

GLAD TIDINGS

“And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers...” (Acts 13:32)

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PROMISES MADE

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Marriage vows are promises made... For those of us anticipating marriage in the near future, actively considering marriage now, or have already married, we need to consider and contemplate the vows and promises we will make or have made. We read in Matthew 5:33, *you have heard that the ancients were told; you shall not make false vows, but shall fulfill your vows to the Lord. A couple's vows are a contract. This is a contract that has been ordained by God and witnessed by Him before men. The vows that are voiced and answered are considered a life long obligation.*

The promises made are similar to these: Do each of you take the other to be – to live together after God's ordinance – in the holy state of matrimony? Will you love, comfort, honor and keep, each other in sickness and in health, for richer, for poorer, for better, for worse, in sadness and in joy, to cherish and continually bestow upon each other's heart the deepest devotion, forsaking all others, keeping yourselves only unto each other as long as you both shall live?

After the questions have

been answered, a statement rendering it, as an executed agreement is given to all: *In as much as you have consented together in marriage before this company of friends and family and have pledged your faith – and have declared your unity by giving and receiving rings – you are now husband and wife. What therefore God has joined together, let no man put asunder.* These things are done in accordance with the Lord's word, as we read in Mark 10:6 through 9 *but from the beginning of creation, God made them male and female. For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother, and the two shall become one flesh; so they are no longer two, but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together let no man separate.*

In the beginning of the marriage relationship the promises made are easy to keep. After all, the love felt is young; the ambition to fulfill dreams dreamed is vibrant; and all the goals yearned for are obtainable. “To love and to cherish” involves much. As Paul said in 1 Corinthians 13: 4 through 7, *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.

As time goes by, we find that our lives are changed by the circumstances of life. Hopefully the conditions that have challenged the, *“love, comfort, honor and keep each other in sickness and in health, for richer, for poorer, for better, for worse, in sadness and in joy,* aspects of our lives, have not changed our hearts.

These circumstantial changes come in many shapes and sizes. Sometimes, the anxiety of financial matters are the circumstances; sometimes the concern of health issues are the reasons; sometimes it's the apprehension about family troubles that are the conditions. Whatever the case, the vows and promises we have made or will make are binding and will help us through the changes that are brought on by life's circumstances. Remember *“For what, therefore, God has joined together, let no man put asunder”.* Vows made are promises kept!