

**Marriage of Isaac Daniel Hockenbarger and Rebekah Lynne Phelps-
Roper**
July 4, 2020

Dearly beloved, the church is now assembled together in the presence of God, and we are compassed about with a great cloud of witnesses, including an innumerable company of angels, that see and hear what we do, as we witness the joining together of Isaac Daniel Hockenbarger and Rebekah Lynne Phelps-Roper in marriage. Those members of the body of Christ who are assembled here today, give our assent that this marriage is appropriate, and in accordance with scripture: neither of you is bound to another spouse, and you are equally yoked together in Christ (you have each made, and currently maintain, a good profession of Christ in your words and your deeds).

Remember that marriage was established by God in the Garden of Eden, as a foundational element of the human creation, and it is emblematic of Christ and His bride, the church. Therefore, as we rejoice with you two dear friends on this happy day, our hearts are enflamed with love for Christ – that bridegroom that we long to see – and with hopeful expectation of that time that will shortly come, when we will no longer be a bride preparing, but a wife joyfully dwelling with and serving our husband in Beulah land, forever. The Lord revealed that beautiful scene to the apostle John, which brought John immediately to his knees in joyful gratitude! Consider it:

Revelation 19:7-9 “7 *Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. 8 And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. 9 And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God.”*

Who gives this woman to be married to this man?

Isaac, please take the ring that you have brought and place it upon Rebekah's finger while I recite the vows that you are hereby entering into with her as your wife:

Do you, Isaac Daniel Hockenbarger, take this woman, Rebekah Lynne Phelps-Roper, to be your wedded wife; to love, nourish, and cherish her above every other creature, and to render unto her all due benevolence; to daily edify her in Scripture, dwelling with her according to knowledge, giving honor unto her as unto the weaker vessel; to have your heart wholly trust in her; to provide for her temporal good; to hold her in no bitterness, do her no cruelty, and deal not treacherously with her – but rather to conceal her faults, failings, and infirmities; and to keep yourself only to her as being heirs together of the grace of life, until the day comes that Christ returns in power and glory or that God Almighty sees fit to separate you from her in death?

Rebekah, please take the ring that you have brought and place it upon Isaac's finger while I recite the vows that you are hereby entering into with him as your husband:

Do you, Rebekah Lynne Phelps-Roper, take this man, Isaac Daniel Hockenbarger, to be your wedded husband; to love him above every other creature, and to render unto him all due benevolence; to reverence and obey him as your head, even as Christ is the head of the church; to adorn yourself with the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, being in subjection unto your husband, in the Lord, willingly and cheerfully, doing well, and not being afraid with any amazement; to hold him in no bitterness and to do him no cruelty; and to keep yourself only to him as being heirs together of the grace of life, until the day comes that Christ returns in power and glory or that God Almighty sees fit to separate you from him in death?

You are now husband and wife – no longer twain, but one flesh. The membership of this called out assembly of believers now bears witness to this covenant that you have both made before God. We bear witness that you both have done so willingly, with understanding, and in accordance with scripture, and that it is therefore lawful and binding in the eyes of God Almighty.

Matthew 19:6 “Wherefore [you] are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.”

TO THE SAINTS OF THE MOST HIGH GOD AT TOPEKA, KANSAS, JULY 4, 2020

MARRIAGE OF ISAAC DANIEL HOCKENBARGER AND REBEKAH LYNNE PHELPS-ROPER

Beloved, we are here as a church body regarding the important spiritual matter of the marriage of Isaac Daniel Hockenbarger to Rebekah Lynne Phelps-Roper. To the church, I say that I love every single one of you and I am very thankful for each of you. You are precious to me. I thank God every day for the privilege of being here with you all and living among you and having the opportunity to speak from this pulpit.

Rebekah, you have been a faithful daughter. You have been loyal to Christ, when those around you have not. Praise to the LORD for that. Your mother and I love you very much. Isaac, we thank you for your loyal service to God and this church. You have not taken the strength of your youth and forsaken Christ. You have not gone a whoring after strange gods and strange women and departed from God Almighty. We are thankful to God for that and we love you.

Isaac, your parents, were married by Fred Sr. in this very church. Rebekah, in 1983, Fred Sr. married Shirl and me in this very church. That is coming up on 37 years ago and it has gone by in an instant. It seems like yesterday that we were married. I thank the LORD and her regularly for marrying me. If you find someone, that will put up with you, you have found a wonderful thing. Prov. 18:22 *Whoso findeth a wife (or a husband) findeth a good thing, and obtaineth favour of the LORD.* One of the elders of this church proclaimed his great love and affection he had for his wife lately and I echo that sentiment and I believe that is universal for all the married men and women of this church. In 1983 I stood where you stood today and I sat where you are sitting. Fred Sr. delivered a charge to Shirl and me that day and I will deliver charges to you both, so you understand in no uncertain terms the gravity of your decision to marry. The wedding photographer that day took several pictures of me walking down the aisle on the way out after the sermon. My head was down, my posture was slumped, and it looked like the weight of the world was on my shoulders. Fred Sr. got my attention. I seek to get yours.

