

# Maxims for Merry Marriage

February 4, 2019



## WHERE CHRIST REIGNS

*Love is a permanent power...*

He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love. In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another. No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us. Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit. And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world. Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God. And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him. {1 John 4:8-16}

### **A Divine Principle & a Permanent Power**

The Bible declares that God is love! This same God of love is eternal and immortal (1 Timothy 1:17). A relationship founded with God as the head will burn brightly with a love that will never die! Jesus declared His oneness with the Father in the following words "I and my Father are one." (John 10:30). Jesus is the God of love. Some may feel that manifesting true love is a difficult thing. Some may feel that they are too degraded and too rough to give love or be loved, but the Bible tells us that we can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth us (Philippians 4:13). So yes, we can demonstrate the love of God. For those who think they are too rough and degraded, the Bible declares that we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord (2 Corinthians 3:18). Christ is love and by beholding Him we can become just as lovable as He is! Now that is powerful! Let's look to Jesus and let's live to demonstrate His love! Keep on reading to find out how God's love is a principle and a permanent power.

Supreme love for God and unselfish love for one another—this is the best gift that our heavenly Father can bestow. This love is not an impulse, but a divine principle, a permanent power. The unconsecrated heart cannot originate or produce it. Only in the heart where Jesus reigns is it found. "We love Him, because He first loved us." In the heart renewed by divine grace, love is the ruling principle of action. It modifies the character, governs the impulses, controls the passions, and ennobles the affections. This love, cherished in the soul, sweetens the life and sheds a refining influence on all around.

{Acts of the Apostles 551.2} –Ellen White

Brought to You By  
Chain of Truth Ministries

## LESSONS

- ♥ Jesus did not enforce celibacy upon any class of men. He came not to destroy the sacred relationship of marriage, but to exalt it and restore it to its original sanctity. He looks with pleasure upon the family relationship where sacred and unselfish love bears sway. {AH 121.2} – Ellen White
- ♥ Jesus is love
- ♥ When we do not love, we do not know Jesus
- ♥ When we love God, we manifest love for one another
- ♥ Love is a principle; not a fluffy feeling
- ♥ We can demonstrate the love of God
- ♥ By beholding Christ, we will change for the better
- ♥ Love controls the passions and ennobles the affections

## **What is love?**

### ***Love is a gift***

Since God is love and Jesus is God then we can safely say that the best gift that comes from Jesus is the gift of love. The differences between passion and true love are that passion is casual, impure, fake, unreasonable and blind. True love is none of those things. Many people have confused passion for love. Love is not a feeling, but a principle.

### ***Love is a high and holy principle***

Right principles don't fade away. The same is true of true love. The most translated female nonfiction author in the history of literature, named Ellen White, wrote "true love is a high and holy principle, altogether different in character from that love which is awakened by impulse, and which suddenly dies when severely tested." {Adventist Home 50.3}

### ***Love is a plant***

Just like a plant needs sunlight, water, air and soil to grow so does a couple's love grow by affectionate hearts, truthful and loving words. Those necessities of growth can only originate from God. Why? Because God is the Sun of Righteousness (Malachi 4:2). The Holy Spirit, symbolized by water, refreshes us with the fruits of the Spirit. (1 John 5:8, John 3:5, Galatians 5:22-23). In a relationship and marriage where Christ reigns, there is love, joy, peace, patience with each other's shortcomings and mistakes, gentleness, beneficence, a reliance upon God in every difficulty and situation, humility, and self-control. For the high and holy principle of love to grow, we need God in our lives each and every moment of every day.

## **The Nature of Love**

When Christ is enthroned in our hearts, love is a permanent power for good. Consider the love of God:

Romans 8:38-39 For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Here we see that love is not a transient feeling or a strong fiery impetuous passion. True love is devoted, real and enduring. The love of God, agape love, is deep, affectionate and manifested in acts of benevolence. True love is lifted out of the realm of passion and impulse. Love is revealed in tender words and acts, and love is found where men and women's hearts are softened and subdued by the grace of Christ.

