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# Love is Genuine- by Evang. Ella J. Alexander

So many people say that you have to be in love in order to understand love. Others say it is better to love and have lost than to never have loved at all, but there is a love that is genuine and that is the love of God. When you have a sister or brother that you have come to know and understand; someone that is there to listen and help when they can, that is genuine love. Minister Floyd Barnes of First Calvary Baptist Church in Brooklyn, New York had to say this about genuine love.

"I have met so many people in my life and I can tell you that many have come and more have died in my lifetime. I have noticed that we don't get too many chances at a real friendship. There are times when a person could be so genuine that they are closer than your own family. I'm not saying that I don't love my family because I do, but I have found a few people that I can call friend and I know that their love is genuine. When they say that they are your friend, they actually show it and I love it. True love means so much to a person. It says a lot too.

I am thankful that I have a few friends that I can say love me with a genuine love. But there are those that love me with that agape love which can't fade away or fail. The love of God is strong and powerful. It can heal and it can restore. I am really

thankful that God loves me because no one else would have died for me. If it was left up to some of my so called friends, I would be dead and gone, but GOD. The one thing about the love of God, since this is the love month, it can take you places and make you feel brand new. The love of God can make you happy at your saddest moment.

I have been in love but nothing compares to the love of God. I got some age on me and I can tell you that I have dated in my youth, fell in love in my younger years; I was so in love with this woman, I married her, but God's love goes



far beyond what I have ever experienced in my life. So I say this to the many men and women that are looking for love in all the wrong places; if you want to experience love, you first must learn to love yourself. Can't anybody on this earth can love you better than you. Now, if you want to experience true love; that genuine love, you must come to know God. He is the one that will love your socks off of you.

So many look at the word love and just see four letters, but love is an action word. Saying you love a person and not showing it means absolutely nothing. You gotta show that you love. Put it in action and let someone see it for themselves.

If you don't get a chance at anything else, I want you to have a desire to experience a genuine love and not this worldly love that will leave you cold, hurt, broke and lonely. Make a decision to experience God who is love and you will learn to love others similar to the way God loves you."





# Love and Relationships

### **Dr. Claude Dangerfield II**

February is called the love month; however, true love is more than just a physical act. Love is a deep emotion that is derived by a deep admiration of another. True love is embraced into an unbreakable soul tie that withstands all obstacles as well as challenges that seek to separate it. Building a relationship that has no boundaries to contain the two which are united. Someone asked what does it take to benefit from a great love relationship? To that I would say God as the foundation and open communication with one another for starters.

I have come across in my life numerous couples that have been married for 30 and 40 + years. I tend to marvel at the closeness I witness. I study the body language and listen to the voice tones of the basic conversations and witness the caring eyes shared between the two parties. The fact that these relationships have actually caught my attention along with that of others because of their success speaks volumes within itself. For we have learned so much not by spoken words of instruction but by their daily lives. This further goes to show for we may never know all the people we have reached just by our walk in life and how we carry ourselves in public places.

I always share one of the greatest love stories I had the privilege of witnessing growing up. That would be the relationship which my Grandparents' shared. The family always referred to them as the "kissingest couple" if there is ever such a phase. But it was good for me as a young man to see true love in the right context. How

a man could be

affectionate to his spouse and make her feel loved, cherished and treasured. Their bond was so unique and envied by others. Grandmother never choose to drive a vehicle so Granddad would make sure that she was able to get wherever she desired to go. One time in particular I recall that her and her sister wanted to go on a cruise, which was leaving out of New York. So he drove her from Virginia to New York with me in tow. We made sure she departed safely and drove back to Virginia. It was funny to me

