



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?



"Old Fashioned Love Song," Three Dog Night (1971)

*Just an old-fashioned love song
One I'm sure they wrote for you and me
Just an old-fashioned love song
Comin' down in three-part harmony
To weave our dreams upon and listen*

Today's program is an old-fashioned love song in a way. We will look at the rock-solid scriptural principles of love from the standpoint of marriage. We will look to shore up this deeply-rooted and important institution as a basic building block of society. We will also take a walk down nostalgia lane and listen to clips of various love songs of the last 80 years.

FIRST! A marriage enhancing principle...

Marriage Box

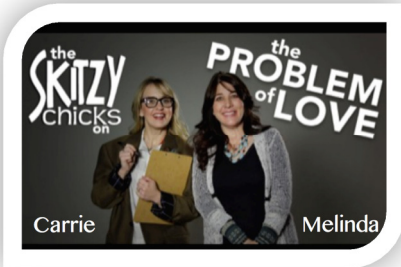
Most people get married believing a myth that marriage is a beautiful box full of all the things they have longed for: companionship, intimacy, friendship, etc. The truth is that marriage at the start is an empty box. You must put something in before you can take anything out. There is no love in marriage. 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.





Introduction, *The Problem of Love, The Skitzy Chicks, The Skit Guys*

- (Melinda) Valentine's Day! It's a great day to think about love and to think about that special someone, to think about your family that means so much to you. Love is just huge, you know? It's not just a four-letter word.
 - (Carrie) Oh, yeah it is. It's four letters. (LOVE)
 - (Melinda) No, no. I mean love encompasses so much. Okay, for example, what do you think about when you think about love?
 - (Carrie) I think of math.
 - (Melinda) Wow! We are so not on the same page.
 - (Carrie) Oh no, not just any math...love math.



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 one another!



"I'm Wishing/One Song," (first verse) from *Snow White* (1937)



*Wanna know a secret? Promise not to tell?
We are standing by a wishing well
Make a wish into the well
That's all you have to do
And if you hear it echoing
Your wish will soon come true
I'm wishing (I'm wishing)
For the one I love
To find me (To find me)
Today (Today)
I'm hoping (I'm hoping)
And I'm dreaming of
The nice things (The nice things)
He'll say (He'll say)*

Agape love gives meaning to our giving:

1 Corinthians 13:2-3: (NASB) ²*If I have the gift of prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing.* ³*And if I give all my possessions to feed the poor, and if I surrender my body to be burned, but do not have love, it profits me nothing.*

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give to one another out of their truest motivation!





So, what should we start to fill our marriage box with?



1 Corinthians 13:4, *The Problem of Love, The Skitzzy Chicks, The Skit Guys*

- (Melinda) Okay, what's going on here?
- (Carrie) Oh, I take love math very seriously.
- (Melinda) In a jacket?
- (Carrie) Yeah, it makes me feel like a college professor of math. So, you may continue.
- (Melinda) Okay, well in 1 Corinthians 13, it says that love is patient, love is kind, it does not envy, it's not boastful, love is not rude...
- (Carrie) Whoa, whoa, whoa slow down. I can't calculate that fast.
- (Melinda) Oh hey, I've got a calculator right here. I learned this neat thing in second grade that if you punch in the numbers and you turn it upside down it says: "hello." Hello, Ms. Cary.
- (Carrie) Distraction.

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>.



A caller from Connecticut suggests: Luke 9:62: *No one who sets a hand to the plow and looks to what was left behind is fit for the kingdom of God.* In an age of so many choices, marriage can be seen as a defeat. Our phones, for example, allow an infinite variety of experiences, yet they are obsolete in months. We fear the same thing in people. 1 Kings 18:21: *And Elijah came to all the people and said how long will you falter between two opinions?* Commitment to a person in marriage by God is freedom. The opportunity to grow together over time is joy. Finding God's love in each other is victory. 1 John 4: *If we love one another, God remains in us and His love is brought to perfection in us.*

Love is patient:

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

Colossians 3:12-13: (NASB) ¹²So, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and **patience** <3114>; ¹³bearing 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!





