



A SPECIAL ANNIVERSARY MESSAGE

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On April 27, 2023, a very special ceremony was held in the Huntington Park, California, church for the Fiftieth Wedding Anniversary of Elder Joel and Sister Armena (Amie) Barnedo. I had the privilege to stand before the couple, their family, and their friends to give some words of blessing and encouragement. In sharing these words below, I hope that other couples, individuals, and those who are contemplating marriage may see what God's will is for marriage.

On this anniversary day, we were surrounded by family and friends, all of whom gathered to witness the couple's renewal of wedding vows and to share in the joy of this occasion, which may be one of the most memorable and happy days of their lives. When there is a union with Christ as its foundation, all heaven observes it.

The couple was a little nervous, but their faces glowed with happiness.

In the book of Genesis, our loving heavenly Father said: "It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him." Genesis 2:11.

Through the providence of God, an individual finds a helpmate. Two people become special to each other. It is love that prompts a man to ask a woman for her hand in marriage. A married couple is urged always to remember that the love which they have for each other is to be like that which Christ has for His church. This is unselfish love. It is love that seeks the good of the other person. With this love in his heart, no one will be absorbed by thoughts of his own happiness, but rather with what he can do to increase the happiness of the other person.

The Scriptures say in the New Testament: "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself for it; that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that He might present it to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself." "For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church." Ephesians 5:25-28, 31, 32.

As Christ loved the church, so the couple loves each other, not just today, but every day of their lives. They will be richly blessed in doing this.

Additionally, God also gave specific advice to the wife. "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and He is the Saviour of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing." Ephesians 5:22-24.

Hearts that are filled with the love of Christ will never drift apart. What is true love? Is it infatuation? No! Is it a feeling that you never felt before? No!

Sister Ellen G. White writes that "true love is a high and holy principle altogether different in character from that love which is awakened by impulse, and which suddenly dies when severely tested." —*The Adventist Home*, p. 50.

Love is a precious gift from Jesus. In *The Holy Bible Containing the Old and New Testaments, a New Translation*, by James Moffatt (1935), the apostle Paul's words

of 1 Corinthians 13:4-8 appear as follows: "Love is very patient, very kind. Love knows no jealousy; love makes no parade, gives itself no airs, is never rude, never selfish, never irritated, never resentful; love is never glad when others go wrong, love is gladdened by goodness, always slow to expose, always eager to believe the best, always hopeful, always patient. Love never disappears."

I would like to give some practical suggestions for a successful married life. They are simple but important.

First: Be committed to each other.

Marriage is a covenant with God and with one another, and it is a lifelong commitment. Do not give up when problems arise. Some days the sun doesn't shine; it is cloudy and stormy. Face the world together, and wait on the Lord. Never say, "I made a mistake in my choice of a companion."

Believe that God put you together, just as God chose Eve for Adam.



She was a part of Adam. Their marriage lasted hundreds of years. It was a wonderful marriage. Was the marriage without problems? No. They were evicted from their home. One son became a murderer. But they survived and were faithful to each other, because they were committed to each other.

The second suggestion is: Watch your words well.

Think before you speak. Do not hurt your spouse with hurtful, unloving words.

Remember the Bible verse that says: "A soft answer turneth away wrath, but grievous words stir up anger." Proverbs 15:1. Remember the Bible text that says: "He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city." Proverbs 16:32.

If both parties are angry, sparks of passion may burn. An unkind word under any condition cuts deep, and wounds may take a long time to heal.

Many marriage counselors consider the failure of proper communication between husband and wife to be a major cause of family problems. So, let me urge you to make time for communication. Take time to understand your partner. Take time to speak in love. Proverbs 16:24 says: "Pleasant words are as an honeycomb, sweet to the soul and health to the bones." Aren't these beautiful words? A kind word will go a long way toward a happy solution. Take time also to be a good listener. Determine to accept your mate unconditionally, even as you may discover weaknesses or character defects. The secret of a successful marriage lies not in having the right partner but rather in being the right partner.

Speak words of appreciation. Say, "I love you, Darling." "That was a super good meal that you prepared. It was delicious." "That is a beautiful dress you are wearing. I like the colors." To your husband you can say, "You did a great job in the kitchen, cleaning up the mess after the guests left." "Thank you for washing the car." The list goes on and on. Say something nice and complimentary. Look for the best in each other.

The third suggestion is: Admit your mistakes and faults to one another.

No one is perfect in this life. Both partners must learn to forgive and forget. Be willing to say words such as, "I am sorry," and "Please forgive me." Be willing to forgive as Jesus forgives us. Do not hold any grudges.

Another suggestion is: Share home duties.

No one should do all the cleaning, cooking, washing clothes and dishes, and ironing. You need to work together as a team. One

can perhaps stir the spaghetti sauce in the pot, make bread, and set the table. The other one can perhaps bake some tasty dishes. There is so much work to be done in the home. Enjoy each other's company, and keep your home clean and attractive. Then the angels will love to visit you in your home.

