

This is the Day...Tuesday

September 21, 2021

A Match made in Heaven

“I will betroth you to me forever; I will betroth you in righteousness and justice, in love and compassion. I will betroth you in faithfulness, and you will acknowledge the Lord.”

(Hosea 2:19-20)

In early autumn of 1992, I was serving as the new pastor of the downtown church in White Bluff Tennessee. Each time I had the opportunity to begin serving with a new congregation, I always spent the first few months just listening to the people. I wanted to hear their stories of the trials and triumphs of the church. I wanted to hear about the things they had done well and the things that concerned them and caused stress. Inevitably, I would come away with some very valuable information. I began to understand what they enjoyed doing in ministry, what they were afraid of doing, and what they had always wanted to do as a church but not had the opportunity.

It was interesting for me to discover that one of the activities they had always wanted to do was a wedding renewal ceremony. The White Bluff church had several couples who had been faithfully married for well over fifty years. One couple had been together nearly seventy years. My first thought was to have such a ceremony around Valentine’s Day, but several couples indicated they would prefer to have the event between Thanksgiving and Christmas. So, in an effort to give these sweet couples what they wanted, I began planning the ceremony. When I sent out the invitation to participate, I expected to only have the couples with the longest tenure to be interested in participating. I was amazed when nearly thirty couples signed up to participate. Some of the couples had only been married for a year or two. Three of the wives in the church had husbands who were in the army and had been deployed. But the wives still wanted to participate and video the ceremony to send to their husbands.

The ceremony turned out to be so beautiful. Everyone was excited and decked out in their finest. Whether they had been married for a year or for decades, they came in white dresses and suits. They repeated the vows and smiled as they reminded each other, and everyone present that love is at the center of their relationship. They were a match made in heaven.

The ceremony reminded me of the Lord’s deep and abiding love for His people. That is the picture which Hosea provides in the Scripture text. There is still a groom deeply in love, and a bride who is preparing for Him. The groom has graciously shared His vows with her, and His words are repeated often as the bride reminds herself of the groom’s amazing promises and love. The Groom is Jesus Christ, and the bride is His church. The love is the same as the love which keeps couples together for seventy years, but it is a love not bound by the constraints of time. It is an everlasting love for you and a match made in heaven.