



REFLECTIONS

July 31, 2011

**as the church submits to Christ, so also wives
should submit to their husbands in everything.
Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved
the church and gave himself up for her**

Ephesians 5:24-25

Christian Love

A photograph of my grandfather sitting astride a Tennessee Walking Horse is among my keepsakes. The breed is known for a calm disposition and naturally smooth riding gaits, but these qualities were not what made Queen Elizabeth Paw Paw's favorite.

My grandmother's name was Elizabeth and Paw Paw loved and honored her like a queen. He showered her with surprises, sometimes lavish ones, and he built her a beautiful home appointed with all the things that brought her joy.

Paw Paw was a successful business man, farmer, and rancher. That's how he fulfilled his role as the family provider. But Paw Paw's success may have never been if Munna hadn't been there to support him. She played her role as homemaker, mother, and grandmother, but she was also committed to the well being of my grandfather—to cheer with him in his triumphs and to lift him up when things weren't going so well. She was his inspiration and strength. That's what made their partnership work.

Their marriage began December 31, 1909 when they made their commitment with promises to love and cherish each other for richer or poorer and in sickness and in health. They each committed to set aside their self-interest in favor of the well being of the other. They honored the commitment for the rest of their lives.

Too often love is associated only with warm romantic feelings expressed through physical touch and words of endearment; but those were not the expressions that defined the love between my grandparents. Their love for each other reached beyond the bounds usually associated with love and into the realm of Christian love.

Christian love is more than warm feelings of romance. It is a commitment to the well being of another because one's greatest joy is found in the joy of the other¹.

Queen Elizabeth was a name given to my grandfather's favorite horse; but the horse is not what brought the spark to Paw Paw's eyes. The spark came from the one for whom the horse was named. He committed his life to her; and she committed hers to him.

That's what Christian love is all about. And it endures for a lifetime. Theirs did.

You are the light of the world,

Richard +

www.reflectingthesavior.org

¹ William Vanstone, *Love's Endeavour, Love's Expense* (London: Darton Longman and Todd, 1977)

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