The fifth suggestion is: Keep up the courtship, and do not let the fire of love go out

To succeed in this regard, the marriage partners need to contribute to the happiness of each other. There are many ways to make your spouse happy. An inspired author wrote, "Continue the early attentions. In every way encourage each other in fighting the battles of life. Study to advance the happiness of each other." *-The Adventist Home*, p. 106.

This is the key to a good marriage. Surprise each other from time to time with little presents, such as a bouquet of roses, a sweater made in Scotland, a good sewing book, or a new computer program. There are so many things that you can give to your spouse! Whatever gift you give, it is another way of saying, "I Love you." And remember your spouse's birthday and your wedding anniversary.

About a hundred years ago, someone wrote these words: "It is the little attentions, the numerous small incidents and simple courtesies of life, that make up the sum of life's happiness." *-The Adventist Home*, p. 109.

It is also nice to take little trips together. Spend as much time as possible doing things together if you want to have a rich, fulfilled marriage. This means to vacation together, shop together, eat together, and work together. Well, just be together and enjoy life!

The sixth and last suggestion for a successful marriage is the most important: Make Jesus Christ the center of your lives and your home.

With Christ in the home, a marriage cannot fail. Love for each other should be an eternal triangle. God is at the top of the triangle, and the couple is at its base. When both of them are joined together with God at the top, they will never be separated from each other at the bottom. The closer each one comes to Jesus, the closer they will come to each other. That is the truth. Come closer to Jesus. He wants to build and strengthen you, while the enemy is doing everything to destroy homes. Do not let him into your hearts. What can you do to prevent the devil from building walls between you? Pray together, sing together, study the Bible together, go to church together on the Sabbath.

There is a song that says, "With Jesus in the family, happy, happy home." I believe those words. Jesus will make your home a little heaven on earth. Trust and obey Him. Love Jesus, and permit Him to dwell in your home forever. God bless you in your life's journey.



"May God help you, parents, to arouse to the responsibilities of your God-given work. Let your life in the home prove the reality and fervor of your piety. Let your works be in accordance with your profession of faith. Bring your children up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. God has given you these young lives to train for His service. You must cultivate the soil of the heart, and sow in it the precious seeds of truth, that will spring up and bear fruit to the glory of God. You are not to teach them external good merely; God requires that the principles that govern their actions and control their thoughts shall be

right. Teach them truthfulness, forethought, and kindness; teach them to be neat and thorough and painstaking. Thus you may train them for God and heaven. These valuable traits of character will not come of themselves; they must not be left to chance work; for this will give Satan an opportunity to lure them from right and truth. From the first dawn of intellect no pains must be spared to form right habits of thought and action." -Letters and Manuscripts, vol. 11 (1896), p. 1.



or in fruits and vegetables is created by specific phytonutrients, which are natural compounds that help protect plants from germs, bugs, the sun, and other threats. And each color indicates an abundance of specific nutrients.

Phytonutrients are not essential to keep you alive (unlike vitamins and minerals), but they may help prevent certain lifestyle diseases and keep a person's body working as it should. A varied, balanced diet provides the nutrients one's body needs to work properly. And without good nutrition, it will be more likely to suffer from disease, illness, and poor performance. Following are specific colors and the health benefits they offer: **Red fruits and vegetables** help fight cancer, reduce the risk of diabetes and heart disease, and improve skin quality. Red foods one should try include red peppers, tomatoes, strawberries, raspberries, watermelon, apples, cranberries, kidney beans, cherries, grapes, red onions, pomegranates, and beets.

Yellow and orange fruits and vegetables improve immune function, reduce the risk of heart disease, and promote eye health. Yellow and orange foods to try are oranges, grapefruit, lemons, mangoes, papayas, carrots, sweet potatoes, winter squash, yellow summer squash, corn, cantaloupe, orange and yellow peppers, pineapple, peaches, and bananas.

Green fruits and vegetables boost the immune system, help to detoxify the body, and restore energy and vitality. Green fruits to try include broccoli, kale, lettuce, collard greens, Brussels sprouts, green grapes, asparagus, spinach, Swiss chard, arugula, green beans, peas, kiwi fruit, avocado, zucchini, edamame, and green apples.

Blue and purple fruits and vegetables may reduce the risk of cancer and heart disease, support cognition, decrease inflammation, and improve skin health. Blue and purple foods to try are blueberries, blackberries, red (purple) cabbage, red (purple) grapes,

A Plant-Based Diet **MAKE IT COLORFUL**

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Following a well-established springtime tradition, I recently made a visit to a local nursery. Choosing an appropriate fertilizer that would best support my summer garden proved challenging. There were so many of them! The helpful sales clerk reminded me that, like people, plants flourish with a variety of nutrients.

Yet, we too easily fall into the habit of limiting our choices to a few tried and true familiar foods rather than expanding our horizons to a greater variety of colorful fruits and vegetables. That is what our heavenly Father intended, according to Genesis 1:12, *English Standard Version*. "The earth brought forth vegetation, plants yielding seed according to their own kinds, and trees bearing fruit in which is their seed, each according to its kind. And God saw that it was good." We can only imagine the abundance, beauty, and perfection of such a garden! No doubt it was a veritable color palette to delight the eye and taste.

