

MARRIAGE IS LIKE SHEARING

Andrew and Joanne you both have an impressive farming pedigree as you are decedents of solid farming stock. The farms you come from both farm Corriedale sheep. Which most of us know are capable of producing good quality wool.

I took my mother into a shearing shed the other day and as she stood and watched the shearer working she described him as poetry in action. When you look at the shearer at work most see the bent back and the movement of the hand piece. What many don't see is where all the power is coming from. It all lies in the feet and the knee movements as they twist around and position the sheep for each blow which removes the wool and reveals the whiteness of the fleece.

The reading from 1 Corinthians read to us by Joy talks about a love that could be described also as the poetry of love in action. The poetry of love that Paul describes in this letter is a quiet subtle love. A love which knows no bounds or limits. It is strong in character and undemanding. It is the essence of a good marriage. It is a love that is not always overtly obvious just like the feet and knee movements of the shearer. Instead it is built on many small and unseen actions. Such love builds the foundation for a lasting marriage. And everyone knows this takes a lot of work.

In today scripture from Corinthians Paul mentions some of the characteristics of love which are required for endurance in marriage. Love is not rude, it is patient, it is not self seeking, it is not easily angered and it keeps no record of wrongs. It always protects, hopes, trusts and preserves
These are high ideals for any of us to aim for in our relationships. But I believe that with Gods help we are capable of so much more.

A young shearer starts with the ideal of being a top shearer. But before they line upon the boards at an AMP show they need a lot of coaching and practice by experienced shearers who seek to show them the best way. In the same way Paul starts our reading by saying "and now I will show you the most excellent way to love" and he points towards the love of Jesus because .

He was a man who talked a lot about love, his words were full of meaning because his actions demonstrated at all times his understanding of true love and it's qualities. It was a love based on not what he could get but rather what he could give. He gave himself self-less-ly for others.

So I urge you Joanne and Andrew to look to and be inspired by the love of Christ as you build your marriage. As you adventure and farm together discovering the true meanings of love. We wish you all Christ's blessing as you spend this life together, fine tuning your marriage so that over the years your love for one another increases and deepens and becomes a thing of beauty, reflecting the love that Paul writes about..

For a marriage based on the example of Christ's love will never look like a badly shown sheep, but instead will be as poetry in action, a joy to watch just as master shear is a joy to watch.