

Fil-Am Community Church.

***The Splendor of Romantic Love***

(Part 1 of 3)

February 14, 2010

**Happy Valentines Day**

We're beginning a new series today to run for the whole month of February which is unofficially called the Love Month. When February sets in, immediately people's minds are filled with images of flowers, chocolates, cards, balloons and the word **'LOVE'** in big, bold letters. Meanwhile, their hearts are filled with excitement and a sense of anticipation for what this month will bring them. But, of course, that is just one aspect of love.

For some of you, maybe the splendor is gone. How you wish you could get it back. You ask, "How could I put that fire back into my marriage? Is this marriage all there is?" **This afternoon, that's what I'd like to tackle.**

I want to talk today about rekindling the romance in your marriage. ***The Bible teaches that your marriage is always either growing together or drifting apart.*** It does not stand still. What do you do when your marriage has gone flat? It's stable but there's no sparkle. What do you do when your marriage has lost its pizzazz? The romance has gone out of it. How do you rekindle that first love?

***(Revelation 2:4-5)***

*"You have forsaken your first love. Remember the height from which you have fallen. Repent and do the things you did at first."* This says three things: remember, repent, redo.

First you remember. **You remember the good times.** You relive the experiences, the happy feelings when you first fell in love. You remember those times. Then you repent. Repent means to deliberately change your attitude towards your mate. You choose to turn it around. **You choose to act in a romantic way even if you don't feel romantic.**

Today I want to give you five actions that cause romance. They cause romance in the first place and they cause romance to re-blossom. If I were to summarize the message in a sentence today it would be this: ***Feelings follow actions. If you act romantic you will begin to feel romantic.*** Not vice versa. You act your way into a feeling. It's easier to act your way into a feeling than it is to feel your way into an action.

When you first fell in love you did five things. And to fall in love again you need to do the five things again.

1. Attention 2. Affirmation 3. Affection 4. Adventure 5. Accordance

***If you'll do those five things, the romance will come back.***

## **1. ATTENTION**

***(Philippians 2:2&4)***

*"Live together in love as though you had only one mind and spirit between you. Look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others."* Let me repeat the last sentence, *"Look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others."*

The very first sign you knew you were falling in love is when you noticed that somebody was paying attention to you and you began to pay attention to that somebody. The first step in falling in love is to start paying attention again. Do you remember how much attention you paid your mate before they were married to you? You wrote notes. You made phone calls. You spent hours talking together. You sent cards. You bought flowers. You brought gifts.

***What happened after you got married?*** "Get it yourself!" The attention switched. We became complacent and take each other for granted. Have you noticed that after you buy something new it loses its attraction after a while? Familiarity loses our attention.

Men are goal oriented. Men are destination, achievement, goal oriented. When you take that and apply it to marriage, the man has a goal, "I've got to get a wife." And men become very

creative in reaching this goal. They might do things they would not normally do. Stuff like poetry.

But once they have got the wedding over, they unconsciously think "Mission accomplished!". The goal shifts from the woman to providing for the woman. And the focus shifts to the career. The result is that the wife in a few months is devastated. She's saying ***"What happened? I've been dumped for a career. It's a set up -- bait and switch. I feel cheated."***

The point is you've got to make time for each other. You must show attention. The attention you showed before marriage you must continue in your marriage if you want the feelings to continue.

***The enemy of romance is a busy schedule.*** You're always in a hurry.

## **2. AFFIRMATION**

The quickest way for you to put spark back into your marriage is for you to start affirming and appreciating and admiring again the strength of your spouse instead of focusing on their weaknesses.

***(1 Thessalonians 5:11)***

*"So encourage each other and give each other strength."* Everybody wants to be admired, appreciated, looked up to. We fall in love with people who admire us. That's how you fell in love: somebody paid you attention and affirmed you and you fell in love with them.

Classic statement: **"Treat your husband like a king and he will treat you like a queen."** Simple but profound. We tend to become what others expect of us.

