

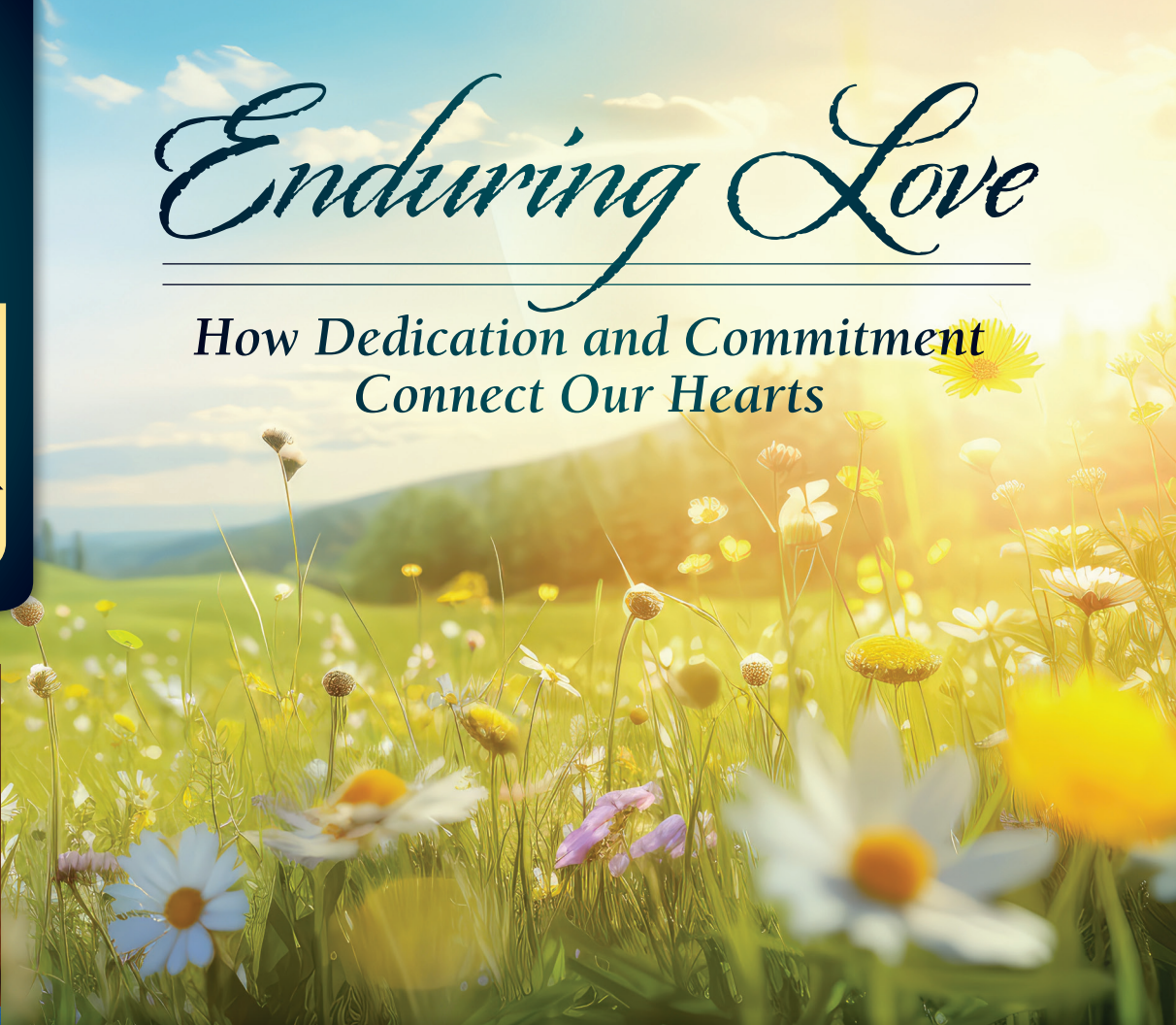
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ON THE AIR

Enduring Love

How Dedication and Commitment Connect Our Hearts



While challenges may arise, know that we stand ready to provide spiritual support to help you remain firm in your first-love commitment to Christ.

—Charissa Swindoll Gaither

As spring arrives, everything is becoming fresher and livelier. The air feels crisper, the sun shines brighter, and the birds sing louder. It's a joyful time for us at Insight for Living Ministries too. Such a splendid season inspires profound gratitude, and our hearts are especially lifted by the enthusiasm surrounding the release of five new *Paws & Tales* episodes. All of us at Insight could not be more excited! The little ones in your life are just going to love them—and you will too!

In our commitment to serving the Lord, our cherished friends and ministry partners remain paramount in our thoughts. Our care for you propels us to furnish you with all the Bible-teaching resources you need to help you walk in a thriving, love-filled relationship with your Savior.

We believe that our ministry's duty is to journey right alongside each of you in pursuit of this same goal. As fellow travelers, we also endeavor to offer solace in times of adversity. While challenges may arise, know that we stand ready to provide spiritual support through every stumble and setback and to help you remain firm in your first-love commitment to Christ.