because he would call out her name and say "where are you? I miss you baby". Then when time had elapsed we made the return trip to this explosive kissing reunion. Even though I may joke about it some it was a great lesson on life. Real men show true emotions. I can truly say I never ever witnessed any arguments while living with them. One thing I truly admired the most was in the evening at bed time they always said their prayers together. One could be comfortable in the family room watching television when the other was ready for bed, but would stop and go into the room and kneel down and pray together and then kiss each other goodnight. To me that was powerful! They also understood each other's strengths within the relationship and allowed each to effectively operate within their gifted areas without fuss. I saw husband love your wife as Christ love the church and the virtuous women in action (Ephesians 5:25, 33, Proverbs 12:12a, 31:10). It was through this relationship I could see God's promises in action and understand that his Word would not come back void. True love is possible and you get out of a relationship what you both jointly put in. They lived out until death do we part and beyond.

Take lessons from those who have a proven track record and most importantly keep God the center of the relationship because he makes it whole. Before you blow up and get mad in a relationship examine your own emotions and motive before displaying them. Consider the cost and take a moment to cool off before you allow words to travel across the threshold of your lips and destroy within second what you have been blessed to build. Words are hard to recall when delivered in haste, confusion and fear. They cut and destroy quicker than a shape knife. Unity is an enemy of the devil but strength in God. Maintain your relationship in and with God's guidance. Always build up your partner and never tear them down-- communication is key. Start with what is right and build with what would make it better to make it beneficial for both. Praying for each other is one of the main keys and speaking life admiration into their life and joint faith will unlock many doors. Each person is relevant to the success of the relationship. Put God first than each other because with him at the helm everything will line up. Always put yourself in your partners place to gain a better understanding within yourself towards your partner and their needs. I pray for your continued victory and success within your relationship.

In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths. Proverbs 3:6



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# Love & Relationship

## **Evang. Stacie Daniels**

Have you ever pondered what makes the world go around? There can be several arguments made for what is believed to be the answer to this question. In my humble opinion, the answer to that question is one word—LOVE. To take the ladder one step further, the essence of love is God. The Bible says in 1 John 4:8 'Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love.' We will revisit this later in this article.



The intangible entity known as love mystifies, gratifies and satisfies. Love is truly amazing because it has the power to bring tears of joy and tears of sadness. Per the Merriam-Webster Dictionary, love is defined as a strong affection for another arising out of kinship or personal ties; attraction based on sexual desire; or affection based on admiration, benevolence, or common interests. If you notice, two key words in the definition are "based on." This is one key element that distinguishes God's definition of love from the rest because His love is not based on how you look, your background or pedigree, your skills, talent, status, or wealth. The love of God is **unconditional**.

Without question, love is more than a mere feeling. Feelings come and go, wax and wane. Feelings can also be contingent upon perception. Perception, as we know, can often be skewed or one sided. However, real love should not be variable or predicated based upon feelings and emotions. We are able to garner a clear biblical definition of love in 1 Corinthians 13. According to this passage of scripture, love is patient, love is kind. This indicates love should not turn on/off like hot or cold water because love suffers long. We see so many marriages failing today and it is common to hear husbands and wives reportedly "fall out of love." I concur with the conclusion of another writer (author unknown) who penned the marriage vow of "till death do us part" today often means that individuals decide to part at the death of their love for their spouse rather than physical death. Nonetheless, it begs the question was it true love from the start?

Love is kind. How can one confess love for another when their approach is far from kind? Conduct and behavior does matter. The scripture is true when it admonishes us to do unto others as we would have them do unto us (Matthew 7:12). The Bible goes on to teach love does not envy, does not boast and is not proud. If I love my brother/sister/neighbor, then I will not envy that person or any of their possessions. What is good for one person does not mean it is good for the next

person. Why desire something tailor made for someone else? What God has for you is for you. He already knows if you desire a house, husband, wife, business, ministry, promotion or whatsoever it may be. There is no need to be anxious because He is not a novice to wise and precise judgment. It is up to you to trust Him, follow Him and allow Him to manifest His plan at the appointed time. The appointed time is the time of fulfillment. Love does not boast and is not proud. Therefore, humility plays a major role in love. True love is not arrogant, self-serving nor does it exaggerate its own virtues. When someone has 1 Corinthians 13 type of love, they will not have a problem asking for forgiveness upon hurt or offense to another person. The sin of pride is swallowing up a multitude while at the same time destroying countless relationships.

