

These days, I imagine that the above words send chills, if not horror, into the ears and minds of many. But it need not be. In fact, what sounds so negative to many, is actually a statement of joyful commitment to me. Until death do us part...has a nice ring to it.

God's commandments are for **our** good always (Deuteronomy 6:24) including His instruction that marriage be a life-long covenant (Romans 7:2). God, who knows us better than we know ourselves, has in essence said, that it will be best for us when we marry, to stay married until death do us part.

The intimate knowledge of one another by two people in marriage, borderlines on something spiritual. The oneness in body begins the first day, but grows into a oneness in spirit that transcends all earthly relationships. They grow to think alike (often being able to read each other's mind without a word being spoken), to view things alike

(developing a similar perspective of many matters) and some say even to look alike. I believe it! A husband and wife can truly grow old together gracefully, experiencing a fulfillment that is almost indescribable.

But the celebrating of a golden anniversary will not come without effort. No relationship of any closeness gets that way without hardships along the way. In fact, I have observed that two can be drawn even closer together by working through their problems. Rather than driving a wedge between them, it produces another degree of intimacy in their relationship. They know each other a little bit better. It is often trials by fire that refine us the most.

The keys to experiencing this joy and oneness in a life-long marriage is two-fold, assuming by God's grace you live a long life. First, there will have to be a strong degree of **commitment**. I know it may sound superfluous, but the beauties of a

life-long marriage will only come through both partners being committed to making it work until death separates them. Marriages are far less likely to dissolve when neither spouse ever entertains the divorce option. In fact, it just is not an option! They both express the sentiment of Ruth to each other; "Entreat me not to leave you, or to turn back from following after you; for wherever you go, I will go; and wherever you lodge, I will lodge; your people shall be my people, and your God, my God. Where you die, I will die, and there will I be buried. The Lord do so to me, and more also, if anything but death parts you and me." (Ruth 1:16-17)

Second, the marriage is more likely to be a great success when both parties are **unselfish** in their love of the other. The man will be very fulfilled to have someone to die for, to provide and protect, and to lead. The wife will be very fulfilled to have someone to live for, to help and support, to love. Both, in their respective, God-given roles, are providing something to the union

that is better when joined to the other. In other words, one whole is better than two halves. And speaking of halves, each will think the other is the better half.

Much more could be said about the joys of a permanent relationship, including the positive effects that a sustained marriage for life has on children and grandchildren. But hopefully enough has been said to make the point... that "till death do us part" is a beautiful thing.

**We are the Lord's church
which meets at:**

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Service Times

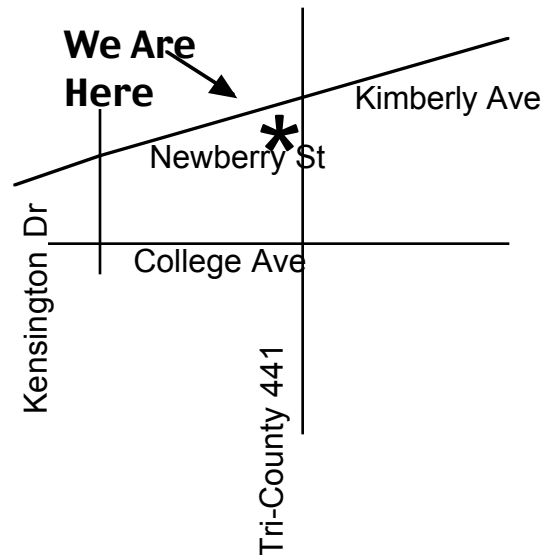
Sunday

Bible Classes - 9:30 a.m.
General Worship - 10:30 a.m.
Evening Worship Hour - 6:00

p.m.

Wednesday

Midweek Bible Study - 7:00 p.m.



Till Death Do Us Part



by Whit Sasser

