

## **Christian Marriage: An Overview**

### **God instituted marriage**

It is God who brought Adam and Eve together (Gen.2:22). Adam and Eve were the first husband and wife (Gen.3:6). Thus marriage is instituted by God.

### **Christ and the church**

The Old Testament describes the relationship between God and Israel as that of a husband and wife (Jer.31:32). The Bible depicts Jesus Christ as the bridegroom (Mt.9:15) and the church as the bride (Eph.5:22-24). Thus Christian marriage is a picture of this relationship.

### **Covenant**

Christian marriage is a covenant. In a contract, the party signing the contract strives to ensure their rights are protected and that they get their dues from the contract. The focus of a covenant is on what you can give rather than what you can get. God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son Jesus Christ to die for our sins (Jn.3:16). The focus of Christian marriage is all about serving one another and together being of service to the community.

### **Sacrament**

Christian marriage is a sacrament. The word sacrament is derived from the Latin word 'sacramentum' meaning 'to make sacred'. Marriage is a sacrament where the bridegroom and the bride are blessed to enter into holy matrimony. God is the centre of this relationship.

### **Permanent**

Christian marriage is permanent – 'till death do us apart' (Mk.10:9). If there are irreconcilable differences between the husband and wife – learn to love the other person all the more. If God can love us when we are sinners, how much more are we obligated to love our spouse irrespective of all shortfalls!

### **Purity**

Christian marriage calls for faithfulness in relation to one another. Sexual relations are restricted to 'each man with his own wife and each woman with her own husband' (1Cor.7:2). God expects the marriage bed to be kept pure (Heb.13:4).

### **Togetherness**

Christian marriage is about togetherness. God instituted marriage to resolve the issue of loneliness (Gen.2:18). Marriage calls for absolute transparency between husband and wife. Husband and wife should uphold each other in prayer. It is a relationship of mutual submission out of reverence for Christ (Eph.2:21).