

CHAPTER 26

HOW YOU CAN RECOGNIZE TRUE LOVE

- I. THE TITLE OF TODAY'S LECTURE IS "HOW YOU CAN RECOGNIZE TRUE LOVE."
- II. IN ORDER FOR YOU TO UNDERSTAND WHAT DIRECTION WE'RE TAKING, THIS DISCUSSION WILL BE DIVIDED INTO FOUR MAJOR PARTS.
- A. They are:
1. How a woman can know when a man loves her.
 2. How a man can know when a woman loves him.
 3. How to know when you're in love.
 4. How to become a lovable person.
- III. THIS TOPIC WILL GO PAST THE PRELIMINARIES OF DATING AND INTO THAT PHASE OF YOUR RELATIONSHIP WHERE YOU ARE CONSIDERING A PERMANENT COMMITMENT.
- A. You've reached the crossroads — that point of making a decision.
- B. You're on the verge of either proposing to the girl of your dreams or, if you're a woman, accepting his proposal for marriage.
- C. There yet remains a final question: How can I know with total certainty that I'm truly in love and that this person is the right one for me?
- IV. IT IS ASSUMED THAT THE PERSON YOU'RE INTERESTED IN HAS MET THE NECESSARY SPIRITUAL QUALIFICATIONS:
- A. Baptism.
- B. Being a member in good standing.
- C. Having the fear of God.
- D. True conversion.
- E. Etc.
- V. SINCE THE BASIC GROUNDWORK FOR MARRIAGE SHOULD HAVE BEEN LAID BY THIS TIME, WE'LL FOREGO THE INTRODUCTORY REQUIREMENTS AND GET RIGHT INTO THE PURPOSE OF THIS LECTURE: HOW YOU CAN RECOGNIZE TRUE LOVE.

QUESTION 1: How can a woman know when a man loves her?

1. Realize that true love will always make itself known.
 - a. First, he will verbalize it.
 - (1) He will tell you in clear, certain terms that he loves you, and will say it often.
 - (2) He will explain why by pointing out the qualities that he admires in your life.
 - (3) He will never leave you in doubt about his feelings and intentions.
 - b. He will also demonstrate his love and affection in myriads of physical ways.
 - (1) In addition to everyday courtesies, this will involve other thoughtful considerations: flowers, candy, cards, etc.
 - (2) He will be attuned to your interests and goals and seek out ways to help you fulfill them.
 - c. If you have doubts about the depth of his love, you need to reconsider whether he's the right man for you.
2. His love will be consistent and enduring.
 - a. He will be the first to patch things up if there are misunderstandings.

