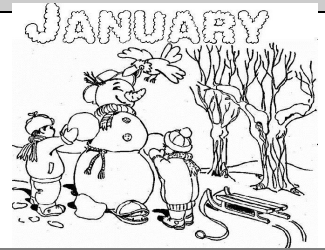




Marriage & Family Savers Institute

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IN THIS ISSUE

Love Is.....1
Winning Souls.....1
Valentine's Day Romance.....1
Are We Ready?.....2
National Marriage Week.....2
From Bill & Penny.....4

2012 is already shaping up to be a "make or break" year for marriage in America.

We need to start by asking the sobering question, "Are we doing all we can to nourish our marriage, so that we can be an example and an inspiration to others who look to us for encouragement as they work to build their marriages?"

Don't be fooled or complacent. Your enemy
"prowls about as a roaring lion seeking who he may devour." (1 Peter 5:8)

He's after our children. He knows if he can destroy the marriage he'll get the children. The evidence is everywhere. So in 2012 as never before we must take the words of the Prophet Nehemiah to heart who said,

"Remember the Lord who is great and awesome and fight for your brothers, your sons and your daughters, your wives and your homes." -Nehemiah 4:19b

LOVE IS...

Looking forward to Valentine's Day, and the celebration of love, it might be a good time to stop and see if we really understand what love really is. We've all seen the cartoons with the little boy and girl and the caption, *"Love is..."* It's as though no one really can know what love is so we'll just put out a lot of nice ideas to at least get the feeling of love. Well, love is no mystery. God made it plain,



"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever would believe in Him would not perish, but have everlasting life." -John 3:16. (Tim Tebow's favorite).

In a practical sense love is "sacrificing for the needs of another." You see, God didn't send His Son to die on a cross for the desires of the people. They wanted to be set free from the Romans, never mind their sin! Jesus knew the need was to be set free from the consequences of sin, so he willingly sacrificed Himself to meet that need.

(Cont. on P. 3)

WINNING SOULS THROUGH MARRIAGE MINISTRY

I'll bet you never thought of your marriage issues as an evangelism tool. It sounds crazy, doesn't it? Well, that just goes to show how God really chooses the foolish things of this world to confound the wise. Believe me, others are watching you, and as you work to save a troubled marriage, or to enrich a good one, I guarantee you, others will come and ask, "How did you do it?" Then you'll have an opportunity to tell them how following Christ and the principles in the Bible were the answer to marital difficulties. We rejoice every time another husband or wife accepts the Lord in the counseling room because their marital difficulties led them to the healer of broken hearts. Save your marriage. Win souls for Christ!

"He who wins souls is wise—Pro. 11:30

VALENTINE'S DAY FOR ROMANCE

Many married people don't have the "spiritual gift" of romance. I remember a young wife telling her sports-crazed husband during a counseling session, "You can remember to turn on the TV every day, but you can't remember to turn on me." Ouch!

Passion and intimacy in a relationship are like oxygen and water to the body. If the body doesn't get the right amount of oxygen, it shows signs of stress: deep breathing, nausea, headaches and such. If it doesn't get enough water, it dehydrates and slowly dies.

The same is true of a marriage. If it doesn't get a regular dose of passion and intimacy, it will show signs of stress: lack of closeness, frustration, resentment, regular arguments and withdrawal. In many ways, the relationship feels as if it were dying.

Valentine's Day is a wonderful time to rekindle passion. But what about the other 364 days of the year? Here are a few things I have

(Cont. on Page 3)

ARE WE READY?

"As God's co-workers we urge you not to receive God's grace in vain For he says, "In the time of my favor I heard you, and in the day of salvation I helped you." I tell you, now is the time of God's favor, now is the day of salvation."

-- 2 Corinthians 6:1-2 (NIV)

According to the Mayan calendar the world is supposed to end on December 21, 2012. Maybe they know something we don't. Either way, I know the Bible tells us no man knows the day or the hour, but we are nevertheless to be ready. In fact, I know exactly when Christ is coming --when we won't expect him!