It is worthwhile pointing out the other qualities of love. Love does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, and it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. Love always protects, trusts, hopes and perseveres. Love never fails. For the sake of brevity, we will not expound on each of these tenets of love. However, they are worth acknowledging because these principles of love are vital to all relationships.

Many relationships (friendships, kinships, marriages) die due to lack of love. It is imperative to take another look at ourselves in the mirror daily and examine where we measure up to the 1 Corinthians 13 standard of love. Sometimes it is needful to ask the questions:

- 1) Do I lack patience?
- 2) How do I feel if I cannot have what I want?
- 3) Do I desire what someone else has?
- 4) How am I treating those around me?
- 5) Does the spotlight have to be on me?
- 6) Do I lack forgiveness? The list goes on and on.

It is also important to recognize that love should grow and not diminish. We have to nurture our relationships. If there is not a mutual reciprocation, the relationship will not thrive and more than likely it will demise. It is crucial to show appreciation and requite benevolence. As highlighted earlier in this article, the scripture in 1 John 4:8 plainly explains that **whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love**. Going to church, owning a Bible, and/or engaging in ministerial duties or tasks does not equate to knowing God. The only way you can know Him is to have relationship with Him.

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The only way to have relationship with Him is to first allow Him to be Lord of your life, spend time with Him and make Him priority. Indeed, to know God is to love Him, to love Him is to obey Him. Without Him, it is not possible to love adequately. We can also be reminded of the familiar scripture in John 3:16 where it reads "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." No God equals No Love.

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# The Fundamentals of Building a Strong Relationship

by Evang. Ella J. Alexander

Prophet Irving Benjamin Jr. President of Empowered 2 Excel Ministries had this to say about Relationships.

"I am one to help people to get a prayer through and push forward. God has blessed me to be one of the voices that many people are willing to hear and accept.

I believe that a healthy relationship in Christ must be consistent in prayer and fasting, spending time with God and living a righteous, holy, and godly life according to God's word, will, and way; not forgetting to possess the fruits of the spirit. There are also signs of an unhealthy relationship such as a prayer less lifestyle, no fasting, not quality time with God, no fruits of the spirit; all those things will result in a stagnate growth one or both parties, whether both saved or only

being unsaved. Prayer sets the foundation for any relationship, whether it be a friendship, an intimate relationship, or marriage. When it comes to healthy relationships in God or in general, I believe that prayer is a very important component because it covers and buffers. Prayer makes the relationship more essential.

The Bible talks about saved and unsaved mates and a lifestyle of prayer. Sometimes a person can pray for the unsaved mate, but it maybe that the person is not for them. In the body of Christ there are fads. This one fad is that you have to get married. Be careful and know that the person is the one God has ordained for you. God gives revelation and our experiences that help us become better people. We can't and shouldn't just marry any and everybody. Know the interest you have in the person or is attracted to, what their spiritual background is, are they rooted and grounded in God's Word, do they like going to the house of worship, or even fasting. It is so important as a believer that you know what you are getting involved in or who you are getting involved with. The bible says, "Can two walk together, expect they be agreed?" (Amos 3:3). If they aren't agreeing, they need to re-evaluate that they aren't doing it just for a fad. That aren't just coming together because their friend or family member is getting married, neither for the reason that someone else got married.

The best way to choose the correct mate is to first seek God. Matt 6:33 says, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God..." and secondly proverbs 18:22 as it relates to a woman, it's the man position to seek the wife. The woman must be in position. Ester adorned herself, dressed herself, and made herself presentable. When it came time for her to come in contact with the King, he noticed her. Women of today must adorn themselves, position themselves and look presentable so when the right man come; you don't know when, where, or how you will meet your mate; just set yourself up. Seek God and then build a friendship, then a relationship which leads to marriage. Be in the right place, at the right time, and in the right position. If you aren't in the right position it will mess things up.

