

WEDDING SERVICE

Saturday 24 April 2010, Clachan Church

Catherine Patricia Rae & Alexander Martin

by Rev. Martin Grashoff

Welcome

Opening Hymn : 'God beyond glory' (*Church Hymnary* [4th Ed.] 699)

Statement

Prayer

Exchange of vows

Giving and receiving of the rings

Declaration of marriage

Marriage blessing

Signing of the register

Bible Reading : John 15:9-12 (*New Revised Standard Version*)

- ⁹ As the Father has loved me,
so I have loved you;
abide in my love.
- ¹⁰ If you keep my commandments,
you will abide in my love,
just as I have kept my Father's commandments
and abide in his love.
- ¹¹ I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you,
and that your joy may be complete.
- ¹² This is my commandment,
that you love one another
as I have loved you.

Address

Catherine and Alex, you have just sealed a new beginning in your lives. You both look incredibly fresh and young today, but each of you already has made a substantial mileage along the paths of life. And whatever we leave behind, it will always be there. But that's not important today.

Today is the first day of the rest of your life. And you decided and vowed to live that life together. For better or worse, but always in the sure and certain expectation of the good life God promises to his children on this earth.

How to find that good life? There is an old pilgrim's wisdom, that says, 'If you set out

on a pilgrimage to find something good, you will not find it unless you already carry it with you'.¹ We are equipped with the wonderful capabilities to do good and be good to each other.

Of course, love is very easy, especially if it's about falling in love. Our hormones can do the job, and all we have to do is to enjoy. But that's not all we can say about love, and it surely is not a steady ground to build a long-term relationship on.

We all are created in God's image, and God is good, God is love. So we are very able to love and be good. As we soon learn in life we are also very able to mess it up, to break hearts, to damage souls. Yet, the only way to make something really good out of ourselves, our lives and our relationships, is to focus on the good. If we can find true love in ourselves and in each other, we have found the right way.

That basically is what Jesus tells us: *love one another, as I have loved you*. Love is reciprocal and unselfish. But you cannot take it for granted. It needs to be worked on, nurtured and tested. Love is a commandment, but only for one reason: *that your joy may be complete*.

When Nelleke and I got married, my father was the minister conducting. We were good Christians, but we had no clue which Bible text to choose. So my dear dad came up with his own choice. Guess what? Yes, exactly what we read today. And he said, 'I'm not sure if it's about marriage, but I thought it was appropriate.' So, when Alex and Catherine said they really did not know a Bible text for their wedding, I could appreciate that. And I thought, 'I'll take my dad's appropriate text.'

And appropriate it is. Love comes with falling in love, but it only works if we really work on it. Working on our love will bring us great joy, as well as disappointment. But it is the complete joy that makes it worthwhile and lasting.

Catherine and Alex, I wish you the Lord's blessing on your house and on your family. And I wish you a long and good journey together, in love and faith. Amen.

Prayers

Closing Hymn : 'God, in the planning and purpose of life'

Blessing

¹ As in this Celtic pilgrim's prayer:

Pilgrim, take care your journey's not in vain,
A hazard without profit, without gain;
The King you seek you'll find in Rome, it's true,
But only if he travels on the way with you.

From: James Carney (ed.), *Medieval Irish Lyrics with The Irish Bardic Poet* (Dublin: Dolmen Press, 1984)