

Christian Marriage – Pilgrims Traveling Same Path

By Jason Helopoulos

Perspective makes all the difference. It matters in life and it matters in marriage. The Apostle Peter provides perspective for Christian marriage when he exhorts husbands to live with their wives in an understanding way and to show them honor, because “they are heirs with you of the grace of life” (1 Peter 3:7). Peter sets Christian marriage on the highest plane possible—husbands and wives possess the same eternal inheritance. They are but fellow pilgrims traveling on the same path to the same celestial city. This informs everything in a Christian marriage. As a Christian husband and wife, we are both recipients of grace and will be recipients of glory. This makes our marriages wholly different than many marriages around us.

This has the effect of centering our marriages not just upon the immediate, or even the next fifty years, but upon Christ and eternity. We do well to remind ourselves of this perspective daily. It changes the goals we pursue in our marriages. This orients us as co-laborers, standing side by side, arm in arm, aimed at the same prize—to finish the race and hear, “Well done, good and faithful servant.” That is the goal of our life, because that is the goal of every Christian life. And the Lord, in His bountiful grace, often gives us Christian marriage to help achieve that end.

Our spouses know our weaknesses, struggles, temptations, and faults, and they can encourage us through them. When we are weak, we have someone to lean on. When we are in need of correction, we have someone to offer a word of counsel. When we are battling, we have a fellow saint to join us in prayer. We possess the greatest of earthly blessings, someone who knows our frailty, loves us, and seeks to carry our burden with us.

In fact, our union is even greater than this. We have been made one flesh. Paul presses this thought home in Ephesians 5:28 when he says, “Husbands should love their wives as their own bodies.” A husband’s wife is his own body. They are one. We, then, are united with our spouses. Therefore, we are never against each other. We are never enemies, never combatants, never opposed. That is not only our goal but our reality. Any injury I do to my spouse, I do to myself. Any encouragement I provide to my spouse, I provide for myself. In Christian marriage, we charge ahead together and we fall back together. We are coheirs and co-laborers united in one flesh.