

Week 8, 8/19/18
What She Said!
Wednesday

The Motivational Power of Relational Desires

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Today's Treasure

*Having purified your souls by your obedience to the truth for a sincere brotherly love,
love one another earnestly from a pure heart.*

1 Peter 1:22

A friend of mine shared about a painful disappointment in her marriage. Seems that her husband had planned a day trip by himself to a favorite getaway in the mountains for some solitude and refreshment. After settling the details and booking a reservation, he casually mentioned his plans to my friend.

What?! You didn't think to invite me along? You'd rather just have a day to yourself?!

Turns out that her typically very sensitive husband had no idea that she would want to go with him, since she had been to that very place a few weeks earlier. As she told him how hurt and disappointed she was, he immediately apologized. What my friend had considered a "no brainer" wasn't on his radar screen at all. He was oblivious to what she expected him to intuit on his own.

Our desires lead us to have expectations in all kinds of relational circumstances. The husband who always knows what to say or do so that we feel loved and secure. The friend who does the same. The son or daughter who rises up to call us 'blessed among women'. The boss who senses when we need extra affirmation (or a financial bonus or surprise day off!).

God's word says that sincere, earnest love from a pure heart towards people, flows from "having our souls purified by obedience" to His truth. What truth? All of it! Lest we become overwhelmed, let's sum it up the way Jesus did.

When asked what the greatest commandment was, Jesus said, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the

great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets.”
(Matthew 22:37-40)

Love for the LORD, our Master and King, means obedience and submission of every part of us, including our desires and relationships. If I’m not consciously submitting these under the loving lordship of Christ, they take over like a room full of toddlers left without supervision. It is craziness... and selfishness.

Our desires motivate us in various relational directions. I can move *against* people, if selfish desires hijack my commitment to love others more than myself. My friend moved against her husband with less than gracious words before she knew the whole story. Her feelings of hurt and disappointment were real. God did not want her to stuff them, or ignore them, but to bring them under His leadership and wisdom before ‘acting’ upon them.

I can also *move away* from people, if my desires and hopes are to only be in relationships that are easy and don’t require much from me. If I demand to feel loved and valued, and you don’t want to satisfy those desires, then out with you! Or if someone is needy and hurting and my desire is to stay away from messy situations, I won’t engage, may disengage, or just not enter in in the first place.

However, when our hope is in God and we submit our desires to Him, we can move *towards people with Christ’s love*. 1 Peter 1:22 guides us that as we obey God, we will grow in deep-hearted love, the kind of love that is increasingly free from the tangled mess that can happen in our relationships when Christ isn’t in His rightful place.

PRAYER

Lord Jesus, I praise You that when Your friends betrayed and abandoned You, You continued to move towards them in love. Help me to grow in resting in Your love, and to then be motivated to love others, even when I’m disappointed and hurt. Deepen my intimacy with You, so that people are in their ‘rightful’ place in my life. Amen.