Paul says at 1 Cor 7:1 *Now concerning the things whereof ye wrote unto me: It is good for a man not to touch a woman... 7 For I would that all men were even as I*

myself (that is unmarried)... 8 I say therefore to the unmarried and widows, It is good for them if they abide even as I. You two, have desired to not follow Paul's advice, which is your right, but your decision to marry comes with much responsibility. Lu 12:48 For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required.

God Almighty, the great Jehovah established and instituted marriage in Genesis 2, at the Creation. It is an important part of God's design and framework of the world. Gen 2:21 *And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; 22 And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. 23 And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. 24 Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.* God did not provide for divorce or remarriage here. The standard is for you both to cleave to one another. Strong's says "cleave" means: to cling, to stick to (like Gorilla glue – the directions say to use gloves when you use Gorilla glue, because it is so effective at sticking things together – from personal experience I will tell you that if you get some on your hands, you will lose skin taking it off), to stay with, keep close and pursue closely. Not only was marriage established at the Creation, but the marriage and everlasting covenant between Christ, (a part of the triune God) and His church, is a part of the Godhead. It is a great mystery. You must take this matter extremely seriously and do not underestimate the importance of the oath to God you took today. One man, one woman, one lifetime. One + One = One.

This is a new union. It is a new body. Isaac, you and you alone are responsible for it. Isaac, you are the captain of the plane. You have had a nice and easy take off. You have been a faithful pilot of the plane so far. You are flying a two-seater right now. It might be that the Lord will add passengers to your little plane. Psalm 127:3 *Lo, children are an heritage of the LORD: and the fruit of the womb is his reward. 4 As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man; so are children of the youth. 5 Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them: they shall not be ashamed, but they shall speak with the enemies in the gate.* You may, down the road, be flying a larger plane, if the LORD blesses you, but right now, it is a two-seater and you have the control stick. Your co-pilot is sitting next to you Isaac and that is Rebekah Lynne. I

am telling you right now that your plane (and your marriage) is guaranteed to encounter great turbulence. Storms are going to hit your little plane and knock it all around. But, they are helpful disturbances and they will make you better for them. Heb. 12:5-6 *My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: 6 For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.* The Lord has made it so that you both are blessed with a lot of people around you, to take counsel with and to help you and if you ask for their help, they will freely give it. But, if the plane falls, you both fall. If the plane crashes, you both crash. And, a lot of people crash the plane.

In the Bible, the Jews were famous for treacherously dealing with their wives (Mal. 2:14-16) and then divorcing them. Mat. 19:3 *The Pharisees also came unto him, tempting him, and saying unto him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?* Hillel allowed putting away and divorcement for every cause, for very trifling thing. If she spoiled her husband's food by over roasting (she burnt the meatloaf), or over salted his dinner; or, if he found another woman that was more beautiful than her these were all just cause for divorce. That is why the Lord Jesus Christ said that in His day it was an "*evil, wicked, sinful and adulterous generation*" (Mat. 12:39, Mat 16:4, Mark 8:38). Christ said no divorce and remarriage. Luke 16:18 *Whosoever putteth away his wife, and marrieth another, committeth adultery: and whosoever marrieth her that is put away from her husband committeth adultery.* Ex. 20:14 *Thou shalt not commit adultery.* Pr 6:32 *But whoso committeth adultery with a woman lacketh understanding: he that doeth it destroyeth his own soul.*

This is your wife Isaac, for your natural life – The Wife of Your Youth for the rest of your life. Rebekah, this is your husband for your natural life – the Husband of Your Youth for the rest of your life. This church will not sanction anyone else for you both.

Heb 13:4 *Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge.* Some people in this day and in this age hate and despise marriage. But, marriage is always honourable – all places and all times.

