

Joe Shea and Charlotte Capaldo
WEDDING CEREMONY

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INTRODUCTION

PSA 118:24

This is the day which the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.

Good afternoon! My name is Pastor Rory Clark of Barah Ministries in Gilbert, AZ. It's a pleasure to welcome you to Joe and Charlottes' wedding ceremony...I'm their Pastor...they are friends. I am privileged to be sharing this moment with them and with you. It's been a long time since I have been this excited to preside over a wedding ceremony, and it is entirely because I am excited about the future prospects of this union. I think this is a union that can go all the way.

I hope the Word of God that you hear in this ceremony is a major contributor to your enjoyment of the experience. In the bible, which is the inerrant Word of God and the exact thinking of the Lord Jesus Christ, in Genesis, Chapter 2, Verses 20 to 24, it says...

GEN 2:20-24

The Lord (Jesus Christ...the Messiah in His pre-incarnate state) caused a deep sleep to fall upon (the first man, Adam), and he slept; then (the Lord Jesus Christ) took one of (Adam's) ribs, and closed up the flesh at that place.//And the Lord (Jesus Christ) fashioned into a woman the rib which He had taken from the man, and brought her to the man.//And the man said, "This is now bone of my bones, And flesh of my flesh; She shall be called Woman, Because she was taken out of Man."//For the cause of (holy matrimony, therefore) a man shall leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and the (two) shall become one flesh.

That was the first wedding ceremony in human history. We gather today in the presence of God and His enemies to witness another wedding ceremony. But it is much more. It is voluntary union...a free will relationship...**MARRIAGE**...and we get to witness these two individuals becoming one flesh...in **UNITY**.

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On June 14, 1987 Marty and Kathy Shea became the proud parents of a beautiful baby boy...Joe. On May 3, 1988 Stephen and Christie Capaldo, became the proud parents of a beautiful baby girl...Charlotte.

On this day, about a quarter century after their births, three beings unite in this marriage, not just two (a fact lost on most in this world)...yes it's Joe and Charlotte and the Lord Jesus Christ entering a union called marriage, which is a classroom for unconditional love. This is not merely a romantic union, but a powerful and spiritual one...a union to be propelled into the world as a testimony to the fairness, the unconditional love and the faithfulness of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. This is a Christian marriage you are about to witness, and that is what makes this day, and these people, so special.

PSA 118:24

This is the day which the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.

Today Joe and Charlotte are making the third most important decision of their lives...they have made the first most important decision in life. They answered the question, "Who is my God?" They have selected as their God and Savior... the one and only God...the Lord Jesus Christ.

They have made the second most important decision in life. They answered the question, "What is my truth?" They have selected the bible as their inerrant source of truth.

Today...the third most important decision... "Who is my lifelong companion?" Today's events, as they unfold, may be a surprise to all of us. But one billion years ago, in eternity past, the one true God, the Lord Jesus Christ, knew this day would happen, and made perfect provision for it.

PSA 118:24

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I asked Charlotte why she wants to marry Joe. After all, there are a lot of fish in the sea...a lot of men on the earth...so I wanted to know why this man...Joe...

Charlotte said, "I love Joe because he is comfortable being a man without feeling the need to be macho, which is a rare quality for a young man...Joe has always treated me with respect...we started as friends and our relationship has grown together from there."

Charlotte thanks her brothers Mike and Nick...her sister Emily...her cousins Hannah and Liz...her friends Jerrica and Naomi, among all the others who have shaped her character and who have prepared her for this day.

I asked Joe why he is marrying Charlotte. He said, "God brought her to me. There is a connection between us that is unique, and much different than any relationship I have had. Ultimately, I think that's what sustains marriages."

Joe thanks his brothers Andrew and Daniel, his sister Sarah...his nephew Caleb...and his friends Hunt, Manley and Jamie, among all the others who have shaped his character and who have prepared him for this day.

It goes without saying that both Joe and Charlotte thank their parents, Marty and Kathy and Stephen and Christie for getting them to this celebration of love as well.

Joe is right. Marriage is best when it is built on the ROCK. In Matthew, Chapter 7, Verses 24 to 27, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ makes it know that He is the ROCK...

/MAT 7:24-27

"Therefore everyone who hears these words of Mine and acts on them, may be compared to a wise man who built his house on the rock.//And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and slammed against that house; and yet it did not fall, for it had been founded on the rock.//Everyone who hears these words of Mine and does not act on them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand.//The rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and slammed against that house; and it fell — and great was its fall."

The wise man **hears** the words of the Lord Jesus Christ and acts on them. His words are simple...build your marriage, on Me...THE ROCK.

