

## Bride

Saturday, 01 December 2007

I remember it was snowing. It was on December 14th, and for the sake of harmony at home, let's just say it was some years back. That night I asked Jane Ann to marry me. It was a proposal that she could have chosen to say yes to, or just as easily to have said no. I chose her to share life with, to provide for her. I asked her to be a life-long companion, to share children with me: to simply be my bride. I know now that she "completed" me in some sense of that word; that her being my bride added some texture to each of our lives. That union produced a life that became unique and could not have been experienced without the partnership between both of us.

Somewhere in a timeless place, God declared a Bride for Himself. He chose you and me (actually all who would accept His proposal) to share His life with, for re-birth, to provide for and to be a companion with. Whosoever says yes to that offer of marriage will partnership with God! God delights in His Bride. He values her so much that He was born into the earth and suffered a traumatic, terrible death just so He could have that partnership with her (you and me). His desire for someone to care for, someone to love unconditionally, prompted a wedding proposal to us all. When I asked Jane Ann, I could not stand being quiet anymore about it. I was consumed with it. I had to ask. I needed to get an answer that badly! I believe that in God's proposal He could not help Himself. It was an inner necessity for Him.

Why? Because He is not simply a God of theology and logic; He's more than a religious idol. He is a God having eyes to see, ears to hear and a heart filled with compassion. Because God is Love, He needed, in the most desperate way, to have an object of Love. In His Word, He has declared that God's kind of Love is patient, kind, is not arrogant. God's kind of Love toward us does not seek anything for Himself, it is not provoked by our weakness, and He forgives. His Love for His Bride bears all things, He believes in us, hopes all things good about us and, most importantly, He endures with us.

A few years ago, one of the early CCM artists sang a song that I remember each Christmas. David Meece's single "We Are The Reason" describes the true purpose for the

season we are about to celebrate. We  
are the reason for Christmas. He  
was born on Christmas Day for your sake, not for His.

As  
little children we would dream of Christmas morn

Of all the gifts and toys we knew we'd find

But we never realized a baby born one blessed night

Gave us the greatest gift of our lives.

We  
were the reason that He gave His life

We were the reason that He suffered and died

To a world that was lost He gave all He could give

To show us the reason to live.

All  
His attention was on the opportunity to make a proposal for all of us to be  
His Bride. We celebrate the  
birth of Christ because it was a humbling, suffering experience for the  
Creator of the Universe to chase after us. The God of Abraham is the only deity to pursue His creation rather  
than His creation pursuing Him. That's  
what makes God's kind of Love so different than all  
the man-made gods. I've never  
heard it said better than in a song lyric from Rich Mullins that I've  
over-used. But it has had such an impact on my life.

There's  
a wideness in God's mercy I cannot find in my own.

And He keeps His fire burning to melt this heart of stone

Keeps me aching with a yearning, keeps me glad to have been caught

In  
the reckless, raging fury that they call the Love of God.

Oh  
yeah, one last thing. The ring. Well God gives us His Spirit, places it on us, actually in us, and seals the deal! That's the engagement symbol the world should see on us. That's a better deal than the little old rock Jane Ann got.

From  
all of us at WBVN. to you and your family, Merry Christmas! Remember the center of the universe pinpoints to a moment in time when God entered the earth looking just for you, looking to make you the offer of a lifetime...so that we could be glad to have been caught in the raging fury we call the Love of God.

