

That doesn't just happen. It takes work, love, and patience. No marriage is without its challenges, but a few Biblical principles can go along way to make it through those challenges:

Be Kind to Each Other. In the beautiful definition of love which Paul taught the Corinthians, he said plainly, "love suffers long and is kind" (I Corinthians 13:4). Far too often scars and hurt feelings lead couples to forget the kindness shown to one another before marriage. The most important person in our life deserves our best treatment.

Look Out for the Other's Interests. After considering the example of Christ's selflessness, Paul told the Philippians, "let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also the interests of others" (Philippians 2:4). Becoming "one" in marriage doesn't mean we lose our individual needs, wishes, and hopes. It is the privileged role of a mate to care about those personal interests more than any other human being. No one on earth should care more about my spouse than I do.

Be Patient with Each Other. Human beings are difficult creatures! We get cranky. We get stubborn. We have bad days, and days when we aren't our best. The Christian who hopes for patience from the Lord, must demonstrate patience towards

others. Paul taught the Christians in Colosse to show, "meekness, longsuffering; bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do" (Colossians 3:12-13).

Submit and Cherish Each Other. The Bible teaches an organization in the home with the husband as head, and the wife in submission (Ephesians 5:23). Yet, this must never be oppressive or humiliating. The husband is to lead as Christ leads, nourishing and cherishing the wife "just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her" (Ephesians 5:25).

Seek First the Kingdom. By far, the best thing that any couple can do to help their marriage to be what it ought to be, is to make certain their relationship with God is what it ought to be. Jesus, in urging His hearers not to worry about the things of life, told them, "seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you" (Matthew 6:33). That doesn't mean there won't be trials, but two souls with their eyes on heaven, will find it harder to get stuck in the mud.

By Kyle Pope

Faithful Sayings

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Services

Sunday: 9:30 a.m.
10:20 a.m.
6:00 p.m.
Wednesday: 7:00 p.m.

Elders:

Ken Ford
Charles Kelley
Pat Ledbetter

Deacons:

Dean Bowers
Eddie Cook
Bill Davis
Pat Goguen
Neil Ledbetter
Jeff Nunn
Fred Perez
Rusty Scott

Evangelist:

Kyle Pope

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"But Then Face to Face"

In Paul's First epistle to the church in Corinth he devotes three chapters to the issue of "spiritual gifts" spanning from chapter twelve through chapter fourteen. In the middle of this discussion, after demonstrating the superiority of love to such "spiritual gifts," he describes their nature as something which was "in part" (13:9). He then declares, "when that which is perfect has come, then that which is in part will be done away" (13:10). The context of this statement and other Scriptural factors, make it clear that Paul is contrasting partial revela-

tion with the time when revelation will be complete (or "perfect.") When the revelation of New Testament Scripture was finally complete, then "that which is perfect" had come.

A common objection to this interpretation stems from a statement Paul makes two verses after these words. He writes, "For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known" (13:12). If we had this verse alone with no other context of Paul's meaning, we

might conclude that heaven will be the only time in which the Christian will behold the Lord “face to face.” However, there is a very significant history behind this phrase. Five times in the Law of Moses, it is used of the relationship between God, Moses and Israel. Exodus 33:11 says, “the LORD spoke to Moses face to face.” In Numbers 12:8 God says of Moses, “I will speak with him face to face.” Then, in Numbers 14:14, the Holy Spirit tells us, “You, LORD, are among these people; ... You, LORD, are seen face to face.” In the same way Moses tells the people, “The LORD talked with you face to face on the mountain from the midst of the fire” (Deuteronomy 5:4). Finally, Deuteronomy ends, declaring of Moses, “But since then there has not arisen in Israel a prophet like Moses, whom the LORD knew face to face” (Deuteronomy 34:10).

It is evident that none of these statements suggest that Moses (or Israel collectively) saw the full glory of the *face* of God. John tells us, “no one has seen God at any time” (John 1:18; I John 4:12). Nor is this saying that Moses and Israel were in the presence of God in heaven. Rather, it is describing a fullness, and complete measure of revelation which was unequalled at the

time. God in giving the Law of Moses, of which the Psalmist said, “the Law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul” (Psalm 19:7), established a relationship with Israel (and Moses specifically) which was described as one that was “face to face.”

In light of this background, it seems very likely that Paul uses the same figure speaking of the time in which the New Covenant would be fully revealed as a time when “that which is perfect” would come. This is a time in which Christians, in their relationship with God (just like Moses and Israel) would see the will of God “face to face” as they beheld the gospel—“the perfect law of liberty” (James 1:25).

By Kyle Pope



“The Wife of Your Youth”

Last year my wife’s grandmother and grandfather both passed away. As is so often the case with couples who have been together most of their life—after being married for sixty-seven years, they both passed within only a short time of one another. As long as I had known them they had treated each other like two young kids in love. They held hands as they walked together, he opened her door for her, and he often would playfully swat her as she walked by him. The family had always known that whenever one of them passed away, the other would find it hard to go on alone, yet as her grandfather’s mind faded we all wondered if the impact of his wife’s loss would move him in the same way. Surprisingly, even though he couldn’t fully grasp the reality of her passing the loss was too much for him. The void was just too great. He passed away less than three months after his wife died.

The Bible records that after creation, the first thing which God recognized which was not good, was man’s solitude. Scripture tells us, “The LORD God said, ‘I will

make him a helper comparable to him” (Genesis 2:18-19, NKJV). In response to this, the Bible records that the first human relationship which God established was marriage. The Holy Spirit tells us of the union which God established between the man and the woman, “Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh” (Genesis 2:24-25). This beautiful bond between a man and woman is a covenant. The two stand before God, who witnesses their pledge, and it is He who joins them together. Malachi 2:14-15 teaches of this compact, “the LORD has been witness between you and the wife of your youth” going on to declare, “she is your companion, and your wife by covenant” and it is God who “has made them one.” As God would have it, this relationship is to last for life. All measures to break “what God has joined together” stem from either sin, in its inception or sin in its completion (Matthew 19:1-9). God would have the relationship of marriage to be the closest, most reliable, and most supportive of all human relationships.