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## Has the Marriage Institution Lost Its Luster?

**Ephesians 5:25:** (NASB) *Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave himself up for her.*

Love, marriage, tradition and happiness. As time goes on, these four timeless elements of our world seem to be drifting ever further apart from each other. It is almost as if we are at a point where we are not really sure what to believe in or how to believe in it. Well, stay with us because on this program we are going to look at the tradition - the godly institution of marriage as a proven vehicle that carries with it love and happiness...love and happiness! Isn't that what we all want?

FIRST! A marriage enhancing principle...

# Marriage Box

Most people get married believing a myth that marriage is a beautiful box full of all the things they have longed for: companionship, intimacy, friendship, etc. The truth is that marriage at the start is an empty box. You must put something in before you can take anything out. There is no love in marriage. Love is in people. And people put love in marriage. There is no romance in marriage. You have to infuse it into your marriage. A couple must learn the art and form the habit of giving, loving, serving, praising keeping the box full. If you take out more than you put in, the box will be empty.

Today's conversation will walk through 1 Corinthians 13, the "agape love" chapter and view it primarily in the context of marriage and commitment.

**Agape love (benevolent or selfless love) makes us honorable:** 1 Corinthians 13:1: (NASB) *If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but do not have love, I have become a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal.*

**SUCCESSFUL SPOUSES SPEAK HONORABLY AND TRUTHFULLY TO AND ABOUT EACH OTHER!**

**Agape love gives meaning to our giving:** 1 Corinthians 13:2-3

**SUCCESSFUL SPOUSES GIVE TO ONE ANOTHER OUT OF THEIR TRUEST MOTIVATION!**

**Agape love is patient, kind, well-wishing and humble:** 1 Corinthians 13:4: (NRSV) *Love is patient <3114>; love is kind <5441>; love is not envious <2206> or boastful <4068> or arrogant <5448>.*

**Patient:** Strongs #3114 makrothumeo to be long-spirited, i.e. (objectively) forbearing or (subjectively) patient

Colossians 3:12-13: (NASB) <sup>12</sup>So, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and **patience <3114>**; <sup>13</sup>bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you.

James 5:7: (NASB) *Therefore be patient <3114>, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the precious produce of the soil, being patient about it, until it gets the early and late rains.*



### **SUCCESSFUL SPOUSES THRIVE AS THEY LIVE THEIR PATIENCE FOR ONE ANOTHER!**

**Kind:** Strongs# 5541 *chrasteuomai* (khraste-yoo'-om-ahee); to show oneself useful, i.e. act benevolently  
Luke 6:35-36: (NRSV) <sup>35</sup>*But love your enemies, do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return. Your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High; for He is **kind <5541>** to the ungrateful and the wicked.* <sup>36</sup>*Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.*

Jesus tells us we are to extend kindness to our enemies...how much more than, to our spouses?

1 John 3:17-18: (NRSV) <sup>17</sup>*How does God's love abide in anyone who has the world's goods and sees a brother or sister in need and yet refuses help?* <sup>18</sup>*Little children, let us love, not in word or speech, but in truth and action.*

### **SUCCESSFUL SPOUSES LEARN TO GIVE KINDNESS TO ONE ANOTHER ALMOST INSTINCTIVELY!**

**Envious:** Strongs #2206 *zeloo*; to have warmth of feeling for or against

James 4:1-2: (NRSV) <sup>1</sup>*Those conflicts and disputes among you, where do they come from? Do they not come from your cravings that are at war within you?* <sup>2</sup>*You want something and do not have it; so you commit murder. And you **covet something <2206>** and cannot obtain it; so you engage in disputes and conflicts.*

### **SUCCESSFUL SPOUSES THRILL AT THE SUCCESSES AND VICTORIES OF ONE ANOTHER!**

**Boastful:** Strongs #4068 *perpereuomai*; braggart; to boast

Proverbs 16:18-19 Proverbs 29:23

### **SUCCESSFUL SPOUSES SHARE THEIR VICTORIES WITH ONE ANOTHER WITH MUTUAL EXCITEMENT!**

**Arrogant:** Strongs #5448 *phusioo* (foo-see-o'-o); from 5449 in the primary sense of blowing; to inflate, i.e. (figuratively) make proud (haughty)

**Lexicon:** 1) to make natural, to cause a thing to pass into nature 2) to inflate, blow up, to cause to swell up 2a) to puff up, make proud 2b) to be puffed up, to bear one's self loftily, be proud

**Arrogance is perhaps one of the most diabolical traits that can undo any good relationship:**

1 Corinthians 4:6-10: Humility and thankfulness squelch arrogance. Arrogance cannot survive in an environment where humility reigns.