***(Romans 12:10)***

*"Take delight in honoring each other."* Verbalize your love every day. If you will verbalize your love you will start feeling loving.

By saying, "I love you... I appreciate you ... I'm glad I married you ... I'm grateful for you" over and over you will actually begin to feel that way. That's the power of the spoken word.

A lady came to an attorney and said, "I want to divorce my husband. I don't just want to divorce him; I want to hurt him bad because he's ignored me for so long."

The attorney said, "Go back, and while I'm preparing the papers, compliment him every day. Tell him how great a person he is, how good he is and what you appreciate about him. Build him up. Then when I've got the papers finished, we'll serve notice; drop him like a hot potato. And it will devastate him because he will fall in love with you if you do all of these things." She called back a month later and said, "Cancel the divorce. We've both fallen in love again ." That is the power of affirmation. *You begin to build each other up, take delight in honoring one another.*

### **3. AFFECTION**

You know how affectionate you were during your courting days or as newlyweds. In fact, you can always tell who the unmarried couples are. **They can't keep their hands off each other.** You see a couple walking hand in hand do you assume they're married or dating?

I think it's sad that after the marriage, after the wedding, the touching and tenderness stops in so many marriages.

**All marriages need large amounts of hugging and kissing and caressing and sitting close together in the car, holding hands, patting each other, snuggling.** I'm talking about non sexual affection where you just enjoy each other's company.

Let's now look at 3 examples of commands God gives to men concerning the treatment of their wives.

1. **Colossians 3:19 (NKJV) "*Husbands, love your wives and do not be bitter toward them.*"**
2. **Ephesians 5:28 (NASB) "*So husbands ought also to love their own wives as their own bodies. He who loves his own wife loves himself*"**

3. 1 Peter 3:7 (NIV) “ *Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives, and treat them with respect as the weaker partner and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, so that nothing will hinder your prayers.*”

Some say, "I'm just not naturally affectionate." So what? **Change!**

Being affectionate is a behavior you learned from your background and you can change. You can learn to be affectionate. **You just simply have to do it.**

**Genesis 26:8 of the KJV says "Isaac was sporting with Rebekkah his wife."** What does it mean? Are they actually engaged in sports? I checked other versions and they say they were “caressing or fondling” each other. In fact, the Hebrew word means “to fondle or caress playfully.”

The Bible says if you want to turn to your first love you need to do the things you did at first. You gave Attention, Affirmation, and Affection. If you start doing those things those feelings will return. You say, "I don't feel affectionate." And you won't until you start acting affectionate again. You can act your way into a feeling. It's up to you.

**Remember from previous sermons that Love is not a feeling; it's a command that produces a multitude of feelings.**

When you get married after a while you get complacent about your appearance and starts letting it all hang out. **When you dated you got all spruced up**, your hair combed, the nicest clothes. You wanted to look the best you could look. When you were single you could spend all day planning your date, from the moment you picked her up, and all the details involved to what you would eat, where you would go, how you would dress etc.

**What changed?** You still look the best you can when you go out in public, but what about at home? You ought to look the best you can for your wife, for your husband.

#### **4. ADVENTURE**

Most marriages are dull but that is not what the Bible wanted it to be.

- **Eccl. 9:9** "*Enjoy life with your wife.*"
- **1 Timothy 6:17** "*God richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment.*"
- **Matthew 11:19** "*Jesus came enjoying life.*" He had a good time. The Pharisees accused Jesus of being a party animal. They said he's a glutton and a drunk; He's always partying with sinners. How did he get that reputation? Because he came enjoying life. Saints remember what it says in
- **John 10:10**, "**The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.**"

Many surveys say the number one cause of affairs is boredom. Are you fun to live with? Or are you a bump on a log? When was the last time you did something just for the fun of it?

**You had adventure when you were having romance.** You've lost the adventure. Everything is predictable. Predictability kills in a marriage. All work and no play can make a dull marriage. **The family that plays together stays together. Learn to play together.**

The problem is for most of us, the way we define fun is this: **Fun is what you do after you've got all your work finished.** The problem is you never get all your work finished. The work is never done. Even after you retire you still have got work to do. As a result, the fun in your marriage gets shoved out the window. The person who takes last place is your spouse. "She'll understand. We're busy right now. Besides, it's only temporary."

