**Noah and Sarah’s Wedding**

17 June 2017
Officiating: Rick Griffith (ed. 6-RG)

Prelude (before 12:30)

Guests Seated (12:30)

Rick & Noah at the front (12:30)

Bridesmaids Enter (12:32)

Hannah (12:32)

Flower girls (12:32)

Bekah (12:33)

Bride Enters (12:33)

Welcome and Announcements (12:34) RG

Prayer (12:36) RG

Song: Amazing Grace (12:38)

Wedding Vows (12:43) RG

Exchange of the Rings (12:50) RG

Pronouncement of Marriage (12:51) RG

Signing the Register: Registrar (12:55)

Song: In Christ Alone (13:00)

Reading (In Chiru and English) (13:03) RE & RS

Sermon: Rick Griffith (13:08)

Prayer #1: Richard Evans (13:18)

Prayer #2: Ritinding Sekho (13:21)

Song: Bless the Lord (13:24)

Charge (13:27) RG

Announcements (13:29) RG

Recessional (13:30)

RG – Rick Griffith

RE – Richard Evans

RS – Ritinding Sekho (Noah’s Dad)

**Prelude –** Background Music

**Guests Seated (12:30)**

**Rick & Noah at Altar (12:30)**

Please stand.

**Bridesmaids Enter (12:32)**

Hannah Jennings

Lydia, Evie, Lois Jennings

Rebekah Maynard-Smith

**Bride Enters (12:33)**

**Welcome & Announcements (12:34) - RG**

Welcome, dear friends, to this special day for Noah and Sarah. An old Swedish proverb says, “Sorrows shared are halved, joys shared are doubled.” Your presence today doubles their joy. Noah’s father and brother have traveled from Northeast India to double their joy. Others have joined us from Singapore, the USA, and Ukraine to double their joy—including Sarah’s former dormmates. Whether far or near, you have taken time and expense to share their joy and double it. Thank you for coming.

Speaking of doubling, it has been my double privilege the past few years to serve both as professor and pastor to Noah and Sarah—professor as they were my students at Singapore Bible College, and pastor as they are members of the church I serve as pastor-teacher: Crossroads International Church, Singapore. This dear couple has enriched my own life in more ways than I can share.

*Shall we unite our hearts in prayer?*

**Prayer (12:36) – RG**

Almighty God and Father, we bow in your presence with praise and thanks as the Author of marriage and of life itself. We ask that in this sacred hour, your presence may be evident to us all.

Open our hearts to the wonder of your tender mercy and love. Speak to each heart in the stillness of these moments.

We especially pray for Noah and Sarah as they have come to this significant day in their lives. As they have come to the marriage altar to celebrate their love, may they first recall your own love, publicly exhibited on the cross by their Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

We pray that the vows that they will soon make may always be remembered and cherished by them as long as they live. Help them never lose the wonder of the love you have given them for each other that has brought them to this sacred moment. May their hands and hearts ever be joined as they experience that breathless wonder, each to the other exclaiming, “Out of all this world, you have chosen me!”

May they also be mindful of the sacred trust that they have already assumed to bring the message of the love of Christ to a lost world and especially to the Chiru people.

Today, Lord, we celebrate not Noah and Sarah as the focus in this ceremony. Instead, we honor you and thank you that we love because you first loved us. We pray in the exalted and matchless name of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord and coming King. Amen.

**Song: Amazing Grace (My Chains are Gone) (12:38)**

Amazing grace

How sweet the sound

That saved a wretch like me

I once was lost, but now I'm found

Was blind, but now I see

'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear

And grace my fears relieved

How precious did that grace appear

The hour I first believed

My chains are gone

I've been set free

My God, my Savior has ransomed me

And like a flood His mercy reigns

Unending love, amazing grace

The Lord has promised good to me

His word my hope secures

He will my shield and portion be

As long as life endures

[2x]

My chains are gone

I've been set free

My God, my Savior has ransomed me

And like a flood His mercy reigns

Unending love, amazing grace

The earth shall soon dissolve like snow

The sun forbear to shine

But God, Who called me here below,

Will be forever mine.