**Just because we may know something does not mean that we are something!**

1 Corinthians 8:1-3: Knowledge has to be applied with godly wisdom. There is no room in the "marriage box" for arrogance.

### **SUCCESSFUL SPOUSES TRULY DO WORK AT CONSISTENTLY PUTTING EACH OTHER FIRST!**

**Love is always appropriate, unselfish, understanding and accepting:** 1 Corinthians 13:5: (NRSV) or **rude <807>**. *It does not insist on its own way; it is not **irritable <3947>**; or resentful;*

**Rude:** Strongs #807 *aschemoneo* (as-kay-mon-eh'-o); to be (i.e. act) unbecoming

1 Corinthians 11:20-21: There is a lot of propriety in the circumstance of marriage. We can easily be rude by being too self-absorbed.

### **SUCCESSFUL SPOUSES CLAIM MUTUAL COURTESY AS A CORE VALUE IN THEIR RELATIONSHIP!**

**Love does not insist on its own way:** Ecclesiastes 4:9-12: By allowing the third strand (God) to bind you together, you have a much stronger union! If you are both focused on God's way, neither one of you are focused on your own way. Philippians 2:3: (KJV) *Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.*

**This next text on how the body of Christ works is profound schooling for making marriage work:** Romans 12:4-10

### **SUCCESSFUL SPOUSES WORK DAILY AT HONORING THE WAYS AND THOUGHTS OF EACH OTHER!**

**Irritable:** Strongs #3947 *paroxunw paroxuno par-ox-oo'-no*; to exasperate



Proverbs 14:17: Irritability inevitably leads to foolish activity. James 1:19-22: There is a sense of learning to rise above the anger and irritability of mankind. In marriage this is so important!

**SUCCESSFUL SPOUSES CONTINUALLY WORK AT NOT TAKING THEIR FRUSTRATION OUT ON ONE ANOTHER!**

There is a big difference between taking our frustrations *out on* somebody instead of *alongside* somebody.

**Love is not resentful: (Thinketh no evil)**

(Source: Bible Commentary by Jamieson, Fausset & Brown) Thinketh no evil—imputeth not evil; literally, "the evil" which actually is there (Proverbs 10:12 1 Peter 4:8). Love makes allowances for the falls of others, and is ready to put on them a charitable construction.

Love for your spouse makes allowances and puts a “charitable covering” over their faults. It keeps honor in the relationship, especially in public.

Proverbs 10:12: (NASB) *Hatred stirs up strife, but love covers all transgressions.*

The power of true love in a true marriage is to cover the transgressions of your spouse, not advertise them to the world.

1 Peter 4:8-10: Don’t complain about your spouse!

**SUCCESSFUL SPOUSES GLADLY COVER EACH OTHER’S FAULTS, ESPECIALLY IN PUBLIC!**

**Love truly joys in the integrity and goodness of others:** 1 Corinthians 13:6: (NRSV) *it does not rejoice <4796> in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth.*

**Rejoice:** Strongs #4796 sugcairw soong-khah’-ee-ro; to sympathize in gladness, congratulate  
Lexicon: 1) to rejoice with, take part in another’s joy 2) to rejoice together, to congratulate

Philippians 4:8-9

**SUCCESSFUL SPOUSES FIND GREAT SATISFACTION IN SHARING EACH OTHER’S STAND FOR TRUTH!**

Love is *faithful* - this *one word* really sums up all of 1 Corinthians 13!

1 Corinthians 13:7: (NRSV) *It bears <4722> all things, believes <4100> all things, hopes <1679> all things, endures <5278> all things.*

So, if we focus on filling our marriage box with unselfish love, it will be overflowing with mutual faithfulness - this faithfulness is practically expressed in the following four characteristics: Bears, believes, hopes and endures.