"Moonlight Becomes You," Bing Crosby (1942)

*Moonlight becomes you, it goes with your hair
You certainly know the right thing to wear
Moonlight becomes you, I'm thrilled at the sight
And I could get so romantic tonight
You're all dressed up to go dreaming
Now don't tell me I'm wrong
And what a night to go dreaming
Mind if I tag along?*



Love is kind:

Kind: Strongs# 5541 chresteuomai (khraste-yoo'-om-ah-ee); to show oneself useful, i.e. act benevolently

be·nev·o·lence: noun

1: disposition to do good

2a: an act of kindness 2b: a generous gift

Luke 6:35-36: (NRSV) ³⁵But 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. ³⁶Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.

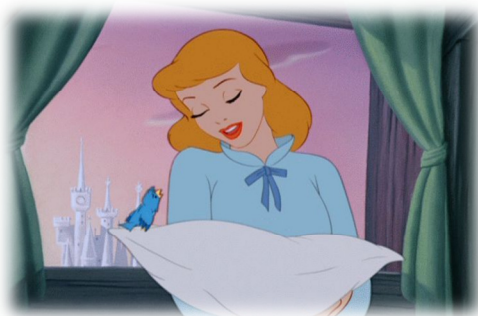
Jesus tells us we are to extend kindness to our enemies...how much more than, to our spouses?

1 John 3:17-18: (NRSV) ¹⁷How 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? ¹⁸Little 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!



"A Dream is a Wish Your Heart Makes," from Cinderella (1950)



*And after all
A dream is a wish your heart makes
When you're fast asleep
In dreams you will lose your heartaches
Whatever you wish for, you keep
Have faith in your dreams and someday
Your rainbow will come smiling through
No matter how your heart is grieving
If you keep on believing
The dream that you wish will come true*





Love is not envious:

Envious: Strong's #2206 zeloo; to have warmth of feeling for or against

James 4:1-2: (NRSV) ¹*Those conflicts and disputes among you, where do they come from? Do they not come from your cravings that are at war within you? ²You 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!



"I'm Getting Married in the Morning," from My Fair Lady (1957-Broadway)

*I'm gettin' married in the morning
Ding, dong the bells are gonna chime
Kick up a rumpus, but don't lose the compass
Get me to the church, get me to the church
Be sure to get me to the church on time
I'm getting' married in the morning
Ding, dong the bells are gonna chime
Drug me or jail me, stamp me and mail me
But get me to the church on time*

What kinds of things don't we want in our marriage box?



"Never Will I Marry," Judy Garland, (1960)

*Never, never, never will I marry
Born to wander 'til I'm dead
No conscience, no care
No burden to bear
No memories to mourn*

Love is not boastful:

Boastful: Strong's #4068 perpereuomai; braggart; to boast

Proverbs 16:18-19: (NIV) ¹⁸*Pride goes before destruction, a haughty spirit before a fall.*
¹⁹*Better to be lowly in spirit and among the oppressed than to share plunder with the proud.*

Proverbs 29:23: (NIV) *A man's pride brings him low, but a man of lowly spirit gains honor.*

SUCCESSFUL SPOUSES
share their victories with one another with mutual excitement!





"We've Only Just Begun," Carpenters (1970)

*We've only just begun to live
White lace and promises
A kiss for luck and we're on our way
We've only begun
Before the rising sun we fly
So many roads to choose
We start out walking and learn to run
And yes, we've just begun*

Love is not arrogant:

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

When I married Mr. Right, I didn't know his first name was Always. ~ Anne Gilchrist

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

1 Corinthians 4:6-10: (NRSV) ⁶*I have applied all this to Apollos and myself for your benefit, brothers and sisters, so that you may learn through us the meaning of the saying, Nothing beyond what is written, so that none of you will be puffed up in favor of one against another. ⁷For who sees anything different in you? What do you have that you did not receive? And if you received it, why do you boast as if it were not a gift? ⁸Already you have all you want! Already you have become rich! Quite apart from us you have become kings! Indeed, I wish that you had become kings, so that we might be kings with you... ¹⁰We are fools for the sake of Christ, but you are wise in Christ. We are weak, but you are strong. You are held in honor, but we in disrepute.*

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: (NRSV) ¹*Now concerning food sacrificed to idols: we know that all of us possess knowledge. Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up. ²Anyone who claims to know something does not yet have the necessary knowledge; ³but anyone who loves God is known by Him.*

Knowledge has to be applied with godly wisdom. There is no room in the "marriage box" for arrogance.

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truly do work at consistently putting each other first!

This is a very hard thing to do in our society!





