

Marriage of Timothy and Lee Ann Phelps

Conducted at the Westboro Baptist Church in Topeka, Kansas

March 10, 1989

Pastor Fred Phelps: Dearly beloved, we are gathered together this day in the presence of God and each other to bear witness of the joining of this man and this woman in marriage. The bond and the covenant of marriage was established in Eden at the creation by God himself. And our Lord Jesus Christ adorned this manner of life by his presence and first miracle at Cana of Galilee. It signifies thus the holy mystery of the union between Christ and his church, and the scriptures at Hebrews 12:3 commands that this institution, and all other institutions, be held in utmost honor among all peoples, in all places, and in all times and ages of human history, from Adam to the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. And it goes like this: one man, one woman, one lifetime. And I really, really hope that you guys have thought this over. Because you are never gonna do it again, in this place; in this house. Now, who gives this woman to be married to this man?

Lee Ann's Brother John: Our mother and I do.

Pastor Fred Phelps: Are you Lee Ann Brown? Lee Ann Brown, will you have this man to be your husband? To live together with him in the covenant of marriage. To love and obey him. To comfort and honor and keep him. In sickness and in health. For better or worse. And through all the vicissitudes of life. And, forsaking all others, keep you only and faithfully unto him, until God himself by death shall separate you?

Lee Ann: I do.

Pastor Fred Phelps: Timothy Bryan Phelps, would you have this woman to be your wife. To live together with her in the covenant of marriage. To love and comfort her. To honor and keep her. In sickness and in health. For better or worse

through all the vicissitudes of life. And, forsaking all others, keep you only and faithfully, unto her until God by death shall separate you?

Timothy: I do.

Pastor Fred Phelps: Now, you have to hold hands. You have to repeat after me. Say these words. Say I, Lee Ann Brown,

Lee Ann: I, Lee Ann Brown,

Pastor Fred Phelps: take thee, Timothy Bryan Phelps,

Lee Ann: take thee, Timothy Bryan Phelps,

Pastor Fred Phelps: to be my husband.

Lee Ann: to be my husband.

Pastor Fred Phelps: And I swear,

Lee Ann: And I swear,

Pastor Fred Phelps: before the Lord God,

Lee Ann: before the Lord God,

Pastor Fred Phelps: and these people,

Lee Ann: and these people,

Pastor Fred Phelps: that I will be good to you,

Lee Ann: that I will be good to you,

Pastor Fred Phelps: and faithful to you throughout my lifetime on earth.

Lee Ann: and faithful to you throughout my lifetime on earth.

Pastor Fred Phelps: And until God Himself,

Lee Ann: And until God Himself,

Pastor Fred Phelps: by death,

Lee Ann: by death,

Pastor Fred Phelps: shall separate us.

Lee Ann: shall separate us.

Pastor Fred Phelps: Okay, now Tim, say these words: I, Timothy Bryan Phelps...

Timothy: I, Timothy Bryan Phelps,

Pastor Fred Phelps: take thee, Lee Ann Brown,

Timothy: take thee, Lee Ann Brown,

Pastor Fred Phelps: to be my wife.

Timothy: to be my wife.

Pastor Fred Phelps: And I swear before the Lord God,

Timothy: And I swear before the Lord God,

Pastor Fred Phelps: and these people,

Timothy: and these people,

Pastor Fred Phelps: that I will be good to you,

Timothy: that I will be good to you,

Pastor Fred Phelps: and faithful to you,

Timothy: and faithful to you,

Pastor Fred Phelps: throughout my lifetime on earth.

Timothy: throughout my lifetime on earth.

Pastor Fred Phelps: And until God Himself,

Timothy: And until God Himself,

Pastor Fred Phelps: by death,

Timothy: by death,

Pastor Fred Phelps: shall separate us.

Timothy: shall separate us.

Pastor Fred Phelps: Now, where are the rings. Lee Ann, take this ring and say, with this ring, I thee wed.

Lee Ann: With this ring, I thee wed.

Pastor Fred Phelps: With this ring, I thee wed.

Timothy: With this ring, I thee wed.

Pastor Fred Phelps: Now, by the authority I have as a Baptist Minister and concurrently with the state, I pronounce that you are man and wife before God.

Now one or two words. So, this is the church of the Lord. I want to talk to you a little bit, Lee Ann and Tim, before we go. It's the way we do in this place. I want to talk to you a little bit out of Malachi chapter 2 and 1 Peter chapter 3. I want you to pay close attention. Malachi chapter 2, verse 11. Start there.

**"Judah hath dealt treacherously, and an abomination is committed in Israel and in Jerusalem; for Judah hath profaned the holiness of the LORD which he loved, and hath married the daughter of a strange god. The LORD will cut off the man that [does] this, the master and the scholar, out of the tabernacles of Jacob, and him that offereth an offering unto the LORD of hosts. And this have ye done again, covering the altar of the LORD with tears, with weeping, and with crying out, insomuch that he regardeth not the offering any more, or receiveth it with good will at your hand. Yet ye say, [Why]? Because the LORD hath been witness between thee and the wife of thy youth, against whom thou hast dealt treacherously: yet is she [still] thy companion, and the wife of thy covenant."
(Malachi 2:11-14)**

What that means is that you can't get along with the Lord Jesus Christ, the great God Almighty, and the church of the Lord Jesus Christ, Tim, if you deal treacherously, at any time in the years to come, with the wife of your youth. You picked her, now you are bound by these, uh, words. She will in every instance from now, until the Lord by death separates you, be – exclusively – the wife of your youth, in any sense.