"Health is a great treasure. It is the richest possession that mortals can have. Wealth, honor, or learning is dearly purchased, if it be at the loss of the vigor of health. None of these attainments can secure happiness if health is wanting." —*Healthful Living*, p. 29.

While eating properly is no doubt an important part of the equation for overall health, conflicting recommendations from "experts" can make following dietary guidelines confusing. Barring specific food allergies and medical conditions, what they all hold in common, however, is increasing the intake of fresh fruits and vegetables. Today a "whole-plant diet" seems to be the collective term that encompasses both vegetarian and vegan diets, both of which can become overly laden with processed meat and dairy alternatives. A good way to avoid these products is to shop the periphery of grocery stores, where fresh produce is more often found.

What vegetarian and vegan diets also hold in common is avoiding the white version of the following foods: salt, sugar, flour, and rice. However, other white foods are highly recommended: onions, mushrooms, cauliflower, garlic, jicama, parsnips, and potatoes. A recent consultation with Dr. Michael Klaper, a well-known proponent of a plant-based diet for the past 40 years, confirmed this.

Research has shown that a diet full of colorful fruits and vegetables can boost health and vitality. Each col-



plums, prunes, eggplant, purple potatoes, purple cauliflower, figs, and raisins.

Brown and white foods protect against certain cancers, keep bones strong, and are a heart-healthy choice. Brown and white fruits to try include cauliflower, garlic, onions, mushrooms, potatoes, parsnips, daikon radish, and jicama.

In conclusion, let us remember the nutritional advice given to our first parents in Genesis 1:29. "And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat."

Also, look forward to His promise in Revelation 22:2: "In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations."

References

Ocean Robbins foodrevolution.org
Dr. Joel Fuhrman
Dr. Mark Hyman
Dr. Michael Klaper
Dr. David Perlmutter

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"Talk light; walk in the light. 'God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all.' Study not how to please self. Lose sight of self, and behold the multitudes perishing in their sins. Gather to your souls the courage that can come only from the Light of the world. Forgetting self, help the many who are within reach around you. Talk faith, and your faith will increase.... Shine as lights in the world, attracting others by the brightness of Christ's glory revealed through your good works." —Signs of the Times, June 3, 1903.



"All who are pursuing the onward Christian course, should have, and will have, an experience that is living, that is new and interesting. A living experience is made up of daily trials, conflicts, and temptations, strong efforts and victories, and great peace and joy gained through Jesus. A simple relation of such experiences gives light, strength, and knowledge, that will aid others in their advancement in the divine life. The worship of God should be both interesting and instructive to those who have any love for divine and heavenly things.

"Jesus, the heavenly Teacher, did not hold Himself aloof from the children of men, but in order to benefit them, He came from heaven to earth, where they were, that the purity and holiness of His life might shine upon the pathway of all, and light the way to heaven. The Redeemer of the world sought to make His lessons of instruction plain and simple, that all might comprehend them. He generally chose the open air for His discourses. No walls could inclose the multitude which followed Him; but He had special reasons for resorting to the groves and the seaside to give His lessons of instruction. He could there have a commanding view of the landscape, and make use of objects and scenes with which those in humble life were familiar, to illustrate the important truths He made known to them. With His lessons of instruction, He associated the works of God in nature. The birds which were caroling forth their songs without a care, the flowers of the valley glowing in their beauty, the lily that reposed in its purity upon the bosom of the lake, the lofty trees, the cultivated land, the waving grain, the barren soil, the tree that bore no fruit, the everlasting hills, the bubbling stream, the setting sun tinting and gilding the heavens—all these He employed to impress His hearers with divine truth. He connected the works of God's finger in the heavens and upon the earth with the words of life He wished to impress upon their minds, that as they should look upon the wonderful works of God in nature, His lessons might be fresh in their memories.

"In all His efforts, Christ sought to make His teachings interesting. He knew that a tired,

hungry throng could not receive spiritual benefit, and He did not forget their bodily needs. Upon one occasion He wrought a miracle to feed five thousand who had gathered to listen to the words of life which fell from His lips. Jesus regarded His surroundings when giving His precious truth to the multitude. The scenery was such as would attract the eye and awaken admiration in the breasts of the lovers of the beautiful. He could extol the wisdom of God in His creative works and could bind up His sacred lessons by directing their minds through nature up to nature's God. Thus the landscape, the trees, the birds, the flowers of the valley, the hills, the lake, and the beautiful heavens were associated in their minds with sacred truths, which would make them hallowed in memory as they should look upon them after their Lord's ascension to heaven.

"When Christ taught the people, He did not devote the time to prayer. He did not enforce upon them, as did the Pharisees, long, tedious ceremonies and prayers. He taught His disciples how to pray: 'And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are; for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily, I say unto you, They have their reward. But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut the door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly. But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do; for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. Be not ye therefore like unto them; for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of before ye ask Him.' Matthew 6:5-8." —*Review and Herald*, April 28, 1885.

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