

Lutheran Church of the Master
580 Kuhn Road, Carol Stream, Illinois 60188
Curt Gerald, Interim Pastor
Saturday, March 6, 2010
A sermon for the wedding of STEPHANIE POSCH & DANIEL LEISEN

WORDS AND THE WORD

Reading #1:

From The Art of Marriage – BY Wilferd Peterson

The little things are the big things.
It is never being too old to hold hands.
It is remembering to say, "I love you" at least once a day.

It is never going to sleep angry.
It is at no time taking the other for granted;
the courtship should not end with the honeymoon,
it should continue through all the years.

It is having a mutual sense of values and common objectives.
It is standing together facing the world.
It is forming a circle of love that gathers in the whole family.
It is doing things for each other,
not in the attitude of duty or sacrifice,
but in the spirit of joy.

It is speaking words of appreciation,
and demonstrating gratitude in thoughtful ways.
It is not expecting the husband to wear a halo
or the wife to have the wings of an angel.
It is not looking for perfection in each other.

It is cultivating flexibility, patience,
understanding and a sense of humor.
It is having the capacity to forgive and forget.
It is giving each other an atmosphere
in which each can grow.

It is finding room for the things of the Spirit.
It is a common search for the good and the beautiful.
It is establishing a relationship in which
the independence is equal, dependence is mutual,
and the obligation is reciprocal.

It is not only marrying the right partner,
it is BEING the right partner.
This is "The Art of Marriage"

Reading #2:

Corinthians 13:1-13

If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. If I give all I possess to the poor and surrender my body to the flames, but have not love, I gain nothing.

Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.

Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away. For we know in part and we prophesy in part, but when perfection comes, the imperfect disappears. When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put childish ways behind me. Now we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known.

And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.

Homily – in addition to the reading and lesson above, this homily was based on two translations or paraphrases of Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 printed below:

Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 (New International Version)

[New International Version \(NIV\)](#)

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⁹ Two are better than one,
because they have a good return for their work:

¹⁰ If one falls down,
his friend can help him up.
But pity the man who falls
and has no one to help him up!

¹¹ Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm.
But how can one keep warm alone?

¹² Though one may be overpowered,
two can defend themselves.
A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.

Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 (The Message)

[The Message](#) (MSG)

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⁹It's better to have a partner than go it alone.
Share the work, share the wealth.

¹⁰And if one falls down, the other helps,
But if there's no one to help, tough!

¹¹Two in a bed warm each other.
Alone, you shiver all night.

¹²By yourself you're unprotected.
With a friend you can face the worst.
Can you round up a third?

A three-stranded rope isn't easily snapped.

Sometimes it is amazing how right on Scripture is. This passage from Ecclesiastes sounds very much like the instructions I received before my first backpacking trip into the Bighorn Mountains in Wyoming: "Remember, never be on the trail alone ... always make sure there are two or three of you ... preferably three ... so that if one of you gets hurt or sick, another one can stay with you while the third one goes for help."

"A three-stranded rope isn't easily snapped" (says the Message). "A cord of three strands is not easily broken" (says the NIV).

This is why in a few minutes the two of you will light the unity candle ... the symbol carries a lot of meanings ... my favorite one is that it represents the two of you coming into your marriage with the promise that if Christ is at the center of your marriage, you have a strong foundation.

In today's world we always have to be quick to say that Scripture doesn't say that we have to get married ... these verses could speak just as eloquently to single persons who will never make the promises you are about to make to each other to anyone ... for those who are single Scripture would still say that it is best not to

go through life all alone ... without friends, without significant others, without the many and various relationships that we find ourselves in on this earthly journey.

For those of us who are married, the second paragraph is true: "two in a bed warm each other ... alone you shiver all night." There are different times in life when those words are an understatement ... but, that is a little ways off for you yet!

"With a friend you can face the worst" ... isn't that true. When I'm really in the pits, I find myself calling Paul whose been my best friend for over 52 years ... or Bruce who has been a good friend for almost a dozen years ... just a word or an email or a message on the cell phone helps get through those difficult or awkward or painful times of life.

We've had the privilege of getting in on a few 50th anniversary parties lately ... my parents made it to their 68th. One of the things that impresses me about these folks who are still a little older than I am ... though I am rapidly catching up with them, is that they will often introduce their spouse of those many years as their best friend.

I join with the author of Ecclesiastes this afternoon in saying that I hope you will be able to say that as well ... not just 68 or 50 or 25 years from now ... but tomorrow and next month and next year ... I hope you'll be able to introduce each other to your friends or business acquaintances as "your wife ... your husband ... and your best friend."

And I also hope that from this moment on you will also be able to introduce people to the best friend of all who stands in the center of your individual lives and of your marriage and of your home and of your family (should you decide and be able to have a family) ... and his name is Jesus. With him as a third ... it will be difficult ... no ... it should be impossible ... to break the union that you make today.