

A Tale of One Love

Women think differently than men. Their brains are apparently wired differently. This is why men have a hard time understanding their own wives and wives think that their husbands never listen. This is a good thing. God made a wife a help meet for her husband. There is a process by which we bridge this gap between what is being told to one partner by the other partner. That bridge is called communication, and it may take years to build it.

We might not realize that that bridge is what turns two islands (2 persons) into one place (life) to live. “The two shall be one.” The tool used to build that bridge is intimacy, often risking the pain of being misunderstood. It is because communication leads to intimacy that there can be a physical aspect to all this. No one gives themselves up to an intimate moment without exposing deep and personal feelings. And if it is the wrong relation, they may never get the feelings back! This is why intimacy in physical relationship is a form of communication tending toward oneness, even “if” with the wrong partner.

Gay relations endeavor to bypass this difference in brain-wiring, but it is this difference upon which the entire marriage relationship (the bridge) is built. It remains only to see the value in building that bridge to span the chasm between two people who love each other but who struggle at times to appreciate and understand one another. Why do I want a heterosexual relationship if I am constantly arguing and trying to understand my partner? Well, staying with the metaphor, there are things on the other side of that bridge that are important to me. There is a value in a heterosexual relationship that is not possible any other way, but it is not available until the bridge is built and “we” become one. So, an impassioned interest in a monogamous relationship is not a bad thing.

In a real sense, the difficulty in appreciating the thoughts and emotional priorities between heterosexual spouses is because they are actually speaking different languages. The words sound similar but are nuanced differently and are often gender specific in meaning. Learning each other’s thought processes—language—opens up vistas of possibilities. When couples begin to speak the same dialect, they begin to co-operate with and appreciate each other’s concerns and interests, and they become an irreplaceable support to one another. That support is over that bridge!

Hetero-relations admittedly at times find it too challenging and risky to communicate truthfully and honestly with one another. (They should always tell the truth on principle.) In a monogamy one’s entire investment is in this one relationship. That is increased risk and challenge like investing all your savings in one stock. It actually benefits a couple to be naive as they jump into the deep end of adult life. Innocence in love means that all possibilities for happiness are before them. They haven’t been with other partners, sexually, learning a foreign tongue which a spouse doesn’t want to learn. They haven’t been assimilating ideas that seem important to others but may prove poisonous to a long-term relationship. We are not talking about obvious subjects that might arise in a premarital counseling session, but a lifetime of discovering each other: a husband learning what a wife meant by love or romance. A wife discovering why a husband’s needs are—in fact—needs and not just selfish interests. And here is where that bridge goes:

Deep within the psyche of all of us are places left vacant to welcome home only that one special someone who hope tells us is out there and on their way to us. In the *Odyssey* by Homer, Odysseus went off to fight a war in Troy and didn’t return for 10 years—years of dangerous adventures on the Sea. His wife, Penelope, waited, and waited, and waited for him, fighting off suitor after suitor remaining faithful to him even though she didn’t know whether or not he was still alive. Her joy was unsurpassed when she looked up and there he was! Some, no doubt, rationalized that there would be no benefit in denying herself love, but she wasn’t! She was waiting faithfully on love because she knew there was clearly a difference between the forbidden pleasures of many suitors and the return of her Odysseus.