

## ***It's Not Over*** by Chris Garner

Marriage is a covenant relationship, not a contract. There is a huge difference between the two; a contract is for a specific period of time and is conditional; a covenant is for life and unconditional. Many people today view their marriages as a contract; the marriage is over for any number of reasons; many of which could be worked through to save the marriage. People may not take marriage seriously, but God does and it is unsettling to see people declaring their marriage over.

Praise God that He does not view His relationship with people the same way people view their relationships with each other. God does not reject people, even though they have rejected Him, dishonored Him and chased after other “gods” in their pursuit of happiness and fulfillment. God is patient and as we see in the story of the “Prodigal Son,” He waits for their return and then throws a party for them when they come home (Luke 15:11-24).

God does not declare the relationship over, even when people turn their backs on Him or walk away. The Apostle Peter denied Jesus Christ and ran away when he should have taken a stand for God, yet Jesus called Peter to Himself and restored the relationship after His resurrection (see Luke 22:54-62 and John 21:11-19).

The marriage relationship is compared to the relationship Jesus Christ has with the Church—the people of God (Ephesians 5:32). He will never leave or forsake his people (Hebrews 13:5). The marriage relationship is not over, even though one or both spouses do not feel love for the other. Even when one walks out and turns his or her back on a spouse, the marriage does not have to be over. God can restore any relationship, no matter how bad it may be or seem, if only the couple will surrender their lives and marriage to Him. We have seen God’s restoration in our own marriage and many other marriages and we rejoice in the fact that He never gives up or declares it over.

It takes faith; like Mary and Martha when they thought it was over for their dead brother. Jesus told them to watch and believe and then He raised their brother Lazarus from the dead (John 11). God has also raised marriages from the dead, even where there was no love or one spouse had walked away. He restores marriages through adultery, addictions, depression, or any number of problems.

Jesus said, "Did I not tell you that if you believed, you would see the glory of God?" (John 11:40). We too must believe, obey and surrender our lives and our marriage to the Lord. It is never over when we allow Him to have control. We must keep our eyes set on Jesus and allow Him to work. He will bring about the miracle in the broken marriage and we will see His glory.