Will be forever mine.

You are forever mine.

*Please be seated.*

**Wedding Vows (12:41) - RG**

We have come together in the presence of God, to witness the marriage of Noah and Sarah, to ask his blessing on them, and to share in their joy. Our Lord Jesus Christ was himself a guest at a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and through his Spirit he is with us now.

The Bible teaches us that marriage is a gift of God in creation and a means of his grace, a holy mystery in which man and woman become one flesh. It is God's purpose that, as husband and wife give themselves to each other in love throughout their lives, they shall be united in that love as Christ is united with his Church.

Marriage is given, that husband and wife may comfort and help each other, living faithfully together in need and in plenty, in sorrow and in joy. It is given, that with delight and tenderness they may know each other in love, and, through the joy of their bodily union, may strengthen the union of their hearts and lives. It is given as the foundation of family life in which children may be born and nurtured in accordance with God's will, to his praise and glory.

In marriage husband and wife belong to one another, and they begin a new life together in the community. It is a way of life that all should honour; and it must not be undertaken carelessly, lightly, or selfishly, but reverently, responsibly, and after serious thought.

This is the way of life, created and hallowed by God, that Noah and Sarah are now to begin. They will each give their consent to the other; they will join hands and exchange solemn vows, and in token of this they will each give and receive a ring.

Therefore, on this wedding day we pray with them, that, strengthened and guided by God, they may fulfill his purpose for the whole of their earthly life together.

*The minister says to the congregation*

***First, I am required to ask anyone present who knows a reason why these persons may not lawfully marry, to declare it now.***

*The minister says to the couple*

***The vows you are about to take are to be made in the presence of God, who is judge of all and knows all the secrets of our hearts;***

***therefore if either of you knows a reason why you may not lawfully marry, you must declare it now.***

*The minister says to the bridegroom*

Noah, will you take Sarah to be your wife?

Will you love her, comfort her, honour and protect her,

and, forsaking all others, be faithful to her as long as you both shall live?

*Noah answers*

I will.

*The minister says to the bride*

Sarah, will you take Noah to be your husband?

Will you love him, comfort him, honour and protect him,

and, forsaking all others, be faithful to him as long as you both shall live?

*Sarah answers*

I will.

*The minister says to the congregation*

Will you, the families and friends of Noah and Sarah,

support and uphold them in their marriage now and in the years to come?

*All*

We will.

*Question to Stephen Heal:*

Who gives this woman to be married to this man?

*Stephen responds:*

I do

*Please come forward and face another. Noah, repeat after me:*

***I, Noah Sekho Chiru ,***

***take you, Sarah Ruth Heal,***

***to be my wife,***

to have and to hold

from this day forward;

for better, for worse,

for richer, for poorer,

in sickness and in health,

to love and to cherish,

till death us do part,

according to God's holy law.

In the presence of God I make this vow.

*Sarah, please repeat after me:*

***I, Sarah Ruth Heal,***

***take you, Noah Sekho Chiru,***

***to be my husband,***

to have and to hold

from this day forward;

for better, for worse,

for richer, for poorer,

in sickness and in health,

to love, cherish, and obey,

till death us do part,

according to God's holy law.

In the presence of God I make this vow.

*Martin, please bring the rings. Let us pray:*

Heavenly Father, by your blessing

let these rings be to Noah and Sarah

a symbol of unending love and faithfulness,

to remind them of the vow and covenant

which they have made this day

through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

*Noah, please repeat after me:*

Sarah, I give you this ring

as a sign of our marriage.

With my body I honour you,

all that I am I give to you,

and all that I have I share with you,

within the love of God,

Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

*Sarah, please repeat after me:*

Noah, I give you this ring

as a sign of our marriage.

With my body I honour you,

all that I am I give to you,

and all that I have I share with you,

within the love of God,

Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

**Presentation of the Couple - RG**

*Please hold hands.*

In the presence of God, and before this congregation,

Noah and Sarah have given their consent

and made their marriage vows to each other.

