

Made For Each Other

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Preacher: Bill Brock

[0:00] Most of you are familiar with how we operate in the summertime with adult classes, but if you're new with us this morning, we do ask you to just write your name on an attendance sheet.

The offering is taken as we proceed in the class. I don't know. Do I have to start about offerings the first time this summer? You're going to give that \$10 every Sunday morning during class. Let's get with it.

You know, I don't like this 20 cent stuff when it comes out average in that way. Just because we're all in a class together, we sometimes forget that giving is part of fellowship.

So the offering is taken. You're doing that now. You're going to sign an attendance sheet. That's a lot of things to be doing at once. And I would like to chat with you at the same time. I don't know who's going to win.

We'll try. If you're a visitor this morning, you've registered at the visitor's desk. Just drop that little visitor slip in the offering basket so the Bible school people will know you're here.

[1:02] If you stay for Sunday morning church, you'll fill out a visitor's card from us and give us a card during the church service. How many of you have your summer brochure in your hand or in your Bible? Come on.

All right. Open it up. Okay. I would like to chat with you and I don't have a lot of time, but I would like to remind you that the summer is a wee bit different than most summers.

Now, throughout the past two or three years, we have brought in speakers every Sunday morning on different subjects and that has worked well. And all of you have appreciated that. This summer and throughout the rest of this year, that brochure covers through the first of next year so you adults know what's going on.

Let me stop. I would still like you to take five, six, seven of these brochures off the table and pass them out to other people. We have printed enough to do that for a few weeks so you can invite others to come.

Now, I'm also aware, class, that you can't please everybody. And you can't always get a subject every Sunday that everybody's interested in.

[2:16] See, I'm a strange duck. I'm interested in everything, even though I don't like it. You know, I read about baseball because some guys want to talk about baseball and I don't want to appear to be a stupid idiot all the time.

I'm not that interested in baseball. But sometimes I think you just have to look at things you might think you're not interested too much in, but it has some value. And that's true with the Word of God sometimes.

Now, I trust you've caught on to the brochure. It is color-keyed for your convenience. There really are three subjects in this series. One is a subject of marriage, and I might say to you, the subject is marriage.

It's not family. And if you will look at the red titles, you will notice some of them are quite frank. And the series deals with them.

Now, this is a brand new series. In fact, I might say to you, we are taking a chance on all of these series. Some of them, as of today, are not even out of production.

[3:21] The one for next Sunday, we will be the first church in the nation to see that series, if it gets here. These are all brand new.

They are not famous named people that have produced them. But they are exceptional works. So that you see, we have not given you a series in a row saying we're going to take eight on marriage and then six on something else.

We have intermingled them on purpose so that you could have interest as you go along and invite people who might have a specific interest on some subject. Now, I'm saying this at the beginning and I realize that when we come to the second week in June, half of our people go on vacation. That's good because they're all here in August then. And I'll probably have to repeat myself for a couple, three weeks. The red-colored series is a film series from two fine spiritual professors on the subject of marriage, not family.

Now, pay attention to that as you read. The blue-colored series is a new series. And I'll be honest with you, Pastor McCullough and I have not even viewed it except in a synopsis form.

[4:39] It is a series that we have picked out a number of strips in regards to cults. Now, I know that's a touchy subject. But it is a subject which is necessary to look at today from a different viewpoint.

Next week is just a basic introductory series on film called Jesus of the Cults. Now, you better pray that that gets its ear. You're going to have to listen to me preach next Sunday morning at 9.30.

The third series is rather interesting, done by a friend of mine and a number of people know, Dr. Henry Brandt out of Detroit, Michigan. He is a psychiatrist.

He has been for years. But he's done a new series on personality, self-image development for the Christian. It is a new type of series for us.

That's the series that's marked in brown. It's really titled Personal Growth. It's a personality situation. Now, you realize the series from now on dovetails around these three subjects except for four or five Sundays that are just put in because we wanted to do something different.

[5:49] July 5th will be a different Sunday. There will be a Sunday on Christian education, as you notice. Other than that, you can see as we go along. So I'm saying to you, we are not running series sequentially.

We are interspersing them as we go along. We may have to make changes because we can't get the material when we want it. It is difficult to get dates lined up and get them in here and get them back out.