And, I say that a lot of people crash the plane. At the time of the U.S. Constitution (1787) it is reported that divorce was so rare an event as to be practically unknown. In the 1930's 1 in 6 marriages ended in divorce. By 1965, the number had grown to

1 in 3. Now it is 1 in 2 at best, and, many millennials don't even get married or if they do they put it off much longer in life (1 Cor. 7:9 *But if they cannot contain, let them marry: for it is better to marry than to burn.*)

To put it rather mildly, the institution of marriage is screwed up in this generation. It is not respected. It is ill-cared for and undervalued to say the least. The parties do not take seriously their commitment and vows to God. They are in danger of hell fire. This is an important matter to God and their never dying souls are at stake. In this generation we have men marrying men. We have women marrying women. We have transgendered people marrying transgendered people (so I have to have a Venn diagram to map out and chart the sexes of the people). We have people marrying dolphins. We have people with 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 marriages. We have polygamy (multiple spouses at a time). God forbid. It is an abomination to God. This is not complicated. Mark 10:6 *But from the beginning of the creation God made them male and female. 7 For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife; 8 And they twain shall be one flesh: so then they are no more twain, but one flesh. 9 What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.* If you are looking for loopholes and an easy way out, you have come to the wrong place. God the Father and Jesus Christ made no provision for this and neither do we.

Mal. 2:14 *The LORD hath been witness between thee and the wife of thy youth, against whom thou hast dealt treacherously: yet is she thy companion, and the wife of thy covenant. 15 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. 16 For the LORD, the God of Israel, saith that he hateth putting away: (this generation says they don't like the word – "hate" – we don't care... the inconvenient truth is that God hates divorce) for one covereth violence with his garment, saith the LORD of hosts: therefore take heed to your spirit, that ye deal not treacherously. 17 Ye have wearied the LORD with your words. Yet ye say, Wherein have we wearied him? When ye say, Every one that doeth evil is good in the sight of the LORD, and he delighteth in them; or, Where is the God of judgment?*

Isaac and Rebekah, this is a marathon. Rebekah, you have run a marathon before, so you have personal experience. What you do early in the race has **direct**

consequences on how you finish the race or if you finish the race. If you go out too fast, if you eat too much before the race, if you are untrained and unprepared you won't finish – you will fail – 26.2 miles is a long way. If you mistreat one another, early on, that mistreatment will turn into resentment, which turns into frustration, which turns into anger, which turns into wrath and malice. Isaac, wives have long memories. Rebekah, husbands can get bitter. Gallop did a study and found that in successful marriages 4 out of every 5 encounters the husband and wife had - must be positive or the marriage was doomed to failure. They said by watching a couple for 30 minutes they could tell with over 90% accuracy if the couple would later divorce. Treat each other well, you both know what that good looks like. You know when you are treating people well. Heb 12:1 *Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses* (we have a great cloud of witnesses here today that we can only see with our faith and our mind's eye, but they are here), *let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us.* You must treat each other patiently and kindly and with great love and respect for one another. Col 3:12 *Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; 13 Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye.* (Forgiveness and forbearance in the Lord has to be a central part of your marriage, or it is doomed) *14 And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness. 15 And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful.*

Isaac, here are the standards for the husband:

- Eph 5:23 *For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body.* If the plane crashes Isaac, you know where God is coming to for an explanation – you. You are the leader of that union and new body. You are the saviour of that body and no one else. The buck stops with you. Embrace it and love it and keep God in all your thoughts and build your house on the foundation of The Most High and you will do well (Luke 6:47-49).
- Col. 3:19 *Husbands, love your wives (1st), and be not bitter against them.* This is the abridged version – Paul has more detail for husbands in other books, but he leads here with *love your wives.* That is a primary duty for all husbands and

should be ever on your mind. Paul follows it up here with *and be not bitter against them*. Why do you think Paul admonished husbands to this effect? It is easy as pie for a husband to blame everything on his wife. It is easy for him to become tired of her requests and needs. It is easy for her idiosyncrasies to weigh upon him. It is easy for him to find fault with everything she does and to become bitter. Bitter means to be angry, hurt, or resentful because of one's bad experiences or a sense of unjust treatment. Isaac, don't become bitter against your wife. I don't think you will – but you must take the warning seriously. At some point in the race, when you get to say mile 18 or later, when you deep into the race (or before), the bitterness might come – don't let it. Your duty is at all times, and all places, and all seasons, and in all circumstances, no matter what happens, is to love your wife and to be thankful the LORD gave her to you, and not be bitter.

