

**The Marriage Mystery Part 4**  
**WEDDING REDEDICATION**

**April 27, 2008**

This is a very special day; it's going to be a fun day for all of us as we celebrate marriage. Today we're concluding a four-week series on the marriage mystery and we're going to have a wedding vow renewal service today. Some of you are family or friends or relatives of those who are going to be renewing their vows and commitments and we want to say welcome and thank you for coming...

I also want to say a special thanks to all of the single adults in our church who have graciously put up with the four week series on marriage. Let's thank them for their patience can we do that.

Thank you for being here today as we focus on the meaning of marriage. I encourage you to set back and relax and enjoy this just like a wedding.

If you're married and you're here with your husband or your wife and you would like to renew your vows, maybe you weren't even planning to do this, it's ok. In a minute when I have them all stand up, I'll invite you to stand up and join in also... This is for everyone who desires to renew their vows and we'd love for you to do that. Then if you'd like to get one of these certificates of marriage renewal that we're going to be giving out to everybody who are participating we'll mail you one if you just let us know that you participated in the service today on the card.

We're going to have fun today. This is a very, very happy time.

I want to say just a few things to you;

First, God is pleased with you. You made a vow to another person and you made a vow to God and you have kept that vow. I don't care if it has been only a few months or 50 years... This I do know... It wasn't always easy, was it? But you have kept that vow and God is smiling upon you today and I congratulate you on that.

I also want to say how proud I am of you. As the Sr Pastor of Calvary Community church this is one of the greatest joys of my life to be able to lead you in a recommitment of your marriage vows to each other. I consider it an honor and a privilege for Edna-Wynne and I to be able to stand here and lead this service today. It's a great thrill for us.

I also want to say that our church is grateful for you.

You are models of commitment in a world that knows little or nothing about commitment. You have succeeded where most celebrities have failed. Think about that. Most of the most famous people in the world have failed at what you've succeeded at and I congratulate you for that.

From the beginning of time it's always been God's plan for men and women to get married. God thought it up. He thought up love. He thought up sex. He thought up marriage. He thought up family. It was all His idea. It was the first institution that God ever created. In fact, when God made Adam and Eve – at first He just made Adam and He put him in a perfect environment. Adam had everything he could possibly want. There were no

problems. Yet God looked down and said, *'this isn't good.*

' Adam was lonely and God said, *"It is not good for man to be alone."* He made Adam a wife, a helper, a lover, a helpmeet. He brought them together and created the first marriage. Then God looked and says, *"It is very good."*

And today, God looks at you and says, this is a good thing you're doing. This is a good thing that you're doing as you renew your vows and commitment to each other.

What is it that makes a marriage last? The Bible says there are three things that are going to last forever. **Faith** is going to last forever, **hope**, and **love**. If you want to build your marriage to last then build it on faith, hope, and love.

First you need faith. You need faith in yourself, that you can be a good husband/wife. You need faith in each other. Then of course you need faith in God. God is the glue that holds us together. It was His idea so you need faith in God.

Then you need hope because life isn't always easy. It hasn't always been easy for you. So God says in those tough times you need hope. **HOPE – Holding On Praying Expectantly**. Sometimes in your marriage that's all you've got. You don't have any feelings for each other. You're going through tough times and you hold on praying expectantly. You have done that. It gets you through the tough times.

The third thing you need is love. God designed marriage to be built on love. It is the basis. The Bible says

God is love. So all love comes from God. Most people don't understand love because they think it means, You bless me. But love means putting the other person first. Love means thinking of the other person. It means giving them what they need not what they deserve. It means making your problem my problem. Love means I want to meet your needs. I'm not thinking about my needs. The most famous chapter in the Bible, 1 Corinthians 13, is all about love. It is a passage that's often read at weddings. You may have had it read at your wedding. Usually when it's read at weddings it sounds very poetic. But the longer you're married the more you realize it's about real love, the real challenge of real love that only God can put it in our hearts for one another. Listen to what 1 Corinthians 13 has to say about real love. *"I'm bankrupt without love. Love*

