



FROM THE PRESIDENT

Better Together

*Therefore shall
a man leave his
father and his
mother, and shall
cleave unto his
wife; and they
shall be one flesh.*

Genesis 2:24 KJV

Links to Mark Kreklau's obituary and a tribute to Mark Kreklau in Rev. Bernhard Seter's blog can be accessed through the *Quarterly* web page at www.lwml.org.

Marriage is a relationship; marriage is a commitment. A Christ-centered marriage is one where both husband and wife are united in Christ.

Mark and I were married for nearly 40 years. Early in our marriage, God brought a special pastor into our lives. God worked through this pastor to share the love and forgiveness of Christ with us. We soon attended adult instruction and joined The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS).

Life changes when God is a part of the marriage. Worship and Bible study became a priority. We had family devotions, and our church family became very important to us. I would like to think we were more patient with each other, but we were still sinful people.

In Genesis, God's Word tells us that a man will leave his parents and shall cleave to his wife. The word "cleave" means "to be glued." Mark and I did everything together. We were always together, unless I was on an LWML trip or Mark was fishing, but that is not the "glue" about which God was talking. I believe the glue is the commitment, the commitment to work out our problems and to sacrifice for the other. It is going the extra mile and loving each other even when we are unlovable. It is keeping Christ the center of the home.

Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her (Ephesians 5:25).

Christ's love for the church is a perfect love. We are not capable of Christ's perfect love; but empowered by the Holy Spirit through His Gospel love, we have all things needful for speaking to each other in kind and loving ways. A marriage that is Christ-centered remembers that it is "Christ-built." In this, the fruits of faith by that same Gospel shine as a mutual love and respect, demonstrated in both word and deed.

Mark always shared his love for me with whoever would listen. I remember many years ago a friend of mine had received a beautiful diamond from her husband. She told me she'd give the diamond back in a heartbeat if her husband would, just once, declare his love for her. I realized at that moment how blessed I was to be married to Mark.

As the years went by, our love only grew. Was it perfect? No! Were we perfect? No! But we are forgiven children of our Father, and we forgave and worked through the difficult days.

We tried to be sensitive and attentive to each other's needs. The thoughtful kindness and consideration we expressed from day to day strengthened the bonds of love; but sometimes we became so busy with our day-to-day routine that we forgot to be kind and considerate.

A few years ago, while listening to Christian radio on my way to work, I realized I had not been praying intentionally for Mark each day. Granted, we spent time together every morning reading God's Word and in prayer, but I had not been faithful in praying for Mark, purposely. That day I downloaded a prayer guide with 31 suggestions for praying for one's husband. It is amazing, when you pray intentionally, how our Lord helps you see the sin in your own life. For example, I started realizing the matter about taking out the garbage really wasn't an issue — I was being critical. I realized I really could unload the dishwasher, even if I had loaded it! I realized many of my demands were immature and unrealistic. I thank God for helping me to see my sin and for His forgiveness.

I thank God for my nearly 40 years of marriage to Mark! I thank God for a Christ-centered marriage and a relationship that depended on Christ being the third person in our marriage.

Do me a favor! Do something special for your spouse today. Most of all, pray intentionally for him or her every day. Remember to tell your spouse you love him or her. Kiss each other goodnight.

With God at the center of your relationship, you will, my friend, be better together!

Kay Kreklau, LWML President