Are You Building Your Life on Facts or Fairy Tales?

Introduction:

1. Fairy tales are exciting, entertaining, and restful.
   1. “Once upon a time, something bad happens, then a magical event that fixes everything – “And they lived happily ever after.”
   2. Example: Cinderella.
2. Fairy tales are fun but it is dangerous if we start believing them.
   1. It is important to distinguish between fantasy and reality.
   2. Jerrie Wayne and Santa Clause.
   3. Many people are looking for their fairy tale to come true – “When I get to be a teenager, a car, out of school, in college, married, house, children, debts paid off, children raised, moved, new job, etc. – Then I’ll live happily ever after.
3. Recognizing that mature, lasting relationships go through different stages and experience growing pains can be helpful.
   1. Honeymoon – extreme happiness, ecstasy – “Everything and everyone is beautiful, perfect, serene.”
   2. Disappointment – it isn’t perfect – “I’m disappointed.”
   3. Reality – “Let’s work and grow together.”
4. EXAMPLES IN THE BIBLE.
   1. Jesus and His followers.
      1. Honeymoon. John 6:1-15
      2. Disappointment. John 6:26, 27, 33, 35, 38, 41, 42, 60, 66
      3. Reality. John 6:67-69
         1. The Apostles didn’t stay on a honeymoon; they were sometimes disappointed with Jesus. Acts 1:6
   2. Jacob and Rachel.
      1. Honeymoon. Genesis 29:17-20
      2. Disappointment. Genesis 29:21-25
      3. Reality. Genesis 29:26-30
5. APPLIED TO OUR RELATIONSHIPS.
   1. Marriage.
      1. Honeymoon – perfect wife, husband – everything is wonderful.
      2. Disappointment.
         1. It will come:
            1. Sometimes even before marriage, sometimes after.
            2. The honeymoon is over when he decides his bride is skinny instead of slender.
            3. The honeymoon is over when he stops helping her with the dishes – and does them by himself.
            4. Jacob was not the first to find someone different with him from the one he thought he married.

“I didn’t know he drank that much.”

“She won’t get up and cook breakfast.”

“He snores so much I can’t sleep.”

“She quit coming to church with me after we got married.”

Once the “I do’s” and the honeymoon are over, Prince Charming has turned into a grouch slouched on the couch, and Cinderella has switched to a witch with an itch for having her own way in everything. All too often days spent in courting are succeeded by days spent in court, and too many partnerships are wrecked on the hard rocks of reality that forever and everywhere loom up in the sea of matrimony.

* + - 1. The disappointment stage is critical, the relationship usually will take one or two directions: dissolving or strengthening.
         1. Some decide to leave, still looking for the fairy tale ending – “They lived happily ever after.”
         2. There are more ways to run than one.

Divorce.

Get drunk.

Blame others because you are not “living happily ever after.”

Make excuses for being less than Sleeping Beauty or Prince Charming, rather than working on improvement.

Take up a hobby or sport that removes you from the relationship.

Wife: “You don’t love me any morel! All you ever think about is golf, golf, golf. I bet you don’t even remember the day we were married.”

Husband: “Of course I do, darling. That’s the day I sank that 69-foot putt.”

Watch TV rather than talk.

Spend more time on the job or get a second job. It is a fact, believe it or not, that when marriage does not provide for the normal husband and wife what marriage is supposed to provide, partners will tend to seek and tend to find these things elsewhere. While it is often adultery, it is not always so. It can easily be in losing one’s self in business, or sports, or clubs, or arts and crafts, or a hundred other things. As for example, a few years back the leaders of our congregation became aware that a certain young man, twenty-seven years of age, married and the father of two children, was working at his company’s office several evenings of the week, on Saturday, Sunday afternoon, going into work early, and often staying late in the evenings. They asked me to check into the matter. Knowing several of the executives at the large company, I chided them for demanding so much of a young man that he was forced to neglect his family. They immediately laughed and told me that they were innocent of the charges. “We well know,” they said, “that happy husbands and fathers make better employees. We would never do this to anyone. He is here because he ‘wants’ to be here.”