In order to obtain the correct mate, you must check the attributes of a person. The attributes of a good mate is love; especially the love of God, compassion, patience, complete honesty communication, understanding, being supportive, watchful, prayerful, and a good listener. I believe if you want something to work you got to work at it. It takes both parties. Communication is very important. Both parties must come together to make the relationship better; if not, it will most definitely fail.

You have to seek God. You can't try to keep up with the Jones'. Remember that this is your life that you are giving to someone else. Do research on the person if you are interested. I always say, "If you rush it, you crush it." So don't be in a rush. Take your time with whatever you do as it relates to marriage. You obtain friends by showing yourself friendly. Get to know the person. Just because you are getting to know someone doesn't mean that that is the person for you, but it could be that God is preparing you for who is to come into your life. There should be some kind of stability, and both must be willing to learn from what they are experiencing to be an effect mate to that individual.

Don't feel that just because he got married or she got married that it is your time to get married. I say that there is a grace. Know what the grace is for you. It may not be the grace for you to get married. It maybe the next season or the season after that. Once you know your grace; your season, then you can avoid a lot of stuff as far as divorce. The divorce rate is high in the body of Christ. Many people may have arguments or whatever, but they turn around and be lovey dovey. Now in the body of Christ, unfortunately, too many get involved in other people's marriage. The relationship/marriage is sacred. You made a vow for better or worse. So keep it. Work at it.

Many don't believe this, but I believe that people need an approval in relationships. Pastors are responsible for the souls. God doesn't reveal everything about people to the pastor. If you are going to get married, get in touched with someone like a pastor. Consult a pastor; I suggest someone that has experience in marriage so that they can get a feel of both parties. It is important that you build a good ground because you are taking a step forward. Make sure that the person you are giving your life to, is worth it.

If I had to leave or give words of encouragement to the single regarding building a strong relationship in God it would be is to come together in prayer, fasting, meditating, reading and studying the word, even worship and praise, an spending endless time with God. Also, get to know who the person is. Sometime they say you would never know a person until you marry them. Learn how to grow together and apart. It is important to spend time knowing the do's and don'ts. It is those small thigs that you have to get at and get an understanding before you get into a relationship. Be real. Don't allow something of your past to come up. Be honest. Even building a relationship with God you will learn to be honest. So when you are deciding about spending your life with someone, understand you are going to make a vow and be honest. You will have arguments but that is ok, it's part of growth.

Don't choose a unsaved person out of convenience; regardless how long you have been alone. There will be those that want to play both sides of the fence. Be careful. You don't want to lose your salvation for the sake of someone else. Sometimes people have had sexual relations and they end up feeling trapped in an unequally yoked relationship. Just because you may be attracted to a sister or brother doesn't mean that they are necessarily interested in you in that manner. They may see you as just a sister or brother. Don't dog the person out. Don't start rumors or scandalize the person's name. Learn to build a strong communication with some people. Don't put things under the cover. Don't refuse to deal with it. People must come to the realization whether or not they want to be with this person whether equally or unequally yoked. You don't want to be in bondage. Marriage should never feel like bondage. It should be enjoyable not feeling trapped."

God's servant: Prophet IBJ

I, Evangelist Ella J. Alexander, thank God for the Man of God. Too many have forgotten the basics of a relationship, even dating, but it is time that we get back to the basics. It is time that we put into practice the very things we think and believe we know everything about. We look around as we can see the many problems, but with the right teaching, listening ear and love, we could help many survive and not sink in or drown in a relationship. Once again we thank Prophet Irving Benjamin Jr.

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Love is Patient, Love is Rind!