Joe Shea and Charlotte Capaldo
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The foolish man likewise **hears** the words of the Lord Jesus Christ, “Build your house on THE ROCK,” yet the foolish man exercises his will differently. The foolish man rejects the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and builds on the sand of self, of things, of people, of the world’s viewpoint... and the result is disaster.

Marriage is intended to be a forever unity...“forever” is from this day forward. Knowing the meaning of “forever” doesn’t really tax our imagination...it means without ever ending...on and on...continual...lasting...through “thick and thin.” “Forever” in marriage means “until the physical death of one or both members of the union.” Great marriages are forever, and they are built on THE ROCK.

Joe and Charlotte are choosing to build their marriage on the ROCK of the Lord Jesus Christ, and if ANY marriage has ANY hope, if THIS marriage has any hope, its hope rests in building on THE ROCK. Marriages built on sand crumble.

Charlotte says, “I want to love Joe forever...he knows how to ease my qualms...he is supportive of my dreams...and our spiritual growth is a testament to our relationship.”

Joe says, “I don't want a common lifestyle. I don't want a lot of the things the world has to offer and a lot of the things the world says a young man should be. I want the challenge of being married and the spiritual growth and maturity that comes from it. I don't want the false sense of togetherness that my generation embraces.”

You can imagine how much that excites me.

Joe Shea and Charlotte Capaldo
WEDDING CEREMONY

THE WEDDING CEREMONY

Let's be clear. The wedding day is not the marriage. A marriage is built on the foundation of unconditional love...it's not "I love you when you are being nice, and when you're not being nice I don't love you." UN is UN. When things don't go well in marriage, the question is, "What part of the UN in unconditional don't you understand?"

The Lord Jesus Christ says in His inerrant word, in Matthew, Chapter 17, Verse 20...

MAT 17:20

... if you have faith as a mustard seed (which is the smallest of all seeds), you shall say to this mountain (which is any obstacle in marriage), 'Move from here to there,' and it shall move; and nothing shall be impossible to you.'

Marriage is such a mountain. To climb the marriage mountain without being a casualty requires much more than just romance and personal love. Let's listen to some of the things God has to say about marriage.

God created marriage. Genesis, Chapter 2, Verse 18 says...

GEN 2:18

Then the Lord Jesus Christ said, "It is not good for the man to be alone; I will make him a helper suitable for him."

It was the kind intention of God's will that men and women marry. And God brings your mate to you. You don't have to go looking for your mate. Genesis, Chapter 2, Verse 22 says...

GEN 2:22

And the Lord God fashioned into a woman the rib which He had taken from Adam, and brought her to the man.

Before there were in-laws or relatives, God instructed them to "butt out" of marriage. Genesis, Chapter 2, Verse 24 says...

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GEN 2:24

For the cause of marriage, a man shall leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and they shall become one flesh.

The word “cleave” means “to pierce or penetrate”...in the Hebrew of the Old Testament, it means “to have sexual intercourse with.” God created sex to be enjoyed within marriage, first for recreation, second for procreation. Sex is UNITY. Sexual intercourse within marriage erects a set of invisible castle walls that bracket the marriage relationship and separates it from all other relationships. So the message to in-laws is simple...this marriage is none of your business, so butt out. These two WILL have problems, and they need to work them out without interference from the nuclear family. This marriage begins a new family, and in effect is a divorce from the nuclear family. Marriage is a covenant relationship of privacy between God, and Joe and Charlotte. In Mark, Chapter 10, Verse 9 God makes a request...

MAR 10:9

“What...God has joined together, let no man separate.”

God has an enemy who seeks to destroy marriages and unity, and who makes moment-by-moment attacks on the foundation of marriage. The attacks are in the form of discontentment, unhappiness, expectations without agreement, and the seeking of more, more, more. Joe and Charlotte, your relationship is elevating to a new place; being married is much different from being single, so don't be surprised when things get tougher than they had been, and RIGHT AWAY!

Perfection is no guarantee of success in marriage. Even in perfect environment, with perfect people (Adam and Eve), marriage did not work. Success in marriage takes more than perfect people. It takes more than perfect environment. Success in marriage DEFINITELY takes more than romantic love. It also takes MUCH MORE than simply being together. Up until now, the two of you have been two flesh...but after today you are one flesh. God's enemy attacks unity.

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God has made Three Divine requests to facilitate marriage success.

God's First Request is to Husbands...Ephesians, Chapter 5, Verse 25...

EPH 5:25

Husbands, love your wives (unconditionally), just as (the Lord Jesus) Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up (as a substitute) for her.

Men are commanded to have one-way love for their wives...unconditional love.

God's Second Request is to Wives...Ephesians, Chapter 5, Verse 22...

