Pride And Prejudice- Marriage Essay, Research Paper

Jane Austen’s novel, Pride and Prejudice presents five married couples. No two are alike. From the pure love which was experienced through Elizabeth and Darcy. To the love and attraction shared by Jane and Bingley. The convenience of marriage was portrayed through Charlotte and Mr Collins while Lydia and Wickham’s marriage was based on their desire, attractions and financial status. Mr and Mrs Bennet’s marriage was for their necessity. Austen reveals many messages through her characters on her major theme, being marriage.

Elizabeth and Darcy share common interests that help reflect their love and marriage. During Elizabeth’s stay in Pemberly while Jane is ill, Austen reveals to the readers, that Elizabeth and Darcy share a common interest. For example, Miss Bingley states that ‘Miss Eliza Bennet… is a great reader…’ p34. While in a conversation between Darcy and Miss Bingley, it is stated, ‘What a delightful library you have at Pemberly,…’ p34. This illustrates to the readers that the two share the same interest of reading. Having the interest reading portrayed to the readers as an interest, reveals that Elizabeth and Darcy may be suitable match for one another. It clearly shows how common interests can increase the chance of marriage as it makes the bond for one another stronger. Thereby demonstrating that the love between Elizabeth and Darcy reflects on their interest shared by each other.

The marriage of Elizabeth and Darcy was also pure love for one another. Though this is not established until the end of the novel. Darcy’s love for Elizabeth is expressed from his heart. Austen illustrates this when he states to Elizabeth, ‘You must allow me to tell you… I admire and love you,’ p157. Austen portrays Darcy’s character as being very proud, so they way he expresses his love for Elizabeth seems pure and genuine. A proud man would find hard to express such feelings in that manner. Thus it proves his love for Elizabeth is clear. Elizabeth also shows her love towards Darcy. Mr Bennet calls Elizabeth into the library after his proposal. In a conversation between the two Elizabeth states, ‘…I do like him,… I love him.’ P303. She is aware that her feelings towards Darcy haven’t always been this positive, but she believes that he is able to make her happy. Elizabeth believes happiness is the first sign to a good marriage. Therefore, this reflects Elizabeth and Darcy marry for love.

The marriage of Jane and Bingley was one for physical attractions and love. This is portrayed to the readers during the early stages of the novel. For example, Bingley states at the ball, ‘she is the most beautiful creature I ever beheld!’ p13. This clearly illustrates his attraction towards Jane. Bingley’s love for Jane is strengthened by her beauty. The love between them is shared equally. Jane’s idea of marriage is to find someone who loves her and respects her as much as she does him. Jane married Bingley for love. Their marriage was a perfect match and their feelings for one another were undeniably from the heart. Thus showing Jane and Bingley married for love and attractions.

Charlotte and Mr Collins’ marriage was one for convenience. Mr Collins was in the position of needing to be married whilst Charlotte was never romantic and wanted to be happy. For instance, in a conversation between Charlotte and Elizabeth, she explains, ‘I ask only a comfortable home; and considering Mr Collins’ character, connections, … I am convinced … happiness with him is as fair…’ p105. Charlotte’s idea of marriage is completely different of that of Elizabeth. Charlotte doesn’t’ need love to make her happy, just that of social security. Charlotte wishes for a stable life. As Mr Collins was a man of connections, a tolerable situation in life, and offering her a comfortable home, Charlotte thought her reasons for marriage were as reasonable as Elizabeth’s. Hence, the reason for Charlotte and Mr Collins’ marriage was convenience.

The marriage of Lydia and Wickham was mainly that of desire, attraction and financial reasons. Lydia married Wickham as she believed he was one with large fortune and high social status. For example, ‘…their elopement had been brought on by the strength of her love, rather than his,…’ p256. Lydia believed that a man of this fine countenance could not go unnoticed and was immediately drawn in by him charm. Lydia found Wickham to be good looking and was sure that these reasons were good enough for marriage. Wickham, however, married Lydia for her money and position in society. He saw Lydia to be good looking be never married her for love. For instance, ‘Wickham’s affection of Lydia… not equal to Lydia’s for him.’ P256. Wickham was not a young man to resist an opportunity of having a companion. So when Lydia reveals her feeling towards him, he jumps at the chance to obtain a wife. Therefore, Lydia and Wickham reasons for marry were desire, attraction and financial problems.

The marriage of Mr and Mrs Bennet was not love, like Jane and Bingley. Nor was if for social advancement like Charlotte and Mr Collins. Mr Bennet was captivated by youth and beauty and married a women without intelligence. Affection had worn off between the two. This is evident when it states, ‘…he had very early in their marriage put an end to all real affection for her. Respect, esteem and confidence had vanished forever.’ P194. Mr and Mrs Bennet married purely for necessity. Austen reveals in the time the novel was written a man of large fortune should be in want of a wife. Though Mr Bennet was not a man of large fortune, he did however, need a wife so that in the event of his death, he had a heir to pass of family fortune to. Mrs Bennet married Mr Bennet simply because women wish to get married. It seemed a perfect match, Mr Bennet had to marry someone to pass on family heritage whilst Mr Bennet married for her own needs. Those being, for connections and fortune of another man. This reflects how marriage between Mr and Mrs Bennet is conveyed to the readers as entirely different reasons. Thus showing how Mr and Mrs Bennet married for necessity.

Five married couples are married together for different reasons Austen’s major theme discussed during the text is marriage. Many messages are put forward to readers as to what an ideal reason for marriage is like. For instance, Elizabeth and Darcy marry for love and interests. Jane and Bingley marry for love and attractions. Charlotte and Mr Collins marry for convenience. Lydia and Wickham marry for their desire, attractions and financial reasons, while Mr and Mrs Bennet marry for necessity . This is established in Jane Austen’s novel, Pride and Prejudice.

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