I Corinthians 13:4 NIV

## Fulfilling Purpose and Being Relevant

by Elder Diane Harvell

I've always been mesmerized by the sinking of the greatest ship ever built-The Titanic. It weighed over 46,000 tons, and was over 800 feet long. But everything that could go wrong on that fateful night of April 15, 1912 went wrong.

The sun, moon and the earth was all aligned together that night which raised the tide and the currents of the water to a rapid pace. This is called a Lunar Eclipse. What is also known is that the ship's builder was quoted to have said, "Even God can't sink the Titanic." As I think about these facts forever drowned in our nineteenth century history, I am reminded when we do not acknowledge God as God, all the elements of our lives become unaligned. As we aboard on life's journey it's imperative that we accept God with us, before us and behind us.

There were several other ships near or close to the Titanic that night but when the distress call was made, everyone's response was either lost, conflicted or unable to be clearly heard. Small broken ice visibly covered the waters and instead of slowing the ship's pace, the captain increased the pace placing the ship in further danger.

The iceberg that the Titanic hit was only one hundred feet high but possibly over nine hundred feet deep.

These sad yet true facts bring me to this observation about purpose. Our problems in this life can reach insurmountable heights which are or can be attached to deep roots of pain, hurt and bitterness. As I recall the early years of my life, I too traveled the icy waters of unseen pain deep below my outward surface. So I began to live a life without God. Like the Titanic I didn't know the dangerous pain beneath the surface was deadly.

So after a failed marriage of ten years, four children later and then discovering I had married a man who had committed a murder, yes all in that order, I realized my life had settled to the bottom of nothingness. But when I began to acknowledge God as God in my life, my purpose and fulfilling it became clearer to me. He allowed me to see and to know the pain within me beneath my surface was destroying me. When I was able to see that and acknowledge that for the bible says in I John 1:9-"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

After then, the Lord freed me from my pain, mended all of those icy broken pieces and areas in my life and now I am able to help other broken hearted women, recognize

their relevance and their purpose.

\*Thought\*-God used one righteous man, Noah to make a boat made of wood which only 8 souls were saved thereon and a new world began. Man made a 46,000 ton ship without acknowledging God in which 1,517 souls were destroyed and it sunk to the bottom of the Atlantic Ocean.

Always acknowledge God as God then everything in your life will be perfectly aligned by Him. And your purpose not your pain will be revealed for His use. Because of this, today I am Elder Diane Harvell and I am fulfilling my purpose through the N.O.W. Ministry (Nurturing Oppressed Women) fulfilling purpose and being relevant to the Kingdom of God. To God be all the Glory!







# ALL ABOUT HEALTH

STACIE L. DANIELS, RN



This issue will begin a series on the benefits of different herbs in our dietary intake. While traditional medicine still has its place, natural products have proven immensely beneficial when it comes to health and wellness. This month we will focus on one of the oldest and best tasting home remedies----Peppermint. Peppermint is a flowering perennial that is indigenous to Europe and the Middle East. It will usually grow between 12-35 inches in height. It is a natural hybrid of spearmint and water mint.

Peppermint has been used in alternative medicine as a possibly effective aid in treating irritable bowel syndrome, breast feeding discomfort, heartburn, migraines, tension headache and to reduce spasms during endoscopy and colon exams. Other uses not proven with research have included dental plaque, bad breath, hot flashes, pain caused by shingles, itchy skin, toothaches, infections, and muscle pain. The herb has also been noted to have a calming effect on the body and a possible remedy to help soothe a nagging cough.

Other possible benefits for peppermint include: antispasmodic (abdominal pain, cramps), gas, aid digestion, and help with insomnia. Studies have shown that peppermint decreases the amount of time food spends in the stomach by stimulating the gastric lining. It may also relax the stomach muscles.

Herbal supplements should be purchased from a reliable source to minimize the risk of contamination. The parts commonly used are dried or fresh leaf and essential oil. Tea is the most common and best employed use of peppermint.