And I might say to you, so you might know, it's tremendously costly. It would be cheaper to bring an outside speaker in and pay his expenses.

So I bear that in mind. We try to give you things that are different. Some of it will be controversial. Most of you know I do not share, shy away from controversial subjects. If we don't like it, okay, we don't like it.

But we've got to listen to it sometimes. So I trust you'll get a little enthused. Sometimes I think you adults are a little blasé about coming at 9.30. I might say to you, Pastor McCullough has to knock himself out for six months to get this series straightened out.

[6:58] And we just don't take something that comes across the board because we want to fill something in. It has a purpose for us. And I trust you appreciate that. Now, very quickly, because I think the film is about 43 or 44 minutes this morning.

And it really is a basic introduction. And there is nothing new in the film. It is only new voices. I have given you a sheet this morning that is just for your own use.

And I find adults are very passive. They don't like to participate. Sometimes they don't like to think. But I do think it would help you if you would quickly look at the front of this page before you view this film.

I had hoped that you would share the back, but we won't have time for that this morning. We'll have to do that during some other time of the series. Sometimes it helps, class, if you know what to look for as you're viewing a film.

You get done with the film and you say, Oh, I wish I could see it again right away because I would like to review something or get something extra out of it. All right, look at something. Four sections are to be considered.

[8:01] Look at your paper. You will notice they work on the difference between a God designed for marriage and present day view of marriage. Number two, we did not fill these in, but you should watch in the film for the three barriers to a happy marriage.

Now, I realize all of us and all of society has been inundated with the subject of marriage and we have a ho-hum attitude. Because there's so much on it nowadays, we don't seem to be interested. Pay attention to number two. Three, there are four types of love explained in the film under the original words used. That may not be important. It may not be new to you.

Then you will find in the film a part called love support system. Now, that's a new phrase. No one else has used that.

Pay attention when you get to these. We give you the little paper with some instruction to help you, not to just give you a piece of paper. On the back of this little paper, if we have time for evaluation, this is for your own good if you're going to use the series to profit.

[9:13] So, pay attention to this as we go along. I think we'll just move into the film. I think it's about 43 minutes long, which means we're going to run close to having to let out as soon as the film's finished.

We appreciate you coming. We would appreciate your comments. We don't expect you all to agree for the summer, but we expect you all to be faithful because God says you have to be. Okay, Dale? Let's see if it runs this morning. Let's see if it runs this morning.

Oh, Kevin, you are always making such a mess. It seems like I have to follow around behind you just mopping up. You are so careless. Mom, please let me go to Susan's now.

If I wait till Daddy gets home, I may never get to go. Becky, I don't want to be hassled about it. You know you're grounded until your father changes his mind, so just hush. All right.

[10:32] Well, sounds like everything's in great shape around here. Daddy, this broccoli's yucky cold.

Kevin, I told you to eat it. Every bite. That stuff does taste terrible when it's cold. Jerry, if you would have been home when you said you would be, Becky would be at Susan's, and the broccoli wouldn't be cold.

Boy, marriage is some fun. The problems Jerry and Carol face are all too common. You see, both of them came into marriage with high expectations, and now they're afraid that they never will have the satisfying relationship they really need and want.

Out of concern for the quality of marriages in America, longtime friends Dr. Carl Burkin and Dr. Paul Faulkner have created the Marriage Enrichment Seminar, and the response has really been tremendous.

More than 40,000 people have already attended the seminar, and their schedule's filled for the next five years. To meet this ever-increasing demand, we've put their seminar on film. The Marriage Enrichment Seminar includes eight sessions with Drs. Burkin and Faulkner each making four presentations.

[11:46] Those include made for each other, the trouble with us is me, what husbands need to know, what wives need to know, how to kill communication, the communication lifeline, speaking frankly about sex, and renewing romance in marriage.

I think you will find each session to be filled with spiritual insight. There will be some humor, and there will be sound suggestions for a happier marriage. The first session will be conducted by Dr. Carl Burkin, who received his doctorate at Southwestern Baptist Seminary.

He's presently a professor of family relations at Abilene Christian University. He's a family counselor and co-author of the book, Whatever Happened to Mom, Dad, and the Kids? Because of his work as a family counselor, Dr. Burkin is well aware that many of us share Jerry and Carol's disappointment.

