



## A FAIRYTALE WEDDING

Okay, I admit it, from about 7:00 a.m. until about 9:45 a.m. Friday morning I watched the before/after wedding coverage of Prince William and his bride, Catherine, the new Duchess of Cambridge. I further admit to several tears along the way. I think it's a dream of most every little girl to marry a prince: the romance, the dresses, the flowers, the ceremony, the carriages, the music, the reverence.....all amazing. Not even living in England, we are drawn to kings and queens, princes and princesses, to another world so different from our own, and yet one we look on with tender hearts and overflowing eyes.

*I think one thing that draws me is the contrast between the real world of tornadoes and devastation here in our own country, wars, fighting, and other forms of destruction around the world and the beauty of a royal ceremony such as this one. It's the difference between Cinderella and the wicked step mother, between Snow White and the ugly queen with the poison apple. It's a place of beauty removing us at least temporarily from the ugliness of our own world and the places we've gone that are so far removed from that beauty.*

During the ceremony, **CATHERINE OF SIENA** *(not the new duchess)* was quoted as saying (something like), *"Marriage helps men and women be who God meant them to be."* For that to happen, a number of things need to take place. Catherine's brother, James, read from Romans 12 saying, *"Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment...Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good....Honor one another above yourselves....Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud...If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone."* We have to be willing to sacrifice for our spouse; give up the things we feel are our "rights"; to *"honor one another above ourselves."*

Too many times, we find ourselves using our spouse to meet needs in us that only God can fill; not another person/human. The demands we make on each other only set us and our marriages up for frustration and failure: The 'holes in our souls' can't be filled by our husbands/wives. When we find those holes/needs unmet,

our first reactions are to blame and resent building up walls of bitterness and disappointment towards each other. The hurts we can inflict on one another are unnecessary and avoidable if we can "*think of ourselves with sober judgment, not thinking of ourselves more highly than we ought.*" Imagine what would happen if we always placed our spouse's needs above our own (not what we think they need, what they say they need!) That would require a far deeper intimacy, a greater transparency and vulnerability than most of us enjoy, wouldn't it?

At one time I dreamt of a prince riding to 'rescue' me on a white horse; knowing he would fulfill all my dreams, meet all my needs. "**Expectation makes demands and sets us up for disappointment**" is a quote I have pasted on the front of my computer because my hopes (expectations) were immature and unrealistic, of course I didn't know that at the time. Neither of us (Dennis and I) were able to fill the deep holes and wounds of the other because only God can bring healing to painful places.

Watching the ceremony and the hundreds of thousands of cheering, singing people just there in London, I was reminded of the time when "*a great multitude that no one could count*" will gather "*standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands. And they cried out in a loud voice: 'Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb.'*" Rev.7:9-10 We will be wearing various crowns and clothed in white robes. The difference will be that we will never stop the celebrating, we won't clear off the streets or the mall. Our celebration will continue always and forever. It isn't really something we can imagine but that's what we're promised.....from the King who keeps all His promises.

So, what does it mean for marriage to "*help men and women be who God wants them to be*" ? It means that God provides many opportunities throughout our lifetimes to grow and mature into who He intended for us to be. He uses, in particular, husbands and wives as His tools for the shaping of each other much as a rough diamond is shaped by a hammer and chisel. That is why we're exhorted to not "*think of ourselves more highly than we ought*" or to "*not be proud*". It requires humility to submit to God's work in our lives, especially when the tool used is our husband or wife. The challenge is to remember that, as a diamond is shaped

*into a beautiful stone by very intricate, precise skill, just so a spouse is shaped with tender, loving care. ....not huge swings of a hammer.* 

*We simply will not be princesses/princes in the way of this world but in our hearts we can be sons and daughters of the King both now and in heaven where He has prepared a place for us. The beauty of the wedding celebration of Prince William and Catherine will be nothing compared to the wedding celebration coming one day to believers around the world. The numbers celebrating will not be counted on Twitter or Facebook but will be countless from across the ages. The gowns, hats, and uniforms worn today will be as "filthy rags" compared to the "white robes" we'll wear on that day. One day I will be a princess and it will be beyond my wildest dreams. When Cinderella was clothed by her fairy godmother for the prince's ball, it happened in the flash of a wand. That is probably the only similarity: not in the flash of a wand but "in the twinkling of an eye."*



*Georgia*