

**WHAT PASTOR THINKS OF YOUR WEDDING**  
**July 30, 2017 –Mark 10: 2-9**  
**The Church of the Covenant**

What does Pastor REALLY think about your wedding? I have one friend in ministry who is a complete cynic where weddings are concerned and he says: “There is more hope at a funeral than at most weddings!” How about that for being cynical? I suppose a pastor could get that way over time. I have done around 600 weddings now over the course of my ministry. Imagine if all of them were the same! Imagine how unexciting that might be! But I have a fun thing that couples do. They choose the different parts of their wedding service; they don’t just get the canned one, the same one from me, the one read out of the book. So no two of those 600 are the same. Then we sit down and discuss it together; why they chose the things they chose. I learn a lot about them. I learn the level of formality of the service they like. But more importantly I learn the themes and the phrases and the biblical and spiritual principles that resonate with them. And we talk about it. And I figure out what makes them tick as a couple and as individuals. In the process I get to know them and they get to know me. What a privilege it is to be invited into the inner most sanctums of someone’s life on one of the most extraordinary highpoints of their life. What a privilege to be your pastor during your wedding.

O to be sure, I’ve had some memorable weddings. The wedding at the Iowa State Fair when the tractor pull went off in the grandstand a block and a half away as I began to say “Dearly beloved”. And the ear-splitting noise drowning out every word I said. God still showed up and they still got married. Or the beautiful wedding by a lakeside in Michigan when the tiny miniscule “no-see-ums”, tiny bugs that swarm in clouds, all buzzed my head because I had after shave lotion on, and I was trying to spit them out of my mouth surreptitiously, with no one knowing. Or the time when a cat ran up the center aisle of the church during the vows; fortunately the bride was a cat lover and took this as a sign from God she really was supposed to marry this guy. Or the time a very nervous groom batted the underside of my wedding book and catapulted a ring waaaaayyyyy up into the sky where it went all the way back to the communion table, wobbled and went down, and I said what any pastor would do, “Let us pray”. And then, with every head bowed and every eye closed, carefully tip-toed back to the communion table, praying every step along the way, and returned into place with ring in hand. Or the amazing miracle of an outdoor wedding where it looked like a huge rain storm was about to fall, and I prayed, and a torrential rain hit the country club less than a mile away but not the wedding site. Praying that there will be no rain for a wedding is on my wedding check list. 600 weddings and only two with rain over 35 years. The family gave me an umbrella to remind me of the goodness of God which I carry to this day. Or the absolutely beautiful moment when a groom gingerly, lovingly coaxed a nervous bride out of hiding from the women’s restroom. I watched the power of love to overcome fear, firsthand. What a beautiful, exquisite moment. Nope, I wouldn’t trade 600 free Friday evenings and Saturdays to miss all that, not for the world. I love doing weddings. Pastor loves your wedding because Pastor loves you...and I love one more thing, as well...

I love the moment in the middle of the wedding when GOD shows up to bless the couple. I mean quite literally you can feel the presence of God at some distinct moment in the service. The Spirit is surrounding us and swirling about us. It is very touching and very moving. I could almost stop the wedding and say to the couple, “Are you feeling what I’m feeling right now? Are you feeling the presence of God?” But I don’t have to stop it; I can look into their faces and know that they too are sensing and feeling the Living presence

of the Lord God Almighty, present and active, blessing their lives and their marriage. I'm kind of a wedding junkie for exactly that reason. I mean some couples are very committed Christians and others, well, let's just say, not so much. But it doesn't matter. I have prayed and asked God to show up and He does. He shows up to love and bless. You'd think after almost 600 weddings there would be at least one wedding where that doesn't happen. But GOD is batting 100%. What God ordains, God blesses. God loves weddings, too, because God has ordained them; HE set it up this way from the beginning.

In some variation or form I have read parts of our scripture lesson for today at every wedding I have performed. Jesus is speaking and He is quoting the Old Testament. He says: *"God made them male and female. For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one."* (Mark 10: 6-8) The phrase, "and the two shall become one", I think is that moment in a wedding service when God shows up. The two become one in HIM when God shows up. What God has ordained, God will bless. And when God blesses, God shows up. It is God's presence that gives life.

And it isn't only in weddings where God shows up. I am equally a "God junkie" loving those moments when God shows up in my life, and your life, and in the life of our church. I love the moments when we are touched by the Spirit and the Lord Jesus comes. I wouldn't trade them for anything in this world.

See, there is a Sovereign plan by a Sovereign God for your life. It is a plan to bless you with every blessing you really need in life, not necessarily every blessing you think you need in life. It is a beautiful plan. It is a perfect plan. It is uniquely your own. God can customize an infinite number of plans for His people precisely because He is God. It is ordained by God. And when we walk in that plan, God shows up. God blesses what God ordains. When God shows up we become joined more and more to HIM through His Son, Jesus Christ. The two, you might say, become one flesh. The Spirit touches our heart and unites within us. And we become more and more each day at one, in UNION, in spiritual union, with God. Over the years I conclude -- A wedding is a spiritual metaphor for God's relationship with us. It is why He loves weddings so; and it is why He loves us so.

What is God's plan for your life? What has God ordained for you? What is God's plan to bless you and give you joy in your life???? What HE ordains, He blesses, 100% of the time. His batting average is perfect.

I have a wedding book that was presented to me when I was ordained and in it I record all of the weddings I have done over all of the years. Periodically, I flip through it and pray for those couples. Early on, I have a notation of where "God showed up" in the weddings. So for some 600 times I have a record of the way God blesses what God ordains. I'd almost like to say there was one where He didn't show up. But nope. He showed up 100% of the time. In all those weddings over all those years, maybe the reason I love them so, is that I have had the opportunity to see the extraordinary love and faithfulness of God at work, every time, every wedding, every time people love one another, every time people get on their knees and pray to the Lord, seeking to know His plan for their lives and then to follow it. God is faithful; all the time, every time. That's Pastor's view of your wedding. Amen and Amen.

*By: The Reverend Dr. Stuart D. Broberg, The Church of the Covenant, Washington, Pennsylvania  
IF THIS HAS BLESSED YOU, PLEASE PASS IT ALONG TO A FRIEND!*