Our marriages just haven't worked out quite as we expected. His presentation will outline God's expectations for our marriages, and that's even better than you might have imagined.

So let's join Dr. Burkin in the session entitled, Made for Each Other. The next several hours, we're going to be talking about ways to enrich your marriage.

[13:03] This marriage enrichment seminar has been built on the premise that every marriage can be a better marriage. We also believe that most marriages can be significantly better than they are with a minimum of time and effort and energy if it is intelligently appropriated to the relationship.

All of us, I'm sure, are deeply concerned about the divorce rate in our country. I find that it's fairly easy to keep the divorce rate at arm's length until somebody that you love is involved in that kind of an emotional experience.

Several weeks ago, I received a letter that begins, Dear Dr. Burkin, I really don't know if I should write or not, but I need to talk to someone, and I don't have the nerve to face anyone. My marriage with Jimmy has just about had it, and I don't know what to do anymore.

I'm not even sure I love him or ever have. We dated for a year and a half before we got married and had sex together most of that time. What I thought was love was just physical attraction.

I realized this about four or five months before we got married. I thought about calling it off, but it seemed too late to. I'd grown to depend on the relationship, but now I wish I had called it off.

[14 : 16] We fought a lot before we got married, but I thought maybe things would straighten out after we got married. Now I realize it doesn't work that way. We still fight a lot, and I hate it. When we have a fight, it's terrible.

We yell at each other, curse at each other, throw things at each other, and actually hit each other. Last night, we had one blank of a fight. He was in the living room, and I went into the bathroom and shut the door and turned on the gas.

I really wanted to kill myself, and I would have, too, if he hadn't smelled the gas. I had nearly passed out when he came in and carried me out. Sometimes it seems like the only way out. In writing you, I'm not sure what I really want. I guess I'm looking for some last hope to try to save my marriage. If you've got any suggestions, please let me know. And she signed it.

When you realize that the divorce rate in our country has been climbing steadily since World War II, that the number of divorces doubled between 1950 and 1966, doubled again between 1966 and 1975, and is well on the way to doubling again in the decade since 1975.

[15 : 27] We're going to pass, in all probability, a million and a half, for example, divorces this year. And yet you realize that even the divorce rate doesn't tell the story.

Because there are a lot of marriages that are still intact. There are people that are still living together and putting up a front of having a good marriage where deep problems exist under the surface of that relationship.

For example, one nationally known observer believes that 80% of all the marriages in our country are less than what this observer would call good.

And that identifies almost perfectly with an Ohio State University study that I picked up several years ago that said five out of every six marriages in our country is broken either in the court or in the heart.

And yet, when you think about the divorce rate and the terrible problems that are even existing in marriages that are still intact, there is a statistic that really comes forward to give us a great deal of courage.

[16 : 31] In a lecture several months ago now, Billy Graham is quoted as citing a study that said where two people go to church together, the divorce rate is one out of 40.

And if they not only go to church together, but study the Bible together at home and pray at home together, he says the divorce rate is one in 400. And it seems to me that the thing that that says to us more than anything else is, if all else fails, read the directions.

We believe that God has made us and he has left us with instructions about the marriage relationship. And because of that, I want us to take a look at some of the biblical background as we begin to think together about being made for each other in the marriage relationship.

And as you open the Old Testament, one of the first things that you notice is that seven times in Genesis chapter 1, God creates something and then he steps back and says, that's good.

Now, I don't know how you like to study the Bible, but if you'll bear with me a moment, one of my favorite ways to study the Bible is to imagine that I am sitting in the branches of a tree watching what's going on. And if you would allow me, and you may join me if you like, to sit in the branches of this tree and watch God create, let's watch.

[17 : 51] We sit in the branches of the tree and God creates something and he steps back and he puts his hands on his hips and he looks it over and he says, that's good. And he creates something else.

And he steps back and looks at it and he says, that's good. And he creates something else and he looks at it and says, that's good. Seven times in Genesis 1, God says, that's good. And then in chapter 2, verse 18, God says, that's not good.

And if I were in the tree, I would want to say, what'd you make it for? And I think the Lord would say, hush. I'm not through yet.

But what God is looking at when he says that's not good is a man alone. A man alone. I want to write that word on the board as we begin.

