

The Harvester



Preparing Souls

To Serve The Lord



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Rules of Romance

By Rick Kenyon

“Romantic” defined: “1. consisting of or resembling a romance; 2. having no basis in fact; 3. impractical in conception or plan; 4. marked by the imaginative or emotional appeal of what is heroic, adventurous, remote, mysterious, or idealized” (“Romantic”). In essence, romance “Don’t make no sense”! On the surface, romance may seem to have no practical purpose for existence. However, romance is a necessary element of any healthy relationship. The purpose of romance is to demonstrate one’s love to his or her significant heterosexual other by showing special attention to him or her. In most cases, romance is an attempted effort of a boyfriend or husband to express his love for his girlfriend or wife. This effort is not always successful. It may fail because of the man’s inability to “be romantic,” or it may fail because the woman has romanticized romance into an unobtainable standard. In either situation, romance can be a tool for cultivating a happy, God-intended relationship. However, romance has its rules.

Rule 1- Romance is not just about the destination, it is also about the journey. It is attention with dimension.

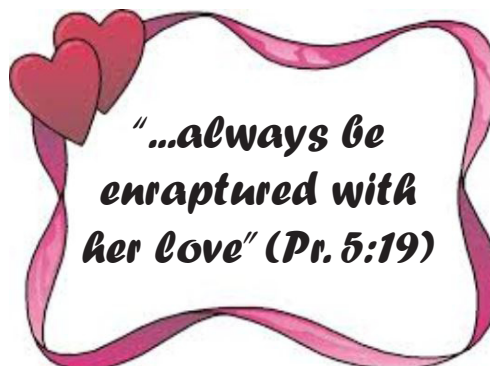
Everyone is familiar with the expression: “Getting there is half the fun!”—the same slogan should be adopted in romance. Love can lack dimension when it

is reduced to a simple proposition (“I love you”). The experiences that lead to that kernel of truth provide a dimension that the logical side of humanity cannot address. In other words, romance is not like a GPS that will get you to your destination with the most efficient time or mileage; romance is the scenic route that goes out of the way to experience the journey. It adds another dimension that will enhance your destination.

Rule 2- Romance is not just for special occasions, but for the entire relationship. It is attention without mention.

American culture has dictated a romantic standard for certain holidays: birthdays, anniversaries, Valentine’s Day, etc. For many, romance is expected at the mere mentioning of these holidays; and, as some may already know, forgetting just one of these special days often translates into utter failure! While anticipated romance is good, the ritualistic

holiday expectations can occasionally stifle the potency of romance. Spontaneous romance offers fresh, sincere efforts. Both parties in a relationship deserve to feel special throughout their entire relationship, not just on days when special attention is “owed” them. To make romance very special, try it out on a non-special day.



Rule 3- Romance is not just for one spouse, but for each spouse. *It is attention with extension.*

This extended attention works in two directions. First, romantic gestures should be pursued by both individuals. Typically, the woman is the primary recipient of romance, and for good reason—they are usually the ones who often need emotional connection. Yet, believe it or not, men also enjoy romance. It may not be in the form of a candle lit dinner or long walk on the beach, but maybe in surprising him with tickets to that sporting event that he loves so much. Second, romantic gestures also benefit the giver. As Paul quotes Jesus in Acts 20:35, “It is more blessed to give than to receive.” If the giver of romance does not enjoy making the other happy, then he or she has missed the point of romance. Both sides should be able to experience the joy of making and receiving romantic gestures. Romance extends both directions.

Rule 4- Romance is a marathon, not a sprint. *It is attention with suspension.*

Not only does the journey matter (see “RULE 1”), but so does the pace. Romance should not be rushed. Rushing through romantic gestures only conveys impatience to its recipient. Beauty is something to be admired and appreciated, and love is to be carefully crafted and molded. One of the

greatest tools in the bag of romance is time. Take time to plan the destination and journey. Take time to enjoy every minute of it. The objective is to suspend those moments as long as possible so that he/she can experience to the fullest ability your expression of love for him or her.

Rule 5- Romance is an end to the means, not a means to an end. *It is “attention with no intention” (Lodato).*

Too often (especially among men) romantic actions are performed with ulterior motives. Romance should be a selfless expression of love that seeks only to increase the happiness of one’s significant other. When romance is used as a “means to an end,” it is not only contradictory to itself, but is also self-serving to its user. Romance should never be weaponized into a shallow ploy to fulfil ungodly, fleshly desires. It should be an “end to the means.” If someone seeks to demonstrate his/her love, then romantic gestures are the end result of their efforts. Similar to the old adage, “People don’t care how much you know until they know how much you care,” romance is the gesture to let one’s significant other know how much he or she is loved.

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1807 South Florida Avenue
Lakeland, FL 33803
(863) 683-4043

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***Our final deposit for the month is usually made on the last Wednesday of the month. All contributions received after that time are reported on the next month’s financial statement.**

Conclusion

God designed humans with the capacity to love and the creativity to fulfill it. Romance communicates love in unique and adventurous methods. On February 14 the holiday that glorifies romantic gestures will occur. If these rules of romance are applied happiness will abound. Valentine's Day is not divinely ordained nor is there a Biblical precedence

for observing this day, yet... husbands will do well to remember it. 

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Florida School of Preaching

1807 South Florida Avenue

Lakeland, FL 33803

www.fsop.net email: fsop@fsop.net

Phone: (863) 683-4043; (800) 320-9780

Fax: (863) 683-0750

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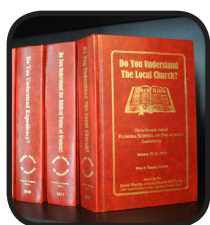
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“Poor in Spirit” While “Hungering and Thirsting”

We appreciate all those who spoke on and/or attended our 40th annual lectureship. Their humble desire to learn God’s word and how to apply it was evident. I want to personally commend the excellent attitude that was displayed throughout the lectureship. It is not often when this size gathering can Biblically discuss potentially controversial issues such as marriage, divorce, and remarriage and race relations and remain level headed, yet that is exactly what happened here during the week. We had great afternoon forums with very challenging questions. Thursday’s forum, “Doing unto Others,” was especially enlightening as the speakers and those participating in the forum questions and answers spoke openly and honestly about their experiences and backgrounds relating to race relations and how the church can (and should) show the world how people of all skin colors should be treated with respect and Christ-likeness! This world is truly a better place by the “salt” and “light” of those who do what Jesus said! Thanks for doing just that! —*Brian*

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