



Marriage in the Time of Corona

August 29th my wife Joni and I celebrated our 38th wedding anniversary. Quickly have the years passed since we first wed in Reno, Nevada at Temple Emanuel. Our marriage has taken us to Cincinnati, Columbus and Las Vegas. Two children and one grandchild. We have seen the death of parents, and cherish the lives of our remaining parents. We have witnessed peace and prosperity, wars, high interest rates and low interest rates. Economic down turns and unemployment. And now a pandemic.

This past weekend I officiated at a wedding on August 29th. Something I rarely have done (in fact it is only the second time I have broken my personal "no weddings on my wedding anniversary rule"). But, in a sense watching another couple exchange their vows amidst the current climate of unrest and Covid-19 only served as a reminder to me that marriage is not about guaranteeing a life filled with utter happiness. There are so many unknowns in life. Marriage is about sharing life's joys and its sorrows. It is about understanding the need to be understanding. And to develop a trust that grows with the years. It is about forgiving mistakes and understanding the other's foibles. It is about patience and more patience as we understand more and more that the person who we share so much with actually differs from us in so many ways.

I suspect that many marriages are being challenged during this time. Cracks in relationships have widened. Tensions have increased as the pressure from unemployment and too much "togetherness" have meant family members have gotten on each other's nerves.

For me, I view this as yet another chapter in a life that continues to go by too quickly. "This too shall pass" as the Jewish saying goes, is both a cause for celebration and sadness.

Standing under the chuppah the couple in front of me seemed so very young. I could tell they were both nervous and excited as they took this next step into adulthood. 38 years later, I can say the same. Each chapter brings us cause to be nervous, to face the unknown and wish that some things would be different. And while we might define "excitement" today differently than we did 38 years ago, we know that life is about the lows as well as the highs. The challenges as well as the successes. And with the grace of God, and the faith we have in each other, each chapter also brings with it the potential to deepen our relationship, and to understand that together we are not alone.

Happy anniversary to the most patient, caring wife I could ask for!