

Reflections with Sharon

It takes two

Read Ecclesiastes 4:9-12

Don't you just love being in a relationship where you have nothing to prove! You can kick off your shoes, let down your hair and just be you – A relationship where there is no fear of rejection, misunderstanding or mistrust; a relationship where you feel loved and accepted and secure; a relationship where silence is as comfortable as conversation; a relationship where you can relax and unwind; a relationship where you are understood and liked even at your worst; a relationship that gives you a warm, cozy feeling – that wonderful sense that you belong.

I wonder if that's why God gave us marriage; because what better place is there for two imperfect human beings to find that kind of relationship! When I consider my 20-year old marriage (June 10, '09), I can't help but feel overcome by a deep sense of gratitude for the man I've been fortunate to spend so much of my life with.

Marriage so far has been a really good ride for me. That's not to say that we've not hit our share of bumps along the way, but bumps and all, I'd say "I do" to this man all over again, anytime. In fact, since we got married, we've already said "I do" four times: For every five-year milestone, we celebrate our marriage with a vow renewal ceremony and reception in the presence of family and friends. If you don't make your marriage a celebration of love and friendship, who will?

The way I see it, when you walk down that aisle and take those vows to stay together until death, both parties had better be committed to guarding and honoring that marriage, because a lifetime can be a pretty long time, especially for those of us who tied the knot young. You can end up making each other feel like the luckiest person in the world or you could make each other's lives so miserable, they'd wish you were dead!

According to the advice of one of my college professors, it's not enough to simply marry someone you feel you could live with; instead you should marry the person you can't imagine living without."

The funny thing is that as a little girl growing up, I wasn't even sure that I wanted to be married. I had decided as a young girl that I wanted to be a missionary to some distant land, and would often romanticize about being a single missionary living in the jungles of Africa. But here I am today, very married and very happy to be married. I love being married, but I'll quickly admit that for this marriage thing to really work, it must take both parties giving their all, trusting in God's strength.

One can't do all the giving while the other does all the taking. The happiness of each must be important to the other. I believe in my husband and he believes in me. I sacrifice for him, he sacrifices for me; I support him, he supports me; I am faithful to him, he is faithful to me; I share with him, he shares with me; I help him, he helps me; I confide in him; he confides in me; I please him, he pleases me; I look out for him; he looks out for me.

When my schedule becomes overly demanding in some area, my husband comes alongside me and does whatever he has to, to ease my burden, even though that may mean helping out with laundry or cooking, or other stuff I would normally do. In the

same way, when he needs me to be there for him, I have to make time for him. I respect him; he respects me. I make him my number one human priority, and he makes sure I'm his number one. It takes two!