So I must be responsible to plan my life to live to be a hundred, but be ready to go tonight. That means that as far as it is possible with me I must be at peace with everyone (Romans 12:18). I've forgiven everyone I need to, and I have asked for forgiveness from those I've offended. I'm loving my spouse unconditionally, and I'm doing my best to provide a godly example for my children.

Oh, that's not the case? Well then, let's start working on it now. Who knows, the Mayans might really know something we don't. Start on your "Things-to-do

-to-be-ready-for-Jesus" list today. Who knows; the Mayans might be Right —or worse, they might be wrong; He might come today!



At last the mystery of the Mayan Calendar is revealed!

Question to ask each other: Do you think you're ready if Jesus were to come tonight? What are the first three things on your "Things-to-do-to-be-ready-for-Jesus" list.

Prayer for the both of us: Lord help us to make sober assessment of our readiness, and help us to encourage one another in love to work on our list to be ready for your coming...whenever it will be.

For more couples' devotionals log onto www.marriageandfamily.org and click on the "MARRIAGE MINUTES" tab or go to www.barnesandnoble.com to purchase the book by Bill and Penny Banuchi, entitled "A Threefold Cord --a Devotional for Couples."

National Marriage Week USA

Taking place February 7-14 every year, National Marriage Week USA is a collaborative effort to strengthen individual marriages, reduce the divorce rate and build a stronger marriage culture, which in turn helps curtail poverty and benefits children. Together we can make more impact than working alone. To find out more, go to [www. nationalmarriageweekusa.org](http://www.nationalmarriageweekusa.org)

Together we can make more impact than working alone. Please join with others to host special events, launch a marriage class or home group, or place local advertising or news stories during National Marriage Week USA.

Several informative webinars available with leading national scholars, authors, and clergy at <http://www.marriagewebinar.com>

TOGETHER FOR MARRIAGE

Marriage works. It makes people happier, live longer, and build more economic security. Children with married parents perform better in school. [Read short summary from "The Case for Marriage" here.](#) [Click here](#) for new re-

search on "Why Marriage Matters: Thirty Conclusions from Social Science."

Deep down, everyone wishes they could have a rewarding lifelong commitment with their spouse. But in the midst of challenges, we forget how marriage can benefit our personal lives. We are losing our determination and the skills to keep marriages heal thy and strong.

Marriage breakdown is costly to our kids and to society at large. Divorce and unwed childbearing cost the U.S. taxpayers a whopping **\$112 billion** annually. In these economic challenging times, building stronger marriages helps build a stronger nation

ROMANCE FROM P. 1

learned, both personally and professionally, that help spark romance all year round:

Play offense. Don't wait until your spouse loses his or her cool because you're not thoughtful or romantic enough. Think ahead. What type of things does your mate spend the most time looking at in stores or online? Take note and show you care.

Listen. Does your spouse ever say, "I wish I could ... " or "It sure would be nice if ... "? Listening for these casual statements can give clues about the things that push his or her "romance button."

Think outside the box of chocolates. It's easy to do the same things — to give flowers or a card, yet once again — but doing something unexpected, such as treating your spouse to a formal dinner or cleaning his or her car, can express love like few store-bought gifts can.

Consider an occasional note. At least once a month let your spouse know about the things you appreciate, respect and have noticed. Be specific and keep it positive. This reinforces how special your spouse is to you.

Walk and drive. Walking together not only makes you both feel better physically and emotionally, but it can also present tremendous opportunities to communicate and reconnect. Early in our marriage, Rhonda and I started walking together, and it became an important part of forging friendship and intimacy. We discussed and solved many life, marriage and parenting problems in our walking shoes, and sometimes still do. We also used to take regular drives in the country. The times I opened up the most were when my eyes were on the road and hers were on the scenery.

