

Dear friends, greetings.

Here is the 3<sup>rd</sup> of 4 musings on love...

### **Love is Redemptive.**

Love is natural, and love is romantic. Many verses in Song of Solomon celebrate the sense of wonder and adoration so common to romantic love...but there is more to love! Love is also redemptive.

Read Song of Solomon 1.5-6. The young girl feels inadequate. She has had to work in the vineyards all day, and hasn't been able to take care of herself. She also believes she has become too dark, comparing her skin to the goatskin tents people pitched in the desert. Her message to the king was clear – I am not worthy of your love. I'm not lovable.

The king pays no attention to these protests (Song of Solomon 1.10, 15). The girl doesn't feel beautiful, but to the king she was beautiful.

Redemptive love doesn't depend on people feeling worthy of love. No honest man ever fully believes that he merits the love of a wonderful woman. Redemptive love is expressed in the prayer of the man newly-fallen in love, "Give me purity to be worthy of the good in her, and grant her patience to reach the good in me." Redemptive love tends to lift the lover, and makes the person a "new" person.

Redemptive love lifts lovers, giving them new outlooks and dreams. Redemptive love refines and elevates. It doesn't mean that lovers are perfect, but it does mean a commitment to overlook minor faults and to forgive the major faults. Redemptive love keeps no record of wrongs, does not dwell on mistakes or failings, but seeks the good in all situations. Even when we are not worthy of love, redemptive love loves us anyway.

*Never love unless you can  
Bear with all the faults of man.  
(Thomas Campion, Advice to a Girl).*

The cross of Calvary is perhaps the best example of redemptive love we can find. Redemptive love, extended to unworthy creatures, who feel unworthy, makes them new creatures.

Many feel unworthy of such redemptive love.

- 1) Mary, Luke 1.46-55.
- 2) John the Baptist, Mark 1.7.
- 3) Peter, Luke 5.8.
- 4) The centurion (Matthew 8.8).

However, when we accept redemptive love, everything becomes new. The NT refers "new" often, e.g. a new command, a new man, a new creation, a new name, a new song etc. When we accept redemptive love, we become new persons, with new identities, new outlooks and new hopes.

The ideal of redemptive love is expressed well in the following words:

*We have lived and loved together  
Through many changing years;  
We have shared each other's gladness  
And wept each other's tears*  
(Charles Jeffreys, We Have Lived and Loved Together).

**What is my personal application of these thoughts?**

Best wishes,

Conrad.