

Who Gives This Woman?

✖ “Who gives this woman to

be wed to this man?” Even though I was expecting this question, hearing it asked by the minister (who is my other son-in-law, Evan) caused a bit of pause. Keep in mind that other than writing a *bunch* of checks, this was my only real part in the ceremony. I was being asked to *give* my daughter to the man standing beside Evan. Not to go on a date. Not for a weeklong vacation. But *forever!*

This beautiful bride-to-be,
standing beside me and holding my hand was my *daughter*.

When she
was born I cut the umbilical cord. My wife and I stood beside
her hospital bed
a

1 year of age as she fought an unexplainable blood infection. I taught her to
ride a bike. To swim. To drive a car (hence much of my gray hair). Much of the
money I have made in my life somehow poured *through* her hands.

Megan (or “Boo” as she will forever be to me) is our daughter.
Daddy’s
girl. My blood runs through her veins. I would, without
hesitation, give my life
for hers. I love her. Period. With all my heart. And I was
being asked to
give her away.

Jared (her fiancé) is an amazing man. He loves
God, not just as talk, he walks it. He can pray. I know; I
have prayed with him.
Worship is a lifestyle to him. He has incredible talent as a
musician and a
voice that surprised me the first time I heard it. But, like

my friend Charles

Billingsley, he does more than sing. He worships. And he leads others to also worship.

God's divine providence brought him into Megan's life. He loves

her. I mean *really* adores her. He has adopted baby Elijah and cherishes

the idea of being his daddy. Their story is a miracle. Even with all of this, I

still took pause in answering the question. And then, this is how I

answered, "Her Heavenly Father, her mother and I." And I did it with a willing, joyous, proud heart.

However, if Jared had not been the man he is, if he hadn't loved her with his whole heart, if he was abusive or rude, if he treated

her with disdain and disregard, I promise you, the answer would have been very

different. In fact, we would not have even been to this point. Because with all

that is within me I would have tried to stop the relationship.

Megan is my

daughter and I would *never give* her to a man who was not worthy.

But God shows us a different kind of love. John 3:16 says, "For

God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten son."

Gave Him. Simply

because He loves the world. Love so powerful, so intense, so pure that He gave

His *only* Son. And here is what totally blows me away about

that kind of
love. God gave His Son to a world that hated Him. He gave His
Son to a world
that would not even acknowledge that He was His Son. He gave
to a world that
totally and completely rejected Him. He gave His Son to a
world that He knew
would mock Him, brutally beat Him (to the point that He no
longer even looked
like a human being), strip Him totally naked, make Him carry
His own instrument
of death, spit on Him, whip Him, and ultimately kill Him in
the most degrading
and inhumane way possible.

God, the Father, knew this. And yet He
gave. At exactly the right time, when humanity was helpless, and being
good enough to get to heaven was hopeless, God gave. Maybe if it was for
good people, friends, people who loved Him, it could possibly be understood. But
for sinners? Amazing. Amazing grace and mercy.

This week, as you journey
in this walk we call Christianity, think about this kind of
love. Love that
gave. A gift you do not have to earn, and no payment is
necessary on our
part because the debt was paid in full by the very Son of God.
A God who
gave freely and unconditionally. Take some time to thank your
Father.
Thank Him that He loved. Thank Him that He cared. Thank Him
that He
gave.

PRAYER POWER FOR THE WEEK OF 6/14/2010

This week as we approach Father's Day, take time to reflect and thank your Heavenly Father for His unconditional, everlasting, undeserved love. Thank Him that He loved you so much He gave His perfect Son for you. Ask the Lord to help you honor your natural and spiritual fathers by allowing Him to express His love through you. Thank Him that even if you don't have a hands-on dad, your Heavenly Father is more than enough. Pray for those who have suffered losses through the massive oil spill, flooding, high winds and tornadoes. Remember our military and continue to pray for the protection and peace of Jerusalem. John 3:16; Psalm 68:5