

## KITCHEN TABLE THOUGHTS ON LOVE

I was sitting at my kitchen table one morning after eating my breakfast when Joe's question from the previous Sabbath popped up in my mind: **WHAT IS LOVE?**

All of a sudden my mind was filled rapid fire with several statements that I felt were relating to loving behavior in relationships. I wrote them down as fast as I could thinking to search out the meaning of **LOVE according to Scripture.**

I began to research about **LOVE** and saw information that was leaning toward human relationships and almost overlooked them in order to search out what the Scripture says about love. I doubted what I was seeing as something I would use in my search for spiritual love. But then, as I continued my research, I had a notice of prayer requests for the widows to pray about and one was for marriage relationships, so I began to take serious what I was seeing and pray it will be a blessing to all of us, especially those struggling in marriage or contemplating marriage.

So, back to the question **WHAT IS LOVE?**: I believe it is an overused and undervalued word. We love baseball and apple pie; sunrises and sunsets; hamburger and French fries, work, no work, cars and trips. According to the dictionary, love is "**an intense feeling of deep affection.**" - a profoundly tender, passionate affection for another person, a feeling of warm personal attachment or deep affection, as for a parent, child, or friend. Meanwhile, Urban Dictionary defines love as, "The act of caring and giving to someone else; **having someone's best interest and wellbeing as a priority in your life. TO TRULY LOVE IS A VERY SELFLESS ACT.**

One Reddit user said, "I think being in love means that you are connected with someone on **ALL LEVELS:** physically, emotionally, and spiritually. It's the feeling that even though you just met them, you feel like you've known them your entire life."

It's also the friendship in love that even though you may not see someone for years, when you come together again you can pick up right where you left off.

We can call **Pure Love,** a love that: **Loves for the sake of loving. It has no desires or needs and dissolves boundaries and separation.**

### **IS THERE ANYTHING GREATER THAN LOVE?**

Someone has said in a simple answer, yes there is: **GRATITUDE.** (maybe it is equal and is important.) To have gratitude for someone means to have no judgment of them, or you. I often say, "An attitude of gratitude goes a long way." The quality of being thankful/grateful, will

eliminate much frustration, fear, confusion and worry, if we believe the scripture, “In everything give thanks for this is the will of Yehovah in the Messiah Yeshua, concerning you. I Thes 5:18

**IN OTHER WORDS IF WE TRULY TRUST AND ARE OBEDIENT TO THE FATHER WE CAN BELIEVE THAT HE HAS OUR LIVES IN HIS HANDS DIRECTING EVERY STEP AND COME WHAT MAY HE HAS GONE BEFORE US, DIRECTING OUR PATH AND HE WILL SEE US THROUGH ALL THINGS AND EVEN CARRY US IF NECESSARY.**

### **WHAT’S A BIGGER FEELING THAN LOVE?**

"**LOSS.**" Truth is if we have never loved we would never know loss. I for one have asked on many occasions, “Is it better to have never loved, therefore not know the pain of loss OR is the joy of love worth the pain for whatever time we have the experience.” We are told in John 16:21 **A woman when she is in travail has sorrow, because her hour is come: but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembers no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world. Joy can mask the pain of loss.**

**Psa 30:4-5 Sing unto Yehovah, O ye saints of his, and give thanks at the remembrance of HIS holiness. 5 For his anger(our sorrow) endures but a moment; in his favor is life: weeping may endure for a night, but joy comes in the morning.**

We can't deny loss for the feeling of loss lingers long after the separation from any situation caused by death, divorce or friendship. The change that comes with loss can be overwhelming causing depression, fear, and uncertainty about the future. Life does go on regardless. That is the time to cling to the **FATHER’S LOVE** as you wait on the healing to come to find the Shalom that only comes from being in His presence.

