The power and purpose of marriage

This past weekend afforded me a rare and profound privilege. Together with my church family, I had the honour of celebrating a remarkable milestone- the 40th wedding anniversary of Honourable and Mrs. Rakuoane. The celebration was held at the serene and picturesque Altissimo Guest House in Bloemfontein, a setting that perfectly mirrored the beauty, dignity, and depth of the occasion.

It was more than a celebration; it was a statement. A statement that, in a time when many have grown skeptical of marriage, there are still living examples that it works- powerfully, consistently, and gloriously. The ruby jubilee was executed with world-class excellence, but beyond the décor, the music, and the elegance, what stood out most was the testimony of endurance, commitment, and love.

As I observed the couple, their family, and the atmosphere that surrounded them, I found myself reflecting deeply on the institution of marriage. What makes a marriage last? What makes it thrive across decades? What transforms a union into a legacy?

First, we must understand that marriage is not a human invention- it is a divine institution. Marriage is God's idea. And like any creation, it functions best when aligned with the intention of its Creator. When God is central in a marriage, it is anchored in purpose, guided by wisdom, and sustained by grace. Many challenges in marriage arise not because marriage is flawed, but because it is approached without its divine blueprint.

Secondly, one of the greatest misconceptions of our time is that marriage is outdated. Society has subtly marketed independence over interdependence, convenience over commitment, and feelings over covenant. Yet what I witnessed this past weekend shattered that illusion.

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Marriage is not outdated- it is under-practised. The principles that sustain it are timeless, but they require discipline, intentionality, and sacrifice- qualities that modern culture often resists.

Great marriages are not built on perfection; they are built on deliberate acts of love. One striking observation from the Rakuoanes' celebration was the evident mutual honour between the couple. Great marriages are characterised by a powerful principle: the desire to outdo one another in doing good. It is not about competition, but about contribution. Each partner wakes up asking, "How can I make your life better today?" That mindset transforms marriage from a contract into a living, breathing partnership.

We must also acknowledge that marriage is sacred. It is not casual, and it is not accidental. It requires both partners to be intentional in nurturing it. The joy, the warmth, and even the "spark" in marriage are not automatic- they are cultivated. Both partners carry the responsibility of keeping the relationship vibrant, respectful, and engaging. Neglect is the silent enemy of many marriages, but intentionality is its cure.

Furthermore, marriage is the foundation of society. Strong marriages build strong families, and strong families build strong communities. From communities emerge nations, and from nations emerge the future of humanity. When marriages weaken, the ripple effect is felt across generations. Conversely, when marriages are strong, they produce emotionally secure children, stable homes, and responsible citizens. Marriage is not just personal- it is profoundly societal.

However, we must not romanticise marriage without acknowledging its demands. Marriage is work. It is a daily investment. It is not sustained by feelings alone, but by commitment. You must show up every day. You must put in your shift. There are days of joy, and there are days of strain- but consistency is what separates enduring marriages from failing ones. The beauty of marriage is not in its ease, but in its resilience.

Perhaps one of the most powerful lessons is this: in marriage, it is more important to be relational than to be right. Many relationships collapse under the weight of pride and the need to win arguments. Yet true strength in marriage is found in humility. It is found in the ability to forgive daily and to apologize- even when you feel justified. Peace is more valuable than pride. Connection is more powerful than correction.

As I left the celebration, one truth remained firmly planted in my heart- marriage still works. Not by accident, but by design. Not by chance, but by choice. It works when it is honoured, nurtured, and aligned with higher principles.

To Honourable and Mrs. Rakuoane, I extend my heartfelt congratulations. Thank you for being a living testimony of what is possible. You have not only built a marriage- you have built a legacy.

And to you, my leader, I say this: may your love life be filled with joy, purpose, and longevity. Whether you are married, preparing for marriage, or reflecting on it, remember that greatness in marriage is not reserved for a few- it is available to all who are willing to commit to its principles.

Rise and lead - first in your home, then in your world.

And never forget: Jesus Christ remains the ultimate leader. Follow Him, and many will follow you.

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