Because I believe it's one of the early clues as to the meaning of marriage and its purpose that's given to us in the Bible. One of the interesting things, though, in Genesis chapter 2 is right after God says it's not good for the man to be alone.

[19:02] The Bible says that God ran all of the animals by Adam and let Adam name them and then it says, but there was not one found fit for the man.

And if I were in my tree, I would say, Lord, what did you expect? You see, there's a giraffe that comes by and old Adam says, let's name it a giraffe, but that won't do for a wife.

And there's a hippopotamus that comes by and Adam says, you know, hippopotamus, but that won't do for a wife. And there's a badger and you just, you know, you just run all of the animals by Adam and Adam names them, but there was not one found that was fit for Adam.

But of course, it's not God that doesn't know what's going on. It's Adam that God is trying to get ready for the next creative act, which is going to be something that is so astounding that the world has never seen anything like it up until this particular point.

But before Adam is ready for that creation of someone to share his life, Adam must feel his aloneness. I'm convinced that none of us is really ready for marriage until we feel our aloneness.

[20:15] In 1969, my father died. And in the next several weeks, we live about three hours from my mom. And so we would drive up to Oklahoma to visit in her home.

Stacy was six at the time. Our baby. So in the next several times that we visited my mom, Stacy would sleep with Annie. And mom told us the story one morning after we had been there one night and Stacy had slept with her.

And as they had gone to bed the night before, Stacy had said, Annie, do you ever get lonely?

Forty-six years plus mom and dad had been husband and wife.

And now he's gone and Stacy says, do you ever get lonely? And mom said, you bet. I sure do. And she said, tears came to her eyes.

I was glad it was dark. Stacy's never been one to let things alone. So the next question says, Annie, do you ever cry? And mom said, yeah, Stacy, I cry myself, sleep nearly every night.

[21:20] Do you hear what she's saying? She's saying, we've grown to depend on each other. We've grown to love each other. We've shared all these years and all these kids and the depression and, you know, we've shared all of these things and he's gone and now, you know, I'm alone.

God said, it's not good for the man to be alone. And so, when Adam felt his aloneness, the next verses tell us that God created someone to share his life.

God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam and he took a rib from his side and of that rib he created someone to share Adam's life. And when Adam comes forth from his sleep and finds this woman, you can't translate what Adam said into English.

It just won't translate. Adam was obviously beside himself. Genesis 2.24 says, a man leaves his father and mother and he cleaves.

He cleaves to his wife. That cleaving is a commitment. It's a commitment for a lifetime together. A little bit later on, the Old Testament in Malachi 2.16 is going to say, God hates divorce.

[22:32] God never did intend for that original relationship to be broken once it is created. And so, a man leaves his father and mother and he cleaves to his wife and the two become one flesh.

That one fleshness is the sexual relationship. So basic, so vital, so important to the marriage relationship. About 1,500 years after Moses originally wrote these words, Jesus is going to quote them and he'll pick up the leave and cleave and one flesh and add to those words what therefore God has joined together.

Let not man put asunder. And what Jesus is saying there is that man may choose. In some societies, parents may select. In other societies, in more modern times, we may be allowed to select.

But once the selection process is passed and two people come together in the marriage relationship, Jesus says, God ordains that relationship and joins them together and what God has joined together, let not man put asunder.

I'm convinced that the three great barriers to a happy marriage are, and let me enumerate them for you. Number one is selfishness. Number two is pride. Number three is low self-esteem.

[23:54] Selfishness is the big problem in the marriage relationship. As a matter of fact, selfishness is the big problem in your life and selfishness is the big problem in my life. It's my biggest problem. It's your biggest problem.

But when selfishness intrudes in the marriage relationship, the normal reaction to a selfish act on my part is resentment, which is a form of pride on the part of my partner in this marriage relationship.

If I come home late, if I choose to do something else instead of what I told her I was going to do, if I act selfishly in such a way that it leaves the impression that she's not there or that she's not important or that she doesn't count, there is resentment that builds up inside her.

It's a form of pride. And so selfishness and pride are the number one and the number two barriers to a happy marriage. But now, pride also comes into a marriage from a different direction.

For example, here is a guy and he grows up with everyone telling him how handsome he is, how macho he is, how striking he is. And when he's little, everybody tells him when you grow up, you're really going to be a heartbreaker.