Do an excessive amount of “church work.” In yet another case, a young man called my home one evening and said; “I would like to start doing more ‘church work’ in the evenings. I want to start visiting some of the members.” Sounds noble, doesn’t it. But wait a moment! Continuing, he said, “My wife and I have not been getting along well for some time and I want to get out of the house.” Since I know, or thought I knew, the young husband fairly well I immediately replied that I thought this to be the absolutely worse reason for doing ‘church work’ that I had ever heard of and would not under any circumstances be a party of such a fraud.

* 1. Preacher - congregation.
     1. Honeymoon.
        1. Preacher.
           1. “The most wonderful congregation!!!”
           2. “Yes, we enjoy our work.”
        2. Congregation.
           1. “He’s the grandest preacher we’ve ever had.”
           2. “Yes, he’s been with us over a year now.”
     2. Disappointment.
        1. Preacher.
           1. “I didn’t know they had all these problems.”
           2. “Do you know of a church that needs a preacher? I’ve done about all the good I can do here.”
        2. Congregation.
           1. “I didn’t like that sermon last Sunday.”
           2. “He didn’t come to see my great aunt in the hospital.”
           3. A salesman came to the church building to see the preacher. He was told by the custodian that the preacher was out again. The impatient salesman remarked, that the preacher was not often in. The janitor said, “No, he ain’t here much and he ain’t much when he’s here.”
           4. You can know disappointment has set in when people say such things as:

“You always manage to find something to fill up the time.”

“We shouldn’t make you preach so often.”

“I don’t care what they say, I like your sermons.”

“If I’d known you were going to be good today, I’d have brought a neighbor.”

“Did you know there are 243 panes of glass in these windows?”

* + - * 1. How does a minister know when to leave?

It’s time to leave when the deacons present him a gift certificate redeemable at the local U-Haul company.

It’s time to leave when the re-modeling committee papers his office with road maps.

It’s time to leave when the worship committee selects the hymn, “If We Never Meet Again” three times in a row.

It’s time to leave when the baptistry committee puts seven feet of water in the baptistry.

It’s time to leave when the church votes a mandatory retirement of age 30 for the preacher.

* + - * 1. The minister of the local church was not exactly popular. Then one Sunday he announced: “The Lord Jesus has told me that he has work for me elsewhere and that I am to move on to another church.” Whereupon the congregation rose spontaneously and sang, “What a friend we have in Jesus.”
  1. Other relationships.
     1. Gospel meeting – preacher.
     2. Employer - employee.
     3. Member – congregation.
     4. Youth workers – teens.
     5. Parents – children.
     6. Student – Christian college.

1. HOW CAN WE WORK THROUGH TO REALITY?
   1. Recognize the stages – the difference between fairy tales and facts.
   2. Be prepared to work.
      1. Unless one always gives in to the other, both will have to work, and work hard.
      2. Almost no one is foolish enough to imagine that he automatically deserves great success in any field of activity; yet almost everyone believes that he automatically deserves success in marriage.
      3. This always applies to following Christ. Luke 9:23; 2 Timothy 3:12
   3. Try to evaluate the probable compatibility of a relationship before you get into it.
      1. Love at first sight is sometimes cured by a second look.
      2. Short Story:

He: “Will you marry me?”

She: “No.”

And they lived happily ever after.

* + 1. Jesus encouraged us to count the cost. Luke 14:25-33
  1. When you reach the disappointment stage in a relationship, before leaving, always ask,
     1. “Where am I going?”
     2. “Am I going somewhere or am I running from something?”

Conclusion:

1. Let’s work on our relationships.
   1. With God. Mark 12:30
   2. With brethren. John 13:35

Behold the duck, he seems serene,

As he glides smoothly o’er the scene.

The effort’s there; just doesn’t show,

He’s paddling like made down below.

1. Are you considering becoming a Christian?
   1. I have good news – you can. Acts 22:16
   2. But I want you to know.
      1. You will be thrilled with your new commitment.
      2. You will be disappointed.
         1. With the church.
         2. With individuals.
         3. Maybe even with Jesus.
      3. I hope you will work through to reality. John 6:67-69
   3. Eventually, Christians will go to the place where we will truly “live happily ever after.” Revelation 21:4

Dalton, GA, February 20, 1983, p.m.