills you, you will show one another love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control, that your love be strong, and that your love for one another grow even in times of adversity, especially in times of adversity. For it is together that you will best overcome difficulty; and it is together, one with each other, and One with God, the Holy Bride, His Church, that you will know true joy.

For this reason you will exchange vows this day. For this reason Mitchell will leave his father and mother, and be joined to Sarah, and you two shall no longer be two, but one flesh.

It has pleased the Lord of Love to give you love for one another. He has given you His forgiveness, that you forgive one another. And it is pleasing to Him that you are here, this day, to be joined in Holy Matrimony. It is good. Indeed, it is very good.

Mitchell and Sarah, may God richly bless you as you are united in Holy Matrimony for the rest of your earthly lives. And may the True Bridegroom bless you, as members of His Holy Church, His chaste and pure Bride, unto life everlasting, as He has promised to do. Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate.

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