**Matt & Clio Wedding**

6 October 2013 (Edition 2-RG)

**PRELUDE –** Background Music(Libante Strings – Violin, Piano, Double Bass)

**PROCESSION –** (Ninang/Ninong – Mom/Kirsten (Matt takes them), Jonathan, Wedding Party Couples, Allen, Hera, flower, Mom/Dad/Clio) – Yellow – *Coldplay* (Strings)

**GIVING OF THE BRIDE**

Who presents this woman to be married to this man?

Clio’s Parents: “We do.”

**OPENING PRAYER (Rick)**

Lord, thank you for this beautiful day where we can celebrate the love of Matt and Clio. We thank you for the ordinance of marriage. It’s the perfect illustration of the pinnacle of love. In today’s ceremony we ask that by it we would be reminded of your love for the church.

Lord, we thank you for those who have traveled a great distance to celebrate with Matt and Clio. I pray that this outpouring of love will warm the hearts of this young couple.

Lord, we thank you for all the support they’ve received. We ask for Matt and Clio to be encouraged by the friends and family who share in their love. I pray they will not soon forget it.

Finally Lord, we ask that you would be present here with us. We love you and wouldn’t dare venture this service alone. Be here with us.

In Christ’s name we pray. Amen.

**SONG & MAIN CANDLE LIGHTING BY SPONSORS**

**BIBLE**

The Bible is the foundation of your submission to God, giving Him the authority over your marital life.

I will now ask Jonathan Stone to read 2 Timothy 3:16-17.

**MESSAGE** A Godly Marriage

On behalf of the families of Matt and Clio, thank you so much for coming to show your support and love. They have been anticipating this day for sometime. I have been anticipating it as well.

I had the privilege of being Matt’s pastor in Singapore after his five tough years in China. This was a difficult time for Matt when he saw God pruning him and remaking him. I saw that sincere desire to serve the Lord in him then, as I do now. His winsome way was and is an encouragement to me.

Clio came into the picture later once Matt switched jobs and they found themselves working at the same bank. I can see why Matt was smitten by her charm and her newfound faith in Christ.

Clio, of course, grew up learning about Christ. But coming to Singapore gave a brand new dimension for her. She began to see that Christianity has many good traditions, but nothing compares to knowing Christ personally. This was what was lacking in her life, so she trusted in Jesus alone by faith to bring her into a right relationship with God.

Matt and Clio have asked me to share with you that it is Jesus himself who has brought them here today—not a religion, not a philosophy, not more traditions. It is Jesus who died for them and rose again—the risen Christ brought them together and also brought each of you here today too. Why? To see a marriage? Yes, but more than that—to see Christ’s love for you. They asked me to tell you that Jesus Christ himself loves you and died for you. Have you said “yes” to him? Doing so would be the best wedding gift you could give them!

Matt and Clio, it’s important to begin our marriage ceremony by reviewing the purpose of marriage. Actually, the Bible tells us that marriage has a few purposes.

First, God invented marriage to offer us companionship. Genesis 2 tells us that God created man and saw that it was not good for man to be alone. So he created woman as a perfect complement and companion.

Second, marriage was created by God in order to procreate and populate our planet so that we can have dominion over it. In Genesis 1 God commands the first man and women to “be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.” The first command in the Bible was for us to have sex in marriage to have kids! That should change some of our wrong attitudes about God being a “Cosmic Kill Joy”! Marriage is one of his best gifts!

Third, God created marriage for us to stay pure. Paul says in 1 Corinthians 7, “But because of the temptation to sexual immorality, each man should have his own wife and each woman her own husband.”

Yet all of these purposes are inferior to God’s primary purpose for marriage. The Bible says that God created marriage with the main purpose of showing his Son’s relationship with the church. In Ephesians 5:31 Paul quotes the part in Genesis where God instituted marriage. “Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.”

And in verse 32 he makes an awesome observation! He says, “this mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church.”

Marriage was ultimately created by God as an example of the relationship between Jesus and his bride, the church. It was not solely created for companionship, procreation, or purity. It was primarily created to symbolize the relationship between Christ and the church. The implications here for your roles in your marriage are profound. Basically, they could be summed up in one word – love. The Bible states over and over again that Jesus loves the church and the church loves Jesus.

**But what is love?**

This might not sound romantic; but *real* love is something beyond the warmth and glow, the excitement and romance of being deeply “in love.” It is sacrificial––a *choosing* to care as much about the welfare and happiness of your spouse as your own. Real love is seen only after you have truly sacrificed yourself for the other. So what you feel now for one another is only a foreshadowing of a deeper and more meaningful love to be experienced in your future.

Real love is not only sacrificial but persevering. Nothing is easier than saying words and nothing harder than living them day in and day out. In a sense, what you promise today must be renewed and recommitted tomorrow. At the end of this ceremony, you’ll be husband and wife, but you still must decide each day to work on nurturing your relationship.

