

Who Believes in Miracles?

Hello to all of you on this beautiful afternoon. I am Allan Green, Dan's very pleased and proud father. Dan and Liza invited me to deliver some remarks of a "religious" nature as part of this ceremony, so here it is: Lord God Almighty! Isn't Liza a beautiful bride! OK, that's it for religion, and I hope none of you are offended or disappointed.

I do have something serious I want to say, however, because this is a very special day for two people we all love. It's a day of *miracles*. The word "miracle" in our culture is often used frivolously to mean any neat thing that happens, but the origins of the word "miracle" mean something much more, something that makes us pay attention, to wonder, to be amazed. In the Bible, miracles were the sure sign of God intervening in human lives and circumstances. Whichever definition of the word you prefer, what you are seeing here today is a miracle.

Why do I say this. First of all, we are looking at a really significant milestone in a love story – Dan and Liza's love story – to be specific. All of you, all of us who have been in love or are in love know that love is a miracle in itself. We marvel at it. We hopefully never get over the wonder of it growing day by day. We find God through it. And why should we not? God created love and knit it into the fabric of the universe we live in. We can't escape it. There is a verse in the Bible, from Solomon's Song, where the bride says of the bridegroom, "He brought me to the celebration, and His banner over me is Love". If you look with God's eyes, you can see Liza sitting here in *this* celebration, and over her head is a iridescent banner that reads, Daniel Stephen Green loves me.

There have already been a lot of miracles in Dan and Liza's story. I know Dan never expected to meet his future wife on an Indian reservation. Chris and I remember him coming home from Cherokee and telling us that he was dating an Indian dancer. We thought, "Great! Maybe we'll have a Native American branch of the family". Well, we got that straightened out pretty quickly, and by the time we met Liza, we knew that Dan thought she was someone pretty special. And when they moved up to that big, bad city that chews up so many youthful dreams - well, I was apprehensive. But look what they have accomplished. They knew what they could do together better than any of us. How is it that we find that one person we want to love forever? It's a miracle, isn't it?

But that's not all! What we are taking part in today is two people, people with high ideals and good judgment, and a deep commitment to honesty, standing here before us and making promises that they intend to keep for the rest of their lives. Serious promises, to love each other so obviously that we spectators say, "She adores him, and He cherishes her." Promises to work together through times of want and plenty (they already have some of that under their belt). Promises to comfort and take care of each other through sickness and discouragement and failure. Promises to meet all the unknowns that fill a lifetime together, with love. How is it that Dan and Liza are willing to make these serious promises? They know that it's not possible to make these promises without God's grace. It's a miracle, plain and simple.

Lastly, I know that for months Liza's attention has been on today. Dan has had a little longer-range view which includes the next week, but they probably haven't thought too much about the time years in the future, a future they can only guess at after a life of loving, of watching their combined efforts bear fruit, seeing the good that has come about because of the promises they are making today, a time when Dan's beard is grey and Liza, as impossible as it might seem to Dan right now, is even more beautiful in his eyes than she is today because he will see her through the lens of years and years of loving: a time when they will look at each other and say, "We have lived a miracle". And it will be. Only God knows what form that miracle will take, only Dan and Liza will know its full richness, but we, we here today, are getting to see how it starts. Everybody here can say without any doubt, "I saw a miracle today." I saw God do an amazing thing today!" Is there any of us who is not grateful for the privilege? Could there be any better proof of God's blessing? I invite you to stay tuned for

the rest of the story.
We love you, Dan and Liza.