

## **CHAPTER 8 - LOVE AND MARRIAGE**

### **WE MUST DISCOVER WHAT WE ARE LOOKING FOR INSIDE NOT OUTSIDE OF OURSELVES**

We all have an inner peace we can learn to consciously access.  
External rational thought creates external feelings.  
Internal conscious thought accesses internal feelings.

### **SPIRITUAL INTELLIGENCE INVENTORY**

1. Love is primarily a feeling. TRUE OR FALSE ?
2. Love is primarily a way of acting. TRUE OR FALSE?
3. Love is a way of thinking. TRUE OR FALSE?

THE GOLDEN RULE . "Whatsoever you want others to do to you, do also to them."  
(Matt 7:12)

### **WHAT IS LOVE**

The problem with marriage relationships is people do not have a common definition of what love is. We hear people are looking for love. If they do not know what the bottom line of love is, they will never be able to find it.

### **LOVE IS NOT A FEELING**

Some people think love is a way of feeling which is the Freudian approach. The therapist talks about feeling and tries to get them to feel their way into right actions. At Christmas time you might have person you do not like, and do not want to not send them a card. In Freudian Analysis you would spend time talking about your feelings until you finally felt like doing it

### **LOVE IS NOT A WAY OF ACTING**

Another approach is to believe love is a way of acting. This is the behaviorist approach to get a person to act their way into right feelings. Some persons at Christmas would be encouraged to send the card whether they felt like it or not. After sending it, chances are they would feel better than they did before they sent it.

### **LOVE IS A WAY OF THINKING**

The bottom line is that love is neither a way of feeling or acting . It is a way of thinking. Thought creates feeling that creates action. The classical problem is caused by people thinking events create feelings, but we know by now that thoughts do. When the therapist spends time talking about feelings, they are talking symptom not cause. Generally with couples a complaint is one person can express their feelings, while the other has a hard time talking about them . Forget talking about feelings, talk about thoughts.

## **IN MARRIAGE DO NOT FOLLOW THE GOLDEN RULE**

One of the problems married couples make is they try to follow the Golden Rule in marriage rather than understand it.

The Golden Rule is "Do unto others as you wish others to do unto you." But this can become the problem that causes the marriage to break up.

There is a version of the Golden Rule called "Kitty Cat Love". I have a cat that rubs against me, not because she thinks it makes me feel good, but because it makes her feel good. I hate it! She bugs me! But still she keeps doing it.

Another version is called "Separate Realities". I like back rubs. I used to rub my wife's back, because if she would do it for me, I would feel good. She hates to be rubbed, and I felt rejected. For a time it was quite a problem. We were seeing the same event, but it was creating different feelings because we had "Separate Realities."

People who think events create feelings will wind up "submarining" each other with their feelings. Once this begins to happen, they do the Golden Rule in reverse. They hurt others as others hurt them.

When the husband feels unappreciated and hurt, he criticizes her as she criticized him. When she feels unloved by him, she withdraws from him as he withdrew from her. What we need to do is not follow, but to understand the Golden Rule. We need "To understand others as we wish others to understand us".

When people sense they are understood, they can then accept the other's love. When they feel they are not understood, they have a difficult time appreciating the other's love. When people are in the peace they tend to have deeper understanding which leads to compassion.

In counseling, it is the difference between what some call "high mood" as opposed to "low mood". I spend the first part of a counseling session helping couples understand the meaning of "getting into the peace". When they have the understanding, that is, the experience, then we can talk about what they see as their troubles. When they are in a high mood and at peace, they will see, hear, and react differently to things than when they are in a low mood and out of the peace.

## **SEPARATE REALITIES**

Generally dysfunctional situations are caused by separate realities where couples see the same events differently.

I have found one basic theme running through almost every marriage counseling situation. Generally the wife as a child had feelings of being unloved whenever her father would withdraw his love from her. She felt loved when he showed compassion and understanding by being there with her. The husband as a child felt unloved when his father would criticize him for not working hard and felt loved when his father showed

understanding and compassion by being appreciative of him for his hard work. When they got married, the husband began working hard at his job, looking for appreciation from his wife. She began doing things for him looking for him to draw nearer to her. The more he felt unappreciated the harder he worked on his job to get the affirmations. The harder he worked on his job the less she saw of him. She felt more unloved and abandoned each time because of the withdrawal of his presence. She nagged him for not spending more time with her and he felt unappreciated for his hard work.

They did not understand they were using "separate realities." For him, working hard on his job showed his love and called for appreciation. For her, his working hard on the job meant withdrawal of love and called for criticism.

Understanding this concept of separate realities can produce not only understanding in a marriage but also compassion.

Seeing they were using separate realities, he could now understand her pain. Her feelings of being unloved is like the time his father criticized him for not working hard. When he tells her he is feeling unloved, it is like the time her father withdrew his love from her. She knows he understands her pain and he knows she understands his pain. This does not solve the problem, but it can clear the emotional air. Out of the sense of understanding can come the expression of compassion followed by wisdom and the act of love.

What people need to do is to get compassion and understanding by getting the peace. When people are in the peace, they will stop trying to fix the other person. Rather, they will love them as they want to be loved. They will start appreciating the other person the way they are being loved. The husband begins to ask what he can do to help, and the wife begins to tell him how much she appreciates his hard work.

There are some exercises that are helpful to people when they are in the peace. However, they can become manipulative if they are used out of the peace. This is because when you are in the peace, you have compassion and understanding. But when you are out of the peace, you may lose compassion and understanding.

It is vital to understand the exercise is like the finger pointing to a truth that is beyond. If you just look at the finger, you may miss the understanding. You need to push the wonder button and look beyond the immediate to get understanding.

### **FORGET FEELINGS TALK ABOUT THOUGHTS**

One exercise I have found helpful is to give the couple a "feeling", then have them share their thoughts. Two basic feelings are "being loved" and "being unloved". They recall (and you, the reader, can join in) thoughts they have had of feeling unloved when they were a child, or in the past, or recently. Then they do the same for thoughts of feeling loved.

To understand an issue, you must "do the math". That is, you must go through the steps

of the math problem in order to truly understand the answer (the issue). Just having an answer is not enough, nor is just observing.

### **AN EXERCISE FOR UNDERSTANDING AND COMPASSION**

If you are interested in strengthening a relationship, in particular with your spouse, this exercise can be helpful. But do it when both of you are in a high mood, open to understanding and to compassion.

When sharing your thoughts, face each other and look each other in the eye. Tell yourself to "understand", not "reply".

The exercise is like this: Share when you were

Feeling unloved as a child , past and recent.

Feeling angry as a child, past and recent.

Feeling loving as a child, past, and recent.

Feeling loved as a child, past, and recent.

Be creative and use other feelings or opposite feelings (such as mistrust and trust, sorrow and joy, and so forth).

Now check your answers and see if you have any change of heart.

### **RESPONSE TO SPIRITUAL INTELLIGENCE INVENTORY**

1. Love is primarily a feeling. FALSE- If it was, a person could lose their feelings. They can't. They only think they can.

2. Love is primarily a way of acting. FALSE- The world is full of people who con others into thinking what they are doing is love.

3. Love is a way of thinking. TRUE- Thought creates feeling. You never lose your feeling, because you never lose your thought.