



# guidelines for living

*a 5 minute message*

February 14, 2018

HOW CAN YOU KNOW YOU ARE IN LOVE?

**Love...always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails. 1 Corinthians 13:6-8**

When I was in college and my roommate started dating, it was easy to tell when he fell in love. For one thing, he walked around glassy-eyed and his nose actually turned red. We also knew that something was going on when he stood in front of Judy's picture for hours at a time making strange sighing noises.

How do you know you are in love? Is there really a yardstick that you can use for measurement? There are some marks on the yardstick which help you know whether it is the real thing which has put the bite on you, or else is but an imitation of the real thing, something which has momentarily affected your sanity, which is certain to pass.

The following are guidelines which serve as measurements on the yardstick of love:

- 1. You know a relationship is moving towards love when you begin to think of it in terms of what you can give instead of what you get out of it.** This was Paul's assessment when he wrote, "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" (1 Corinthians 13:4-5). The individual who thinks of a relationship in terms of what he or she gets out of it, whether it is personal gratification or a house which comes with a husband, isn't really in love. He or she is "in like," which is a good deal different.
- 2. You know your relationship is going somewhere on the yardstick of love when you begin to think in terms of "we" and "ours" instead of "I" or "me" and "mine."** A good marriage is the merging of two lives into the fabric of oneness, while at the same time each maintaining his own personality and identity. When one or the other in a relationship insists on smothering the other, it's a danger sign. The uniqueness of marriage is that two become one, yet each is a person loved and respected by the other.
- 3. You can be quite certain a relationship is moving towards love when you are convinced that your life would not be the same without the other.** Paul wrote, "Love...always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails" (1 Corinthians 13:6-8). These ingredients contribute something of great value to a relationship which enriches without limitation. It tends to bring out qualities which make you only a better, more loving, nobler person.



# guidelines for living

*a 5 minute message*

**4. You are taking another step towards the goal of lasting love when you have disagreements and learn to resolve them peacefully.** Couples who really love each other never argue and disagree. Right? Dead wrong. They do disagree. They may argue, but they learn how to resolve conflict without turning on each other and destroying the cathedral of their love. They attack problems, not each other. Whether they never go to sleep without kissing and making up, or else they sleep on it, letting their tempers cool, and then resolve the problem, they know that to move on in their relationship, they must solve what bothers them.

**5. You are moving towards a mature love when you are able to communicate with each other at a deep and personal level.** Part of this is being comfortable with each other as you are, without pretending to be more or less than you actually are. It includes a relationship with God whereby you both acknowledge your need for His guidance and help.

Frankly, I succumbed to this condition called love long ago, and I'm still being blessed by the same, which only grows more wonderful year by year. With some experience, I've learned what really counts is not what you get out of a relationship, but what you put into it. Think about it.

Resource reading: Matthew 5:43-48.