True love is a plant that needs culture. Let the woman who desires a peaceful, happy union, who would escape future misery and sorrow, inquire before she yields her affections, has my lover a mother? What is the stamp of her character? Does he recognize his obligations to her? Is he mindful of her wishes and happiness? If he does not respect and honor his mother, will he manifest respect and love, kindness and attention, toward his wife? When the novelty of marriage is over, will he love me still? Will he be patient with my mistakes, or will he be critical, overbearing, and dictatorial? True affection will overlook many mistakes; love will not discern them.

{Fundamentals of Christian Education 105.1} –Ellen White

- ♥ God's love is a permanent power
- ♥ True love is a gift from God
- ♥ Passion is casual, impure, fake, fake, unreasonable and blind
- ♥ True love does not fade away
- ♥ True love never dies when severely tested
- ♥ A couple's love grows by affectionate hearts, truthful and loving words
- ♥ True love originates with God
- ♥ The human heart is incapable of manifesting true love on its own
- ♥ A Christ centered relationship and marriage will demonstrate the fruits of the Spirit
- ♥ God's love is a permanent power for good
- ♥ True love is not a transient feeling



### **Merit Love and Affection**

Ellen White wrote some very good counsel for “tough to love” husbands. She wrote “if the husband is tyrannical, exacting, critical of the actions of his wife, he cannot hold her respect and affection, and the marriage relation will become odious to her. She will not love her husband, because he does not try to make himself lovable. Husbands should be careful, attentive, constant, faithful, and compassionate. They should manifest love and sympathy.... When the husband has the nobility of character, purity of heart, elevation of mind, that every true Christian must possess, it will be made manifest in the marriage relation.... He will seek to keep his wife in health and courage. He will strive to speak words of comfort, to create an atmosphere of peace in the home circle.” {Adventist Home 228.2}

### **Love is not Selfish**

John 3:16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

God gave the best gift to humanity because He loves us. He gave up His only Son so that we might be saved. God is not selfish. He looks out for the interests of His people. Let all courting couples and married men and women remember the phrase in 1Peter 5:7 “casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you”. Married couples, God cares for you so why don’t you all demonstrate the unselfish care of God to your spouses?

### **How is unselfish love manifested?**

Jesus said in John 14:15 “if ye love me, keep my commandments”. We show our love to God by keeping the 10 Commandments. The best way to summarize the commandments of God are love the Lord your God with all your heart and love your neighbor as yourself. (Mark 12:30-31). When we love God with all our hearts, the pursuit of marriage will not be an idol, but God will be our focus and His mission; our mission (Exodus 20:3-5, Matthew 28:19-20). Marriage is not our mission; however, God may unite us with a spouse while engaged in the Lord’s mission. For a married couple, the closest neighbor is the one united next to them and their first mission field is in their home. God already knows we love ourselves too much. Let’s take some of that self-love and make it “others-centered” by demonstrating the love of God to our spouses. Surely then wives may declare of their husbands like the church declares of her husband “his mouth is most sweet: yea, he is altogether lovely. This is my beloved, and this is my friend...” (Song of Solomon 5:16).

You have looked upon it as a weakness to be kind, tender, and sympathetic and have thought it beneath your dignity to speak tenderly, gently, and lovingly to your wife. Here you mistake in what true manliness and dignity consist. The disposition to leave deeds of kindness undone is a manifest weakness and defect in your character. That which you would look upon as weakness God regards as true Christian courtesy that should be exercised by every Christian; for this was the spirit which Christ manifested.

{Adventist Home 228.1} –Ellen White

- ♥ A husband should never be tyrannical, exacting and critical of his wife’s actions
- ♥ Husbands should be careful, attentive, constant, faithful and compassionate
- ♥ Husbands should strive to speak words of comfort and to create an atmosphere of peace in the home circle
- ♥ Love is not selfish
- ♥ The Father has demonstrated unselfish love by giving His only begotten Son
- ♥ Jesus is the best gift that the Father could have ever given to fallen humanity
- ♥ God is not selfish
- ♥ We should call to remembrance 1 Peter 5:7
- ♥ Married men and women should demonstrate the love of God to their spouses
- ♥ Unselfish love manifested towards the Lord is the keeping of the 10 Commandments
- ♥ The two greatest commandments are to love God with the whole heart and to love our neighbors as ourselves
- ♥ Marriage is not our mission
- ♥ God may send us a spouse while in the mission field
- ♥ The church has expressed her love for Jesus Christ in Song of Solomon 5:16