

A Life of Love

*Alan and
Nicole Parker*





From an In-Love Fiancé

“I want to walk with you and talk with you and hold you in my arms at night. I want to listen to music with you and watch a candle flicker together, and read and pray and watch the stars. I want to warm myself in front of a roaring fire in the middle of winter, snuggled up to you and reading from a favourite book.”





The Hollywood Marriage



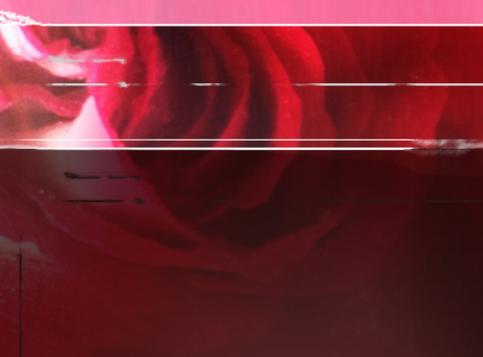
Hollywood Marriage:

- *Is founded on feelings of attraction*
- *Is all about mutual satisfaction*
- *Measures success based on happiness*
- *Is a contract rather than a covenant*

What drives a relationship?







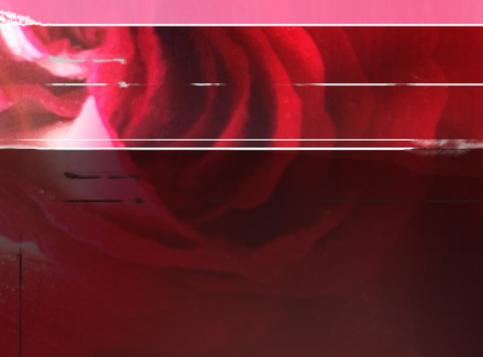
Ephesians 5:1, 2

“Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children. And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave Himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.”



Education, p. 154

“Unselfishness, the principle of God's kingdom, is the principle that Satan hates; its very existence he denies....It was to give in His own life an illustration of unselfishness that Jesus came in the form of humanity. And all who accept this principle are to be workers together with Him in demonstrating it in practical life.”



Ephesians 5:1, 2

“Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children. And walk in love....”

Ephesians 5:2 (The Message)

“Observe how Christ loved us. His love was not cautious but extravagant. He didn't love in order to get something from us but to give everything of himself to us.

Love like that.”



Die in Love



**New seatbelt design:
45% less car accidents!!**



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Ephesians 5:25

“Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her.”

“Gave Himself”

“The supreme test of love is whether it is prepared to forgo happiness in order that the other might have it. In this respect the husband is to imitate Christ, giving up personal pleasures and comforts to obtain his wife’s happiness.”

S.DA Bible Commentary, Vol. 6, pp. 1036-1037

The Happiness Tug-of-War



Ephesians 5:25

“Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.”

Happiness or holiness?





Ministry or manipulation?

A happiness goal leads to manipulation.

A holiness goal leads to ministry.

When holiness is our goal, we honor the other person as made in God's image and growing into His likeness.

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Attitudes of Honor

- *You belong to God*
- *You are made in God's image*
- *I give without expecting a return*
- *I want you to be successful*
- *God is using you to make me like Him*
- *I'll love you even if you don't respond with love*

Attitudes of Manipulation

- *You exist to serve me*
- *You are an object*
- *I give to get what I want from you*
- *I need you to make me happy*
- *You're the problem*
- *I'll love you as long as it "works" (i.e. changes you)*

Winston Smith, Marriage Matters, p. 84



A happy marriage or a holy one

Which one is the highest priority to you?

*“Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His
righteousness; and all these things shall be
added unto you.”*

Matthew 6:33



If you had to choose one...

Which one would be more important to you, happiness or holiness?

If your goal is happiness, you will never be fully happy.

If your goal is holiness, you may well achieve both.



The pursuit of happiness

*If your goal is happiness, your method of achieving it
will be selfishness.*

*If your goal is holiness, your method of achieving it will
be sanctification.*



What was wrong?

My GOAL was happiness instead of ministry to Alan.

My ANGER stemmed from him not fulfilling my goal.

I was seeking to be ministered unto, not to minister.

If your goal is happiness...

- Your contentment will rise and fall on your spouse's behavior.*
- When your spouse does not please you, you will seek to manipulate him or her.*
- You will swing from apathy to resentment, anger, disillusionment or depression.*
- You may find yourself thinking, "If only he/she would _____, I would be happy."*
- You will approach conflict self-protectively.*

If your goal is holiness...

- You will rely on Christ as the rock-solid foundation of your happiness, lovability and worth*
- You will approach conflicts with a primary desire “not to be ministered unto, but to minister.”*
- You will respond to conflicts lovingly and respectfully, whether or not you feel loved or respected.*
- You will bring to your home an atmosphere of heaven.*

