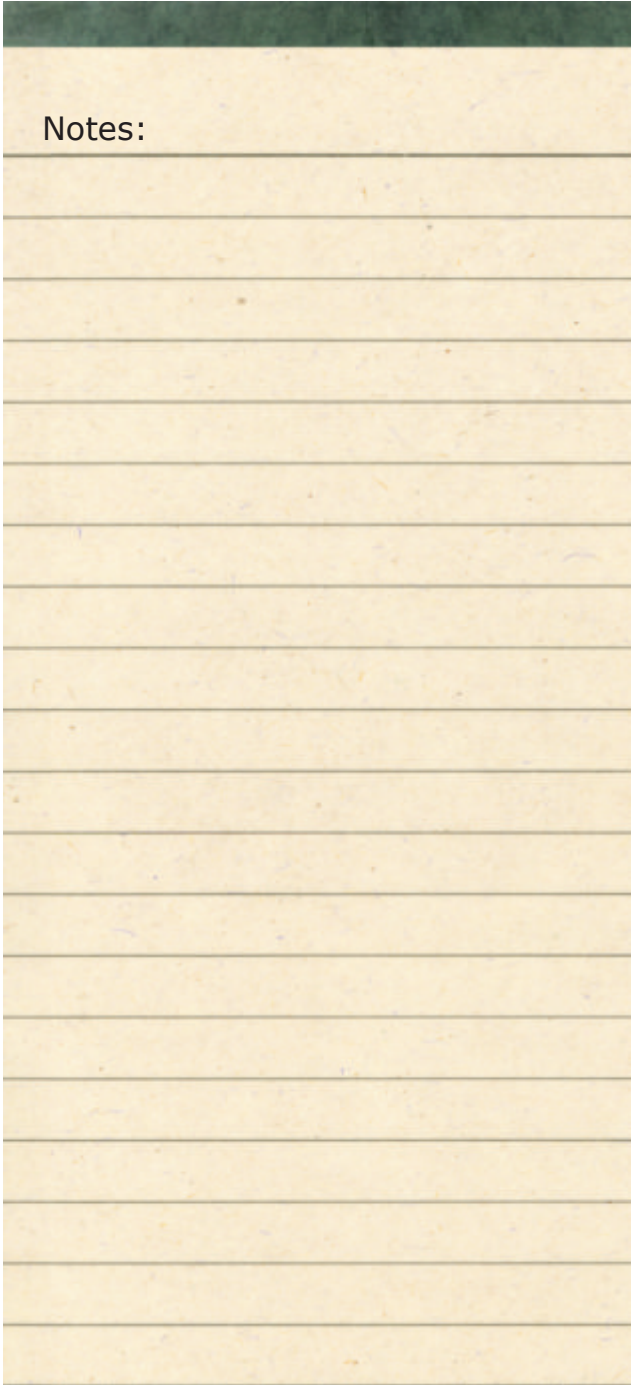


## What Does It Mean When A Couple Falls In Love?

You're a married person. Why are you married? What led you to get married? Well, I would guess, like me, that there came a time when you said I think I'm in love. I think I've fallen in love. What does that mean? Now this is going to sound harsh. I don't want to sound harsh, I want to be gentle, but it's going to sound harsh. When you fell in love it was a wonderful, precious, immature thing. Because what you were saying was this person is exciting to be with. I have all sorts of dreams and possibilities for what could be. I feel a tingle. I feel excited. I feel sexually aroused. I want to get married. I feel intimately aroused. I want to spend my life with this person. And you have fallen in love. Is that a good thing? Absolutely, it's a wonderful thing.

C. S. Lewis describes it this way: it's like a kid splashing around in a wading pool. But you're going to have to learn how to swim in the deep end. And that means that when you fall in love, understand that it's a wonderful beginning but your experience of being in love is not going to sustain your marriage. You're going to have to redefine what the word love means. You're going to have to define love fundamentally as a commitment, as a decision; whether the feeling is there or not, I love the feelings. I enjoy my wife. I'm privileged to feel that. But if that's a definition of my marriage, I don't have a marriage, I have a narcissistic relationship that's indulging my desire to feel a certain way. But if I'm willing to swim in the deep end and say honey, even when the feelings aren't there after 42 years there are certain feelings that were possible to me as a teenager falling

Notes:

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in love that are not possible to me as a 64-year old man who still loves my wife.

But there's a deeper reality that's possible. Falling in love is a wonderful thing, but mature into giving love to your spouse on the basis of a decision to honor the purposes of God in this most intimate of all relationships.

Notes: