

## MARRIAGE AT RISK

The dreams they dreamed of ecstasies,  
Of wedded promenade,  
Of happiness, of holding hands,  
Of pride in wearing wedding bands,  
Not always sprang from loyalties,  
From friendship firmly laid.

The thrills of laughter filled with mirth,  
Of kisses, hugs and bed,  
Of drinking bliss in privacy,  
Of wonder during pregnancy  
And joyful tears surrounding birth,  
All melt when love is dead.

Preoccupations with a home,  
Its gilding and decor,  
Or efforts playing model roles,  
While missing union of their souls,  
Leave couples lost to roam  
A desert, dry and poor.

How shall they check the raw decline  
Before their marriage dies?  
Where, in the sacramental rift,  
Are steps to capture back the gift  
Made sacred by the Lord Divine  
Who blesses wedded ties?

“Lay down your life,” the Savior said.  
“There is no greater love!”  
When whims and will and wishes end  
By crucifixion for a friend,  
Life rises from what’s dead,  
And Heaven sends the Dove.

Survival, in a world that scorns  
The faithful marriage bond,  
Demands both prayer and sacrifice.  
But all who yield to friendship’s price  
Can grow a love that God adorns  
Today and far beyond.

— *David L. Hatton, 11/18/1993*