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# Am I in Love?

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**W**HAT IS IT? Have I experienced it? Is there hope of my finding it? How will I know when I possess it? When it overwhelms me, how long will it last? Will I recognize it when it comes near? What can I do to hurry its arrival? Must I be cautious of a counterfeit? Is there one? Will I know for sure when I am in love?

Have you stopped to realize how distorted this word is in today's human relationships? Many think love is showing kindness. To some of the younger generation making love is SEX. (How sad!) Many a person falls out of love when the moonlight and roses pass and fade. Does love mean we understand one another perfectly? Never argue? Agree about everything? Being appreciated and showered with nice things?

## Love's Action

Love is never found in a smug self-satisfied individual. Love is the opposite of selfishness. It is always going into action for the benefit of another. Note God's action resulting from His love: "Beloved, let us love one another; for love is of God, and everyone that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love. In this was manifested the love of God toward us, 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" (I John 4:7-10). "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" (John 3:16).

Love for another individual motivates our granting his or her every desire and request. Our love for Christ indicates clear evidence of such possession. "If ye love me, keep my commandments. He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me; and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him" (John 14:15,21).

## Love's Definition

Love is an unselfish, self-sacrificing desire and passion to MEET THE NEEDS of the cherished person. After a complete survey of all His creatures, God concluded there was no one to meet the needs of man. Thus His motivation in presenting a woman to be the help that man needs. His supply indicated his incompleteness

without the woman. He needed assistance. "And the Lord said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help fit for him" (Genesis 2:18).

The needs of any individual are clearly known and identified. There are spiritual, emotional, intellectual, social and physical needs. This same development of Christ into manhood is clearly portrayed in Luke 2:52:

"And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man." The basic needs of a woman are security, love, home and children. The basic needs of man are confidence in his ability, physical satisfaction and accomplishment of desires. Prior to falling in love, there are two questions that must be answered: (1) Who is my master? (2) What is my purpose in life? (3) With whom am I going to spend the rest of my life? There is no hope of two people pleasing each other independent of pleasing the Lord first and foremost. "But seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matthew 6:33).

Love places us in subjection to the one we love. "Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God" (Ephesians 5:21). Is there an ability to surrender to each other independent of such a relationship with God, who demands the same from all of us?

1. **Surrender to the one loved.** You are to love a person, not just a body. If your love is on the physical level only, you may marry a person who is emotionally immature, mentally dumb, and socially incompatible.

2. **A reverent attitude.** Such an attitude places the object of your love on a pedestal. Reverence means you will not contaminate or defile one another prior to marriage. The person you love is given you by God. You will answer to Him for your treatment of him or her. You never ask for or surrender something that will cause you loss of respect for yourself or the other person. The greater the intimacy, the greater the reverence and sacredness of your relationship. If you are God's man and she is God's woman, act accordingly.

3. **Giving yourself for their benefit.** Devote your entire life to the other person. Many are in love with only themselves. Such relationship will bring contamination. It is more blessed to give than to receive. "Delight thyself also in the Lord and he will give thee the desires of thine heart" (Psalms 37:4).

4. **A willingness to take responsibilities.** Privileges, pleasures and advantages are never independent of responsibilities. You assume them for the benefit of the other person.

5. **You have joy in their presence and pain in your separation.** You are to delight in one another's presence.

6. **Mutual enjoyment of each other.** Something is wrong in your relationship if there is a constant need of

physical expression for enjoyment. Physical is only a part of the whole relationship. Sexual promiscuity before marriage assures it alter marriage. Most affairs during marriage were started before marriage.

7. **Protection of the one you love.** You do not speak sarcastically of your partner. You are one another's number one cheering fan.

8. **Belonging to each other.** You are wrapped up in each other's needs. Share ALL THINGS with one another.

9. **Understand one another.** Talk freely about ALL THINGS. Determine to have the same attitude about important things. Communicate at ALL TIMES.

10. **Maturing character of Christlikeness.** You are not complete. God is not through working with you. Much of what God desires to teach you is still ahead. He will use your spouse for much of the teaching process.

Very few couples you know are meeting the needs of one another. Nothing is more important during a life-time. Should you find a place of prayer and ask God for genuine love for your husband or wife? He has it for you!

Now a few words to those not married. A question I have been asked in youth seminars and conferences is, *How do I know when I am in love?* I sincerely hope the following principles help you to face your own situation.

### **Is It Genuine Love?**

1. Does my boyfriend indicate an interest in me for his benefit or mine?
2. Is my girlfriend willing to let me become a strong tower to her?
3. Are there traits of immaturity in his or her character?
4. Is my partner a hard, diligent and dependable worker on his job, in our relationship, and before the Lord?
5. Do we have fellowship together with God in prayer and Bible study?
6. Is she willing to leave her parents and trust me completely for her future?
7. What is her or his attitude toward other people?
8. Will he or she talk about me in a derogatory manner as he or she does about others?
9. Am I the next to the most important influence in his or her life?
10. Do we practice encouraging each other?
11. Is our relationship only on a physical level?

12. Is he a better man today than when I first met him?
13. Is her or his presence sufficient satisfaction for me?
14. Are we already granting each other too many liberties prior to our wedding day?
15. Am I confident of his ability to lead us into the complete will of God for the rest of our lives?
16. Is she or he already stubborn and immature?
17. Are there matters in our relationship that I am fearful of dealing with?
18. Is my partner more interested in his personal welfare than mine?
19. Does he or she have a great motivation to please me?
20. Does his or her action measure up to the statements made under moonlight and roses.
21. Is there a hesitation to talk about anything that is upon our minds?
22. Can we advise one another freely for improvement in any area of our lives?
23. Will he or she make a good, kind parent of my children?
24. Can I trust my life and children to this life-time leadership?
25. Am I sure she will be a good mother and wife instead of a career gal?

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