1 Corinthians 13:4, *The Problem of Love, The Skitzy Chicks, The Skit Guys*

- (Melinda) Well, it also says that love does not insist on having its own way, it's not irritable, it's not resentful, love does not take joy in wrongdoing. It rejoices in the truth and that is what I was trying to do. Just bring a little truth.
- (Carrie) Yeah, and it also says that love bears all things.
- (Melinda) Yes, it does.
- (Carrie) And it believes and helps and endures all things, and love never fails.
- (Melinda) Never fails.

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: (NASB) ²⁰Therefore when you meet together, it is not to eat the Lord's Supper, ²¹for in your eating each one takes his own supper first; and one is hungry and another is drunk.

There is a lot of propriety in the circumstance of marriage. We can easily be rude by being too self-absorbed.

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claim mutual courtesy as a core value in their relationship!

As an explanation for this next song, when a performer got injured in the circus, to divert the audience from the trauma, they would send in the clowns so the audience would be focusing on something happy rather than something terrible. In this song about relationships, Judy Collins is saying it is such a disaster they should "send in the clowns."



"Send in the Clowns," Judy Collins (1975)



Isn't it rich?
Are we a pair?
Me here at last on the ground
You in mid-air
Where are the clowns?

Isn't it bliss?
Don't you approve?
One who keeps tearing around
One who can't move
Where are the clowns?
There ought to be clowns





Love does not insist on its own way:

Ecclesiastes 4:9-12: (NIV) ⁹Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their work: ¹⁰If one falls down, his friend can help him up. But pity the man who falls and has no one to help him up! ¹¹Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm. But how can one keep warm alone? ¹²Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.



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: (NRSV) ⁴For as in one body we have many members, and not all the members have the same function, ⁵so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another. ⁶We have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us: prophecy, in proportion to faith; ⁷ministry, in ministering; the teacher, in teaching; ⁸the exhorter, in exhortation; the giver, in generosity; the leader, in diligence; the compassionate, in cheerfulness. ⁹Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good; ¹⁰love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honor.

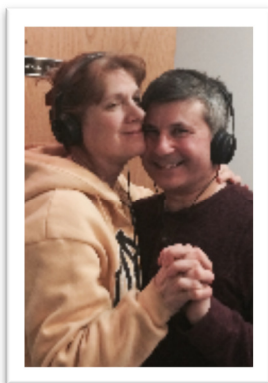
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work daily at honoring the ways and thoughts of each other!

Sometimes we get lost in our own "stuff" and forget about honoring our spouse.



A caller from Connecticut suggests the failure of marriage reflects on an unstable society, plagued by crime and corruption. Schoolteachers are often perplexed by the lack of discipline reflecting an unstable home environment. **Psalms 127:1:** *Except the Lord Jehovah build a house, they labor in vain who build it.*

This next song was played at Rick's wedding...




"Longer," Dan Fogelberg (1979)

*Longer than there've been fishes in the ocean
Higher than any bird ever flew
Longer than there've been stars up in the heavens
I've been in love with you
Stronger than any mountain cathedral
Truer than any tree ever grew
Deeper than any forest primeval
I am in love with you*





Love is not irritable:

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

Proverbs 14:17: (NASB) *A quick-tempered man acts foolishly, and a man of evil devices is hated.*

Irritability inevitably leads to foolish activity.

James 1:19-22: (NASB) ¹⁹*This you know, my beloved brethren. But everyone must be quick to hear, slow to speak and slow to anger;* ²⁰*for the anger of man does not achieve the righteousness of God. (In marriage this is doubly so!)* ²¹*Therefore, putting aside all filthiness and all that remains of wickedness, in humility receive the word implanted, which is able to save your souls.* ²²*But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves.*

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.



"Young Guns (Go for it!)," WHAM! (1982)



Hey sucker
(Now there's nothing you can do)
Well I hadn't seen your face around town awhile,
So I greeted you, with a knowing smile,
When I saw that girl upon your arm,
I knew she won your heart with a fatal charm.
I said, "Soul Boy, let's hit the town!"
I said, "Soul Boy, what's with the frown?"
But in return, all you could say was
"Hi George, meet my fiancée"

Young Guns,
Having some fun
Crazy ladies keep 'em on the run.
Wise guys realize there's danger in emotional ties.
See me, single and free
No tears, no fears, what I want to be.
One, two, take a look at you

Death by matrimony!

Marriage is considered the end of life in this song rather than a beginning!