They have declared their marriage by the joining of hands

and by the giving and receiving of rings.

I therefore proclaim that they are husband and wife.

Those whom God has joined together let no one put asunder.

Noah and Sarah, please face the congregation.

Family and friends, I present to you for the first time Mr. & Mrs. Noah and Sarah Sekho!

Noah, you may now kiss your bride!

*Evangelistic song introduction: The couples trusts Jesus alone…*

**Song: In Christ Alone (13:00)**

In Christ alone my hope is found

He is my light, my strength, my song

This Cornerstone, this solid ground

Firm through the fiercest drought and storm

What heights of love, what depths of peace

When fears are stilled, when strivings cease

My Comforter, my All in All

Here in the love of Christ I stand

In Christ alone, who took on flesh

Fullness of God in helpless babe

This gift of love and righteousness

Scorned by the ones He came to save

'Til on that cross as Jesus died

The wrath of God was satisfied

For every sin on Him was laid

Here in the death of Christ I live, I live

There in the ground His body lay

Light of the world by darkness slain

Then bursting forth in glorious Day

Up from the grave He rose again

And as He stands in victory

Sin's curse has lost its grip on me

For I am His and He is mine

Bought with the precious blood of Christ

No guilt in life, no fear in death

This is the power of Christ in me

From life's first cry to final breath

Jesus commands my destiny

No power of hell, no scheme of man

Can ever pluck me from His hand

Till He returns or calls me home

Here in the power of Christ I'll stand

**Signing of the Register (12:55) - Registrar**

Registrar to oversee. Table at the side.

2 Witnesses

Photo moment

**Reading: 1 Cor 13 (Bilingual) (13:03)**

Richard Evans (English)

Ritinding Sekho (Chiru)

The foundation of their marriage is Love/Numpok

1 If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal.

*Kiei na miring hai le ravantir hai chawng a kachawng joiawm, numpok kha kieiniei joi nawkatu, imiri khong ninawkle thirkhong kha le ra’ang kanih.*

2 And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing.

*2 Khan chawng rophongna khutchawi kha kieiniei joiawm, murukchawng kholok le shingna kholok kha kejet joiawm, khan mo hai kha thawtna rang, takashawn kholok kha kieiniei joiawm, numpok kha kieiniei joi nawkatu, kiei iawm nimi’ing.*

3 If I give away all I have, and if I deliver up my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing.

*3 Khan shara hai vaina rang, kieinieinak kholok kha kepek joiawm, khan kupum kha ha rang kepek joiawm, numpok kha kieiniei joi nawkatu, kiei dieng nemna iawm nepeh mak.*

4 Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant 5 or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; 6 it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth.

*4 Numpok tu ashawk a odoi, khan roihoi inih, numpok na manarshie thaw mak, numpok na nining a mapak mak, khan lienrasha mak. 5 Numpok na rum mak, ama rangbak khan tawk mak, baitek a shang mak, ashie kha mining mak. 6 Dikna boi khan ningai mak, inia adik khan ningai.*

7 Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

*7 Nieinak kholok kha odoi, nieinak kholok kha takashawn, nieinak kholok kha ngakmining, nieinak kholok kha ruput.*

8 Love never ends. As for prophecies, they will pass away; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will pass away. 9 For we know in part and we prophesy in part, 10 but when the perfect comes, the partial will pass away.

*8 Numpok tu shukcho a cho mak. Inia chawngrophong hai kha mawngawh rangnih, chawngshil hai kha rangatna awm rangnih, khan shingna kha mathang rangnih.9 Ajarla khoite kha nijet u inih, khan khoite a nirophong u inih. 10 Inia rupumping kha jong phakhan, rupumpingna kha mathang rangnih.*

11 When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I gave up childish ways. 12 For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I have been fully known.

