CORNERSTONECONNECTIONS
APRIL042026

Scripture Story: 1 Corinthians; 2 Corinthians.
Commentary: *The Acts of the Apostles* (or *Unlikely Leaders*), chapters 29-32.

love is patient



Photo by The Crystal Lenz

keytext

"For now we see only a reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known."

(1 Corinthians 13:12, NIV)

flashlight

"For he knew that when the soul fails to make this surrender, then sin is not forsaken, the appetites and passions still strive for the mastery, and temptations confuse the conscience. The surrender must be complete. Every weak, doubting, struggling soul who yields fully to the Lord is placed in direct touch with agencies that enable him to overcome. Heaven is near to him, and he has the support and help of angels of mercy in every time of trial and need" (*The Acts of the Apostles,* p. 299).

what do you think?

What statement best describes your position on premarital sex?

1. It's not that big of a deal. What goes on between consenting adults should be left up to them.
2. I want to follow God's plan and wait until I'm married before I share a sexual relationship with anyone.

did you know?

God does not require us to give up anything that it is for our best interest to retain. In all that He does, He has the well-being of His children in view. Would that all who have not chosen Christ might realize that He has something vastly better to offer them than they are seeking for themselves. . . . No real joy can be found in the path forbidden by Him who knows what is best and who plans for the good of His creatures. The path of transgression is the path of misery and destruction."—Ellen G. White, *Steps to Christ,* p. 46.



INTO THE STORY

"I wrote to you in my letter not to associate with sexually immoral people—not at all meaning the people of this world who are immoral, or the greedy and swindlers, or idolaters. In that case you would have to leave this world. But now I am writing to you that you must not associate with anyone who claims to be a brother or sister but is sexually immoral or greedy, an idolater or slanderer, a drunkard or swindler. Do not even eat with such people.

"What business is it of mine to judge those outside the church? Are you not to judge those inside? God will judge those outside. 'Expel the wicked person from among you.'"

"If I speak in the tongues of men or of angels, but do not have love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. If I give all I possess to the poor and give over my body to hardship that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing.

"Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.

"Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away. For we know in part and we prophesy in part, but when completeness comes, what is in part disappears. When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put the ways of childhood behind me. For now we see only a reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known.

"And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love."

(1 Corinthians 5:9-13; 1 Corinthians 13, NIV)

OUT OF THE STORY

How do you think we should balance being supportive and loving with standing for our principles?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

What difference should there be in our expectations for believers versus nonbelievers?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

In 1 Corinthians 13 do you think love is a feeling or an action? Why?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

How do you think 1 Corinthians 13 relates to marriage?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

By looking at these two passages, what is the biblical perspective on love and marriage?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

By looking at these passages, how would you define love?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

punch lines

"Isaac brought her into the tent of his mother Sarah, and he married Rebekah. So she became his wife, and he loved her; and Isaac was comforted after his mother's death" **(Genesis 24:67, NIV).**

"So Jacob served seven years to get Rachel, but they seemed like only a few days to him because of his love for her" **(Genesis 29:20, NIV).**

"With persuasive words she led him astray; she seduced him with her smooth talk. All at once he followed her like an ox going to the slaughter, like a deer stepping into a noose" **(Proverbs 7:21, 22, NIV).**

"Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me" **(Psalm 51:10, NIV).**

"But he said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.' Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me" **(2 Corinthians 12:9, NIV).**

further insight

"A religion that seeks only to gratify the eye, the ear, and the taste, or that sanctions self-indulgence, is not the religion of Christ."—Ellen G. White, *The Acts of the Apostles,* p. 317

Sabbath

Read 2 Corinthians 12:9.

Do you think that waiting until you get married to have sex is an unattainable ideal in our modern society? God is clear in the Bible about what He expects. Second Corinthians 12:9 says that God's grace is sufficient for us, and that His power is perfected in our weakness. Why not make a vow right now that in your next weak moment you will turn to God for the strength you need?

Sunday

Read Proverbs 7:21, 22.

In the two passages in *Into the Story* the first passage warns us not to associate with people who are doing immoral things. We should be able to witness to others, but for those who call themselves Christians, there should be a certain standard to live up to. The second passage talks about love and how love is the most important aspect of our lives. How can we balance those two teachings? Look up the word "love" in a Bible concordance and look at several random verses. Is it unloving to hold a fellow Christian up to Christ's standard? Is there a way to lovingly stand for the right thing?

Monday

Read 1 Corinthians 13:12.

The *Key Text* talks about how we don't know fully now, but later on we will. Now we see things foggily, but later on we'll understand it all. This can be related to how we might feel right now. We want to know the person we love fully, and be fully known by them. We want a connection! Look at the following statements and decide if you agree or disagree with them:

1. T F—TV presents realistic relationships.
2. T F—TV presents a distorted version of relationships, and God's way is the way that gives us the best chance at a lasting, happy relationship.
3. T F—If I do things God's way, no one will want to date me and I'll be alone.
4. T F—I trust God that if I do things His way, He'll give me the intimacy I crave.

Tuesday

Read Psalm 51:10.

Having the strength to wait is not easy. In fact, it might even seem impossible. This doesn't make you a bad person. This makes you human. Of course you want that connection; it's just a matter of the timing. So how do you wait? God can give you the strength, but only if you are really serious about it. You have to be willing to hand it over to Him complete with your doubts, wishes, longings, and weakness.

Today, write a personal letter to God telling Him about the kind of relationship you want to have in the future. Then meditate on Scripture and pray to God to lead you according to His plan.

Wednesday

Read Genesis 29:20.

In the Bible we can see the most amazing love stories. Jacob was willing to work for seven years before marrying Rachel. He felt that kind of passion. Isaac was 40 years old when he met and married Rebekah. Isaac and Rebekah were in love at first sight. These stories show us that if we are willing to wait on God's timing and do things God's way, we'll have all the excitement and passion that we long for.

Write down five famous couples from the Bible, and next to each couple write down the first thing you think about them. Did they follow God's way or do it the world's way? How have they been remembered?

Thursday

Read 1 Corinthians 13.

First Corinthians 13 talks about the definition of love. All too often, we think of love as an emotion. While we might feel loving feelings from time to time, real love is an action. Do you feel ready for a test and then study for it? Or do you study for a test and then feel ready? Love, the real lasting kind, is an action. When you act loving, when you say kind things, when you put the other person first and practice self-control until the time is right, you will feel those loving feelings.

List 10 ways that you can appropriately show your love for someone special, and beside each write how those loving gestures can make the relationship grow. (Use the note pages in the back of your study guide.)

Friday

Read Genesis 24:67.

What kind of love and relationship do you dream of? What kind of person do you think would make a good partner in life? What do you think you need to do to become the best partner someone may wish to have in order to experience lasting love and happiness in the future?

this week's reading*

The Acts of the Apostles (or *Unlikely Leaders*), chapters 29-32.

**Unlikely Leaders* is a special adaptation of *The Acts of the Apostles,* created for you by the Ellen G. White Estate and Pacific Press. Get more information about it at www.cornerstoneconnections.net /article/191/about-us/conflict-of-the-ages-companion-books#. URlhF1rBO9s. By following the weekly reading plan, you will read at least one book of the Conflict of the Ages Series each year.