- b. He will forgive and forget past offenses.
 - c. He will be patient, tender and caring in working out differences.
 - d. He won't expect perfection or be picking at every little flaw.
 - e. Regardless of your fluctuating moods, he will be strong in his resolve to encourage and support you.
3. He'll make you feel exclusively special and the most important person in his life.
 - a. He will be deeply endeared to you and honor you as a gift from God.
 - b. He will treat you differently from anyone else in any situation, public or private.
 - c. Overall, his spontaneous reactions toward you will be gentle, respectful and sensitive.
 - d. Instead of humiliating you and making you feel inferior, he will uphold your sense of dignity and self worth.
 - e. His love and appreciation for you will be obvious in just about everything he says and does.
 4. He will make every effort to disclose his innermost thoughts and feelings.
 - a. Generally, a man will not share his hangups and frustrations with you until he is confident that you'll not hold them against him or betray his trust.
 - b. Sharing his feelings, then, is another indication that his love for you is true.
 - c. He will not hide any secrets from you so that you will feel secure in his loyalty and devotion.
 - d. He will want to make you a part of every facet of his life so that you'll know you are needed and important.
 - e. If he's not comfortable in communicating with you at this level, there's a serious defect in your relationship.
 5. He will have become your closest and most trusted friend.
 - a. He will always be there when you need him.
 - b. He will never violate a confidence or trust.
 - c. He will work at understanding your total makeup and personality: weaknesses, fears, self-doubts, anxieties, frustrations, mood swings, etc.
 - d. He will strive to please you and make you happy.
 - e. Instead of giving premature advice, he will patiently hear you out until you've aired your frustrations and problems.
 - f. He will use wisdom and diplomacy in helping you work through the crises in your life.
 - g. He'll protect your name and defend you from criticism or harm.
 6. He will prove his love through self-denial and personal sacrifice.
 - a. He will put your needs above his selfish interests and desires.
 - b. He'll not demand his rights or insist on having his way.
 - c. Instead, he will be considerate of your welfare and cheerfully take the time to help and serve.
 - d. His total orientation will be that of outgoing concern.
 - e. Helping you find joy and fulfillment will be one of his highest priorities.
 7. He will be loyal, trustworthy and totally committed to you.
 - a. This is where unconditional love fits in.
 - b. Once he's made a commitment to you, it will become a sacred trust.
 - c. To enter marriage without this resolve could lead to heartache and disaster.
 - d. No matter what arises, whether it's a simple misunderstanding or an emotional blowup, he will take the lead and reconcile your differences.
 8. He will shoulder his duties as a responsible leader.
 - a. He will always be up front as an example, leading the way to God's Kingdom.
 - b. He will prepare himself, work hard and be a good provider.
 - c. He will accept the full weight of the role God has assigned to him.
 - d. He will take charge, courageously face the future, and deal with problems as they arise.
 - e. In everyday situations, he'll help you with decisions and take the pressure off you where he is able.
 - f. He will take a firm stand if, within his heart, he feels you are deviating from God's path.
 9. He'll give attention to the little things that are important to you.
 - a. This shows that he is attuned to your every comfort, safety and well-being.
 - b. He'll give heed when you express your honest needs and desires.

- c. He will be sincerely interested in your hobbies and projects.
 - d. He will notice the new picture on the wall, a new floral arrangement on the table, or a new doily you've crocheted.
 - e. He will compliment you regularly and encourage you to develop your full potential.
 - f. Giving attention to the finer details conveys a message that he's genuinely devoted to your success and happiness.
10. He will demonstrate an ever-deepening and growing love.
- a. If his love is true, it will stand the test of time.
 - b. He will strive to understand the complexities of your background and personality.
 - c. He will be forever asking questions to this end and picking up cues from your reactions and everyday behavior.
 - d. His love will mature as his understanding of you deepens.
 - e. He will reflect depth of character and integrity and reassure you of his continuing love.

QUESTION 2: How can a man know when a woman loves him?

1. She will give herself to you in wholehearted commitment.
 - a. She will make you the number one focus — the most important person — in her physical life.
 - b. No other man will stand as tall in her eyes.
 - c. Her loyalty and devotion will clearly shine through.
 - d. Her actions and words will have increasingly proved this over a period of time.
 - e. She will adore and admire your manhood and allow you to be the only true love in her life.
 - f. Her attitude will show in her eyes — she will look at you with respect and deference.
 - g. She will make every effort to prove that her commitment is steadfast and unquestionable.
2. She will demonstrate joyful submissiveness and the desire to let you lead.
 - a. This attitude comes from walking with God and allowing His Spirit to fill her mind.
 - b. She'll be conscious of her role for which she was created and dutifully submit as a helpmeet and companion.
 - c. She will fight the tendency to go around you, usurp your authority and have her way.
 - d. Her body stance will not be hostile or defensive.
 - e. She'll look to you for guidance and help when confronted with a problem or important decision.
 - f. You'll be her sounding board, her crying post, her strong shoulder and protector.
 - g. Being submissive and wishing to please you with all her heart basically mean the same thing.
3. She will want to respond and support you as her number one earthly ambition.
 - a. It's her attitude of responsiveness and eager cooperation that tells you her love is true.
 - b. The depth of her devotion will be indicated by the enthusiasm of her response.
 - c. She will willingly heed your desires and wishes because of an instinctive yearning to please you so much.
 - d. She'll take a personal interest in your goals and seek for ways to help you reach them — even if it means a sacrifice.
 - e. She'll express excitement about the activities you plan and be grateful for your effort and attention.
 - f. She'll support you in all your endeavors, encouraging you in failure and praising you in success.
 - g. She'll respond to you in ways she would not to any other man.
4. She'll make it easy to iron out differences and seek suggestions for ways to improve.
 - a. Since she's motivated by a burning desire to please you, she'll desire your input and gentle correction.
 - b. She will reflect the best of intentions and make an all-out effort to change.
 - c. This does not mean that she wants you to remake her, but rather is an expression of her willingness to fit in with your life.
 - d. In other words, she'll strive to remove the scratchy elements in her personality that create tension and conflict.
5. She'll be completely open, straightforward and honest, and communicate freely with you.
 - a. A woman will normally not do this unless she feels protected by your love.
 - b. She will be confident that you'll neither berate nor betray her.

