For Broadcast: 12th February 2017

**JUST BECAUSE**

***Pastor Trevor Keller***

**Trevor:** “What a gift love is! In fact it’s the most precious gift we can ever give to anyone, and it’s the greatest gift we can ever receive.”

**I’m Richard Fox and this is Messages Of Hope.**

**This week many people will be celebrating Valentines Day. It’s that one day of the year we’re reminded to do something romantic for the one we love.**

**How do you feel about Valentines Day?**

**Speaker 1:** Valentine's Day. Valentine's Day sort of gives me an opportunity to reflect on the fact that I’m loved and in love.

**Speaker 2:** It probably just renews romance in people's lives.

**Speaker 3:** Just another commercial day I think for a lot of people. They sell a lot of flowers and all things like that but nah it doesn't mean a lot.

**Speaker 4:** I don't think people should have a day where they should be told they’re loved. It should happen every day.

**Speaker 5:** If we get a rose we’d be pretty pleased.

**Do you feel loved? Maybe you feel like that spark you had at the start of your relationship is long gone, but you wish it could come back. What does true love look like anyway? Here’s Trevor Keller to share his thoughts on love that lasts.**

**Trevor:** I decided to buy my wife some flowers. As I stepped into the florist shop I noticed a dozen really nice red roses. “They’re the ones”, I thought, “they are just perfect.”

As the florist prepared the arrangement for me to take she asked, “Who’s the lucky person?

“My wife”, I replied.

Almost simultaneously another assistant said, “I thought it might be your girl friend.”

“She’s that too”, I replied.

“Your lover”, quipped another assistant.

“Yes!” I said.

“Your best friend?” questioned the original voice.

“Absolutely,” I declared.

The questions continued in rapid fire.

“Is there something special?”

“No!”

A birthday?

No!

An anniversary?

No!

“Just because ………….,” smiled the florist.

“Just because ………..,” I answered, “Definitely just because!”

**Do you wish there was more romance in your relationship, and not just on Valentines Day? Is there a difference, between romance and love?**

**Speaker 1:** Romance is getting a bunch of flowers.

**Speaker 2:** I would say love is more of a commitment whereas romance is more short term or instant.

**Speaker 3:** Love is more of an effort than romance it's easy to give people romance. Love is a lot harder.

**Speaker 4:** If you want romance in the evening it starts in the morning with doing the dishes. It goes for the whole day not just that act of actually loving each other.

**This is messages of hope. If you wish you could put some romance back into your relationship, contact us for the free booklet RENEW THE ROMANCE. You can order RENEW THE ROMANCE by calling 1800 353 350, that’s 1800 353 350. Or go to messagesofhope.org.au to order or download your free copy. That’s messagesofhope.org.au. Now it’s back to Trevor to share that you don’t need a special reason to express your love for someone. You can do it ‘just because.**

**Trevor:** Just because …………………

That’s what love does.

There doesn’t have to be a reason; there doesn’t have to be a season. It’s just a heartfelt response that can’t be analyzed or explained. Or if it is – analyzed that is – it loses something of that moment where you simply want to say, “I love you …….. just because………..”

It’s like our granddaughter, who some years ago when she was two years old, ran up to her grandma, wrapped her arms around her, and with loving eyes looked up into her gran’s face and said, ”I love you ‘gam’, with all my heart.” It was enough to bring a tear to any grandparent’s eye. And it still does, as we often recall that moment. How could a little girl know such love? And why did she do it?

The simple answer is, “Just because ………..” There was no ulterior motive, no attempt to manipulate, no premeditated calculation to win some favour. It was simply a wonderful expression of the heart, of a little girl showing love in a way that is so often impossible with words.

**I’m Richard Fox and this is Messages of Hope. Today we’re talking about love and what makes it last. Perhaps you’ve got a story about an unexpected act of love. Why not share it on our facebook page at messages of hope. We’d love to read about it and your story can encourage others too. So, what does it feel like to be loved?**

**Speaker 1:** Overwhelmed. Yeah. Just like a bubbling up inside.

**Speaker 2:** How do I feel when I'm loved. Supported, cared for, happy.

**Speaker 3:** When I’m loved I feel understood. Somebody cares, especially at my most vulnerable moment.

**Speaker 4:** And you're safe when you've got love.

**Speaker 5:** My husband is always there for me and he will just take me as I am. Whether I'm having a good day or a bad day.