Have you ever noticed that some restaurants give their patrons peppermint candy after a multicourse meal? This is to aid digestion. Quality hotels also put peppermint candies on the pillow to promote a goodnight rest. So, if you are one who tend to toss those little peppermint candies to the side, you might want to give it a second thought.

As a health care professional, it is imperative to add that this information is not intended to take the place of any medical advice from your treating practitioners. Always consult with your doctor before considering treatment with herbal supplements. The material provided is for educational purposes only and not intended for diagnosis or treatment.

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# Aftermath of Brokenness

# Dr. C. A. Dangerfield II

In this article, we would like to examine some of the effects that generate from a broken relationship. The initial fallout comes from the two persons involved in the conflict which creates the separation. Then comes the defending of each person's individual positioning as well as the attempt to rally support outside of the initial relationship to help them strengthen their position and support any actions render. Most people don't understand that this is and can become a very dangerous area because it can create a ripple effect outside of the initial parties, with others that become close to either party. Thereby, they form loyalties to their respective relationship not knowing the extent of initial conflict and may never come to know it.

It is extremely difficult when it comes to family breakups and children. It is a majority of the time that the custodial parent has an advantage of creating a healthy and peaceful transition for the children involved or they can present one with ridicule and contention which creates a disconnect for the outside parent. So in this case the children always lose. It really becomes apparent later in that child's life because some sort of resentment comes in place due to the lack. The connection that God intended has been made into calamity and it will take God to settle the raging waters of discord.

The unfortunate outcome for the children really must be understood as well as realized. Most of the time it is not really deeply understood when in turmoil. When one is caught up in his/her individual emotion, they never really stop to deeply think of the lost that will impact the children. Each child loses due to the separation of either parent's daily absence. Nine times out of ten the mother becomes the custodial parent which creates an immediate disadvantage for a young boy with the absence of his father. Here are a few things that may or may not be considered, if there is a daughter in this scenario she has an initial advantage. In her daily life she will have the benefit of a mother inside the home daily with direct interaction. She also benefits from visual learning, seeing how to become a woman directly from her mother. Learning how to follow her dreams and selecting and developing her own style. Her disadvantage is that she doesn't have the daily in home interaction with the man she would consider the number one man in her life, her dad. Learning from him how a man should interact with his mate, her mother in a loving relationship. This teaches her how a woman should accept a mate with in her life. The son in a relationship is also at this same disadvantage but in the reverse affect. When the father daily presence is absent it creates an unbalance for a young boy especially when his sibling is a sister. Because the bond he should have to benefit from doesn't exist and it puts him at odds and resentful. All of this can be avoided when bringing children into a relationship by considering the long term desire for the relationship and working out differences by communicating truthfully and effectively and maturely thinking beyond you.

One disconnect I have witnessed happening a lot in these situations is if either parent enters into another relationship it can be a difficult fit for the other person outside of the initial relationship for a few reasons.

If either person from the initial relationship harbors resentment they will use the children to create havoc on the new relationship

in numerous ways. Also depending on the closeness of the initial relationship the children can become confrontational and drive a wedge which could become very disheartening and even devastating. It's in times like these we wonder why we as individuals, are having trouble with Jesus' first command which is to "Love thy neighbor as thyself",

The take away I desire for anyone reading this article in this situation is to think about how you as an individual can grow from the hurt. Can you take the lead on the healing process for yourself and all who are around you? Can you be the peacemaker? Can you build a new bridge in situation where children are involved to where you can jointly participate in helping not to be distraction in their climb to a successful life? Remembering it's not about your emotional baggage, but creating a harmonious environment for their path to success. Which is allowing all positive deposits into their lives even when they may come from your ex's new partner. Aways remember a key to success in any capacity is the ability to communicate effectively as well as to listen to constructive feedback. We are all striving for perfection in God. Always pray one for another.



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