



MY MARRIAGE JOURNEY

This month of April is very special to me and my wife Cynthia. We were married on **April 13th 1985** and will be celebrating our 36th Wedding Anniversary!

I recall teaching at Pastor David T. DeMola's bible school in the spring of 1984. I was teaching the 2nd year students on the book of Proverbs. We taught on many of the subjects contained there along with what it said about marriage and relationships. I was single back then and so my life experience was not great when it came to marriage and relationships.

It would be a year later before I would meet Cynthia and ask her to be my wife. I remember on one of the lessons I was talking about my desire for a wife and that I knew God had a special one picked out for me. Little did I know it would not be that long before I would meet the woman of my dreams!

When Cynthia and I were engaged she shared with me how she had read Dr. Paul Yonggi Cho's book on the Fourth Dimension. In it he shared the importance of using your God-given imagination to see the things you were trusting God to bring to pass in your life. He told the story of a young woman who wanted a husband and how she imagined herself marrying a gentleman with very specific qualities. She prayed over it and God eventually brought the man who fit her description perfectly.

Cynthia was so inspired by this that she began to make a list that went something like this; *Lord, I would like him to be Born Again and Holy Spirit filled, called to the ministry, be a graduate of Rhema Bible Training Center, tall with a minimum height of 6 feet, musical where he can play instruments by ear, blonde hair and **Lord, let him be rich!*** Then she made one little change...she said, **Lord he doesn't have to be rich but at least let him look like he has money!!!** I have often told her over the years that if she had just left that last one alone we'd have it made in the shade!

I met every one of those qualities and characteristics! I am obviously born again, Holy Spirit filled, a 1980-81 Rhema graduate (which happened to be same time she attended Rhema yet we never met the whole time). I had just begun our church in Long Island and was pastoring. I'm 6' 4" tall. I play 3 instruments, Piano, Guitar and Drums, mostly by ear. I was blonde headed when we met and looked like I was RICH! Talk about fitting the bill!

We have learned that marriage is the closest thing to a heaven OR hell that one can experience in this earthly life. Marriage is of God between a biological man and a biological woman. The reason Jesus said in **Matthew 22:30**, "*For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven*" (KJV) is because **MARRIAGE IS FOR IMPERFECT PEOPLE!** Perfect people do not need to marry and since everyone in heaven is perfected they don't need to be married.

When Cynthia and I had met as stated I had the beginnings of a new church I was planting and she was traveling around the USA with the New Life Drama Company sharing the gospel. Neither of us were looking for a spouse but were focused on obeying God's call upon our life. The night I met Cynthia was at a church service being conducted at a VFW Hall. I had gone to see the NLDC and considering having them at our services.

After the service I spoke with Billy Claudio who had called me seeking a booking at our church. I mentioned that I was a Rhema Graduate and he replied that one of the members of the team also had attended Rhema. I asked who and he called Cynthia over. *Now I am not exaggerating or embellishing what took place.* As we were introduced and shook hands I heard over my right shoulder what seemed like an audible voice, **Michael, you are looking at your wife!** I was so taken by this experience that I turned and looked over my shoulder and had to stop myself from saying, ***I'm looking at my wh...!***

Cynthia was talking but I could not hear a thing she was saying because of this God moment. To this day when I tell this part of the story she says, *Nothing has changed in this area!* Obviously there is no truth to that!

To Those Who Are Single

It's true that many **single or unmarried** people see their singleness as a burden they are bearing. **Singleness** is as much a gift of God's Grace as marriage is but many are wasting their **singleness**. Think about it...When you are single there are many freedoms that are available to you. You don't need to ask permission for something you want to do or places you want to go. You really don't have to answer to any one but God and yourself.

Singleness is a short season of life where we can draw closer to God and develop our relationship with Him which He designed to equip us for the challenges of marriage and potential parenthood that is to come.

Singleness is what the Apostle Paul was referring to in **1 Corinthians 7:35** when he said, *'...I want you to do whatever will help you serve the Lord best, with as few distractions as possible'*. This is also the time where any particular calling we might have, whether it be vocational or otherwise, can be brought to fruition to help us with our careers.

A Word to the Wise for the Unmarried

One of the greatest powers that God has given to us is the **Power of Choice**. The one thing we must understand about this power is that **once we exercise the power of our choices we then become servants to those choices**. Many people today are serving the choices of their past. Therefore we must learn early in life to choose wisely.

The two most important decisions you can make in life are; #1 - To receive Jesus Christ as your personal Lord & Savior. This the most important decision one can make and will determine whether that person goes to heaven or hell! The **#2** most important decision we make in life is who we marry. ***This decision determines whether we live in a heaven or live in a hell!***

Who you marry one day is your choice and you need be reminded of the old adage that **'Love is blind'**. That is why the Bible teaches us that *'Without good direction, people lose their way; the more wise counsel you follow, the better your chances'* MSG. The King James Version says, *'...there is safety in the multitude of counselors'*. Trying to establish strong relationships without the proper foundation is futile. It all starts with you as an individual starts a growing relationship with the Lord. Visit

www.mjbministries.org/connect-with-Jesus to begin this vital relationship today. He makes all things new and while He can heal a broken marriage, His best is for you doing the marriage thing right from the beginning. **New Construction is always easier than Reconstruction!**

- Rev. Michael J. Burns