[25 : 01] And so he grows up thinking of himself as being God's gift to the ladies. And he thinks as he decides on who he's going to spend the rest of his life with, he thinks to himself, any woman that catches me is really going to have a fine catch because I am just going to be a fantastic husband for her.

And so he goes into the marriage relationship filled with pride thinking she's going to be pleased to spend the rest of her life waiting on me hand and foot. Let me sit in my big green chair and watch TV and drink coffee or do whatever it is I please and she's going to be pleased to spend the rest of her life waiting on me hand and foot.

And she's not, is she ladies? About 15 minutes of that is long enough and then she's going to want him to pull his share of the weight in that relationship. Or here's a young girl that comes into the marriage relationship essentially the same way.

She grows up, everyone convinces her that she's gorgeous, she's just a knockout. And so as she goes through the dating process, she is convinced that she's the greatest catch of all time and maybe a guy will even say to her, sweetheart, I'm not in love with you yet, you're not in love with me yet, but I know you're going to be because all I want to do is to spend the rest of my life making you happy.

And she thinks, I don't mind if he does. And so she marries him and decides I'm going to spend the rest of my life just sitting on the couch eating chocolate candy and watching the soaps.

[26 : 26] and that lasts maybe all afternoon, some afternoon, and then he wants her to begin to pull her share of the weight in the marriage relationship.

And so pride comes into the marriage relationship from that direction. Low self-esteem comes in from the other direction, doesn't it? Because many of us have grown up in families where our parents have convinced us that we're no good, we're never going to amount to anything, we never live up to their expectations, we never live up to their standards, we never live up quite to what they want us to be and what they want us to do, and we come into the marriage relationship convinced that no one could really love us because we're not lovable.

And so anybody who tries to convince us that they love us is conning us. And we've got to be suspicious and we've got to watch for ulterior motives. And so low self-esteem comes into the marriage relationship from the other direction and it is devastating to relationships and we've all experienced those things.

You know, many people go into marriage thinking the marriage relationship is 50-50. Have you ever heard that? Marriage relationship is going to be 50-50? Marriage relationship can't be 50-50, can it? Never could be, never will be. You know why the marriage relationship can't be 50-50? There are a number of reasons. First one is because I don't recognize my 50 when it comes. When I get to about 42, I think that's close enough for my 50.

[27 : 52] And when my wife gets to about 48, she usually thinks that's probably close enough for her 50. And so we can spend the rest of our lives fighting and scrapping about those 10% in the middle there.

Many of the problems of the marriage relationship are over fairly minor, proportionately, things in that relationship. And so in reality, I don't reach my 50% until in my perception of it, I've reached about 60%.

And the wife doesn't reach her 50 until she's reached past the 50. And so both of us must be willing to give more than we get in the marriage relationship as we perceive it. Let me ask you a question. Who gives more in your marriage? Think about that just a moment. Who gives more in your marriage? Some experts made up a little test that asked that question. And the thing that they found was astounding because what they found was that in good marriages, both partners say the other one does.

And so if you thought, well, by the way, I do. Welcome to the Marriage Enrichment Seminar. We have some things we'd like to say to you.

[29:06] The cure, the cure to the problems of the marriage relationship is love. You knew that all the time, didn't you? The cure is love. The problem with love is that most of us have trouble knowing what love means because we use the word in so many different ways.

We use the word to talk about loving picnics and loving food and loving grandmother and loving apple pie and loving, you know, all kinds of different things. And so let me share some experiences that I've had with you about love.

A couple comes into my office and they say, Dr. Rakeen, we want to get married. One of the questions I almost always ask couples is, why do you want to get married? And they always look at me like I've got a hole in my head.

And they say, because we're in love. If you're in love, you ought to get married, right? And I always tell them, wrong. You shouldn't get married just because you're in love.

As a matter of fact, it's fairly easy to fall in love. The difficult part is staying in love, isn't it? It's fairly easy to fall in love. You did it once a week in elementary school and, you know, some of them lasted two and three weeks when you got to junior high and a month sometimes in senior high.

[30:15] But we just fall in and out of love. And so it's just out of sight. It's just ecstatic. It takes talent to blow a honeymoon. So they have a delightful honeymoon.