Consider these ideas and think up a few of your own. They will help keep the spark of romance alive, especially when "life" begins to happen in your marriage. ♥

LOVE FROM P. 1

So we see that there are two elements to love: the need on the receiving end of that love, and sacrifice on the giving end. Both must be present to demonstrate love. We can go wrong in one of two ways: We can give to meet a real need, but if it's not giving to the point of sacrifice it doesn't communicate love. It's been said that a person's generosity is not measured by what he gives but by what he has left. Christ had nothing left. He gave all. That's love.

The other way we can miss it is by sacrificing, but totally missing the need on the part of the one we're trying to love. This is pretty typical in the husband who knocks himself out working overtime to provide for the family, when the real need might be spending quality time with them.

You see, real love means taking the time to understand the real needs of the one being loved, and being willing to give all — just as Christ gave all — to meet that need.

That is love. Anything else is a relationship built on something else, perhaps co-dependency or a mutual use agreement, but whatever it is, it isn't love.

Oh, and by the way, without God you don't stand a chance because

"Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love.—1 John 4:7,8

So now, we no longer need cartoons to give us a feeling about love; we know exactly what it is, and what two elements need to be present: the need on the part of the one receiving, and unconditional sacrifice on the part of the one who is giving.

So what does that look like in our relationship?

"Dear friends, let us love one another..." —1 John 4:7 ♥

Under His Wings Ministries for Marriage
getaway in Sullivan County. Log on to:

www.uhwpislam91.com

LOVE'S CHECKLIST

Below is a list of the various manifestations of love according to 1 Corinthians 13:1-4.

Go through the list together. Check off the areas that you've mastered, and start praying and working on the rest. Pretty sounding Valentine's Day cards are nice, but this is where the rubber meets the road.

- ☐ Love is patient,
- ☐ love is kind.
- ☐ It does not envy,
- ☐ it does not boast,
- ☐ it is not proud.
- ☐ It is not rude,
- ☐ it is not self-seeking,
- ☐ it is not easily angered,
- ☐ it keeps no record of wrongs.
- ☐ Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth.
- ☐ It always protects,
- ☐ always trusts,
- ☐ always hopes,
- ☐ always perseveres.
- ☐ Love never Fails



MARRIAGE SAVER SEMINAR on DVD

If you've never been to a Marriage saver Seminar, or if you need a refresher course, don't forget you can experience the entire seminar in your own home with our DVD program which even includes two workbooks and two personality profiles so you'll be able to work on your relationship just as you would at the actual seminar. Just go to our web site and click on the Marriage Store. Or just call our office and tell us you'd like to purchase the Seminar Kit on DVD. The cost is \$39.95. We'll even waive shipping when you mention this newsletter.

Dear Friends and Supporters,

We pray that this new year will see you experiencing the Kingdom of God more fully than ever before. His kingdom, the Bible tells us, is righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. (Romans 14:17) That sounds pretty good to me.

Yes, we are still here. The building has not been sold yet despite a bargain price, nearly what we paid for it 12 years ago. But God is in control. It all belongs to Him. We're just trying to manage His property in a way that we believe would be pleasing to Him.

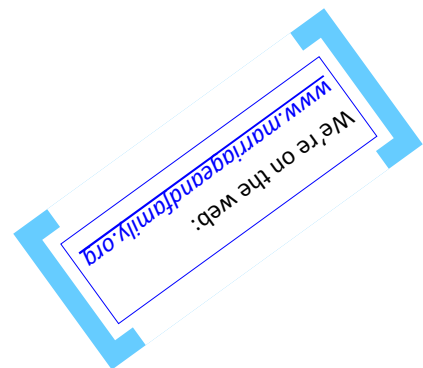
Our doors are still open for marriage counseling or life coaching Monday thru Friday. Just call the office to make an appointment.

We've taken on the challenge of starting a state chapter of the Faith & Freedom Coalition, so we welcome you all to join us the second Sunday of each month, 7:00 PM at New Harvest Christian Church in New Windsor to be equipped and motivated to make a difference in your sphere of influence for decency and morality—God knows we need it!

Please continue to support us with your prayers and finances as God enables you, and we will continue to fight for marriages, families and liberty—all gifts of God's grace.

With hearts of thanksgiving,

Bill & Penny



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