### **WHAT IS STRONGER THAN LOVE?**

Being enamored of something or with someone goes far beyond liking them, and it's even more flowery than love. Enamored means smitten with, or totally infatuated. Unbreakable relationships that go beyond the feeling of love are built on **deep and enduring commitment that doesn't waiver, THIS COMMITMENT IS THE STRENGTH OF LOVE,** no matter what storms life sends your way. Your relationships are like anything else in your life – **they need your time and attention to grow and thrive.**

### **WHAT CAN DEFEAT LOVE?**

In the natural/flesh it's a good bet one or more of the following kills love:

1. **Subtle Unkindness**. Couples move from vibrancy to life support when they start **saying “No”** to the little things they ask of each other. But those No's add up, and the tiny acts of unkindness translate into **“You don't care about me”** faster than you think. Eventually, the question becomes, “Why should I love someone who doesn't care about me?”
2. **Sticky Fights** -We've all sat next to the person on a plane or in a meeting who seems to talk and talk, and it gives a feeling of being stuck. Sadly, couples can start to fight like that—the fights get sticky and hard to end. These kinds of fights feel like a trap, until someone slams a door, hangs up a phone, or tunes the other out. The **problems don't get solved**, because the fights aren't about the topic; they're about **hurt feelings and misunderstandings**. **Everyone wants to feel valued**. As sticky fights that don't resolve any issues happen, more and more, **LOVE BEGINS TO DISAPPEAR**.
3. **Loneliness After a Fight** –Big fights that don't resolve anything lead couples to isolate themselves—they go off to separate corners to lick their wounds. **But**: That means that the person you thought you could count on to dry your tears has become the one causing those tears, and they don't come to apologize or try to fix things, **FURTHER CAUSING THE FEELING OF BEING ISOLATED AND NOT VALUED**.
4. **Rewriting Your Story** -Memories of how you fell in love become memories of how you thought you fell in love, and you begin to think it was all a lie. You begin to believe you weren't really in love, weren't really that happy, or weren't really that attracted to the partner. Once this lie from the enemy of our soul, rewrites your story and what you once felt, **love can quickly flatline**.
- 5 **Sleeping With a Stranger** – You look over and think, “Who is this person that made me feel so bad last night?” When love starts to look like a weed you shot with Roundup, you usually decide the other person isn't who you thought they were. Instead, you see them as a stranger—and not a nice one. Your thoughts consist of negative ideas about your partner's character, and you predict and fear that those character flaws are permanent – causing you to feel trapped. **You fall out of love because you believe the stranger is a villain who lied from the beginning and you no longer feel connected to your spouse**.

(From Psychology Today June 2, 2015 by Kevin D. Arnold Ph.D., ABPP)

**The subtle unkindness's, the fights that don't solve anything, but cause loneliness and feelings of isolation, allowing you to believe the enemy's lies that the love wasn't real to**

**begin with will lead you to believe that you are trapped with the character and nature of the spouse that will never change or meet your expectations.**

**THE TRUTH IS THAT FROM THE BEGINNING OUR FATHER “MADE THEM MALE AND FEMALE” TO BE COMPLIMENTARY TO ONE ANOTHER – NOT TO BE EXACTLY ALIKE IN DESIRE AND ABILITY – BUT TO BE STRONG WHERE ONE IS WEAK, TO BARE ONE ANOTHERS BURDENS AND BE SOMEONE TO LEAN ON IN TIMES OF TROUBLE.**

If you are caught in one of these love traps maybe there is just enough information here to jumpstart you to healthier relationships. Also for the men, who I personally think, are responsible for the temperament of their home, **Rabbi Shalom Arush** has a book “**Garden of Peace**” which gives practical guidelines just for men to find the true path of peace. I had read that this book was required reading by judges for some in Israel contemplating divorce –with dramatic results. He also has the Garden of Peace for Women.

I said above that I believe the men are responsible for the temperament of the home and I also believe women as the “**Ezer Kenegdo**” have a responsibility to share their input. Gen 2:18 And Yehovah said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help(H5858) meet for him. **Ezer** H5858 – One who helps. Of the 21 times help is mentioned in the OT, 17 are referring to Yehovah. Clearly He was not a servant here. He was a rescuer (help) and a defender (shield). Likewise, the same can be said of a woman. Being an ezer had nothing to do with being subservient; an ezer was not a docile assistant or submissive side-kick. We would never describe Yehovah in these terms, nor should women be given these labels.

