

Greater Love

A spiritual task adapted from a sermon by Brian W. Keith

Story

“Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down his life for his friends” (John 15:13).

Meaning

In his sermon, “The Face and Clothing of Love,” Brian W. Keith points out that these words have application in friendships—within and outside of marriage. For to be a genuine friend to another involves being willing to give up some of our selfish life for the greater good of our friendship. Focusing on the good in a friend or spouse, while also trying to give up our own selfishness, is a good way to build genuine friendship.

It is friendship which helps a couple make the transition from romance of the early days of marriage to the everyday challenges of joining two lives into one. It plays an especially critical role in marriage at times when there are significant problems. The devils try to convince us that we no longer love our spouse. But if we can force ourselves to act in a friendly way, the Lord will be able to help us work through the difficulties.

Task

- Reflect on the good you see in your spouse, or if you aren't married, think about a good friend. You might want to write these down and look at them from time to time.
- Now reflect on ways you may have been acting selfishly in the relationship. How could you “lay down” some of this selfish life?
- We are told that it is “the nature of love to confer joys upon another whom it loves from the heart” (*Conjugal Love* 180). What could you do that would bring joy to another?