

*Sermon for the Marriage of Crystal Hackler and Benjamin Walther*

*Evangelical Lutheran Church of Saint James the Apostle / Chanceford Twp., York Co., Penna.  
20.viii.05, 11:00, Ecclesiastes 3:1-8 ;I Corinthians 12:31-13:13*

**J. J. !**

Grace to you and peace from Him Who is and Who was and Who is to come! ✠ Amen.

Benjamin and Crystal, we have all come together at this appointed time, because, as the writer of Ecclesiastes says, it is a time to marry. It is *your* time to marry. But soon, in a very few minutes, this time will have passed as you go from this church to spend time with family and friends and from that luncheon in your honor back into the world of your everyday lives. Time passes, and our lives pass along with it.

But is it not just the passage of time, what we all pray will be many years of faithful marriage filled with happiness or, if with sorrow also, then with the mutual love and understanding you have found in each other. As those years pass, we ask God for the grace to make sure that something else is happening. Saint Paul the Apostle describes it in His Letter to the Christians of Corinth, Greece, so long ago. It is growth into love that I mean.

Saint Paul describes, as we have heard, what genuine, self-giving love is, and also what it is not. But he is also mapping out a path for growth *into* that love. *No one* has achieved what Saint Paul describes, except One, the One Whose love for and for God *was* perfect, complete and total, love so great He took it with Him to the Cross. I pray that you will come to know that One in whom your own love may grow, and I invite you to do that here, in this congregation. As you have accepted the hospitality of this House of God, may you also feel welcome here among the people of God all the days of your life together. In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. ✠ Amen.

***S. D. G.!***