**Bears:** Lexicon: 1) deck, thatch, to cover 1a) to protect or keep by covering, to preserve 2) to cover over with silence 2a) to keep secret 2b) to hide, conceal

**SUCCESSFUL SPOUSES DO NOT COMPLAIN ABOUT THEIR MATE TO OTHERS!**

If you are married and things are not working out so well, perhaps you are revealing your spouse’s weaknesses to others. When you do that, you begin to go down a road of destruction for that marriage covenant. The marriage covenant is a promise made before God. We cannot take that with anything other than the greatest seriousness of our lives.

Because we feel a certain way, we act a certain way. Love and marriage go beyond just how you feel. It is a commitment. Even if you feel like you are falling out of love because things are not going so well does not mean you throw in the towel. It means you reel in the emotion. Put great things in the “marriage box” and great things will come out!

**Believes:** Lexicon: 1) to think to be true, to be persuaded of, to credit, place confidence in 1a) of the thing believed 1a1) to credit, have confidence

**SUCCESSFUL SPOUSES GIVE THE BENEFIT OF THE DOUBT AND NEED THAT BENEFIT TO BE PROVEN WRONG TO CHANGE THEIR PERSPECTIVE!**

**Hopes:** Strongs #1679 el-pid’-zo; to expect or confide: (have, thing) hope (-d) (for), trust.



### The principle of hope truly applies to marriage!

Romans 8:24-25: (NASB) <sup>24</sup>For in hope we have been saved, but hope that is seen is not hope; for who **hopes <1679>** for what he already sees? <sup>25</sup>But if we hope for what we do not see, with perseverance we wait eagerly for it.

### SUCCESSFUL SPOUSES DEMONSTRATE THEIR PROTECTION OF AND BELIEF IN EACH OTHER THROUGH TRUST AND CONFIDENCE!

**Endures**: Strong's #5278 hupomeno hoop-om-en'-o; to stay under (behind), i.e. remain; figuratively, to undergo, i.e. bear (trials), have fortitude, persevere

1 Peter 2:20: (NASB) For what credit is there if, when you sin and are harshly treated, you **endure <5278>** it with patience? But if when you do what is right and suffer for it you patiently **endure <5278>** it, this finds favor with God.

Plant your feet and find favor with God. Do what is right even if difficulty comes.

### SUCCESSFUL SPOUSES REALIZE THAT LIFE'S CHALLENGES MAY BE LONG ROADS TO TRAVEL AND THEY ARE RESOLVED TO "STAY THE COURSE" UNTIL IT IS FINISHED!

We honor those who honored their covenant of marriage who have suffered loss as their spouses have passed away. This includes Fred, who runs the CQ sound board, Julius, a faithful caller to this program and Rick's mom, who just lost her spouse a few weeks ago. They now have beautiful, powerful memories.

**Love never fails (ends)**: 1 Corinthians 13:8 Mark 10:6-9: This is the original statement from Genesis repeated by Jesus, so we know it to be solid and worthy of our consideration and admiration.

### SUCCESSFUL SPOUSES LIVE A "NEVER QUIT!" MARRIAGE ATTITUDE. THE HARDER THE CHALLENGE, THE STRONGER THEIR WILL AND EFFORT TO OVERCOME!

The secret? Commitment! If you are truly committed to your marriage, then it matters not how anyone feels, what your circumstances are or who is right. If you are truly committed to your marriage, then you will selflessly love, humbly give and joyfully endure first, then ask questions later!

Marriage is like an empty box. That shell of a box is the covenant, the commitment you make before God. What do we put into that box each day to store up, so you can take them out when you need them? What about companionship, intimacy, friendship, honor, respect, loyalty, confidence and romance? Put things in you want to be able to take out! How about serving and praising each other and having commonality of your objectives? Look at the value of your spouse's victories. Be selfless in our love for each other so we can honor the commitment for what it is. We must apply scriptural principles to make it a success!

*So, has the marriage institution lost its luster?  
For Jonathan and Rick and Christian Questions...  
Think about it...!*