"And did not he make one? Yet had he the residue of the spirit. And wherefore one? That he might seek a godly seed. Therefore take heed to your spirit, and let none deal treacherously against the wife of his youth. For the LORD, the God of Israel, saith that he hateth putting away: for one covereth violence with his garment, saith the LORD of hosts: therefore take heed to your spirit, that ye deal not treacherously." (Malachi 2:15-16)

And did not he make one? That is to say, for this cause – and only this cause – shall a man leave his father and his mother and cleave to his wife. That is to say, a new relationship is now being established. I will talk a little bit about it. A new relationship, a new priority of things, wherein, for this reason and only for this reason are you entitled to, in some way, change the relationship with your father and mother. For this cause shall a man leave, in that sense, his father and his mother and cleave to his wife and they two shall be one flesh. And did not he make one? That is one flesh out of two. A new and immensely important relationship.

Yet had he the residue of the spirit. I'll tell you what that means. That means in Eden when the Lord God created one man and one woman and said this is now flesh of thy flesh and bone of thy bone. And for this cause shall a man leave his father and his mother and cleave to his wife. There wasn't anybody who had a father and a mother at that time. There had never been any people born. Just two people who were freshly created. This institution had been established then. It is a prior institution above all other institutions of man, and it ought to receive that kind of power and authority. Yet had he the residue of the spirit, which is to say that there was no limitation upon the power of the sovereign, and no diminution of His power after he had created one man and one woman. Which

is to say, he could have created one man and twenty women. Yet had he the residue of the spirit. One man, one woman, one lifetime. Period. You can have nothing to do of a carnal nature with any other female.

And why one? Next question Malachi puts. Why is it this way? Answer: "That he may seek a godly seed. Therefore take heed to your spirit and let none deal treacherously against the wife of his youth. The Lord the God of Israel says that he hateth putting away." Get the Lord very mad at you if you even start thinking, at any time, about putting Lee Ann away and vice versa. Vice versa.

Now, you were born, Tim, August the 10th, weren't you, 1963. Now I think that that was a Saturday. At least as I recall, it was a Saturday. And you missed church that next day, and I watch things like that. You were not in church. But the next Sunday you were in church. And the last Sunday, this past Sunday, last Sunday, a week ago tomorrow, as I recall it, you have never missed a meeting in this church. Every Sunday, 25 going on 26 years. You never missed a meeting. And you must bear that in mind, Lee Ann, as there is a changing of the guard in some respects. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother and cleave to his wife. Whilst we had that prior influence over Tim, he never missed a meeting. Now there is a conjugal influence you have over him from this day forward, and I hope that won't change. He has never forsaken the assembling, like it says in Hebrews chapter 10 I think. The church of the Lord Jesus Christ, hitherto, has met twice every Sunday. Tim has always been there. Never once has he missed. And I hope that your influence over him, henceforth, will be in that same direction. And I believe that it will, because since you came amongst us, maybe – oh – 6 years ago or so, however long it is, you have given evidence that your calling and election is sure, also. Now uh, 1 Timothy 3 puts it this way:

"Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without [argumentation or disputation] be won [over] by the [behavior] of the wives; While they behold your chaste [behavior] coupled with fear. Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of [fine] apparel; But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the

ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands: Even as Sara obeyed Abraham, calling him lord: whose daughters ye are, as long as ye do well, and are not afraid with any [terror]." (1 Peter 3:1-6)

If the Lord Jesus Christ tarries, hard times are coming for you two, for everybody. And it will be easy to abandon these bed rock principles. And I have now read to you out of Malachi and out of 1 Peter, and, of course, you know I could have plucked from any one of many other places in the bible with the same points. And the way the bible puts that is, you will be simply terrified.

**"Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered. Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous:"
(1 Peter 3:7-8)**

In like manner, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge. That is knowledge of these great truths. Upon which marriage is put – established. And you husbands must give honor unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel. Now that's what it says. And you must give honor unto the wife, as the two of you being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered. Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous.

Tim, you have been a very good son. You will be a good husband. If the Lord tarries and you have children, I hope they will treat you good. Now our custom is at such times, to close the meeting with prayer, and to sing a hymn and to go out.

Almighty God and our Heavenly Father, we thank thee that the grace of God has appeared bringing salvation and teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, and righteously, and godly in this present time. And looking for the blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and our saviour Jesus Christ. The only wise God. Who only hath

immortality, and dwelling in that light that no man can approach unto. And we thank thee that thou hast bidden us come in this house in this hour to participate in this marriage of Tim and Lee Ann. And coming to invoke the blessings of the Almighty, even as the patriarch Jacob said upon his dying bed, the Lord God has fed me all my life long and the angels that delivered me from every evil work feed these lambs. And that same God of our fathers, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob who has promised good things to them that love Him, for a thousand generations. Bless this union. We ask these things all in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ for his sake. Amen.

Now we sing, stand and sing, The Sands of Time Are Sinking.

The Congregation sings: "The Sands of Time Are Sinking"

The sands of time are sinking, the dawn of Heaven breaks;
The summer morn I've sighed for—the fair, sweet morn awakes:
Dark, dark hath been the midnight, but dayspring is at hand,
And glory, glory dwelleth in Immanuel's land.

O Christ, He is the fountain, the deep, sweet well of love!
The streams of earth I've tasted more deep I'll drink above:
There to an ocean fullness His mercy doth expand,
And glory, glory dwelleth in Immanuel's land.

O I am my Beloved's and my Beloved's mine!
He brings a poor vile sinner into His "house of wine."
I stand upon His merit—I know no other stand,
Not even where glory dwelleth in Immanuel's land.

The Bride eyes not her garment, but her dear Bridegroom's face;
I will not gaze at glory but on my King of grace.
Not at the crown He giveth but on His pierced hand;
The Lamb is all the glory of Immanuel's land.

Pastor Fred Phelps: And they sang an Hymn, and they went out.