

Love or Infatuation?

by Wayne S. Walker

EDITOR'S NOTE: *Ann Landers wrote an advice column in the newspaper until her death. Wayne Walker references a column of hers on the subject of love versus infatuation, and makes some observations.*

Ann's Comments

Infatuation is instant desire. It is one set of glands calling to another. Love is friendship that has caught fire. It takes root and grows — one day at a time.

Infatuation is marked by a feeling of insecurity. You are excited and eager, but not genuinely happy. There are nagging doubts, unanswered questions, little bits and pieces about your beloved that you would just as soon not examine too closely. It might spoil the dream.

Love is quiet understanding and the mature acceptance of imperfection. It is real. It gives you strength and grows beyond you — to bolster your beloved. You are warmed by his presence, even when he is away. Miles do not separate you. You want him nearer. But near or far, you know he is yours and you can wait.

Infatuation says, "We must get married right away. I can't risk losing him." Love says, "Be patient. Don't panic. Plan your future with confidence."

Infatuation has an element of sexual excitement. If you are honest, you will admit it is difficult to be in one another's company unless you are sure it will end in intimacy. Love is the maturation of friendship. You must be friends before you can be lovers.

Infatuation lacks confidence. When he's away, you wonder if he's cheating. Sometimes you even check. Love means trust. You are calm, secure and unthreatened. He feels that trust, and it makes him even more trustworthy.

Infatuation might lead you to do things you'll regret later, but love never will. Love is an upper. It makes you look up. It makes you think up. It makes you a better person than you were before.

Wayne Walker's Comments

Now let us make some applications. Far too many people in our society today confuse love with infatuation. The sources of this confusion are unrealistically romantic movies and television programs. Our young people often feel that mere physical attraction is "real love," and think, "If a girl really loves a boy, she will give her body to him."

In the same vein, young married couples will sometimes mistake starry-eyed romance for genuine love. Romance is important in marriage, but there must be something more. The result of this attitude is that when the honeymoon is over they decide, "We must not truly love one another any more," and then they get a divorce. And that is easy to do today.

Love is not simply an emotional reaction. It is an act of the will. This kind of love will never ask anyone to do anything that is wrong or untoward. Instead, it will always seek the very best interest of everyone involved, especially the person toward whom it is directed. Furthermore, it will continue even when things are not so good. It is divine.

— *via Present Truth*
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