*never gives up. Love cares more for others than for self. Love doesn't want what it doesn't have. Love doesn't strut, doesn't have a swelled head, doesn't force itself on others, isn't always, 'Me first!' Love doesn't fly off the handle. Love doesn't keep score of the sins of others. Love doesn't revel when others grovel. Love takes pleasure in the flowering of truth, puts up with anything, trusts God always, always looks for the best, never looks back."*

Let us Pray: Our Father, we thank You for Your love for us. It is a love that is all those things we just read. You didn't put Yourself first. You looked out for our needs. We can learn so much from Your love. So we look to You in this ceremony and this time of commitment and ask that Your love be put into our hearts that we can love each

other. We admit it, God. We need Your love so we can love each other like this. Lord, help us to know how much compassion You have for us so we can be compassionate for each other, to look to Your forgiveness so we can forgive each other. Lord, help us to be aware of the practical ways You meet our needs in everyday life so that we can have the strength to meet the practical needs of those around us. Our Father, we pray that we realize we can't love like this on our own. We look to You for the strength that You give us in Your love. In that strength we find something new, something fresh. Your love for us expressed to one another. We ask that You do this in our hearts like only You can because You love us. We ask it in Jesus' name. Amen.

I'd like to at this time ask all of the couples to ***stand right now*** and come forward and when you find a place you can face each other and hold hands. I'm going to invite those of you who weren't even planning to do this. If you're here and you want to join in... I invite you to join in with the others this will be a meaningful time for you, too. . Join hands, and face each other. Just turn toward each other and hold hands.

The secret of a lasting marriage is summed up in one word. It's the word "commitment." Not romance. It's *Commitment*. It takes far more than romantic feelings to make a marriage last because you don't always feel romantic, do you? But you have feelings that come and go. You didn't always feel like staying together. Every marriage has had problems. But maturity, emotional

maturity – is when you begin to live by your commitments not your feelings.

So today, those of you who are standing. I honor you that you're still together. You've made it this far. Not because you always felt that way but because you made a commitment. That's why the most important part of a wedding is the commitment time where you commit to each other.

What you're about to do – this recommitment of your marriage vows – in many ways is far more important and significant than your original wedding vows. Why, because now you know this person now. You know their weaknesses – every one of them. And they know your weaknesses – every one of them. So you're not making a commitment to a fantasy. This is reality. You know each

other is not perfect. You've experienced that many times together. Your marriage has been tested by time, by problems, by trials. You have a greater understanding of what commitment is all about now to the other person. So in many ways what you're about to do is now far more significant.

Men, I want you to take your wife's hand and look into her eyes. I challenge you now before God and before all of these witnesses that you're to accept this woman that you're looking at as a gift from God. She is God's gift to you. You are to love her unconditionally. You are to accept every part of your wife, (PAUSE) including those parts that irritate you... although she has ever few of them, now that I think about, she has practically none.

You are to love every part of her because the Bible says that once you are united in marriage in God's eyes the two become one. So to reject any part of your wife would be in essence to reject yourself because God sees you as one. Men, you're to love this woman as Christ loved the church – sacrificially. Putting her needs before your own. You're to love her and let your love be an example of Christ's love for us.

Likewise, ladies, as you look at this man, I challenge you and charge you before God to accept this man as God's gift to you. He is God's gift to you. You are to love him unconditionally. To reject any part of him would be in essence to reject yourself because you are one with him. Your love is to be an example of God's love for each other.

Men, I want you to repeat these vows after me.

Repeat after me, Before God and all these witnesses I renew my commitment to love you. I promise to cherish you as God's gift to me. I promise to respect you and to accept our differences. I promise to share my feelings and to forgive you. I promise to pray for you and to love you and to encourage you. I promise to grow in loving God with you. I promise to support you in serving God and fulfilling God's purposes for you. I love you with all of my heart and I will for all of my life. With God's help I'll make our home a place of joy as long as we both shall live.

