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Happy Valentines Day

From Man's Side And By Man's Side

As I have engaged in conversations with other men about their families, it has caused me to start thinking about men, women, love and marriage in a new way, at least for me. I want to share some of these thoughts and new discoveries with you at this time.

As I reviewed what God said about why He created women, and as I began to reflect upon the reality of life, I received a refreshing viewpoint about what can make a marriage work for the long haul. It isn't the sexual passion or erotic type of love that young couples experience that will last for eternity. Unfortunately for some married couples, when the vision of a loving relationship has dimmed, just staying married seems like an eternity. A love that endures for a lifetime of marriage is often not understood by most men.

The creation of a woman was God's final act of creation as recorded in the Bible in Genesis 2:18-25. The woman was created from man's side as explained in verse 23, and her purpose was to be man's helper as explained in verse 18. I am not a student of the original Hebrew and Greek, but from what I have learned from various resources, it appears the language used in the King James Version referring to the woman as being a "help meet" means that she was to be a helper that was suitable for man. She was to be man's "Assistant", a "Companion", a "Helpmate", a "Helper", a "Partner", a "Succor", and a "Spouse".

She was to provide assistance to man in time of want, difficulty or distress. The woman was created from man's side for many reasons that I will touch upon later. She didn't come from any other part of his body, but his side. We men need to remember that. **How many times do we drive our wives away because we do not understand her innate need to be by our side?**

Being by our side may be figurative or it may be literal, or it may be both. **Most times, especially in successful marriages, it is both as we come to understand what God had in mind.** God goes on to say in Genesis 2:24, "Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh."

Now most of us men believe that "becoming one flesh" is a sexual thing. Hebrews 13:4 says, "Marriage is honorable among all, and the bed undefiled; but fornicators and adulterers God will judge". From that passage it is easy to understand that a good sexual union within the marriage relationship is looked upon with favor by God, rather than one outside of the marriage relationship. Most of us men believe that to "become one flesh" is to procreate and to have children. It certainly includes that, but marriage is vastly more enduring and intimate in ways beyond simply the sexual relationship. Let us think beyond the reproductive years toward what it means to become one.

Becoming one flesh is a concept that is not always easily understood. It involves all portions of our being. The fact that Jesus told us in Mark 12:30, "And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and all your strength", is proof that there is more to us than flesh and blood. Our love is to encompass all portions of our being. Becoming one with our wife must encompass all four areas of our being, which are emotional, spiritual, mental and physical. Truly becoming "One" and "Intimate" involve all four areas.

All too often, as we age, the physical attraction between spouses begins to fade, and since most men are not properly trained in western culture to understand the total balance of our beings, the relationship with our wives begins to deteriorate. In many instances, we are not prepared in the other three areas of our loving relationship with our wives to move ahead beyond a purely physical relationship.

The reality of life is that most of us men equate the word "Love" to mean, "Sex". The truth is, however, relative to what God says about "Love", in I Corinthians 13:4-8, romance, passion and sex are not mentioned. This is not an area of expertise for me, but the Greek uses at least 3 different words to describe a Relationship of Love. **Agape Love is a Godly type of Love that is Unselfish and Unconditional. Eros Love is a Romantic, Passionate and a Sexual type of Love. Phileo Love is a Friendship and Family type of Love.**

The passage in I Corinthians 13:4-8 sets the standard for all types of love, regardless of the area. Below is a paraphrased list of what Love is and what Love is not, in the order as presented in the verses.

1. Love is patient.
2. Love is kind.
3. Love does not envy.
4. Love does not boast.
5. Love is not puffed up.
6. Love does not act rudely.
7. Love is not selfish.
8. Love is not provoked.
9. Love thinks no evil.
10. Love does not rejoice in iniquity.
11. Love rejoices in truth.
12. Love bears all things.
13. Love believes all things.
14. Love hopes all things.
15. Love endures all things.
16. Love never fails.

So now what? We know what Love is and what it is not, but can we perfect it in our lives toward others, especially our wives? God tells us in Proverbs 18:22, "He who finds a wife finds a good thing, and obtains favor from the Lord." Is it any wonder then about what the Apostle Peter told us? In I Peter 3:7 it says, "Husbands, likewise dwell with them with understanding, giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers may not be hindered."

In reviewing in my mind's eye what I have thought and written about, I have come to the following conclusion. **God intended for our wives to not only be by our side and to be our helper and spouse, but God intended for our wives to actually complete our creation as men who were created in God's image. Our wives may not always understand our work, and they may not always care about our work, but they intimately care about us because they came from our side in order to complete us. Think about this concept the next time you look at your wife.**

My wife Marilyn has very little interest or understanding of the markets, yet it was she who showed me the Seasonal Patterns of the Seasonal Rally during each season of the year. When I first started C&S Grain Market Consulting in 1998, I prepared weekly charts for every year for December Corn and November Soybeans, from 1970 to 1998. I laid them out on our pool table and asked her to look at them to see if she noticed anything significant that I needed to be aware of. After looking at them for a relative short period of time she said to me, "Every Season of the year has a rally. Every Winter has a rally, every Spring has a rally, every Summer has a rally, and every Fall has a rally!"

I was dumbfounded! I always knew that the overall Seasonal was for low prices to occur in the Fall at harvest time, and for a Seasonal High to follow sometime next Spring or Summer. What I hadn't realized before was that every Season of the year, Winter, Spring, Summer, and Fall had some kind of rally. In a matter of minutes my wife discovered a principle that will take me years to perfect because every year is different in timing. Even though she has little interest in the markets, she has an intimate interest in supporting me.

Speaking of being intimate, there is more than an Eros way for a man and woman to be intimate. Just walking together while holding hands can be intimate. Sharing a hug and a kiss can be intimate. Retiring for the night at the same time and sleeping side by side can be intimate. Discussing a common interest can be intimate. Participating in our children or grandchildren's lives can be intimate. Working on a puzzle together can be intimate. Worshipping and praying together can be intimate. Going out to eat together can be intimate. It doesn't always have to be about work or sex.

Again I want to remind you of what God tells us in Proverbs 18:22, "He who finds a wife finds a good thing, and obtains favor from the Lord." Again in I Peter 3:7, "Husbands, likewise dwell with them with understanding, giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel, **and as being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers may not be hindered.**" **This is Paramount!**

I certainly am not an expert in marriage and in keeping my wife happy and never failing her. Communication is a constant challenge in a marriage as men and women communicate and process information differently. **As long as we are alive in the body, we need to be aware of each other as unique individuals, while allowing love to reign at the end of every day.**

The bottom line, however, is that God has given us wives to make us complete, and the basis for an ongoing loving relationship needs to be centered on God and not just ourselves, because true love has no room for selfishness. As Christians, our service to God is either blessed or hampered, depending upon the relationship we have with our helpmate and spouse.

The power of touching, the power of sharing and the power of loving our wives as God defines it are never ending, for it completes God's Creation. In Genesis Chapter 1 when looking at His creation, God always said, "And God saw that it was good." **Sharing life with your wife is good!**

For Completeness of Life and Love

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