But real love is not total absorption in each other either; it is looking outward in the same direction together. A Swedish proverb says, “Sorrows shared are halved. Joys shared are doubled.” Marital love makes you stronger so you can reach out and become involved with life in ways you dared not risk alone.

Of course, the way that you live out your love for one another is unique. The ways that Jesus loves the church are different than the ways the church loves Christ. In other words, each of you will show your love for the other in a different way.

Matt, to love her as Christ loves the church means you are to **protect** her by sacrificing yourself for her. Ephesians 5:25 says, “Husbands, **love** your wives, as Christ **loved** the church and gave himself up for her.”

As Christ sacrificed himself for the church, you are to sacrifice yourself for Clio—protecting her physically, emotionally, and spiritually.

As I said earlier, she must practice sacrificial love as well, but it’s not ultimately her responsibility to inspect the house in the middle of the night when there’s a strange noise. You don’t split that responsibility 50% of the time. That’s your responsibility 100% of the time. You are to protect her.

You also show Christ-like love when you **honor** Clio. 1 Peter 3 says, “Likewise, husbands, live with your wives in an understanding way… showing **honor** to her.”

You must be diligent to understand Clio’s thoughts and feelings. Clio’s opinions matter! You honor her when you listen to them.

And finally, to love Clio as Christ loves the church means you are to practice biblical headship. Ephesians 5 tells us that the husband is the **head** of the wife as Christ is the head of the church. This is *not* a passage stating that you, a mere mortal, are superior to Clio in any way (and if you believe that then you and I will have some one-on-one post-marriage counseling!). Rather the word **head** simply explains your *role* in the family. As the head, you are responsible for nurturing Clio’s emotional, physical, and spiritual wellbeing. God will hold you ultimately responsible for the wellbeing of your family.

Clio, you also are about to assume serious responsibility.

To love Matt as the Church loves Christ means you are to **submit** to Matt. Ephesians 5 tells wives to submit to their husbands as the church submits itself to Christ. In the original language this word is written in the middle voice. This means that submission is volitional. Wives are never to be forced into submission. Wives must *choose* to submit. But what does that mean?

Practically speaking, a wife who submits to her husband chooses to do two things.

First, a wife who chooses to submit to her husband chooses to ***support*** him. Knowing Matt’s heart, knowing Matt’s dreams, you are to choose to help him carry them out. Moreover, Matt will look to you for solace and support in the hour of trial. You demonstrate love by offering that support.

Second, a wife who chooses to submit to her husband chooses to ***accept*** his God-ordained role as the head of the family just as Christ is the head of the church. Now that doesn’t mean that he always receives the pleasure of making the final decision when you both reach a disagreement! Rather you demonstrate your trust in God’s design for the family by accepting Matt’s God-ordained role as the head of the family. Your acceptance of his role will make his leading a joy and it will lead to many other blessings for both of you as well.

To love Matt as the church loves Christ also means you are to **respect** Matt. Ephesians 5:33 reads that a wife is to **respect** her husband. Matt will feel invincible when you respect his knowledge, skills, abilities and dreams. Moreover, just as the church would not desire to do anything that shames the name of Christ, so should it be for you and your husband. You are to live your life with Matt in such a way that others admire your relationship with him. Respect is a pillar in your relationship. For the biblical health of your marriage it must not fail.

Now to be clear, your marriage is not conditioned on these responsibilities. Marriage is not a merely contract but a covenant. It is a sacred bond between a man and a woman, instituted by and publically entered into before God. Hence, your marriage is permanent despite your fulfillment of these responsibilities. However, your marriage is designed by God to demonstrate Christ’s love for the church and the church’s love for Christ. You glorify God and exalt Christ when you fulfill these responsibilities.

**CHARGE TO THE COUPLE**

I charge you both, as you stand in God’s presence, to remember that love and loyalty alone will serve as the foundations of a happy and enduring home. If the solemn vows which you are about to make are kept permanently, and if you steadfastly seek to do the will of your Heavenly Father, your life will be full of peace and joy, and the home which you are establishing will abide through every change.

**CHARGE TO THE PARENTS**

To the parents, your main role with the relationship of these two individuals is to guide and encourage them to continue to love one another and not to overpower them over their decision-making. Remember that you now have a new son and a new daughter. You are to assist them in times that they need you without expecting something in return. The Bible says that they “leave” you and “cleave” to one another…

**CHARGE TO THE SPONSORS**

To the Sponsors, you are here not only to witness the wedding, but also to take responsibility to encourage and mentor the couple in matters of moral, financial, and spiritual guidance.   You are responsible to support them through trial and tribulation, but as well as celebrate with them in the blessings that God bestows upon them in their journey together.  This is why it is important that you all continue to be a good example of loving and selfless marriages.

