



What's Love Got To Do With It?

Proverbs 4:23

About Marriage: Falling in Love. Staying in Love.

We all know what's required to fall in love . . . a pulse. Falling in love is easy, but staying there, that's something else entirely. With more than a thousand matchmaking services available today and new ones springing up all the time, finding a romantic match is easier than ever. But staying with the one you've found seems to be the real challenge. Is it possible for two people to fall in love and actually stay there? Absolutely. That's what this series is all about.

Today's Bottom Line: Your ability to stay in love has as much to do with the condition of your heart as it does the behavior of your partner. What's in you is coming out, so pay attention to what's in you.

Review

Anyone can fall in love. All of us want to believe it's possible to stay in love, but we have our doubts.

It's much easier to fall in love than to stay in love.

The question that started us off was, "Can two people stay in love forever?" The answer is yes . . . if they are willing to make love a verb, which involves mutual submission. Mutual submission is treating others like they are more important than us.

Last week, we added how relationship comes before rights, rank, and respect, and we saw how Jesus was our role model and pattern to follow when loving our mate (and everyone else for that matter).

Introduction

Today, I want to illustrate why love relationships are so difficult.

This will explain why two people who swear they love each other more than anyone else on the planet can end up hating each other more than anyone else on the planet.

This is why people split up.

Struggle

Most of us are full of hurts, pain, and a whole lot of other baggage.

*There's stuff in us, and love relationships
bring it out faster than anything else.*

What comes out of us is what's inside us!

Truth

Proverbs 4:23, "Above all else, guard your heart."

Most of us pay no attention to the condition of our hearts. Instead, we monitor his or her heart.

Everybody at some point thinks, "If I can just get him to behave a certain way, I'll be happy."

Translated: My happiness depends on the way he behaves.

Then ... we create strategies to change his behavior.

You ability to feel loved, accepted, respected, and cared for has much more to do with the condition of your heart than it does with the behavior of your spouse.

So, your ability to stay in love has much more to do with the condition of your heart than it does the behavior of your spouse.

Please don't misunderstand! Both are important, but the problem is we largely ignore one.

Their behavior is **part** of the equation, but it's only a part, and it's the part you can't control.

Your ability to stay in love has more to do with the condition of your heart than does your husband's/wife's behavior.

How do I know?

Proverbs 4:23, "Above all else, guard your heart, **for everything you do flows from it.**"

What's in there is coming out!

Application

You've heard it said, "Think before you speak."

But I say unto you, think about what you feel ... before you speak.

What am I feeling? Most people don't know.

Name it.

Angry, left out, embarrassed, unappreciated, ugly, unlovable, like a failure, old, stupid, lonely, abandoned, scared, out of control, betrayed, picked on, jealous, disrespected.

Proclaim it.

Say it out loud.

When you bring your emotions out of the darkness and expose them, it removes their power.

Bringing them into the open gives you insight into the source, and it's not always him or her. AND ... you give up your excuse or bad behavior and attitudes.

Confess it.

When appropriate, tell your husband or wife.

When you do, say, "I feel ..." That's so much better than, "You always ..."

Conclusion

Want to stay in love? Guard your heart.

What do you need to name, proclaim, and confess?

What's lurking that needs to be exposed to the light?

Is there something you need to talk over with your spouse or someone you love?

Scared? Tell them that!

Above all else, guard your heart. Everything you do flows from it!

Next Steps

- Memorize Proverbs 4:23
- Think about what your feeling.
- Name the emotion.
- Proclaim the emotion.
- Confess the emotion.