

Forever In Love

The world does not own love. As a matter of fact, the world did not author love. The God Who is love originated it. The best the world can do is try to make a copy of the real thing. God is romantic, He called Israel His wife and the Church is His bride. We call His return "The Rapture.". In the inspired writings He called the eight chapters describing the romantic love between a man and woman "The Song of Songs Which is Solomon's" (Song of Solomon 1:1). God was saying of all the songs in the Bible this is the song of all songs!

As we contemplate Valentine's Day, we want to encourage you from the Bible to stay romantically inclined. Some well meaning people believe romantic love to be a carnal expression because of the way the world has taken this concept and attempted to twist it into something vulgar. Don't let Satan rob us what God has freely given to His children to enjoy within the confines of holy matrimony. A definition of romance is: "a quality or feeling of mystery, excitement, and remoteness from everyday life or to court; woo." Examine Song of Solomon 8:6 and 7 and tell me if you do not think this qualifies as romance: *"Set me as a seal upon thine heart, as a seal upon thine arm: for love is strong as death... Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it: if a man would give all the substance of his house for love, it would utterly be contemned."* The Lord intends not only that romance be involved in bringing us to love but also to keeping us in love. How do we stay forever in love? Let me suggest this occurs...

1. ...when we feel secure in our love.

Song of Solomon 1:5-7 says, *"I am black, but comely, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, as the tents of Kedar, as the curtains of Solomon. Look not upon me, because I am black, because the sun hath looked upon me: my mother' children were angry with me; they made me the keeper of the vineyards; but mine own vineyard have I not kept. Tell me, O thou whom my soul loveth, where thou feedest, where thou makest thy flock to rest at noon: for why should I be as one that turneth aside by the flocks of thy companions?"* The Shulamite maiden complains that she has been in the sun so much that her skin has taken a hue that in those days was considered a sign of someone thought to be unlovely. She says her older siblings have forced her into taking care of the family business in the vineyard and unlike the foliage around her, she was unkempt. To use modern language, she is saying, "My hair needs serious attention, my nails look like an auto mechanic's and I am just an overall mess." Then her language shifts as she inquires, *"Tell me, O thou whom my soul loveth, where thou feedest, where thou makest thy flock to rest at noon."* In other words, she tells us that her shepherd lover loves her no matter how she looks or what she possesses. Ah, these are the words of one secure in her love!

2. ...when we have no competition.

Song of Solomon 2:16 says, *"My beloved is mine, and I am his: he feedeth among the lilies."* Song of Solomon 7:10 again says, "I am my beloved's and his desire is toward me." These are words spoken by one who knows she is number one in her beloved's eyes. There are no sideline maidens competing for his affection. Everyone wants to be someone's "one-and-only."

3. ...when we know your mate is faithful.

The Shepherd/King says of his bride in Song of Solomon 4:1, *"Behold, thou art fair, my love; behold, thou art fair; thou hast doves' eyes within thy locks: thy hair is as a flock of goats, that appear from mount Gilead."* The Shulamite speaks of her bridegroom, *"His eyes are as the eyes of doves by the rivers of waters, washed with milk, and fitly set"* (Song of Solomon 5:12). Research has shown us there is a strong symbolic link between doves and lovers. Because mated pairs of this species stay together over many years, and possibly for life, the birds have long been associated with love and faithfulness. The birds are famous in more modern poetry and literature as well: Shakespeare, Edmund Spenser, and even Buddy Holly made reference to the birds. "The Turtle Dove," a well-known folksong, links Turtle Doves to faithful love and to the belief that if one of a pair dies, the other will never take a new partner. Luke 11:34 says, *"The light of the body is the eye: therefore when thine eye is single, thy whole body also is full of light; but when thine eye is evil, thy body also is full of darkness."* Jesus teaches in this passage, that when the eye is focused fully on the object of love, behavior is affected. If we lose focus and become diverted with someone else, darkness veils and covers what was intended for light, clarity and conviction. When our eye is focused like the eyes of a faithful dove on our one-and-only, faithfulness is appreciated, which is breeding ground for true romantic love.

4. ...when we are convinced of the absence of agenda and ulterior motives.

Song of Solomon 2:4 says, "He brought me to the banqueting house, and his banner over me was love." God did not intend for us to be kind and thoughtful to each other simply to get our way or to obtain favors from one another. True love gives without demanding. When ulterior motives are removed and when we love each other with no agenda, the natural godly reciprocation is returned from that same heart of love.

5. ...when we enjoy each other's presence to the max.

Song of Solomon 2: 6 says, *“His left hand is under my head, and his right hand doth embrace me.”* In these inspired words we see a man who is not preoccupied with other interests. He is not in the mode of not letting the left hand know what the right hand knows, which is the point Jesus was making in the matter of benevolent giving (Matthew 6:3). On the contrary, when it comes to loving your spouse you are to be fully informed and very aware of your mate’s deepest needs and longings. When a woman is convinced she has the undivided attention of her husband, she beams. We are never to live as though we endure each other’s presence; we are to live in such a way that it is apparent, especially to our spouse that we value and thoroughly enjoy each other’s presence.

6. ...when our home is a respite.

Song of Solomon 2:11-13 says, *“For, lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone; The flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land; The fig tree putteth forth her green figs, and the vines with the tender grape give a good smell. Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away.”* In these beautiful words we understand that although the world is a cold and distant place, our home becomes a royal palace of warmth and comfort. It may be winter outside but to use the words of some of our more modern poets, “I’ve got sunshine on a cloudy day. When it’s cold outside, I’ve got the month of May. Well, I guess you’d say, ‘what can make me feel this way?’ My girl. Talkin’ ‘bout my girl.” Romantic love blossoms in the springtime of the home, which has become a respite from our work and day-to-day existence.

7. ...when we allow nothing and no one between.

Song of Solomon 2:15 says, *“Take us the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the vines: for our vines have tender grapes.”* In the vineyards the large foxes and other animals make enough noise that the owner can hear the racket and quickly chase the robber of his vineyard away. However, the small foxes work so stealthily that he cannot be discovered until the grapes have been plucked and eaten. The loving couple of the Song of Solomon is giving each other the assurance that they will not allow anything or anyone in even the smallest way come between one another. This includes children, parents, work or work associates. Jesus said, *“For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife”* (Mark 10:7). There can never be the proper cleaving without the proper leaving. If we determine to keep it this way through the course of our marriage, happily ever after steps from the verbiage of fairy tales to reality.

-Pastor Pope-