**Bill:** Ladies, would you repeat this.

**Edna-Wynne:**

Before God and all of these witnesses, I renew my commitment to love you. I promise to cherish you as God's gift to me. I promise to respect you and to accept our differences. I promise to share my feelings and to encourage you. I promise to pray for you and to forgive you. I promise to grow in loving God with you, to support you in serving God and fulfilling God's purposes for you. I love you with all of my heart and I will for all of my life. With God's help I promise to make our home a place of joy as long as we both shall live.

**Bill:**

There's another thing you did when you got married. You exchanged rings. You may not be able to get them off your finger now. The ring is a symbol that has been around for

thousands and thousands and thousands of years in every culture. It's a symbol of commitment.

Men, I want you to put your hand on your wife's ring and look at it for a minute realizing that it is made of precious and pure metal representing the preciousness and purity of your love for your wife. It is an unbroken circle representing the commitment you made that is to never be broken.

As you put your hand on that ring, I want you to look into your wife's eyes and say these words: "I give you this ring as a symbol of my love and with it I promise to always be faithful to you."

**Bill:** Ladies, put your hand on your husband's ring. Say these words to him.

Edna-Wynne

I give you this ring as a symbol of my love for you and with it I promise to always be faithful to you.

**Bill:** The Bible says a man shall leave his father and mother and cleave or cling to his wife and the two shall become one flesh. In weddings we often symbolize that unity with a unity candle. I'm going to ask \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ to light this candle as a symbol for all of us who are renewing our vows today.

The phrase "the two shall become one" is so important it's mentioned in the Bible five times. It's as if God is saying, I want you to understand this is a vow, this is a bond that is meant to last forever. The two shall become one.

I'm going to ask all of the couples if you will face your husband/wife. Hold hands with your husband/your wife.

Now that you have recommitted yourselves to each other before God and before all of these witnesses here in our church family by the authority invested in me by the Calvary Community Church and in accordance with the laws of the state of Maryland, I now pronounce you *again* husband and wife. And gentlemen, you may kiss your bride.

You may be seated.

Without a doubt the most important way to build your marriage is to cultivate your spiritual life together. You have a social life, you have a financial life, you may have a

parenting life, you have a love life and you have a career life. God says focus on your spiritual life together and that will grow everything else. It will bring you closer together. It makes two become one. You can pray together. You can serve in a ministry together. You can worship together. One of the greatest ways as I mentioned at the beginning of this service is to get in a small group with other couples and fellowship together. We need other people who believe in marriage too... to keep our marriages strong because we all go over rocky bumps.

Praying together has brought the intimacy in my marriage that's really neat. God is at the center of our family now. We have both learned that anything done God's way never lacks a blessing from God.

We're both following the same instruction book, God's word, the bible and there's a lot less to disagree about now.

This has been a true blessing for us. It's done a lot for our marriage. I thought we had a great marriage but actually studying about marriage and the word of God and how my role is to God and what I'm supposed to do as a father and husband ... it's been great. It's improved my relationship with the Lord and my wife. It really did save our marriage.

Let us Pray:

Father, I want to thank You so much for thinking up the idea of love. You are love. Thank You for thinking up the idea of marriage and family. We don't have to go through life alone. If You hadn't created the idea of marriage none

of us would have been alive. I ask You to bless these marriages. Bless them with love and with wisdom and with patience. Bless them with forgiveness because we're all imperfect. I ask You to bless these marriages with good health so they can better serve You. I ask You to bless these marriages financially so they can give to others. I ask You to bless them together as they fulfill Your purposes for their lives in this generation. May the world be a better place because of their love for each other. May they be an example of Your love for us. I pray that You will protect them from all the temptations that want to destroy or tear apart their union. May other people see Jesus Christ and see Your love in their marriage. So I ask You to bless

these marriages in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.