- Eph 5:25 *Husbands, love your wives, (2nd time) even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; 26 That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, 27 That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. 28 So ought men to love their wives (3rd time) as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife (4th time) loveth himself. 29 For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; **but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church:** 30 For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. 31 For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. 32 This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church. 33 Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself (5th time – are you sensing a pattern?)... Your job Isaac is to love the Lord, and then love your wife with all your being. If you do those two things you will do well. A husband that loves his wife as Christ loved the church will never ever divorce her. He will give himself freely in all things for her benefit. He will never let her fall but will lift her up. He will not trumpet her faults, but he will quickly cover them over. If a husband, does not love his wife as Christ loved the church then he is not worthy of Christ. You have a duty to love your wife and it is not conditional upon the actions of the wife.*

You are to nourish her. That word in Strongs means “to nurture, to bring up.” Nurture means the process of caring for and encouraging the growth or development of someone or something. It means to encourage, foster, promote, cultivate and develop. If you have a little teeny tiny seedling and you plant it, and water it, and put it in the sunshine, and stake it and fertilize it and yes, sometimes you have to prune it and cut it back (and do things that might not appear to be in her best interest – but it is) and tend to it regularly it will become a giant redwood tree. Your job is to nurture that relationship. Your job is also to cherish her. Strong says to cherish means to treat with “tender love, to foster with tender care.” You know how to be tender and kind. Gal. 6:7 *Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. 2 Cor. 9:6 But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully.* If a husband nurtures and cherishes his wife sparingly, he will reap sparingly. But he who loves and nurtures and cherishes his wife bountifully shall likewise reap bountifully. Yes, you must tell her words she needs to hear, no doubt. But the tone and demeanor you use should be one of love and affection.

- 1 Cor 7:3 *Let the husband render unto the wife due benevolence: and likewise also the wife unto the husband. 4 The wife hath not power of her own body, but the husband: and likewise also the husband hath not power of his own body, but the wife.* Love and intimacy are not for you to decide, but you defer to the other’s needs. This is not negotiable; it is the standard.
- 1 Cor 7:33 *But he that is married careth for the things that are of the world, how he may please his wife.* It is a joint responsibility Issac for you both, in your service to God, to please one another. That takes work and action and attention, but I believe you can do it.
- 1 Peter 3:7 *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. 8 Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous: 9 Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwise blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing.* Your duty is to dwell with her according to Godly and spiritual knowledge and to honor her and treat her as the weaker vessel, so your prayers are not

hindered. There are many sermons on this. And, you both must have compassion one to another and not render evil for evil.

Rebekah, standard for a wife is to:

- Be Isaac's help meet. Ge 2:18 *And the LORD God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him.* You are to love him, support him and assist him, any way you can.
- Col. 3:18 *Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord.* Rebekah, you are in a support role. It is still a very important role, but he has the command. You are to voice your opinions in a respectful manner, but if you see the plane flying into a mountain, or in a nosedive, your responsibility is to advise him as such immediately and get help if you need to, but the plane has to be righted. You must help each other.
- Eph 5:22 *Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands (2nd time), as unto the Lord. 23 For the husband is the head of the wife, (3rd time) even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. 24 Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing (4th time).* You must submit yourself to your husband, as long as there is nothing ungodly about it. You defer to his judgment, but probably most of the time, your judgments will converge.
- Eph 5:33 *...and the wife see that she reverence her husband.* Reverence means to honor and have a deep feeling of respect and love for him and to obey him.
- 1 Pet 3: 1 *Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands (5th time); that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives; 2 While they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear. (Rebekah, I believe you want to do these things) 3 Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; 4 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. (Again, Rebekah, I believe you have such a spirit) 5 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 (6th time): 6 Even as Sara obeyed Abraham, calling him lord: whose daughters ye are, as long as ye do well, and are not afraid with any amazement.* I believe you

will be in subjection to Isaac and be a wonderful help meet (fitting, appropriate) for him.

- Gen 3:16 *and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee (7th time).*
- 1 Cor 7:4 *The wife hath not power of her own body, but the husband: and likewise also the husband hath not power of his own body, but the wife.* Again, you are render due benevolence to him, you have not control over your body but he does. It's a joint duty one to another, and it should not be taken lightly.
- Titus 2:3 *The aged women likewise, that they be in behaviour as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things; 4 That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, 5 To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, (8th time) that the word of God be not blasphemed.* Your job Rebekah is to love your husband with all your heart and to have sobriety. You are to keep his policies and guide his house and be discreet and chaste.
- 1 Cor 7:44 *But she that is married careth for the things of the world, how she may please her husband.* Again, Rebekah your job is to, in your service to God, please your husband.

In conclusion, I went in the house of a member of this church when their family was unbeknownst to me praying and the husband's prayer was that he would be made a worthy, acceptable and good husband to his wife and a good father to his children. That is a good prayer and I recommend it.

Gramps told Shirl and me on our wedding day that *It's a very wonderful adventure to travel through life together, and suffer together, and weep together and rejoice together. And, above all, follow the Lord Jesus Christ together.* So, that is my charge. Nothing new. I love you both. Amen!