

Practical love in marriage

Ole and Olga lived on a farm in Iowa. Olga was starved for affection. Ole never gave her any signs of love, and Olga's need to be appreciated went unfulfilled. At her wit's end, Olga blurted out, "Ole, why don't you ever tell me that you love me?" Ole stoically responded, "Olga, when we were married I told you that I loved you, and if I ever change my mind, I'll let you know."

That is not enough. Daily we need to express our love for one another just as God does for us daily in His Son, Jesus Christ. Love is new each day.

1 Corinthians 13: 4 – 8

1) Love is Proactive not reactive

- Romans 5: 8 But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.
- We don't love our partner if and when he/she loves us
- We take the first step to love even if our partner has messed up
- If they have messed up we take the step to reconcile
- One problem in marriage is that we all fail and when we wait for the other person to take the first step to make things right we end up living with a broken relationship
- True love is proactive and takes the first step to apologise, to forgive to want to reconcile even if we are not wrong.
- This is the way God loved us while we were still sinners. He loved us sacrificially even though we were wrong and He was perfectly right.

2) Love is based on Commitment not feelings

- John 14: 15 If you love me, you will obey what I command
- We so often use the word love that it has lost its meaning
 - I love ice cream
 - I love going to the movies
 - I love your hair style
- The fact is that we are committed to ice cream, the movies and hairstyles
- But what about loving people?
- We need to be careful that we don't mix up infatuation and love
 - Infatuation is based on emotions
 - Love is based on commitment
 - Infatuation leaves when the emotions are down
 - Love remains even when your partner looks unlovable
 - Infatuation is concerned with what you can get out of the relationship
 - Love is concerned what you can give to the relationship to benefit the other person
 - Infatuation doesn't last
 - Love never ends

3) Love is Practical

- We easily tell our partners that we love them but what do we mean by that?
- 1 Corinthians 13: 4 – 8 puts some practicality to love:
- Love is:
 - Patient – Never gives up
 - I am patient, enduring, tolerant, unwearied, uncomplaining, long suffering, serene with _____
 - Kind – cares more for the other person than for self
 - Am I kind to _____
 - It does not envy – it doesn't want what it doesn't have
 - I am not envious, jealous, resentful, spiteful of _____
 - Does not boast
 - I do not boast, brag, show off about my own achievements making my partner feel inferior
 - It is not proud
 - I am not proud, arrogant, self-righteous, over-confident and am willing to receive correction from _____
 - It is not rude
 - I am not rude, impolite, discourteous, bad-mannered, offensive, foul, vulgar to _____
 - It is not self seeking
 - I am not self-seeking but rather I always put _____ ahead of me
 - It is not easily angered
 - I do not easily get angry, infuriated, irritated, annoyed, enraged, exasperated, frustrated with _____
 - It keeps no record of wrongs
 - I do not keep a written or mental record of wrongs that _____ has done.
 - It does not delight in evil
 - It rejoices in the truth
 - I do not delight in any evil that has come on _____ in any way including gossip and slander but I rejoice in the truth about him/her.
 - It always protects
 - I always protect _____
 - It always trusts
 - I always trust _____
 - It always hopes – it always looks for the best
 - I always have hope in our relationship
 - It always perseveres – never looks back
 - I always persevere in our relationship regardless of what it seems to be.
 - Love never fails – it keeps going to the end
 - I will never fail _____ and will always be there for him/her.