

True love is measured, not by the warm emotions that accompany it, but in those moments when we see weakness in the one we love. It is measured in how we choose to respond in the face of those weaknesses, shortcomings and sins; will we choose to commit, to stay and love them? We choose to love another and to commit to them, through it all – even amidst the reality of their weaknesses and failures. Rather than wanting them to change, we choose to love our spouse as they are! This is what it means to totally give of oneself! This does not mean that we give our spouse permission to not strive to be the best person they can be, and vice versa, but that we choose to love them each and every day right where they are on their journey to Heaven.

The gift of grace comes to us part-and-parcel with our relationship with God and His desire to heal us, to transform us in simple ways so that we can truly forgive, love and serve one another. Marriage is a school of self-giving; it is where God shapes and forms us to grow in self-giving love. In marriage, we take on the responsibility to care for another person, and we commit to seek what is best for our spouse and our children. It is where we learn to love **beyond** how we can love **on our own**.

UNITY IS ALWAYS BETTER THAN PERFECTION

The purpose of marriage and the sacrament is the sanctification of spouses, wherein God proves His love to us through our spouse. Unity is always better than perfection – let's strive to preserve unity.

Recognising how our past affects our married and family life

Everything that happened to you in your past comes with you once you enter marriage, and it greatly affects your relationship with your spouse and your family life – death of a loved one, heartbreak, addictions, habits, attitude to finances, etc.... That is why it is so important to have faced these experiences, processed them and sought healing from their impact in our lives before we commit to loving another in the covenant of marriage.

Let's build love from the first moment – so that we can be brought into the greatest love story of all – God's love for us!¹⁶

Our preparation for marriage began from the time we were born. We've all been preparing for marriage our entire lives. Every heartache, disappointment, trial, suffering, joy, happiness, delight – every experience, every moment, every lesson learned – has impacted us and played a part in who we are right in this very moment. Because of this, we are prepared now for what will come tomorrow – to whatever and wherever God may be calling and leading us. God goes with us, every step of the way.

"For the Lord your God is he that goes with you, to fight for you against your enemies, to give you the victory."

— DEUTERONOMY 20:4



RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

Beloved: Finding Happiness in Marriage Home Edition DVD Set augustineinstitute.org/formed/beloved/


Gary Chapman, *Covenant Marriage*

Gary Chapman, *The 5 Love Languages: The Secret to Love that Lasts*

Michel Esparza, *Self-Esteem without Selfishness: Expanding Our Capacity for Love*

Debra Fileta, *True Love Dates: Your Indispensable Guide to Finding the Love of Your Life*

Kimberly Hahn, *Chosen and Cherished: Biblical Wisdom for Your Marriage*


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