- c. She'll withhold no secrets and will lean on you for physical, emotional and spiritual strength.
 - d. She'll feel no inhibition in sharing her joys and disappointments — her total 100 percent self.
 - e. She will reciprocate in kind when you are warm, expressive and compassionate.
6. She will reflect a caring and nurturing affection.
- a. She will exemplify this by wanting to be with you and doing as many things together as possible.
 - b. She will express a deep joy in helping you to achieve the things you consider important.
 - c. She will want to know more and more about your life and how she can blend into it.
 - d. She'll understand how fragile and sensitive your ego can be and will endeavor to be a source of encouragement and motivation.
 - e. Because of her nurturing instinct, she is dutifully compelled and motivated to take care of you.
7. She will place trust and confidence in your leadership and ability to succeed.
- a. She could never love and respect you unless she believes in your competence as a leader.
 - b. She trusts in your wisdom and good judgment in making decisions.
 - c. She feels safe and secure with you because of your track record of diligence, experience and maturity.
 - d. She'll be careful not to criticize, ridicule or chide you for mistakes you might make.
 - e. Instead, she will provide the support and backing you need.
 - f. Because she looks to you as her head and provider, she will inspire you with the drive and confidence you need to achieve great heights.
8. She will make you feel totally comfortable and relaxed with her.
- a. You'll sense no pressure to put on airs or try to impress her with a macho image.
 - b. She'll laugh at your humor and enjoy playful teasing.
 - c. There will be a bonding of minds, attitudes and spirits between you.
 - d. Even differences of opinion will be viewed as a growing experience.
 - e. You'll find that you can sit and talk with her for hours and never get bored.
9. She'll give attention to the little things that please you.
- a. This will include a host of little extras which she'll go above and beyond in performing.
 - b. She'll study your habits, disposition and lifestyle for clues to what you consider important and valuable.
 - c. She'll come to know your tastes in food, clothing and hairstyles.
 - d. She'll ask to find out your preferences.
 - e. Since love is a creative energy, she'll seek to add that special touch of originality in the way she serves you.
 - f. She will display those special courtesies afforded only to royalty.
10. Her love will be steadfast and enduring.
- a. She'll be willing to follow you to the ends of the earth if necessary.
 - b. If circumstances warrant, she would even live in poverty to be with you.
 - c. Even though you might become handicapped, maimed or defaced, her devotion is so strong that she would still love you for life.
 - d. She'll help you to weather every storm and win every battle, even if it means a painful sacrifice.
 - e. She'll rebound from her hurts and tears, even when rebuffed, in order to be worthy of your love.
 - f. She will live what the apostle Paul said: "Love endures all things" (1 Cor. 13:7).

QUESTION 3: How do you know when you're in love?