Charissa Swindoll Gaither

Charissa Swindoll Gaither



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More inside



By God's grace, Pastor Chuck and Cynthia Swindoll will celebrate their sixty-ninth wedding anniversary this June! Dependence upon and submission to Christ along with an unwavering commitment to and delight in each other—plus some dogged effort!—are a few reasons they give for having made it this far.

Keeping the Greatest Thing the Main Thing

by Pastor Chuck Swindoll

In a couple of months, Cynthia and I will celebrate sixty-nine years of marriage. Yes, you read that right. *Sixty-nine years!*

The pages on the calendar whirl by in my mind as I think back to the day of our wedding.

The place: First Baptist Church in Galena Park, Texas.

The date: June 18, 1955.

The time: 8 p.m.

I can still see my sweetheart, as radiant as an angel, wearing the wedding dress she had made, walking down the aisle on her father's arm. Soon, we were on our way to a lifetime of learning and growing, delights as well as disappointments, heartaches and joyous laughter, family and ministry.

We had no clue our path would plant us in three states—Massachusetts, California, Texas—and send us to minister all around the world. Whew!

Countless scenes still play in my memory. Many of them touch my heart. Deep down, Cynthia and I have not changed—having the same passion for ministry, same love for family, and same granite-like commitment to each other.

We started with hearts in tune. Though youthful, we had no disagreement over who would have the final word . . . *our Lord*. He had called us to become one, and we wanted Him to remain preminent.

We were determined not to let anything decrease the priority of our marriage and our family—not seminary, not church or work responsibilities, not our kids' teenaged years, not our own goals, not even the maddening pace of life. All praise to His name, Cynthia and I are still close . . . still committed . . . and even more in love than when we first made our vows at the altar.

That kind of love has always been our aim to cultivate and sustain.

In the book, *Passages of Marriage*, I recall reading about the fifth and ultimate stage of love, *Transcendent*

Love—“a profound and peaceful perspective toward your partner and toward life.” We’re in that stage now. I think of it as a deep trust in each other, an abiding confidence and respect for the other person, as well as a shared delight in and enjoyment of one another.

A love like that takes consistency over time—including some dogged effort! When life gets hectic, noisy, and difficult and the world’s chaos bombards you, it is easy to become distracted and get pushed apart. Stress can create friction. Life can sink into a cold routine. Without intentionality, the flame of deep love flickers out.

The believers in Ephesus allowed that to happen to them . . . not in their marriages . . . but for their Savior. By the time the apostle John recorded and circulated the book of Revelation, the Ephesian church kept serving Christ as before, yet without enjoying Him or delighting in Him.

Oh, they were busy doing all the right things and staying committed. Jesus commended them for their diligent work, patient endurance, and rock-solid theology (Revelation 2:2–3).

Even so, the heartbroken Bridegroom (Jesus) told His bride (the church), “you have left your first love” (2:4 NASB).

The word *left* suggests not a sudden departure but a slow erosion. While they toiled and defended the faith, their love for Jesus had cooled over the years.

Duty replaced devotion.

But just as in relationships, love for the Lord can be rekindled.

First, Jesus told them to “remember” (2:5 NASB). They needed to remember it was God’s love that led Him to send His Son. They needed to remember how Jesus loved the church, which is why He gave Himself for her. Sustaining your first love in Christ includes remembering the love that drew you to Him.

Second, Jesus told them to “repent” and “do the deeds you did at first” (2:5 NASB). Repent means to turn, to change. It’s never too late to start over with God. Go back to those early days of *loving the Lord* as you serve Him.

Continued on back

ON THE BROADCAST

Revelation The Earthly Drama, Act 2

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Keeping the Greatest Thing the Main Thing, *continued from inside*

A timely lesson surfaces for us in these commands.

Do not get so busy doing for Christ that you neglect being with Christ.

Love is the greatest thing, but for it to thrive, it must be the main thing . . . in your walk . . . in your witness . . . in your worship.

Whether you're directing cars in the church parking lot, handing out meals at the homeless shelter, planning an evangelistic outreach event, leading a Bible study, shepherding your family, giving your financial gift, or doing any one of countless acts of commendable service, keep your love of Christ foremost in your heart, letting your service to Him flow out of your intimacy with Him.

Sixty-nine years of marriage has been a true adventure of love. Even now, we don't take it for granted. Kindling the deep flame of love requires consistent demonstration. For decades, one of the ways Cynthia and I have expressed and renewed our love for one another is by drinking coffee together in the quiet hours of the morning. Our commitment to spending those moments together has only fueled our affection for each other. What we have experienced together can also be true in every believer's relationship with Jesus.



Sustaining our first love in Christ creates in us an abiding joy . . . which often comes with a ready laugh!

If that isn't your habit, I encourage you to start today. Spend quality time with your Savior who loves you. Are you wondering where to begin? How about with this simple expression, "Lord, I love you. Here I am ready to be with you."

SAFE, BIBLE-BASED ENTERTAINMENT FOR YOUR LITTLE ONES

Introducing a fun and entertaining, Bible-based podcast for your kids! With exciting stories and catchy songs, *Paws & Tales* helps children imagine God's love. Each episode comes with parent tools to guide meaningful conversations as you help them grow in God's truth. Scan the QR code to get started.

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