And they come back and imagine with me, Monday morning after the honeymoon is over, somebody's got to go to work. And if you'll imagine with me a moment, here are two people back to back in bed on Monday morning after the honeymoon and somebody has to go to work.

The alarm clock goes off and some unidentifiable hand reaches out and taps the snooze button and back under the cover. And two people in that beautiful never-never cobweb land where it is such tremendous sleeping lie back to back in bed.

Honeymoon's over. Somebody's got to go to work. She grew up in a family where her daddy fixed breakfast. You're ahead of me, aren't you?

She's in trouble. She's in trouble, isn't she? But would you believe I grew up in a family where my daddy fixed breakfast? For the first eight years of my marriage, I fixed breakfast before I found out that wasn't my job.

[31:22] I didn't have to fix breakfast. But here she is and her daddy fixed breakfast and so she begins to dream this dream, this beautiful dream.

He's going to slip quietly out of bed in just a few moments and he's going to slip into the kitchen and put on some coffee and some bacon and some eggs and in just a little while he's going to return and he's going to reach down and kiss me into awareness.

And I'm going to roll over and throw my arms around his neck and give him the biggest kiss that you've ever seen and then I'm going to discover that he's brought a breakfast tray and I'm going to sit up in bed and he's going to slip that breakfast tray over me and he's going to sit down on the other side and there on this beautiful breakfast tray of bacon and eggs and orange juice and coffee and one red rose in a white vase and being married is just going to be nobody moves.

He grew up in a family where his mother fixed breakfast like most of us did and he's dreaming exactly the same dream backwards. She's going to slip out of bed quietly so as not to wake me bring breakfast back in bed.

Being married is going to be fantastic but nobody moves. In a little while aware that nobody has moved he rolls over and he puts his arms around her and he begins to kiss her on the back of the neck and whispers in her ear sweetheart wouldn't bacon and eggs taste good this morning?

[32:50] And she turns over and responds and gives him a great big hug and kiss and says yes they would why don't you fix us son? And he sits right straight up in bed and says me?

Fix us son? That's your job and she begins to tear up and cry. You see here's love first morning after the honeymoon's over deciding who's going to fix breakfast the next 65 years or so.

Three days go by the waste basket fills up over in the corner. She wonders why doesn't he empty the waste basket? And the reason he doesn't empty the waste basket is that full waste baskets don't bother men.

Nobody ever told her that. But full waste baskets don't bother men. Full waste baskets bother women. You see a man can walk by that waste basket and throw paper on top or whatever on top of it and as long as it's in the general vicinity of the waste basket it's fine with him.

So she pulls the waste basket out in the middle of the floor and he stumbles over it and falls. And he picks himself up and he dusts himself off and he looks back at it and he says what in the world is that?

[34:09] And she stands on the other side of it and looks back with her hands on her hips and she says that dummy is a waste basket. And he says I know that. What's it doing in the middle of the floor?

And she says I thought if you could see it you'd empty it. And he says empty the waste basket that's your job and she says oh no it's not cooking breakfast is my job. Emptying the waste basket Now you see there they are.

Here is love standing on either side of a waste basket with its eyes flashing deciding who's going to empty the waste basket until they get a son old enough to empty the waste basket.

Love. So the thing that we try to tell people is that it's a whole lot easier to fall in love with a person than it is to stay in love with a person.

You can fall in love with a lot of people that you cannot possibly live happily with can't you? You can fall in love with a criminal. You can fall in love with a halfwit. You can fall in love with a scatterbrain.

[35:16] And you know I keep getting people punching each other. Some of you have heavenship. That wasn't really where that was intended to lead but it's a whole lot easier to fall in love than it is to stay in love.

So one of the things that we need to do at this upsetting session is to talk about love and what love is and how love functions in the marriage relationship. The Greeks had four different words for love and each one of them has a special role to play in our understanding of what a loving relationship really is intended to be.

The first word that the Greeks had was the word storge. It's a word for family love and it describes love that parents have for children and love that children have for their parents and love that brothers and sisters in a family have for each other storge love and storge love in the marriage relationship says I realize that you are a member of a family and because you are a member of a family and your family is important to you your family is going to be important to me.

The second word is the word eros and the word eros is a word for self-fulfilling love but the Greeks used it primarily for sexual love and in the marriage relationship erotic love says you are physically attractive to me.