1. Realize that true love is based on a foundation of mutual respect and friendship.
 - a. It may begin with physical attraction.
 - b. Or, it may simply start when two people are casually brought together.
 - c. Whatever the circumstance, the relationship will have unfolded gradually into its present state.
 - d. You will truly have come to know and appreciate each other as two endearing friends.
 - e. Once a solid friendship has been built, you are better equipped to recognize true love when it emerges.
2. There will be a spark of attraction — a certain amount of romantic chemistry.
 - a. Even though this spark is usually present, it's not an emotion that blinds you to reality.
 - b. To base a commitment purely on physical appeal leaves you without a sure foundation of enduring love.

- c. Lust is like an intense fire that quickly burns out.
 - d. By comparison, true love is like sunshine that warmly glows and endures.
 - e. Infatuation is usually self-centered, but true romantic love will mature into genuine outgoing concern for the other.
 - f. Be sure there is a proper balance between what your heart feels and what your head knows.
3. The test of time will prove your love is true.
- a. You cannot possibly learn all there is to know about each other on one or two dates.
 - b. Getting to know the other requires time and togetherness.
 - c. Therefore, being certain your love is real will take a great deal of interaction, communication and seeing each other in many situations.
 - d. If you continue to gravitate to each other in spite of occasional conflicts and differences, you can be reasonably sure there is something special in your relationship.
4. You will have developed a kindred spirit and like-minded outlook.
- a. Two people deeply in love will share the same values, goals and basic interests.
 - b. You will have grown to appreciate one another's unique qualities, strengths and talents.
 - c. You'll be compatible in the essential areas of life and experience a meeting of minds on all important issues.
 - d. You'll work at understanding what makes the other tick and desire to help him or her find fulfillment.
 - e. There'll be no sense of intimidation or jealousy when one has achieved recognition or triumphs.
 - f. To the contrary, you will support and mutually encourage each other to excel.
 - g. You will have established common goals and will be working together to attain them.
5. You will yearn to be with that person and miss him or her when you are apart.
- a. He or she will begin to fill your thoughts.
 - b. You'll find yourself looking for ways to serve each other and watching for needs you can meet.
 - c. This inner longing will be based on the joy of companionship and the desire to share each other's thoughts and experiences.
 - d. If you're separated for days and you're not lonely or bothered by the absence, then it's doubtful that you're truly in love.
6. There will be a willingness to make a lifetime commitment without hesitation or doubt.
- a. At this point in your relationship all anxieties and reservations should have been resolved.
 - b. You will have learned the art of solving your differences in a mature and self-restrained fashion.
 - c. You will have learned how to forgive and forget hurts and offenses.
 - d. Time and again you will have proved that your love is stable and unwavering.
7. You'll find that serving the other has become a source of great joy instead of an irksome duty.
- a. You'll be eager to sacrifice time and pleasure in order to benefit the other.
 - b. You'll care so deeply that you would give your life for him or her.
 - c. You'll try to avoid any action that will tear down, discourage or displease the other.
 - d. If your love is true and lasting, you'll make whatever sacrifice is necessary to keep your commitment intact.
8. This person will bring out the best in you and keep you focused on God's Kingdom.
- a. He or she will never attempt to undermine your principles or defile your conscience.
 - b. Rather, each will be a source of strength and vitality to the other.
 - c. God's Holy Spirit will bind you into oneness of mind that nothing can separate.
 - d. You will feel proud to be seen together in public.
 - e. You'll also be pleased to have this person to be the father or mother of your children.
 - f. Each will provide a fertile environment of support and encouragement for the other to grow and flourish.
9. You can be yourself and feel perfectly comfortable in your relationship.
- a. Neither will try to remake or fashion the other into a new mold.
 - b. Each can speak his or her mind knowing the other will be patient and understanding.
 - c. You will give each other space to work through problems and attitudes.
 - d. Both will remember that growth is a process and overcoming self requires a lifetime.

