

The Family Friend



A collection of articles and quotes to aid your family in daily living.

Volume 17, Number 2

February, 2015

"ONE COKE; TWO STRAWS

by Norman Bales

A friend of ours was reviewing his successful climb up the corporate ladder. At that point he was the executive vice-president of a fairly large company and later moved up the ladder to company president. He was grateful for his prosperity and gave God credit for his successful career. As he reflected on his life, he realized that he and his family enjoyed financial prosperity beyond his wildest expectations. Then he offered this comment. "Despite all the material blessings we have now, I don't think my wife and I were never happier than we were in our early days of marriage when we could afford one Coke and two straws."

Shared Happenings

Our most satisfying life experiences are shared happenings; our most disappointing experiences are those events, which occur in isolation. Several years ago I flew to the South Pacific to work in a missionary project. Ann was unable to go with me. My route took me

through Honolulu, so I arranged to spend a couple of days in Hawaii before flying on to my destination. When I boarded the airplane in Los Angeles, I noticed I was the only person traveling alone. When I arrived in Honolulu, I rode a bus to my hotel where I enjoyed luxurious lodging near the beach at Waikiki. I walked the streets and saw no one except myself walking alone. I discovered a wonderful Chinese restaurant and dined in the company of myself. I arranged to go on sight seeing tours but I was the only person taking any of the tours by myself. I rented a car and drove around on the island of Oahu, but my only company was the friendly announcer on the car radio. I decided that Hawaii is an exciting place to be but you don't enjoy it much unless you share it with somebody. I'm sure Ann had trouble feeling sorry for me when I complained that I didn't enjoy Hawaii very much without her companionship. You can rest assured that if I ever make that trip again she will be at my side.

God created marriage to provide an opportunity for intimate sharing of experiences in the context of a lifetime commitment. In Genesis 2:18, God said, "It is not good for man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him." From the very

beginning of the marriage relationship it has been understood that marriage is a living arrangement in which sharing takes place. From a Biblical perspective shared activities among married couples include prayer (1 Corinthians 7:5; 1 Peter 3:7), love and respect (Ephesians 5:25-33; Colossians 3:18-19), setting examples for each other (Titus 2:3-8) and mutual sexual fulfillment (1 Corinthians 7:1-4).

Sharing may involve both joy and sorrow. Although Paul was clearly applying the body metaphor to the church in 1 Corinthians 12, his analogy surely describes husbands and wives when he wrote "If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it (v. 26). The Ephesians passage suggests that it's possible to interchange the metaphors that describe church relationships and marriage relationships. In Genesis 2:24, when two people enter into a marriage relationship, they become "one flesh."

Ours Not Mine

If we understood that concept, we would be much less territorial with our marriage partners. Couples would stop fighting over "my money" and "your money" because it would be "our money." Throughout most of our adult lives we had

separate careers. I was in ministry and Ann was a registered nurse. To be honest, I never mastered medical terminology, but I visited the operating suite where she worked and supported her work as much as I could. Don't let your imagination run away with you. I never actually assisted with an operation. In fact I never saw the inside of the operating room except for those rare occasions when I was a patient. When you look at the other side of the coin, my ministry has really been our ministry. When I was younger I observed ministers who sat on the front pew until it was time to preach while their wives sat further back and attempted to monitor the behavior of their children. Early on I decided I wanted to sit in the pew with my wife, to share the parenting responsibilities and to hold her hand when we prayed. I didn't leave my pew until it was time to preach. That's a characteristic that permeates our entire approach to ministry. That's why the AAF Newsletter is a joint project.

Then there are those domestic tasks. Sometimes married couples have a difficult time assigning tasks, "Who is going to take care of the check-book?" "Who is supposed to take out the trash?" "Who is going to prepare dinner and clean up the kitchen when both partners work outside the home?" "Who will weed the flowerbeds and mow the lawn?" Most married couples struggle to define these roles and dozens of others. But if we'll think of these projects as joint responsibilities, we'll blame less and enjoy working together more. In our personal arrangement, I'm the guy who carries

out the trash. To be quite honest, I was less than enthusiastic about accepting that responsibility in the early years of our marriage, but it's part of my regular routine now. It's probably not my favorite task, but I don't complain about it either. I accept it as an opportunity to make a contribution toward order in our home. Last Spring, when I was in the hospital for ten days, Ann had to take over that job. She also did it without complaining. Many years ago I decided that learning to cook would probably contribute toward my long-term survival. I'm not a gourmet chef, but to date Ann hasn't thrown food away that I prepared for her. She's even complimentary. When she's sick, I take over in the kitchen and we are not in danger of starvation.

But we also share our sorrows. When each of our parents died, we both felt a sense of loss. Both of us have faced some serious health issues. At no time has either one of us said, "Well I'm sorry you've got that problem. Too bad about you. I'm going to go on with my life and you'll just have to fend for yourself the best way you can." We've both been there with sympathy, assistance and concern. Actually I get the better end of the deal. Ann is a retired Registered Nurse, so I get an extra portion of TLC (tender loving care).

"They Do Not Love Who Do Not Show Love"

William Shakespeare once wrote, "They do not love who do not show their love." Love is shown when a young, money-strapped couple drinks one bottled soft drink with two straws. Love is shown when one partner

The Family Friend

Published Monthly by
Calvert City church of Christ

gets out of bed in the middle of the night, helps the other one into the car and drives to the emergency room. Love is shown when a husband and wife grieve together over a wayward child. Love is shown when either or both partners are willing to make themselves uncomfortable to meet the needs of the other and thereby improve their relationship. When we care about one another and we display that care through concrete actions, we give the emotional side of love a chance to grow.

"If you live to be a hundred, I want to live to be a hundred and one day, so I never have to live without you." (Winnie the Pooh) It's possible to feel that way, when you concentrate on mutual service.

**February 27– 28,
2015**

***Stronger Marriage
Workshop***

Calvert City

Church of Christ

Time:

Friday, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Saturday, 9:00 a.m.

There is no charge but, please let us know if you are coming!