

"Marriage: Mirage or Oasis?"

Grove Presbyterian Church

September 6, 2009

Jim Moser let me fly his airplane the other day. For real. Not a model airplane with wires attached to it, but a real Cessna out Bloomsburg airport. Now, we only puttered around the valley about 4000 feet up. And he wouldn't let me buzz our Spire. Nor would he let me attack Fred Pharr who we saw flying into the Danville airport.

But, while he worked the throttle and the pedals, he did let me bank the plane. He took over when I started a barrel roll.

Fun, but tedious. Took him about a half hour going over the flight checklist even before he'd let me get inside and put on my goggles and flight helmet.

Check the gas. Check the tires. Check the flaps. Sight check, instrument check. Make sure the propeller works. About fifteen minutes pushing GPS and radio buttons.

Tedious, laborious, exacting, demanding, but a whole lot of fun, a great adventure in the sky.

A lot like love and marriage and getting to know someone over the years.

It's Labor Day weekend and that means we honor all types of labor. Birth requires labor. Everything new requires labor.

Love takes work. A cliché. For sure. Which is why clichés are clichés. They dead on accurate.

Which is why love is a decision rather than a feeling. If you can get rid of our cobweb thinking and get your brain and heart around that, you've got a chance. Every day it is a decision.

- To work on common goals
- Negotiate the quid pro quos, the somethings for something so that both feel like winners

- To respect each other
- To tolerate each other's foibles, fallibility, and vulnerabilities - as if you're perfect not a piece of work
- Make the most the assets and minimize the liabilities
- Keep your communication clear, mindful that all behavior, and not just the words, communicate a message

And best when mutual. Be subject to one another out of reverence for Christ. Well, maybe more the best. Maybe only possible when mutual.

The other night - Friday two weeks ago to be exact - I saw something I hadn't seen for a long time. It was an old-fashioned altar call. Where people go forward to the altar to rededicate themselves to Christ.

Well, in this case, it wasn't really Christ. The object of veneration was the Moody Blues. It was kind of funny too because I bet if I told the crowd at the concert that what they were doing was the same as an altar call in church they would have hushed their hands and me and dismissed me. But still the crowd pressed forward to the stage to stand, sway, reach out their arms, and be near the presence of grace.

And the Moody Blues sang.

*Beauty Id always missed
With these eyes before,
Just what the truth is
I cant say anymore.*

And more people came down the aisle and pressed forward.

*cause I love you,
Yes, I love you,
Oh, how, I love you.*

Might be time for a silent altar call. Where, at least from our pews, we rededicate ourselves to Christly love. Help me become the person you, Lord, equip me to be.

{Silent Prayer}