*11 Kiei na naite kuruchanglai, naite ang a kuruchawng, naite ang a kurujet, naite ang a kurumining. Inia kawhawngchang phakhan, naite awmchan hai kha kapai joi. 12 Ajarla tun mengsheng a varjinglam a nimuk u inih, inia makha nimiktak na riethienghiei a numuk u rangnih, tun khoite kha kijet inih, inia nuk a Pathien na inejet hi ang a, urupum a kejet rangnih.*

13 So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love.

*13 Khan takashawn, ngakmining, numpok hihai ‘thum hi, awm. Khania hihai kar a alienving tu numpok hi inih.*

**Sermon/Reflection: Rick Griffith (13:08)**

# Introduction

### Interest: The feelings on a wedding day are very strong—and they should be, given that you have anticipated this day your whole life.

### Need: No one goes into marriage with the expectation that this love will fail. No one wants it to fail either, but few know what to do to keep it from failing.

### Subject: So how can your love for one another last? How can the love you share this wedding day never end?

### Background: The context of today’s text is relational, especially in reference to gifts. The basic idea of 1 Corinthians 13 is that love is more important than spiritual gifts.

#### Love is better than gifts (1-3).

#### Love benefits others (4-7).

#### Love outlasts gifts (8-13).

### Preview: The center section tells us the best description of love that you will ever find—all that benefit others (4-7). These 14 qualities lead up to the climax in verse 7. Here we see four qualities of love that assure that you marriage lasts.

### Text: In lieu of time, today we will look only at this one verse: 1 Corinthians 13:7. Ah, 7 is the perfect number! It says, “Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.” Simple enough, especially in the Greek that has only 8 words—the word “all” four times, separated by four verbs: literally, “covers all, believes all, hopes all, endures all.”

(But what do these four verbs mean? They are in essence four commands to love in practical ways that answer the key question: how can you make your love last? So here are four practical tips that, if you follow them, will preserve your love for a lifetime. Here’s the first exhortation…)

# I. Protect each other.

[You’re both imperfect, but you must guard against all attacks on your marriage.]

## “Love bears all things.” Really? So you just put up with every weakness so that your spouse can take advantage of you? No.

## “Bears all things” means love protects the shortcomings of others (13:7a).

### Literally, it means, “to keep confidential, cover, pass over in silence” (BDAG).

### Harnack defines this “bearing” as to “throw a cloak of silence over what is displeasing in another person” (BDAG).

### Another translates it, “Love springs no leak” (BDAG)!

## So protect each other in light of each other’s shortcomings.

### Some of these you already know. Others you will find out soon enough.

### Some things you won’t like about one another. Still protect these things.

### How? Don’t reveal your spouse’s unknown weaknesses to others—especially to family members. Cover for the other’s shortcomings, like my wife has done for my horrible weakness in gift-giving for decades.

### Noah, lead the way in protecting Sarah. How?

#### Do not compare Sarah to any other woman. She is unique in God’s sight and you protect her by not comparing her to anyone else.

#### Study her for a lifetime to see where you are strong and she is weak—then protect her at that weak point. As she will move into your comfort zone in your home culture next year, make this first year of marriage one where you genuinely protect her by putting her first above all.

### Sarah, you love your father and rightfully respect him, but today your allegiance changes from submission to your Dad to submission to your husband under God. Protect Noah from feeling that he is second to your father. Each of these men must rightfully hold a unique, special place in your heart without comparison.

(So protect each other: “Love bears all things.” How else can you make your love last? The next phrase says to…)

# II. Trust each other.

[Place such a pure faith in the other that you leave no room for doubt of integrity.]

## “Love believes all things.” What does that mean? Does it mean that love is gullible? No. It means that…

## Love believes the best of others (13:7b).

## You have thousands of opportunities ahead to think the worst or think the best. Well, think the best. Trust each other. But what does trust look like?

## Don’t have “secret money” where you are not accountable to the other—except to give to the other!

## Always tell the truth to one another. This will strengthen your trust.

## Continually ask yourself when making decisions, “Hmm, will this way *strengthen* my spouse’s trust in me—or weaken it?” Then do that which builds trust.

(How else can you make your love last? The next phrase says to…)

# III. Hope in each other.

 [Don’t be pessimists. Be optimists.]

