

THE MARRIAGE PRAYER

BY LOUIS H EVANS

O God of Love, Thou hast established marriage for the welfare and happiness of mankind. Thine was the plan and only with Thee can we work it out with joy. Thou has said, "It is not good for man to be alone. I will make a help meet for him." Now our joys are doubled since the happiness of one is the happiness of the other. Our burdens now are halved when we share them; we divide the load.

Bless this husband. Bless him as provider of nourishment and raiment and sustain him in all the exactions and pressures of his battle for bread. May his strength be her protection, his character be her boast and her pride, and may he so live that she will find him the haven for which the heart of woman truly longs. Bless this loving wife. Give her tenderness that will make her great, a deep sense of understanding and a great faith in Thee. Give her that inner beauty of soul that never fades, that eternal youth that is found in holding fast the things that never age.

Teach them that marriage is not living merely for each other; it is two uniting and joining hands to serve Thee. Give them a great spiritual purpose in life. May they seek the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and the other things shall be added unto them.

May they not expect that perfection of each other that belongs alone to Thee. May they minimize each other's weaknesses, be swift to praise and magnify each other's strengths, and see each other through a lover's kind and patient eyes.

Now make such assignments to them in Thy will as will develop their characters as they walk together. Give them enough tears to keep them tender, enough hurts to keep them humane, enough failure to keep their hands clenched tightly in Thine, and enough success to encourage them in their walk with Thee. May they never take each other's love for granted, but always experience that breathless wonder that exclaims, "Out of all this world you have chosen me."

When life is done, may they be found then as now, hand in hand, still thanking God for each other. May they serve Thee happily, faithfully, together, until as last one shall lay the other into the arms of God. This we ask through Jesus Christ, great lover of our souls.

Amen .