

REFLECTIONS

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Then he took the cup, gave thanks and offered it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you."

Matthew 26:27

Renewing Our Vows

The setting was beautiful and warm for the celebration. The celebrating couple remembered their wedding every year, but this year they had committed to renew their vows. The celebration in their home included a planned and scripted ceremony. Some close friends and relatives were asked to participate and were given roles to play. The music had been carefully selected and the scripture readings prayerfully chosen. It was touching when the couple expressed anew before God that they would give their lives to each other for richer, or poorer, in sickness and in health till death do they part.

The vows they made did not replace those originally given. Rather, they were a remembrance of them. Most importantly, the couple recommitted themselves to each other in a manner that said "I give my life to you all over again."

Now let's go back more than 2000 years to the occasion of a Hebrew betrothal ceremony. There a man came of age to marry. His father and the father of the young girl chosen to be his wife hosted a dinner. At the dinner, the bridegroom's father poured a cup of wine. In obedience, the bridegroom took the cup and offered it then to the young girl chosen to be his bride. As he offered her the cup he said, "By offering this cup, I vow that I am willing to give my life for you." The young bridegroom's heart filled with joy when she took the cup from him, for it signified that she was willing to give *her* life for him.¹

Then the bridegroom joyfully declared, "In my father's house are many rooms. I go to prepare a place for you and when I am finished, I will come back and take you to be my wife."

A long time ago Jesus offered the cup to us as a way of saying, "By offering this cup, I have given my life for you." By taking the cup, we signify that we were willing to give our lives to him. Each time we receive the cup we renew our vows to give our lives to Him all over again. Jesus' heart fills with joy. He has gone to prepare a place for us; and when He has finished, He will return to take us to be with Him in his eternal home.

"You are the light of the world."

Richard +

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¹ *Echoes of His Presence: stories of the Messiah from the people of his day*/ Ray Vander Laan with Judith Markham, copyright © 1996 by Ray Vander Laan, First Zondervan edition 1998, Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49530.

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