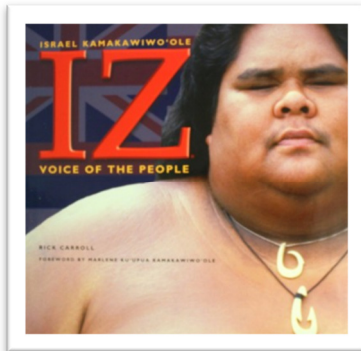




Is there a one-word answer to sum up what love has been described as?



"In This Life," Israel Kamakawiwoole (1990) (A popular Hawaiian singer)



*For all I've been blessed with in my life
There was an emptiness in me
I was imprisoned by the power of gold
With one kind touch, you've set me free*

*Let the world stop turning, let the sun stop burning
Let them tell me, love's not worth going through
If it all falls apart, I will know deep in my heart
The only dream that mattered had come true
In this life, I was loved by you*

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: (NASB) ⁸Above all, keep fervent in your love for one another, because love covers a multitude of sins. ⁹Be hospitable to one another without complaint. ¹⁰As each one has received a special gift; employ it in serving one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.

Don't complain about your spouse!

You come to love not by finding the perfect person, but by seeing an imperfect person perfectly.
~Sam Keen

/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: Strong's #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: (NASB) ⁸Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things. ⁹The things you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you.

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find great satisfaction in sharing each other's stand for truth!



"How Do I Live Without You," Trisha Yearwood (1997)

Baby I don't know what I would do
I'd be lost if I lost you
If you ever leave
Baby, you would take away everything real in my life
And tell me now
How do I live without you
I want to know
How do I breathe without you
If you ever go
How do I ever, ever survive
How do I, how do I
Oh, how do I live

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

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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. Honor your spouse.





"Fallin'," Alicia Keys (2001)

I keep on fallin'
In and out of love with you
I never loved someone
The way that I love you
I'm fallin'
In and out of love with you
I never loved someone
The way that I love you
I'm fallin'
In and out of love with you
I never loved someone
The way that I love you

"Falling in and out of love..." 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

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give the benefit of the doubt and need that benefit to be proven
wrong to change their perspective!

**With our marriage box full of good things,
can there be a "happily ever after"?**

"It's your story. Make it beautiful. Fill it up with what you love. Remember what matters. Forget what doesn't. Create a happy life together." ~ A wedding card



"Love Story," Taylor Swift (2008)

We were both young when I first saw you
I close my eyes and the flashback starts
I'm standing there
on a balcony in summer air
See the lights; see the party, the ball gowns
See you make your way through the crowd
And say, "Hello,"
Little did I know
That you were Romeo, you were throwing pebbles
And my daddy said, "Stay away from Juliet"
And I was crying on the staircase
Begging you, "Please don't go"
And I said...





"Romeo, take me somewhere we can be alone
I'll be waiting; all that's left to do is run
You'll be the prince and I'll be the princess
It's a love story, baby, just say, 'Yes.'"

Hopes: Strong's #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) ²⁴For in hope we have been saved, but hope that is seen is not hope; for who **hopes** <1679> for what he already sees? ²⁵But if we hope for what we do not see, with perseverance we wait eagerly for it.

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demonstrate their protection of and belief in each other
through trust and confidence!



"Not Like the Movies," Katy Perry (2010)

Snow White said when I was young
"One day my prince will come."
So I'll wait for that date
They say it's hard to meet your match
Gotta find my better half
So we make perfect shapes
If stars don't align
If it doesn't stop time
If you can't see the sign
Wait for it
One hundred percent
Worth every penny spent
He'll be the one that
Finishes your sentences
If it's not like the movies
That's how it should be, yeah

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.

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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.



"There you'll be," (first verse) Faith Hill (2001)

When I think back on these times
And the dreams we left behind
I'll be glad 'cause I was blessed to get
To have you in my life
When I look back on these days
I'll look and see your face
You were right there for me
In my dreams I'll always see you soar above the sky
In my heart there will always be a place for you for all my life
I'll keep a part of you with me
And everywhere I am there you'll be
And everywhere I am there you'll be

Love never fails (ends):

1 Corinthians 13:8: (NRSV) *Love never ends. But as for prophecies, they will come to an end; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will come to an end.*

Mark 10:6-9: (ASV) *⁶But from the beginning of the creation, male and female made he them. ⁷For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; ⁸and the two shall become one flesh: so that they are no more two, but one flesh. ⁹What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.*

This is the original statement from Genesis repeated by Jesus, so we know it to be solid and worthy of our consideration and admiration.

