

CULTIVATING MARITAL LOVE

The divorce rate is proof that there is a wholesale failure of so many marriages in this country. There is a need to cultivate marital love. Webster defines the word cultivate as follows: "1. To prepare and use soil, land, etc., for growing crops; till. 2. To break up the surface soil around (plants) in order to destroy weeds, prevent crusting, and preserve moisture...to improve or develop (plants) by various horticultural techniques. 5. To improve by care, training; or study; refine (to cultivate one's mind). 7. To seek to develop familiarity with; give one's attention to; pursue." Certainly, in marriage, there is the constant need to eliminate the negatives that would destroy the proper relationship between the husband and wife. Every effort must be made to keep the marriage from "crusting". Love will become hard if not cultivated. Care must be given in preserving and maturing marital love. This requires wisdom, knowledge and training to develop (cultivate) this love. "For the love of a woman is a shoot, not a seed. And flourishes most vigorously only when grafted on that love which is rooted in the breast of another" (Colton). Here are some suggestions that will enable marital love to be mature with the passing of the years.

First of all, husbands and wives should learn early in their marriage to give themselves totally to each other. Love is something that must be given away in order to receive it. This is certainly true in the sexual relationship (see I Corinthians 7:1-6). Marriage is not a fifty-fifty relationship but the giving of oneself one hundred percent in making it work.

Second, there is the need to be unselfish in marriage. "Love seeketh not her own" (I Corinthians 13:5). One should seek the other's good and welfare at all time. If one is not careful, selfishness will prevent this from happening. Selfishness is a root sin that contributes to many marital problems.

Third, love should be expressed in words as well as in actions. A gift is good but is no substitute for the beautiful words, "I love you." Love's characteristics such as patience, kindness, generosity, humility, courtesy, unselfishness, good temper, guilelessness, and sincerity will be found in a good marriage (I Corinthians 13:4-8).

Four, learn never to hold a grudge. When a tea-kettle cannot release the steam, trouble is about to happen. Partners should not harbor resentments. Paul wrote, "Be ye angry and sin not; let not the sun go down upon your wrath" (Ephesians 4:26). Sure, there will be disagreements but how beautiful it is when there is forgiveness and reconciliation. When one has been wrong, there is the need to learn to say, "I am sorry." And, the response should be, "I forgive you."

Fifth, couples should avail themselves of good literature based on biblical principles that will aid them in settling problems and informing them of positive ways by which they can improve their marriage. There might also come the time when someone else should be consulted. That person might be a professional counselor, an elder, a preacher or a good friend. The institution of marriage is so precious in the eyes of God that every effort should be made to save this relationship.



Raymond Elliott

Remember in Prayer

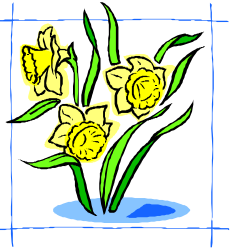
Faye Brown is at Princeton Room 6109

Sam Swiney is at Princeton in North step-down unit

Sara Morgan is in Walker Baptist Medical Center in room 2102

Martha Wiley fell and hurt her back, and is home-bound.

Dan Pulley is at UAB in room 9312



Mark Your Calendar/2009

Apr. 25 -- Ladies' Day with
Cindy Colley

May 1-2--Renew @ ICYC (9th-12th grade)

May 1--Keenagers trip to Homestead Hollow

May 8-9 -- Men's Retreat

May 21--Senior Banquet

June 7-10 -- Gospel Meeting: **Ken Tyler**

July 5-10 -- Ronnie's week @ICYC

July 26-29 -- VBS

Oct. 11-14 -- Gospel Meeting:

Curtis A. Cates

Oct. 17 -- Family Fun Day @ Tannehill

Dec. 31 -- New Year's Eve Singing

Jr. and Sr. High Devo, Friday April 24th at 6:00 PM, at the home of Brad and Kim Strange.

K- 5th grade Devo, April 26th in the fellowship hall following evening Worship.

Renew @ ICYC will be May 1-2, This youth workers retreat is also available for our young people, grades 9-12. The cost is \$30. Please let Chance know by Wednesday April 22, if you plan on attending.



Ladies' Day April 25, 2009

Please come for a day of devotion and fellowship for our Ladies' Day with **Cindy Colley** as our special guest speaker. The Theme:

My Peace I Leave With You

Registration begins @ 8:30am with hospitality breakfast. Our program will begin at 9:00am. Lunch will be provided. For more information call 205-674-5659

Our Members With Long Term Needs

David Burford, Sara Morgan, Earl Martin

Gertrude Blackwell, Ruby Glidewell, Ruth Parsons,

Bernice Snow, Glenn Terry

Military

Please remember the following who are currently serving for our country: **Tyler Burger, Mark Davis, Chris Ham & Chris Pridmore**



Keenagers, your next trip is to Homestead Hollow, on Friday May 1, 2009. The cost will be \$8.00 each. See the sign up sheet on the table in the foyer.

Visitation Team Meeting

Visitation Team #4 which includes their Captain, **Stentsen & Erin Ellenburg** and members: **Eulan & Robbie McCaleb, Paul, Alberta, & Hunter McCaleb, Alan, Michelle & Sarah McCaleb, Nathan & Crystal Harr, Marcelle Yeilding, Becky & Caleb Kersh, Tera & Robby Harden, Brian & Ivy Wolfe, Gloria Wolfe, Pat Graham, Linda Graham, Nick & Jennifer Rouse, Billy & Betty Cash, Chad & Teale Yeilding, Mark & Shanna Griffin** and **Finley Tuggle** will meet Sunday after the morning service. Visitors will be invited as an honored guest to share this meal with Team #4. This is a great opportunity to work in God's Kingdom. Continue to make your plans to prepare food and enjoy this time of fellowship.

