

Sermon Notes



Love for a Lifetime?

6-27-2010



# Reflections

When we consider the power of the love that we “felt” for the one we married as we began our lives together, why is it that we can convince ourselves we no longer “feel” that way about each other? What is it that convinces us sometime later that we don’t love them anymore? What voices are speaking such silliness into our thinking? Why has divorce become so prevalent? Why are so many “living” together without marriage? Will marriage as we know it survive this period in our history? Can love survive the ups and downs of life and last for a lifetime?

Over the years we have shared the hurts and trials of couples when they have found a need for help. Many were trying to really solve the conflicts that have besieged them and with a little help they move on and their marriages strengthen. On the other hand there have been those who have sought help but really had already decided the outcome and were merely going through the motions. We sadly watched their marriages dissolve. The outcomes are dependent on the desires of those who are seeking help. If they truly want to repair the damage and preserve their marriage, and are willing to follow the Bible’s plans for their lives, they will succeed. Too often, however, many cast away their marriages for the deceptions of a sin-cursed world’s promise of renewed happiness in a “better” relationship.

The great tragedy of our time is the rejection of God’s plan for life as one that can be fulfilled in marriage. Many have become convinced that they just can’t promise to love for a lifetime and in their promiscuity they find that they have lost their ability to love at all. They are satisfied only until they “see” someone more desirable. They constantly seek that which promises something that they are led to believe they don’t have now. Solomon was such a man during his lifetime and as he reflects on what he has learned through the failures in his life he shares the best strategy for love and happiness. From this insight he says...

*Drink water from your own cistern, and running water from your own well. <sup>16</sup> Should your fountains be dispersed abroad, streams of water in the streets? <sup>17</sup> Let them be only your own, And not for strangers with you. <sup>18</sup> Let your fountain be blessed, And rejoice with the wife of your youth. <sup>19</sup> As a loving deer and a graceful doe, Let her breasts satisfy you at all times; and always be enraptured with her love. <sup>20</sup> For why should you, my son, be enraptured by an immoral woman, and be*

*embraced in the arms of a seductress? <sup>21</sup> For the ways of man are before the eyes of the LORD, And He ponders all his paths. <sup>22</sup> His own iniquities entrap the wicked man, And he is caught in the cords of his sin. (Proverbs 5:15-22 NKJ)* His greatest insight in these matters is that God is always aware of where our energy is being spent. Are we true to our vows or are we living in sin? If our lusts become our “love” we are quite deceived and our sin will bear the fruit of death to our relationships and we will become entrapped in our iniquity to the futility of always seeking a better relationship.

Will marriage survive the onslaught of the current waves of same-sex marriage attacks, the politically correct philosophies of relationships, or the political climate now becoming so prevalent in our society? Only God knows, but the outlook is very problematic. The Church has not only been far too silent, but has now embraced some of the modern ideas and has paid the price with higher divorce rates, higher rates of sexual involvement without marriage, and in toxic relationships even in many intact marriages. The price has been high among our young folk as well. Too many are convinced that being “sexually active” is acceptable for teens and young adults, and that abortion is available for “problem pregnancies” and after all, you are entitled to enjoy life. It is entirely possible that the enemy may steal the sanctity of marriage unless the Church becomes more effective in preparing our children to be married according to God’s plan for marriage.

It is telling that God uses our relationship to our spouses as a great metaphor for Jesus’ relationship with His Church. He, through the Apostle Paul explains to us, in Ephesians ch. 5, that the mystery of married life is the best picture of how Jesus relates to the Church. It is in the context of marriage that the command of God to be fruitful and fill the earth is understood. It is this lifelong commitment of love that also commits the parent’s love for the children to raise them in the fear of God. (Eph. 6:1-4) So now the ultimate question arises. Can love last a lifetime? God’s love is eternal and when He is placed at the center of our love and relationships, He promises that His love is eternal and ours must be until death separates us. In the context of God’s plan for marriage, the answer is a resounding yes. You see, love is not only experienced in the fleshly feelings we have for one another, it is founded on commitment to each other. God declares He will tolerate no other gods before Him, and so in the same way we must tolerate no other “loves”. The one we have can indeed last a lifetime. **Pastor Doug**