10. God will reveal that you've made the right choice.
 - a. If you have trusted God in child-like faith and prayed about your relationship throughout its duration, He will make known to you the answer.
 - b. This may require much counsel and some fasting.
 - c. If you use wisdom and caution, God will not allow you to be deceived, since you're looking to Him for guidance and protection.
 - d. Always remember that your marriage will endure and weather any storms if you keep God at the center.

NOTE: If you have not yet found that special person with whom you'd like to share your life, the following points will help you prepare toward that end.

QUESTION 4: How can you become a lovable person?

1. Pray for an attractive personality and a likable disposition.
 - a. Realize that the desire and ability to transform your life must come from God.
 - b. He will grant the motivation and power if you wholeheartedly seek His help.
 - c. Earnestly strive to develop a positive, joyful and peace-loving outlook.
 - d. Request that the fruits of His Holy Spirit will truly become apparent in your life.
 - e. Remember that it is God's mind and nature in you that will make you lovable.
2. Ask your closest friends to help you see your shortcomings.
 - a. Really mean it when you ask for their input and counsel.
 - b. Don't justify or make excuses when they tell you the truth or share their honest feelings.
 - c. Be open-minded and thankful — take their suggestions to heart.
 - d. Seek to know if you are any of the following:
 - (1) Negative.
 - (2) Critical and complaining.
 - (3) Whiny.
 - (4) Coarse, crude and unrefined.
 - (5) Immature and demanding.
 - e. Come to see yourself as others see you and desire to make genuine changes in your life.
3. Embark on a crash program of overcoming.
 - a. Set your mind to change and to really achieve breakthroughs with long-standing problems.
 - b. Visualize the transformed person you want to be and the benefits that you will gain as a result.
 - c. Work on the repulsive and scratchy elements first — the things that turn people off.
 - d. Make yourself vividly aware of how ugly selfishness is.
 - e. Set deadlines to conquer your most obnoxious habits.
 - f. Get tough on yourself and start today.
4. Practice humility and grow in Christ's likeness.
 - a. First of all, realize that every blessing you possess has come from God — your brain, talents, abilities, resources, etc.
 - b. Secondly, recognize that others have contributed greatly to your present success.
 - c. Remember that you're only dust — made from 16 elements — like everyone else.
 - d. Therefore, don't think too highly of yourself or take sole credit for your accomplishments.
 - e. Condescend to others in love and service.
 - f. Determine to remove every trace of pride, arrogance and vanity from your life.
 - g. Keep Christ's example of humility in the forefront of your mind.
5. Be friendly and make people feel comfortable in your presence.
 - a. Be cheerful, enthusiastic and expressive when you interact with others.
 - b. Help people to relax and save face if they make an embarrassing mistake.
 - c. Don't show favoritism, or be a respecter of persons.
 - d. Treat everyone with care and respect: the shy, the handicapped, the young, the elderly, the quiet, the backward, etc.
 - e. Develop a good sense of humor and learn to laugh at yourself.
 - f. Smile and radiate warmth as an on-going way of life.
 - g. Be responsive and approachable.