**CHARGE TO THE CONGREGATION**

Your main responsibility, as a witness to this memorable day, is to help the couple in times of need.  Please encourage them to nurture their love and prioritize one another.

**PRAYER (Nate Ackerman)**

**THE PLEDGE**

Matt, will you have Clio to be your wedded wife, to live together in the covenant of faith, hope, and love according to the intention of God for your lives together in Jesus Christ? Will you listen to her inmost thoughts, be considerate and tender in your care of her, and stand by her faithfully in sickness and in health, and, preferring her above all others, accept full responsibility for her every necessity for as long as you both shall live? Will you lead her, provide for her, honor her, and protect her as long as you live?

Clio, will you have Matt to be your wedded husband, to live together in the covenant of faith, hope, and love according to the intention of God for your lives together in Jesus Christ? Will you listen to his inmost thoughts, be considerate and tender in your care of him, and stand by him faithfully in sickness and in health, and, preferring him above all others, accept full responsibility for him every necessity for as long as you both shall live? Will you submit to his leadership, honor him, respect him, and accept his role as head of your family as long as you live?

**GIVING OF VOWS**

Matt and Clio have chosen to write and recite their own vows.

**GIVING OF THE RINGS**

May I have the rings? Let us pray. Bless, O Lord, the giving and receiving of these rings. May Matt and Clio abide in Your peace and grow in their knowledge of Your presence through their loving union. May the seamless circle of these rings become the symbol of their endless love and serve to remind them of the holy covenant they have entered into today to be faithful, loving, and kind to each other. Dear God, may they live in Your grace and be forever true to this union. Amen.”

Groom: Matt, please recite after me, “Clio, I give you this ring as a symbol of our love, and with all that I am, and all that I have, I honor you. In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. With this ring, I wed you.”

Bride: Clio, please commit yourself likewise, “Matt, I give you this ring as a symbol of our love, and with all that I am, and all that I have, I honor you. In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. With this ring, I wed you.”

**UNITY CANDLE**

Notice we have four candles up front. The large candle represents God, who grants life to all. Earlier in the service this large candle was lit as a reminder that God comes before all as Light of the World.

Each mother will now light the two outside candles as a symbol that Matt and Clio both received the gift of life from these two, dear women. They, in turn, received this life from God.

However, they are two distinct lights, each capable of going their separate ways. As you join now in marriage, there is a merging of these two lights into one light. God charges you both, as you stand in His presence, to remember that He alone can make you one. You in essence blow out your own will, your desires, as you become one in Christ in marriage.

This is what the Lord meant when He said, “On this account a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife and the two shall be one flesh.” From now on your thoughts shall be for each other rather than your individual selves. Your plans shall be mutual, your joys and sorrows shall be shared alike. As you each take a candle and together light the center one, you will extinguish your own candles, thus letting the center candle represent the union of your lives into one flesh. As this one light cannot be divided, neither shall your lives be divided but a united testimony in a Christian home. May the radiance of this one light be a testimony of your unity in the Lord Jesus Christ.

**SONG**

**COINS**

These coins symbolize the union of your faith with each other as stewards of the gifts that God gives to you.  I Timothy 5:8 says, “Those who won’t care for their relatives, especially those in their own household, have denied the true faith. Such people are worse than unbelievers.” Matthew 25:15 under the imagery of God as King notes that the King “gave five bags of silver to one, two bags of silver to another, and one bag of silver to the last—dividing it in proportion to their abilities. He then left on his trip.” In light of these financial responsibilities, the groom and bride will now declare their commitments.

Matt Reads: I promise to supply your needs and of our family. I will do my best with all I can to give it willfully with all my heart for the betterment of our family.

Clio Reads: I promise to take care of our finances responsibly to ensure a smooth governance of our assets and expenses. I also promise to give to the Lord what is due Him.

**VEIL**

The veil over the shoulders of the couple symbolizes the Holy Spirit’s covering over their lives as they face the challenges that come as they build their life together.   Acts 5:32 says, “We are witnesses of these things and so is the Holy Spirit, who is given by God to those who obey him.”

**CORD**

The cord symbolizes that both of you are now one and cannot be separated.  Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 notes, “Two people are better off than one, for they can help each other succeed. If one person falls, the other can reach out and help. But someone who falls alone is in real trouble. Likewise, two people lying close together can keep each other warm. But how can one be warm alone? A person standing alone can be attacked and defeated, but two can stand back-to-back and conquer. Three are even better, for a triple-braided cord is not easily broken.”

**INTRO TO PAPER SIGNING**

The signing of papers today reminds us that marriage is a legally binding union before both God and man.

**SONG DURING PAPER SIGNING**

**PRONOUNCEMENT**

Now that Matt and Clio have given themselves to each other by the promises they have exchanged, I pronounce them to be husband and wife, in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

You may now kiss the bride!!!

**DECLARATION**

Ladies and gentlemen, I present to you for the first time Mr. & Mrs. Matthew Scott!