A temporary, hectic schedule becomes a permanent lifestyle. You schedule the fun out of your marriage. And you wonder why the feelings have died.

I challenge you, I beg you to say, "In spite of our hectic schedule we're going to have fun together. We're going to have at least one date a week." **You need to date your mate.**

## 5. ACCORDANCE

Spiritual accord. Spiritual intimacy. Oneness of spirit. The Bible says at Pentecost, "*they were all of one accord.*" Their hearts, their spirits, were knit together.

**1 John 1:7** "*If we are living in the light of God's presence then we have wonderful fellowship and joy with each other.*"

The key to fellowship with your mate, joy with your mate, is that both of you live in God's presence. When I'm committed to Christ and my wife is committed to Christ, and we're both trying to live for the Lord, it naturally draws us together in a bonding that nothing else can take the place of. Spiritual harmony, spiritual oneness, brings about emotional oneness which brings about physical oneness. It joins you together. Spiritual unity enhances romance.

It says in **Colossians 2:2**, "**My purpose is that they may be encouraged in heart and united in love, so that they may have the full riches of complete understanding...**"

If you haven't done it, you need to commit your life to Christ, **commit your marriage to Christ.** It's the most logical, helpful thing for your marriage. How can you be spiritually one when one of you isn't committed? You can't. You're going in different directions. If you're not one in your spirit, how can you be one in your soul and one in your body like God intended for you to be? The husband needs to be committed to Christ and the wife needs to be committed to Christ and together you have glue that keeps you cemented together in the crises.

**If you were sick** you would never try to operate on yourself, but you would naturally go to a Doctor, if you had car trouble its natural that you would go to a mechanic. Well saints if we understand the need for assistance on those things why do we look at our marriage and try and figure it out ourselves as we go instead of turning it over to God? **Your marriage should be the best investment you make**, so stop holding back, but go all in and bet everything you have.

We study the concept in the couples class of a triangle, if you put God at the top of the **triangle** and your spouse at the other side you will see the closer you get to God the closer you get to each other.

Remember it says in **Matthew 6:33** “**Seek yea first the Kingdom of God and All things will be added to you.**” Not some things or part of the things but **ALL Things!** How do you develop spiritual oneness? Assuming that you both have made that commitment then:

1) Pray together. Hold hands when you pray together. Hold hands around the table at dinner time when you pray together. When was the last time you prayed for your wife? When was the last time you prayed for your husband in front of your husband? When was the last time the two of you prayed together for your children? If you're not doing that you're missing so much!

2) Share your life. Share your spiritual journey, what you're learning. You can take these outlines and later on you can use it as a foundation to talk about spiritual matters. Developing spiritual oneness takes time and energy and the devil fights it. But it is worth it.

### **Conclusion:**

God wants you to have oneness. The Bible says the two shall become one. That involves five areas:

- 1) Intellectual intimacy
- 2) Emotional intimacy
- 3) Physical intimacy
- 4) Recreational intimacy
- 5) Spiritual intimacy

When your engine is running only on three of those cylinders you're not fully what God wants your marriage to be.

But when you get all five cylinders going, then you develop real oneness in your marriages.

When you cut one out, the potential for your happiness goes down. You need them all.

God believes in romance. God is romantic. He wrote an entire book of the Bible just on romance. Songs of Solomon. The whole purpose of the book is the beauty of romance and sexual love. *That's what God wants for your marriage.*

Some of you think you've married the wrong person. But you are dead wrong. You don't need a new mate. You need a new attitude. If you act romantic, you will become romantic. You'll feel those feelings. Remember how it used to be. Repent and choose to treat your husband/wife differently, the way you used to. Choose to change. Do the things you used to do.

Remember the Theme for 2010 is Above and Beyond.

Please get connected to your local home group and see what Christ is doing in your community.