

PARTNERS IN PAIN

On a wall in my office hangs a small painting; not a masterpiece, but I like it. It's a realistic depiction of a forest scene, and down the center of the frame running from front to back is a well-traveled curving lane lined by trees on both sides. We view this scene as if sitting on horseback—let's say from fifty yards away—and we see two little girls, their backs facing us, walking into the distance. Two young children walking in the forest together.

People form relationships in all sorts of ways, for all sorts of reasons: sometimes traditional, sometimes not.

I know a fellow who got together with his wife in a way that may be more common than ever. They were high school sweethearts. And now, after fifteen years, they're parents of two pre-schoolers; both have been unfaithful, and she's initiated divorce. There's hostility on both sides, and the chances for reconciliation (while we must say there's always hope) are zero, according to her.

From the beginning their love was charged by the need to fill the void left by their broken families. They bonded in pain, and the bond was instant and powerful. Two children lost in the forest, trying to find their way out.

But, if the bond was so powerful, how did they both choose to cheat? He did so within months after their wedding! And she cheated while they were an "item" before the wedding. How could this apparently powerful bond be so quickly and so readily broken?

Maybe the bond only felt powerful, because the emotions they experienced were so powerful. The need, the loneliness, the hurt, so powerful. The desperation of two children, lost in the forest, so powerful. And so the narrative develops: "We are made for each other. No one understands me like you do, and no one gets you, like I do. This is meant to be. Our love will never die."

No human being can heal a heart that has been broken by sinful behavior. Only with God is this possible. In a relationship based on God's Holiness the healing is possible. Why? We are not holy; only God is Holy.

And as for choosing a mate, let's remember that emotions shift as sand shifts from day to day, moved around by the wind, the tides, and the sun. To base the choice of a mate on emotion is to build a house on a collection of minuscule granules, which may look solid for a moment in time. This is all the more sad and absurd, when we know that the Rock is available and free to all.

- **Bob Kallus, Family Institute Director**



Matthew 7: 24—27

"Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock.

"But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall."

Dear Readers,

On December 4 at the Chatham-Avalon Church of Christ in Chicago, the Shults-Lewis Family Institute will be represented at a large city-wide gathering of church leaders. Thanks to Chatham's minister, Dr. Daniel Harrison, this allows us to invite numerous churches and their members to upcoming workshops in the Chicago area. This is an exciting development. Please pray that the Lord may bless this opportunity. Thanks! - B.K.



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Falling In Love and Marriage

"It's like an avalanche where you have to run for your life." (Roger, 9)

"If falling in love is like learning to spell, I don't want to do it. It takes too long." (Leo, 7)

"Be a good kisser. It might make your wife forget that you never take out the trash." (Randy, 8)