I had heard that the **Ezer Kenegdo** is for the man “a helper against himself.” This word means an ally or rescuer, someone who comes running when the people cry out for help. An ezer drops everything to save those in need... An ezer is a hero. Likewise, a Godly wife, when treated with love and respect, will be a Proverbs 31 woman and a true defender of her husband. And a man who is truly following Yehovah and confident in his own strength and ability, loving his wife as Yeshuah loves the ekklesia and gave His life for us, will allow his wife to use her strengths to be the helper he needs in all things.

**Kenegdo** - The Hebrew word Kenegdo means opposite as to him or corresponding as to him. A woman is no better or less than the man. Man and woman are equally and uniquely created, a perfect fit. Gen 2:18 NKJV And Yehovah said, "It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him."

**PS:** After reading the SM newsletter it also would be beneficial to consider what Joe put in the Newsletter about the topic of Ezer Kenegdo and the videos concerning a woman's real role and a man's response to her input.

Another person I would recommend for couples (or anyone contemplating marriage) is a video by Pastor/Christian Counselor Mark Gungor on the differences in how men and women think and act: **THE TALE OF TWO BRAINS**. He has others on marriage and relationships that I have not seen but know this one to be well worth the time for helpful insight and a fun evening.

As believers, we must not forget to remember who the **ENEMY** really is in relationships and give him no power over them. I have come to believe that **EXPECTATIONS** in relationships is the real threat to peace and unity. Most of us have preconceived notions that our spouse should be a mind reader "if they love us." Ain't going to happen. Understanding the differences in how a man thinks and how a woman thinks is crucial to peace. Some are more in tune and sensitive to others, but that is not necessarily the case just because you are married.

According to relationship expert **Dr. Gary Chapman** in his book **The Five Love Languages: The Secret to Love That Lasts**, the different ways that people show love are:

**WORDS OF AFFIRMATION – written or spoken compliments that show love, affection, appreciation and encouragement. Examples:**

**I feel LOVED when you...**

**I APPRECIATE when you...**

**I am PROUD of you when you...**

**I want to hear all about your day...**

**What can I do to help...**

**I regret/I'm sorry for ...**

**Next time, I'll try to ...**

**I could've done \_\_\_ better today ...**

**I appreciate that you ...**

**I couldn't \_\_\_ today if it weren't for you ...**

**I am thankful that you ...**

**Great job ...**

**I'm so thankful to have you in my life because ...**

**I wish I could \_\_\_ the way you do...**

**It makes me happy when you ...**

**I'm proud of you for ...**

**Prov 25:11 A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver.**

**2. PHYSICAL TOUCH -** Family therapist Virginia Satir once said, “We need four hugs a day for survival. We need 8 hugs a day for maintenance. We need 12 hugs a day for growth.” While that may sound like a lot of hugs, it seems that many hugs are better than not enough. A simple touch on the hand, shoulder, arm conveys love and the fact that you want to be near me.

**3. SENDING GIFTS –** who doesn’t love a box of chocolates or flowers **JUST BECAUSE**, or help with whatever is needed to make the home run efficiently and peacefully for all.

**4. QUALITY TIME -** Just making time to be near and to see and genuinely listen to what the other is saying and feeling or needing. Quality is better than quantity.

**5. ACTS OF SERVICE –** No his and her responsibilities – helping with whatever needs arise that will make the spouses life less stressful. A loving relationship is joy multiplied, sorrow divided. A Spanish proverb tells us, “Joy shared is doubled; sorrow shared is halved.”

When I started this search on love, my thoughts were meant to be concerning the Love we find in scripture. But as Father began to put these ideas before me, I began to see the following kitchen table thoughts as definitely something we might need to be refreshed in to strengthen our earthly relationships. There is no problem with anyone being heavenly minded in all things, but beware of being so heavenly minded you are no earthly good.

1. You catch more flies with honey than with vinegar.
2. A soft answer turns away wrath.
3. Back a cat in the corner and it will come out hissing, clawing and scratching.
4. ALWAYS leave the door open (Don’t let the sun go down on your wrath/anger)
5. LOVE WITH MERCY COVERS A MULTITUDE OF SIN AND DISAGREEMENT.

## FIND THE BALANCE

