

The Bulwark

OCTOBER 29, 2023

LOVE IS KIND OF FUNNY THAT WAY

It is the wise bride or groom who views the long trek down the aisle with great hesitation. Perhaps there is the realization of what all is factored in with respect to love. If lovers haven't come to a full understanding of all that is involved in love, they are ripe for a world of trouble. Love holds the relationship of marriage together, and when put into practice it is truly a wondrous beauty to behold. It is responsibility enjoined to both husband and wife. *Husbands love your wives* (Ephesians 5:25), "...women to love their husbands." (Titus 2:4) Short, directed commands, but there is so much involved in embracing what true love means.

Love is kind of funny, inasmuch as it involves tripping over self in order to provide for the other. In a sense it is a putting away of self in order to accentuate the other. Bear in mind that in love, you won't be truly happy unless the other person is happy. If you have an argument, no matter who "wins" it, you lose. Love is an exercise in frustration: you leave the window up when you really want it down, you watch what the other person wants, you turn the music down when you really want it cranked up.

"For this cause a man will leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and the two shall become one flesh." (Matthew 19:5) In marriage two become one, but the one isn't you; it's the other person. You love the other person more than you love self. Love

strives to bring out the best in people. When one knows that they are truly loved, it can only bring out the best. Love is kind of funny that way.

Inasmuch as love is all encompassing and calls for the putting first of the other, it will seek to lift up the other to a place of honor (see Ecclesiastes 9:9, Proverbs 31:23, 28-31). Love produces a win-win situation for both partners. There will be respect and allowance for the other to be the "star". A story doesn't have to be interrupted to correct a minor faux pas, a joke doesn't have to be one "upped" and so forth.

Love is patient, love is kind, and is not jealous; love not brag and is not arrogant, does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong suffered, does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth, bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. (1Corinthians 13:4-7)

It was out of love that led Jesus to the point of allowing Himself to suffer death in a most horrific way; inasmuch as He wanted only the best for mankind. Love looks outward. It pays to be mindful of what is found in Romans 5:8, *"But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."* *"We love, because He first loved us."* (1John 4:19) Truly God made the first overture of love.

It is not a coincidence that God patterned the relationship between husband and wife after that of the magnitude of love that is present in the pattern and plan of the redemption of mankind. *"This mystery is great; but I am speaking with reference to Christ and the church, Nevertheless let each individual among you also love his wife."* (Ephesians 5:31) There is no denying the fact that Christ loves us, the question is if we hold a like mind set and are willing to fully commit to Him? *"I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and delivered Himself up for me."* (Galatians 2:20). (wbe)

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