



Fueling Our Love for God by Carol Landis

Reading the sweet stories in this month's Making Connections was helpful as I wrote this article. There's an excitement in young love that stirs emotion. While emotion often receives a bad rap, I believe *emotion fuels love*. Within every relationship I cherish, the caring, kindness, loyalty to another and spending time together are fueled by love. Does this connect with how we love God?

I believe loving God begins with **desire**. An emotion birthed by knowing and experiencing truth about God. When we feel the true joy of being accepted, loved and forgiven (Col. 3:12-13), and experience the bliss of being able to pour out all our "stuff;" knowing nothing is too awful or insignificant. He wants to hear; He's not bored; He truly cares (1 Peter 5:7). When we believe He is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us (Eph 3:20). He has the power to empower and transform us to live with confidence, and complete all He has planned for us to do (Phil. 1:6). And, He works for good of those who love Him (Rom. 8:28). *These truths, deeply embedded in our hearts and minds fuel our desire for Him.* How could we not be excited?!

Yet, the demands and expectations of earthly life are real. Jesus experienced them too. When He did, He withdrew to lonely places – and prayed (Luke 5:16). Constant activity doesn't allow one's spirit to be refueled by the Holy Spirit, and just as anything gas-powered needs to be re-fueled, so do we. I don't know about you but sometimes I simply want to withdraw and isolate (turtle), or just have fun. I'm pretty sure Jesus would see some value in these, but His first priority was prayer. The instruction in 1 Thessalonians 5:16 to pray continually can create images of silence on bended knee, or it can mean *including God in the continuous stream of thought going on in our minds*. Let's make it **a priority to talk with Him**.

Obey. Obedience may seem the opposite of emotion. But is it? Isn't life experienced best when kindness is the norm, humility is evident, authority is respected, truth is valued, and integrity reigns? Isn't life best when Jesus' teachings are obeyed? Jesus' final words to his disciples before His crucifixion feel key: "As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have obeyed my Father's commands and remain in his love (John 15:9-10). *Obedience seems a seal to keep our love resolute and committed.*

Keeping as our focus God's love for us, recalling His promises, talking with Him, and obeying His Word will fuel our desire for Him.

February 2022





Making Connections

Meet our Brides!



Rachel Shreiner and Landon Detweiler. My name is Rachel Shreiner, and I am the daughter of Tim and Cheryl Shreiner. Over the summer on August 11, 2021 I became engaged to my fiance Landon Detweiler, son of Don and Tara Detweiler who attend Grace Community Church. Landon and I met back in May 2019, and as cheesy as it sounds I fell head over heels for him. Luckily I would come to learn that he felt the same way about me. I had never dated before and had some pretty high standards. I looked at dating as many do, that you date with the hope of marriage, but Landon crossed off every box on my list. After meeting in May 2019, there wasn't an easier yes I've ever had to give than when he asked me out just a few months later in July. Sadly Landon still had two years of school left and had to leave to return to Pensacola Christian College for his junior year. As much as I knew I really liked this guy, there were

some of my own spiritual and personal issues that needed working out and after a couple months of long distance I knew I wasn't ready for a relationship and we eventually broke up. As the months went on, all I could think about was him and I prayed to God over and over to make it clear whether or not this was a relationship God wanted. As Landon came home early from school because of COVID, we were able to grow our friendship and build a foundation and in August 2020 we started dating again. About a year later my family took a trip to the OBX and little did I know this man had big plans. On August 11, I was blown away with a beautiful waterfront proposal, and of course I said yes! You'll have to ask Landon the story of how he asked me – it's a good one! In a short 5 months now, Landon and I will be getting married on June 25, 2022 at Dan and Nancy Leatherman's barn, and we couldn't be more excited! We appreciate all the prayers and blessings as we continue to plan and enter into the start of our marriage.

Alana Bergey and Caleb Carson. Caleb and I are planning on getting married on July 9 of this year! We met in college and started dating our sophomore year. Our dating life was filled with adventures, including the opportunity to work at Big Sky Bible Camp together in Bigfork, Montana. Then, Caleb proposed at our family mountain house in August 2021 while my sister, Laura, was hiding behind some trees taking pictures! Caleb and I are both graduating from Grove City College in May of this year, with a degree in Business Analytics (for Caleb) and Secondary English Education (for me). It has been a joy to grow closer together and watch as God works through our relationship and lives, and we can't wait to see where God will lead us in our future jobs and passions!



Tonya Nice and Brent Fischer. Brent and I had our first date on February 11, 2019. We had been chatting through a dating site for about a month and after a few scheduling conflicts, we made a date! We met at Margaritas in Collegeville, which is one of my favorite restaurants. I remember being nervous and afraid he wasn't going to like me. But the date went very well, the conversation flowed and we had a great time! Before we parted ways, he walked me to the car, gave me a hug and kissed me goodbye. I know I left with a smile on my face!

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(Tonya and Brent) We took things very slow for a while. One night when we were hanging out at his place, I told him I had to go, because I had church in the morning. He said, "Well, I like going to church!" So I invited him to come with me the next Sunday and to meet my family. He's been attending Franconia with me ever since! I think we can also say that we fit well into each other's families!

Brent proposed to me on Christmas Eve, 2021! He caught me off guard while getting ready for a family gathering and got down on his knee to propose to me, in his kitchen, just the two of us!

We have both had paths with rough spots, leading up to this relationship. We've both gone through struggles, getting to this point. But we can both truly say, the trials we've gone through separately, allowed for the Lord to work in each of us to prepare our hearts for this relationship. God has used our imperfections to have compassion and forgive each other's faults. We are thankful, beyond words that He placed us together! With God, our families and our church family supporting us, I know that we will have a successful marriage!

We are so excited for our upcoming wedding, on August 7, 2022!

Praise the Lord!



Get Involved!

Save the Date for these activities coming up in March!

We encourage you to attend the church-wide **Wednesday night Fellowship Meals & Bible Studies** in February!

Ladies
BUNCO NIGHT

 Wednesday, March 9



Walk in the Park
at Franconia Park
Tuesday,
March 22



Succulent Craft
with Patti Landis
Thursday,
March 31

Scrapbook Crop
 Saturday, March 26
 If interested, contact
 Janet Derstine
 (215-723-7413)

February 2022

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
		1	2	3 Hebrews study 9:30-11:15	4	5
6	7	8 Sewing Circle 8am-4pm Prayer Shawl Ministry 7pm	9 Church Meal & Bible Study	10	11	12
13	14 Happy Valentine's Day	15	16 Church Meal & Bible Study	17	18	19
20	21	22	23 Church Meal & Bible Study	24	25	26
27	28	29	30 Church Meal & Bible Study			

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