

Bite Size Bible Study

A Token of Love #109

By Pastor Lee

Several years ago we took my wife's rings to the jeweler to have them resized and checked. She hadn't been able to wear them for a couple of years since her chemo. As we dropped them off at the jeweler I noticed a lot of rings that were much larger and probably much more expensive than the one that I had given her, over 53 years ago. But these rings were all we could afford at the time.

But the ring wasn't the most important thing I had given her then. I wanted to give her the best I could, but what was most important was that I was giving her me. I was promising to partner with her and help her through thick and thin. And she was promising the same to me. We have had a little thick and a lot of thin when it comes to possessions, but thankfully a lot of thick and very little thin when it comes to companionship and cooperation.

Those little rings that we gave each other as a Token of Our Love are in some ways like what God gives us as we accept Jesus as our Savior. He gives us His Token of Love in the person of the Holy Spirit, a comforter, a councilor, and a committed friend. He gives us a promise of a committed relationship without an end. In our marriage relationships we must say, "until death do us part," but our relationship with God exists outside of the restraints of time and this physical universe. So for lack of a better term we just call it "eternity."

When we are courting we wait until we are pretty sure that we will get a positive answer before we ask the other person whether they would like to have a lifelong relationship with us. As they say, "I do" we begin a lifetime of giving of ourselves, our possessions, our time, and our talents to them. They respond in kind.

When God knows that we are ready to have a permanent relationship with Him, He stands at the door and asks, expecting an "I do." Then He commits to that relationship by giving Himself to us, as we have in turn given ourselves to Him. Just as in the marriage we are no longer two but one. Jesus mentioned this in His prayer on the Mount of Olives that last night before His crucifixion. *My prayer for all of them is that they will be one, just as you and I are one, Father--that just as you are in me and I am in you, so they will be in us, and the world will believe you sent me.*

John 17:21 NLT

Just as in our marriages, with God there are times of thick and times of thin. Our relationship grows rapidly at times and remains constant at other times. We get to know Him better and we begin to trust Him a little more with each test or trial we face.

You have no doubt noticed that when a couple is together longer and longer they begin to look, think and act a lot like the each other. Are we beginning to look, think and act a lot like Jesus? Stop and think about that a minute. (Yes - I mean stop.)

For instance, do we let people get under our skin? Do we blow up when we are under stress? Jesus never seems to have done these things even when under a great deal of stress, and he had plenty. He would go to the Father for His strength, encouragement, and direction. Then He stood tall and faced the situation. Read the account of the crucifixion and you will see step by step how He dealt with the incredible stresses of that day.

Where do we fall short when we meet tough situations in our lives? Personally, I often skip the first step - that is, going to the Father in prayer for direction, strength and encouragement.

I act like the little six-year-old who thinks that he is a big boy now and can handle this one all by himself. Then I inevitably find that I am not big enough, well equipped enough or strong enough to stand against the situation that I face. And like the little boy, I come running back to Daddy all bloodied and bruised, and He comforts me and soothes my wounds.

Let's work on trying to think and act as Jesus showed us. With the courage, strength and knowledge that God provides through His Holy Spirit – His Token of Love, and we cannot be failures. Jesus' example in the most stressful time of His life should be all of the encouragement that we need to face the obstacles in our own lives, and be winners.

**Just as the bride shows everyone her ring,
let us show everyone, through the way we live,
the Holy Spirit that we have received as
God's Token of Love for Us.**

Cornerstone Community Church

PO Box 654 Lemon Grove, CA 91945-0654 – www.cornerstonecommunityonline.org