

Your Marriage, Love, And The Bible

A quick search on the internet will bring you to the following definition of marriage. "A marriage is an interpersonal relationship with governmental, social or religious recognition, usually intimate and sexual, and often created as a contract" Frankly this definition just does not do it for me. I did not marry my wife for social recognition. I did not slip a ring on her finger for governmental recognition. While I did propose to and marry her for an intimate and sexual relation I in no way viewed it as a "contract"

In comparison when we open the Bible we find marriage worded much simpler. If we read Genesis 2:24 we find: "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh". Neither social nor governmental recognition yet a deep and meaningful portrayal of that which is truly meant for man and woman. We find recognition that the spouses shall be of themselves and that the preceding generations, while present, will not be the center of the relationship. We find that the man and the woman will be of one accord in many things in life as they are now biblically of one flesh. And yes we find a very apt description that there is an intimacy and a sexual nature to the bonding.

This bonding came about when God looked at Adam after he was created and realized that oneness was not the correct way for mankind. Go back a few pages (Genesis 2:18) and the Lord God said "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make him a helper suitable for him". In this moment of creation we see the first wedding. We can therefore conclude that marriage is indeed God's idea. That marriage was designed and instituted by the Creator and we know that that at the heart of God's design for marriage is companionship and intimacy.

We should therefore conclude that a main ingredient in this design is that the spouses need to love one another. And this is where the troubles begin. Difficulties in the twenty-first century (as well as prior years) rise in that the human population does not understand what love is. Love has become a very shallow and one-sided feeling or emotion. This lop-sided effort of love brings us a very immature concept of love. We find descriptions where love is meant as what others can do for "me". That "she loves me" has been taken to mean that a wife will not complain when her husband spends Saturday at a sporting event rather than help her with the raising of the children. It has become love when a wife thinks "I want him to bring me roses for I love the smell of them so much." Many other situations create a meaning of love in which greed and self-thought are the center of the word. A belief exists that love is mysterious and invades you as would a case of mumps. That love is fleeting and will go on its own accord at any time. And beliefs and feelings as these are truly what love is *NOT*.

Yet again to the Bible. There are over five hundred (500) verses in the Bible relating to love. And in all of them, without exception, define the word as a "purposeful commitment to sacrificial action for another". There we have it. Love is action, and in that action it does in fact speak louder than words. Biblical love is far removed from the common selfish view of love by the "world" While love in society is based on what you can get, on who will be nice to me and meet my needs, Biblical love is not. This is reflected in Jn 13:34. "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another: as I have loved you, that ye also love one another". In every instance the love displayed by Jesus Christ was a giving love. A love based in action to and for others. A sacrificial love.

And yet love is enjoyable. Love is that tingling feeling you have for another. For when you love someone you have concern for them. You are not concerned with what they can and will do for you, you have concern for their feelings. Concerns for their health, their future and desires. Love is being in constant thought about your mate and how you can help them in their daily struggles. In your behalf love does mean enjoyment with and of your spouse. Common goals and interests bond spouses in a way no others can be to them. And if we lose this bond on interest and goals we become nothing but room mates as you had at college in the dorms

The Bible has many places where physical intimacy is for the spouses. Song of Solomon 1:2 says "Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth-for your love is more delightful than wine". Proverbs 5:19 is very descriptive with "A loving doe, a graceful deer--may her breasts satisfy you always, may you ever be captivated by her love". The Lord has placed sexual attraction in the heart of a relationship yet it is not the most important part of the marriage. When we are in a loving (giving) marriage we can enjoy touching and caressing with the knowledge that your spouse cares and this brings security as well as satisfaction to these acts.

Ephesians 5:25---"Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it". Again---sacrificial. When our primary concern is the others happiness and well being then we ourselves will reap contentment and joy from the union. To build your marriage, your relationship, have more concern for the other. If love is indeed action, then treat the other as you wish to be treated. Leave selfish at the edge of your marriage. When you want more love, then pray for more love until you are compelled to love. Do you want to build your love life? Then discover the needs of your spouse and strive to fill them. And in these actions you will find your needs filled to a depth more than you could have dreamed of.

And you will find as in Proverbs 15:17---"A bowl of vegetables with someone you love is better than a steak with someone you hate"

God be with you and your spouse on your journey.

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