The third word is the word phileo and the word phileo is a word that describes emotional love between two friends it's friendship love it's the enjoyment that two people have of going places together and doing things together and experiencing things together as friends and friendship love says I like you I enjoy being with you I enjoy going places with you I enjoy doing things with you I enjoy being with you you are my friend and the fourth word is the word agape and the word agape is a word for unselfish service it's a word that describes not the way we feel about another human being but the way we reach out to another human being and let me share with you a concept that came to me several months ago that I believe is a very important concept for the marriage enrichment seminar and for our understanding of what the marriage relationship is intended to be if you put sexual attraction there and if you put friendship there and if you put service and think of unselfish service there and then you draw boxes around these

[37:45] I believe that these two constitute romantic love eros is sexual attraction friendship is the way we enjoy being together and when you put those two together I believe you come up with romantic love one of the things that caused me to think in these terms was asking myself the question what do people mean when they say I love you let me ask you that question what do you mean when you say to each other I love you and you have a hard time getting a handle on that but one day I had sat in my office for about an hour listening to two people who were saying to me we don't love each other anymore and as they left I asked myself what were they saying turn it around and ask yourself what are two people saying when they say we don't love each other anymore and I began to make myself a list they're saying we don't enjoy being around each other anymore

I don't enjoy his company I don't enjoy chatting with her she nags she fusses she criticizes she complains I don't enjoy being with her anymore I don't enjoy being with him anymore and it dawned on me that what they were talking about was friendship and that what we basically mean when we say I love you to each other is you are my friend and it dawned on me that one of the greatest things in a marriage relationship is for two people who are husbands and wives to be best friends and if I were going to give you an assignment growing out of this first session together the

assignment would be for the two of you as husband and wife to become and be to each other best friends if you are not best friends learn to share learn to talk learn to communicate learn to enjoy things together and create things that you enjoy doing together because you're friends because I believe that it is at the heart of the marriage relationship and what it means for two human beings to be in love

I'm convinced that a combination of sexual attraction and friendship blends to make the romantic dimension of love but in order for that romantic dimension to be long term in order for it to really stretch out over the years and grow and develop and be a blessing to people's lives there has to be the agape love that is unselfish service and the best description of agape love in the New Testament is the description in 1 Corinthians 13 that is so familiar to every student of the Bible everyone who loves to study the word when Paul begins in verse 4 of 1 Corinthians 13 to say love is patient and kind love is not jealous or boastful it is not arrogant or rude notice that Paul is not discussing the way two people feel about each other instead the apostle is talking about the way you treat another human being love is patient it may not feel patience but it acts in patience love is kind it may not feel kindly as a matter of fact it may feel very unkindly at the moment but since God is ruling in our lives God has called us to express loving relationships to other people and so love is kind regardless of how it feels it will develop emotions in time but it need not have emotions at the moment love is not jealous or boastful it's not arrogant or rude it doesn't insist on its own way there is their selfishness and the apostle Paul tells us that love agape love this unselfish service to another human being reaches out to serve and so it stymies the very greatest problem there is in the marriage relationship no it's fairly easy to fall in love staying in love is the trick and so as you think about these definitions of love and their essential meaning so far as the marriage relationship is concerned let me sketch for you some things that I call elements in love support system I believe that these are elements that are absolutely essential if love is not only to develop but if it is to grow over a long period of time one of the first things that is important to a loving relationship is a quality of character in the individual who is doing the loving so many times a lack of character destroys a relationship it destroys a relationship because a person cannot be trusted one of the things that we tell young people constantly is there's no such thing as love at first sight but one of the reasons there's no such thing as love at first sight is that you cannot tell what's on the inside of a person by looking at the outside of a person and you cannot love deeply a person that you cannot trust deeply I believe that says volumes to us about the marriage relationship it says to those of us who are husbands and wives I need to be open and honest with my partner I need to share my life with my partner I need to share with my partner who I am and how I feel today and what I believe because you cannot love deeply a person that you cannot trust deeply and then I need to accept my part of the responsibility and I need to treat my partner fairly I need to do things that allow my partner to develop a deep trust in me but trust does not come quickly the second thing that is essential as a part of love support system is maturity one of the things that that we realize is that the divorce rate doubles when two teenagers get married if two young people are 19 or less both of them the divorce rate is 70% in the first five years and eventually reaches 85% it's not because they were not right for each other not because they were not meant for each other it was because they were not ready to accept the responsibilities that were involved in the marriage relationship and so it requires some maturity some willingness to accept responsibility some willingness to do something that I need to do rather than do something that I want to do a willingness to see a project through to the end that maturity is an important ingredient in a loving relationship a third ingredient in a loving relationship is common interests two people need to have a great many things in common if their relationship is to grow and develop and mature and they need to do a great many things together if they do not have things that they do together in common they need to develop more things that they can do together as husband and wife I know a number of husbands and wives who have developed skiing backpacking camping some things that neither of them had any particular interest in that both of them decided we need to do some things together and here is something that both of us have decided together that we can enjoy and so mutual interest becomes something that is an important ingredient in a happy marriage a fourth element in love support system is a good disposition and a good disposition has to do with the way you take life just the day you take day in day out living how do you take it when you don't get your way how do you take it when you win are you hard to live with how do you take it when things don't go exactly the way you wanted them to go can you can you still be pleasant to be around one of my favorite stories is a story that took place one night several years ago when our children were quite small we developed what we called family night half