## “Love hopes all things.”

## During our premarital counseling, I asked Sarah why she wanted to marry Noah. She said, “He makes me laugh.”

## Love hopes in God that problems will be resolved (13:7c).

## Our world lacks hope, but you can help yourselves and help others restore some hope.

## Recognize that Jesus “will never leave you nor forsake you” (Hebrews 13:5). Acknowledging his presence will give you hope!

## Live in light of the return of our Lord Jesus, which is called “the blessed hope” (Titus 2:13).

## God has filled your future with hope. It is unknown, but it is not dark. Instead, it is bright but blurry. As God brings your future into the present and then the past, anticipate that future with each other with a contagious optimism.

(So protect, trust and hope. What’s the final way to make your love last? The next phrase says to…)

# IV. Endure each other.

[Persevere with one another.]

##  “Love endures all things.”

## Love perseveres when personally wronged (13:7d).

## Like every relationship, you have already hurt each other at times. You have even more misunderstandings ahead. But persevere.

## Look ahead with only open and closed doors but no back doors.

## Today begins not a sprint but a marathon. Run it together, “looking to Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith” (Hebrews 12:2).

## But *how* can you endure marriage?

### Build your marriage in prayer. Begin each morning before you get out of bed talking to your Heavenly Father.

### Always keep learning. Spend time each day reading God’s Word and it will instruct you how to endure.

(“Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.” How do these four brief descriptions of love help you make your love last? In short…)

# Conclusion

### *Never give up loving each other* (Main Idea).

### “Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.”

### This means (Main Points):

#### Protect each other.

#### Trust each other.

#### Hope in each other.

#### Endure each other.

### How? Substitute the word “God” for the word “love” and you have the perfect example and ever-present source of strength: “God bears all things, God believes all things, God hopes all things, God endures all things.” God protects, God trusts, God gives hope, and God certainly endures more than any human ever has. Ask for his enablement.

**Prayer 1**: Richard Evans (13:18)

**Prayer 2**: Ritinding Sekho (13:21)

(In Chiru)

**Song: Bless the Lord (13:24)**

Bless the Lord, Oh my soul

Oh my soul, worship his holy name

Sing like never before, Oh my soul

I'll worship your holy name

The sun comes up, it's a new day dawning

It's time to sing your song again

Whatever may pass and whatever lies before me

Let me be singing when the evening comes

Bless the Lord, Oh my soul

Oh my soul, worship his holy name

Sing like never before, Oh my soul

I'll worship your holy name

You're rich in love and you're slow to anger

Your name is great and your heart is kind

For all your goodness, I will keep on singing

Ten thousand reasons for my heart to find

Bless the Lord, Oh my soul

Oh my soul, worship his holy name

Sing like never before, Oh my soul

I'll worship your holy name

And on that day when my strength is failing

The end draws near and my time has come

Still my soul will sing your praise unending

Ten thousand years and then forevermore

Bless the Lord, Oh my soul

Oh my soul, worship his holy name

Sing like never before, Oh my soul

I'll worship your holy name

Bless the lord, oh my soul

Oh my soul, worship his holy name

Sing like never before, oh my soul

I'll worship your holy name

I'll worship your holy name (3 more times)

**Announcement (13:27) – RG**

Following the recessional, those attending the reception to join the bride and groom may find a map at the back. Please be seated.

**Charge (13:28) RG**

Sarah and Noah, as you have committed yourselves to each other in marriage by the promises you have exchanged, by the authority of God committed to me as a Minister of the Gospel, I give you this charge from the words of the Apostle Paul:

• Never let your love end (1 Cor 12:7).

• Consider the needs of the other more than your own (Phil 2:3).

• “Be strong and immovable. Always work enthusiastically for the Lord, for you know that nothing you do for the Lord is ever useless” (1 Cor 15:58).

May God grant you his grace and strength to fulfill these vows in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Noah and Sarah, please face these dear people now.

Dear friends, I present to you once again Mr. and Mrs. Noah and Sarah Sekho.

**Recessional (13:30)**