6. Develop an interest in people and the qualities that make them unique.
 - a. This takes courage and effort, but the friendships you gain will be well worth it.
 - b. Getting to know people and what makes them tick is an adventure in learning.
 - c. A vast education awaits you if you'll step out and make new acquaintances.
 - d. You'll also win the admiration of people you befriend because you will have brightened their lives.
7. Pray for love and the knowledge of how to creatively apply it.
 - a. The love that God imparts is creative.
 - b. It enlightens the mind to thousands of ways in which to help others succeed and be happy.
 - c. Think about the needs and well-being of everyone with whom you come in contact.
 - d. Look for opportunities to help carry the burdens of others and to lighten their load.
 - e. Be thoughtful in word and in deed: encourage, edify, commend, give, aid, share.
 - f. Recognize the desire for attention that people crave.
 - g. Every human has a need of love — seek for ways to give it.
8. Always be honest, truthful and sincere.
 - a. Be upright and true at all costs and in every circumstance.
 - b. Reflect integrity.
 - c. Be completely reliable and strive to be the kind of person others can always trust.
 - d. Keep your promises and make your word good.
 - e. Manifest a child-like innocence in mind, attitude and character.
 - f. Keep private information confidential — make this an absolute must.
 - g. Be conscientious like Christ, inside and out.
9. Be polite and courteous to everyone you meet.
 - a. Practice being kind and gracious.
 - b. Realize that these qualities represent refined godly love.
 - c. They say to others, "You count — you're important and worth something as an individual."
 - d. This kind of love is an outward manifestation of God's Spirit at work.
10. Learn the art of being tactful and sensitive to others' feelings.
 - a. "But your mind in gear before you open your mouth" is an old adage that still holds true today.
 - b. Choose your words carefully so as not to intimidate, humiliate or irritate people.
 - c. Avoid put-downs and sarcasm, and watch the tone of your voice.
 - d. Words and actions can have just as painful an effect on people's self-esteem as a whip across their backs.
11. Be an attentive and interested listener.
 - a. Look at people when they're speaking to you.
 - b. Train yourself to pay attention and show respect.
 - c. Be responsive with a nod, smile and verbal feedback.
 - d. People appreciate these gestures and will be endeared to you.
 - e. Being a good listener is a small price to pay in your quest to become lovable.
12. Be aware of the lasting impact your example can have on others.
 - a. It's a well-established fact that you have either a positive or negative influence on every life you touch.
 - b. If you manifest the qualities of good breeding, culture, kindness and love, people will long remember you.
 - c. However, if you're pessimistic, negative, selfish and carnal, you'll leave a legacy of distaste in their memories.
 - d. Becoming a lovable person is tantamount to being a true Christian.
 - e. Therefore, commit yourself to this lofty challenge and you'll grow in favor with God and man.

VI. A FINAL WORD OF CLARIFICATION.

- A. Please don't use these qualities as the perfect and all conclusive checklist in choosing a mate.
- B. No one has attained them in their entirety.
- C. Each of us has achieved different levels of growth and spiritual maturity and should not be compared to others.
- D. These points are given merely as guidelines to show the meaning of true love and how to recognize it.

- E. What is important is to grasp their essence and to use them as the ideal to strive for.
- F. Hopefully you and your future mate will reflect all of them to some degree. However, don't expect total perfection.
- G. To be fairminded, realistic and patient, allow time for growth and development.
- H. Best wishes and success!

-END-

ADDENDUM

HOW A WOMAN CAN KNOW WHEN A MAN LOVES HER

1. How he treats other people.
2. Does he make you feel comfortable?
3. Can you trust him?
4. Is he thoughtful and considerate?
5. He will work at removing the irritants from his life that bug you.
6. He will note the special things you do to serve him.
7. He will praise you for your efforts, personal growth and self-improvement.
8. He will make it a point to provide you with a forum to express your feelings, ideas, hopes, dreams, etc.
9. He will study and investigate your unique interests and needs.
10. As a rule of thumb he will think of you first, himself second.
11. He will try to make you feel feminine and proud to be a woman.
12. He will reassure you over and over that you're beautiful, important and valuable.
13. He will be tolerant and give you space to grow.
14. He will demonstrate his firmness of character and leadership day in and day out.
15. He will lavish praise and compliments.
16. He will be responsive to your suggestions and careful not to intimidate or put you down.
17. He will avoid any mode of behavior that would make you question his love, loyalty and devotion.
18. He will wait on you instead of waiting on you to serve him.
19. He will be light-hearted and humorous.
20. He will dignify your work and responsibilities.
21. Overall, you will know he loves you by:
 - a. What he says.
 - b. What he does.
 - c. How he acts.
 - d. How he thinks.