birthdays were a part of our family night system and what happened was that when our children had birthday parties when they were real small their friends came and we enjoyed that but mom and I primarily directed traffic and cut cake and ice cream and you know tried to stay out of the way as best we could but along in those years we kept saying to each other we ought to have some time together where the family celebrates with each of its members as the honoree and so we came up with what we call family night and in these family nights on half birthday six months after your birthday we would go out to eat somewhere that was your choice and we would do something that evening that was your choice if you were the honored guest this particular night we were eating at McDonald's it wasn't my half birthday and we were eating at

[46 : 33] McDonald's and coming in the south door of McDonald's that night as we were about halfway through our evening meal we were sitting back on the east side about halfway back laughing and eating our hamburgers having a good time coming in the front door of McDonald's was a mother and a father and two small children and a grandmother and as the door opened as I looked up and noticed father had opened the door and mother came through the door first and she had a scowl on her face that would make you think she's been drinking vinegar or eating something very bitter or sour we decided later that they had voted on where to go to eat and she had lost but anyway dad opened the door and in came mom and the two kids and the grandmother and they wheeled around and took the booth right by the door and mom took those two kids and almost literally pitched them in that booth and then pinned them in dad stood to take the orders for the family and as he took the orders he went over to get them got them brought them back distributed them and mom took the paper off of her hamburger and took the top off of it and looked at it and it obviously was not the way she had ordered it and so she put the top back down and she stuck it back up in his face and I couldn't hear what she said to him and my wife wouldn't let me move close enough to hear but she told him in no uncertain terms how to fix that hamburger next time and so he took it back and got it fixed the way she ordered it brought it back he was embarrassed about all of these things that were going on but he handed her hamburger back she took the paper off again and took the top off of the hamburger and look at this time it was evidently what she had ordered and the way she had ordered it so she put the top back down put it in her mouth and you could just see it curdled all the way down to her stomach and ever since that night I've used that woman as a bad example of a woman with a bad disposition because I am and I'm convinced that there is a woman who has a character flaw because there is no earthly reason for her to put her family through what she's putting them through regardless of what's happened before they've arrived what she thinks is if

I'm probably if I'm ugly enough next time they'll go where I want to go what she doesn't realize is that next time they won't invite her they'd rather stay home than have her with them acting this way but here is a woman with an obvious character flaw here are four elements in love's support system character maturity common interests and a good disposition things that two people who are going to be in love over a long period of time need in their lives if they are going to have a love together that endures over time it's fairly easy to fall in love it's difficult many times to stay in love over a long period of time will you pray with me we'll close this session together our father we're so deeply grateful to you for life for the excitement of being in love excitement of having children and going to love them to know them to watch them grow develop to watch our own love as husband and wife grow and develop father we're grateful for your creative design and for the instruction that you have given us in your word as to how that life together should be lived we pray your blessings upon us as we study this precious relationship may we see a vision of our relationship as you want it to be in the name of Jesus we pray amen this concludes the first session of the marriage enrichment seminar in our next session dr.

paul faulkner will discuss the greatest problem in marriage in a presentation entitled the trouble with us is me we hope you can join us you you you you you