

Glad Tidings

“And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers...” (Acts 13:32)

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“Will you love...?”

(Jerry Fite)

In the wedding ceremony the bride and groom will usually be asked the question, “*will you love*” him or her. This is correctly asked because love is a matter of the “will.” Yes, the man and the woman are excited and emotions are high. But love is more than a response to the pleasures at hand; it is a determination to seek the other's well-being regardless of circumstances. The bride and groom are not only being asked, “Do” you take this man or woman to be your husband or wife; but they are vowing before God that they “Will” love their chosen mate.

What does this entail? Paul gives us some details of true love that will help any relationship, including marriage. “*Love suffereth long, and is kind; love envieth not; love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth behave itself unseemly, seeketh not its own, is not provoked, taketh not account of evil; rejoiceth not in unrighteousness, but rejoiceth with the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Love never faileth*” (1 Corinthians 13:4-8). Knowing the problems in Corinth, one can easily see the needed characteristics of love with those “puffed” up about their

miraculous spiritual gifts, and “envying” one another as teachers, but these sixteen statements or facets of love unite to form a beautiful gem for marriage.

We often hear, “you hurt the one you love,” or in reality you are lashing out and treating rudely the one closest to you. True love does not act this way. Love does not behave in an “unseemly” or improper way. It is “kind,” not wishing to inflict any pain upon the other. You may have had a bad day, or you are not happy with yourself, but love rises above “issues” and the “will” kicks in and blocks unseemly and unkind reactions.

On the receiving end, when a husband or wife asks for forgiveness, the offended one does not keep a record of grievances forgiven, but not forgotten. True love takes “not account of evil.” Forgetting is not a matter of blocking from our memory the fact that something happened, but it is refusing to remember the offense against the penitent offender. It does not bring it up when backing up the argument that “You are ALWAYS doing” that. “Remember when you did this?” Yet, the “this” was something forgiven in the past. Love moves

on without holding grudges. Marriages that last need these fresh and new beginnings.

People are imperfect and soon these imperfections can manifest themselves in day to day living. One does not go around and trash their imperfect husband or wife to others. Love “beareth” all things. There is a protective “cover” in true love. This does not mean you overlook sin or fail to rebuke sin which can issue into a lost soul. But one who truly loves does this work behind the scenes, and wills to “beareth” all things in public.

Love does not give up. It is “longsuffering” and continues to “endure”. It does not give way, for it never “faileth”. How many despondent husbands or wives have come to the point that they just do not love their mates anymore? They don’t feel the same anymore and are ready to give up on the marriage. One must first remind themselves that the vow before God was “will you love...” not “do you love” after the feeling is gone. Second, love is what you will to do regardless of unpleasant circumstances or annoying habits. Love has a long fuse and endures. It does not give up. Such a promise to love avoids divorce court.