

“A Man Shall Father, Mother Leave”

I originally wrote this hymn for my niece’s wedding. It is based on Genesis 2:24, of which stanza 1 is a paraphrase. The key to the hymn is its use of the word “love” three different times: love before sin (st. 1), love after sin (st. 2), and new love in Christ (st. 3). And the heart of the hymn is “Cana’s Christ comes,” a rich reference to the Incarnation, the Wedding at Cana (John 2:1-11), and the desire of Christ to be invited to each wedding and into every marriage.

Stanza 3: Love, joy, and peace are the first three fruits of the Spirit and imply the other six (Gal. 5:22-23). Together they make up the “new life.”

When this hymn is sung at a wedding, the following stanza may be added.

With groom and bride then let us pray
For Christ to come and bless this day:
O come, Lord Jesus, be our guest,
And let these gifts to us be blest!