*Don't marry the person you think you can live with;
marry only the individual you think you can't live without. ~James C. Dobson*



live a "never quit!" marriage attitude. The harder the challenge,
the stronger their will and effort to overcome!



"There you'll be," (last verse) Faith Hill (2001)

'Cause I always saw in you my light, my strength
And I want to thank you now for all the ways
You were right there for me
You were right there for me
For always in my dreams I'll always see you soar above the sky
In my heart there will always be a place for you for all my life
I'll keep a part of you with me
And everywhere I am there you'll be
And everywhere I am there you'll be
There you'll be





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...!*

*And now even more to think about...
only in the **Full Edition** of CQ Rewind!*



(Congratulations to the parents of one on the Rewind team members!)





A bit more on the marriage relationship as defined in the Scriptures:

Ephesians 5:25-31: (NASB) ²⁵Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave himself up for her, ²⁶so that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, ²⁷that he might present to himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she would be holy and blameless. ²⁸So husbands ought also to love their own wives as their own bodies. He who loves his own wife loves himself; ²⁹for no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ also does the church, ³⁰because we are members of his body. ³¹For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and shall be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.

Observations:

- Women - LOVE and be subject
- Men - LOVE and give yourself up for her
- Men - LOVE and care for her as your own body
- Men - Your love for her becomes your way of self-preservation
- Men - Cherish her
- Men - Leave all other ties for her sake

Notice there is one admonition to women and then the rest are for men. It looks like men need all of this scriptural input and direction. Seems like there is an inherent strength in women that we often do not consider, so let's look:

Women are instinctive givers, generally without thought to their personal cost.

Luke 8:1-3: (NRSV) ¹Soon afterwards he went on through cities and villages, proclaiming and bringing the good news of the kingdom of God. The twelve were with him, ²as well as some women who had been cured of evil spirits and infirmities: Mary, called Magdalene, from whom seven demons had gone out, ³and Joanna, the wife of Herod's steward Chuza, and Susanna, and many others, who provided for them out of their resources.

Women as disciples have just as much to offer in the service of the Gospel as men.

Whether you are a romantic or not - finding a woman of excellence is life's greatest discovery:

Proverbs 31:10-13: (NASB) ¹⁰An excellent wife, who can find? For her worth is far above jewels. ¹¹The heart of her husband trusts in her, and he will have no lack of gain. ¹²She does him good and not evil all the days of her life. ¹³She looks for wool and flax and works with her hands in delight.

Part of a woman's strength is in her maturity and experience:

Proverbs 31:25-27: (NASB) ²⁵Strength and dignity are her clothing, and she smiles at the future. ²⁶She opens her mouth in wisdom, and the teaching of kindness is on her tongue. ²⁷She looks well to the ways of her household, and does not eat the bread of idleness.

Part of a woman's strength is in her example:

Proverbs 31:28-29: (NASB) ²⁸Her children rise up and bless her; Her husband also, and he praises her, saying: ²⁹Many daughters have done nobly, but you excel them all.





Part of a woman's strength is in the depth of the beauty of her soul:

Proverbs 31:30-31: (NASB) ³⁰*Charm is deceitful and beauty is vain, but a woman who fears the LORD, she shall be praised.* ³¹*Give her the product of her hands, and let her works praise her in the gates.*

✓ SUCCESSFUL SPOUSES ✓

- ...speak honorably and truthfully to and about one another!
 - ...give to one another out of their truest motivation!
 - ...thrive as they live their patience for one another!
 - ...learn to give kindness to one another almost instinctively!
 - ...thrill at the successes and victories of one another!
 - ...share their victories with one another with mutual excitement!
 - ...truly do work at consistently putting each other first!
 - ...claim mutual courtesy as a core value in their relationship!
 - ...work daily at honoring the ways and thoughts of each other!
 - ...continually work at NOT taking their frustration out on one another!
 - ...gladly cover each other's faults, especially in public!
 - ...find great satisfaction in sharing each other's stand for truth!
 - ...do not complain about their mate to others!
 - ...give the benefit of the doubt and need that benefit to be proven wrong to change their perspective!
 - ...demonstrate their protection of and belief in each other through trust and confidence!
 - ...realize that life's challenges may be long roads to travel and they are resolved to "stay the course" until it is finished!
 - ...live a "never quit!" marriage attitude.
- The harder the challenge the stronger their will and effort to overcome!