**This is Messages of Hope. Do you want to know how to find a love that lasts? Here’s Trevor Keller.**

**Trevor:** What a gift love is! In fact it’s the most precious gift we can ever give to anyone, and it’s the greatest gift we can ever receive. In fact to receive the gift of love is to receive the very heart of God himself. For the Bible tells us, “God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God lives in him/her.” (1John 4:16)

You see God loves from the very bottom of his heart, and it’s his loving us, and our realization of that love, that enables us in turn, to love others. Why does he love us? A good question, really. In reality it’s, *just because* …………….. because the answer is not found in words. God doesn’t tell us why he loves us. He shows us. We see God’s love demonstrated to us, best of all, in Jesus. One of the greatest passages in the Bible tells us of that love. “For God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.” (John 3:16 ) That’s love in its purest, most unadulterated form, and he did it all, *just because* he loves us. And that, as one of my parishioners often says, is *“the wow of God”.* Or in current television viewing terms, we’d probably call it, the X factor.

Actually it’s that very “wow” factor that God wants to see us actively live out, in the world of our every day living.

**This is Messages of Hope. So far today Trevor Keller has been talking about how to build a love that lasts. But how do you define love, and how and when to show it. Back to Trev.**

**Trevor:** Jesus told his followers that they must love each other, just as he had loved them. So, how did he love his followers?

Well he was patient with them. He walked with them and took time to talk and share with them. He actually taught them in the most down to earth way; told them stories, and gave them illustrations so that they could get a handle on what he was trying to convey to them. He saved some of his closest followers from a ferocious storm. He cooked breakfast for them and even healed the mother-in-law of one of his disciples. He encouraged them, corrected them and lovingly pointed them in the right direction even when they didn’t understand. He prayed with them, and for them, often.

That’s what he wants us to do. No ulterior motives, not because we might feel we ought to, or have to. Not even a skerrick of self interest to boot. Jesus wants us to follow his example willingly and lovingly, *“just because …”*

**What are some ways you can keep the love in your relationship?**

**Speaker 1:** It's the small things again I think. It's the smile, the handhold, the cuddle. The doing the dishes occasionally, means a lot.

**Speaker 2**: I think I really learned that when I'm cranky I used to stop talking and forget that he couldn't read my mind and I couldn't read his. And now we know that even if we're cranky we just need to talk through it and get to the end of it and work it out.

**Speaker 1:** My faith in God definitely helps. It’s just a solid influence that’s constant when we can be a bit variable.

**We all have our ups and downs in relationships but there are simple things we can do to rebuild the intimacy we once had. If you want to bring back that lost connection with your partner, contact us for the free booklet RENEW THE ROMANCE. You can order RENEW THE ROMANCE by calling 1800 353 350, that’s 1800 353 350. Or go to messagesofhope.org.au to order or download your free copy. That’s messagesofhope.org.au.**

**Trevor:** So where are we to start?

The place to start, is with those who are closest to us. Start by trying to live out the kind of love Jesus demonstrated with our wives or husbands. By taking time to show our children, what love is all about. That’s where our two year old granddaughter discovered what love is all about. She experienced it from her mum and dad.

Show Jesus’ love to your parents and grandparents, to your grandchildren and friends. Show it in ever widening circles, by the way you act and the way you live. Take time to stop from the busy world you live in to play a game or have a coffee, to cook a meal, or just sit and listen as someone shares about a busy day at work or school, the routine of cooking, washing and cleaning for a family, or about a day or night of loneliness, rejection, pain, and suffering.

Take time to laugh or cry or celebrate.

Take time to care.

Take time because she matters………because he matters…….

Take time because they matter…… because you matter……because it matters ……… Take time because……..

There doesn’t have to be a reason.

Take time to show your love……… to say “I love you” ……….*just because ………..*