EPH 5:22

Wives, (propelled by a great spiritual life) be subject to your own husbands, (just) as (you are subject) to the Lord.

This is a simple command for wives...to respect your husbands and to respect the authority vested in them by God to "husband" the marriage ... to protect it and to protect you.

God's Third Request is to Both Husband and Wife...Ephesians, Chapter 4, Verses 31 and 32...

EPH 4:31-32

Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice.//And be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you.

Real solutions for the marriage relationship begin with unconditional love and continue with forgiveness. If you two carry grudges, just know they are the beginning of the destruction of your marriage.

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What is unconditional love? It's a love with no conditions! It is not "I love you IF" love. Unconditional love is "NO MATTER WHAT" love. Unconditional love works when the object of your love is being unlovable. We've all heard these verses at every wedding. First Corinthians, Chapter 13, Verses 4 to 8...

1CO 13:4-8

Love is patient, love is kind, and is not jealous; love does not brag and is not arrogant, // does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong suffered, // does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth; // bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. // Love never fails.

This is a reference to unconditional love. Unconditional love comes from God through us. God loves us unconditionally. Unconditional love in marriage is doing your 100% when the other person is doing nothing. It's one-way love.

Marriage is a long and bumpy and intensely exhilarating ride. You will go through marriage ups and downs you could never anticipate...losing a child...having a major illness or disability...suffering a betrayal by the one you love the most. When you experience these adversities, hang in there. Remember that God is there for you during the tough times, and so am I. When you're thinking of doing something crazy, call me and I'll talk you out of it.

As you face the challenges ahead, stay together...NO MATTER WHAT. I am confident about you two, as you face the challenges of the marriage battle zone. Remember David's words in First Samuel, Chapter 17, Verse 47...

1 SA 17:47

...for the battle is the Lord's...

Your marriage battles are the Lord's...He will deliver victory into your hands.

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The ROCK, your Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, is omnipresent, and He is here with you today. He is laughing. He is happy for you. He is loving you unconditionally. First John, Chapter 4, Verse 19 says...

1JO 4:19

We love (unconditionally), because He (the Lord Jesus Christ) first loved us (unconditionally).

The ROCK, your Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is looking forward to being faithful to you when you are not. Deuteronomy, Chapter 32, Verse 4 says...

DEU 32:4

“The Rock! His work is perfect, For all His ways are just; A God of faithfulness and without injustice, Righteous and upright is He.”

Best of all, God wants you to live the “Zoe” life...the resurrection life...a life of abundance. John, Chapter 10, Verse 10 says...

JOH 10:10

(The Lord Jesus Christ says today) I came that Joe and Charlotte may have (the Zoe) life (the resurrection life both here on earth and for all eternity), and have it abundantly.

So as you go forth in this marriage, and when your marriage hits the bumps, remember these powerful words from your Lord and Savior Jesus Christ...Isaiah, Chapter 41, Verse 10 says...

ISA 41:10

‘Do not fear, for I am with you; Do not anxiously look about you, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, surely I will help you, Surely I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.’

In your relationship I hope you LAUGH uncontrollably...LOVE unconditionally...FORGIVE unceasingly...and LIVE unlimitedly. I’m sure I speak for all who are here when I say we’re glad to be here today to send you off into living this LAUGH-LOVE-FORGIVE and LIVE lifestyle.

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THE SPIRITUAL VOWS AND THE RING CEREMONY

I Joe

Take you Charlotte

To be my lawfully wedded wife

I promise to love you as Christ loved the church...unconditionally

I promise to care for you

In sickness and in health

For better or for worse

For richer or for poorer

With God's enabling power

Until physical death separates us

THE RING

Please accept this ring

As a sign of my commitment to spending the rest of my life with you

**Joe Shea and Charlotte Capaldo
WEDDING CEREMONY**

THE SPIRITUAL VOWS AND THE RING CEREMONY

I Charlotte

Take you Joe

To be my lawfully wedded husband

I promise to respect you and to obey your authority as our Lord has instructed

I promise to care for you

In sickness and in health

For better or for worse

For richer or for poorer

With God's enabling power

Until physical death separates us

THE RING

Please accept this ring

As a sign of my commitment to spending the rest of my life with you

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WEDDING CEREMONY**

CLOSING

If anyone here sees any reason that these two should not be joined in holy matrimony...speak now or forever hold your peace.

What God has joined, let no one separate.

Now by the power vested in me by God Himself and by His Word and by your trust and by the laws of the great State of California, I now pronounce you husband and wife.

Joe you may kiss your bride.

Ladies and Gentlemen...I'd like to introduce for the first time...

Mr. and Mrs. Joe and Charlotte Shea