

## “Life, Death, Love, and Robin Hood”

By Jason Vanderlaan

It’s a classic story. Maid Marian has been captured by the evil Sheriff of Nottingham, who plans on forcing her to marry him. On top of this tragedy, Marian also believes that her true lover, Robin Hood, is dead. But just as the contrived marriage ceremony is completed, Robin Hood comes crashing through the stained glass window to rescue his love. After an extended battle, Robin finally defeats the Sheriff. The scene climaxes with Marian and Robin embracing. Marian, weeping, whispers, “You came for me. You’re alive!”

Now here it is. This is the moment for our hero to come out with the best line all the money in Hollywood can buy. Women are on the edge of their seats, breathless, ready to be swooned. The men are pulling out pens and paper to take notes. Here it is: “I would die for you,” he says.

And I sigh in disappointment. This is the best they can come up with? Now don’t get me wrong, it’s a very noble thing to die for someone, but is that really the ultimate statement of true love and devotion? I would argue that it isn’t.

Think about it. Say you’re dating that special someone who promises you all sorts of beautiful things and makes many grand proclamations of love, and yet they end up ditching you eventually. Perhaps they even tell you that they still love you (as a friend or whatever) and would still “die for you.” Is that true love?

Or maybe you know someone who says they love you but they keep doing inconsiderate or hurtful things to you. Is that what love is all about? No, true love is when someone is willing to not only die but *live* for you. True love is living your life in a way that benefits the object of your affection. It is as simple as putting the other person’s wants and needs above your own, even when you don’t feel like it. The ultimate expression of love is not “I would die for you” but rather “I will live for you.”

So how about it, are you giving your life in love to someone? Or are you simply making grand and empty promises that come to nothing in the end? And conversely, are you placing your heart in the hands of someone who will live for you, or are you entrusting your love to someone who is only interested in living for themselves?

It can be a very difficult thing to find a person willing to love you with their life. It is also difficult sometimes to be the kind of person who loves that way. But what’s really awesome about being a Christian is that we have a God to look to as an example of true love. Jesus loved us so much that He died for us, yes, but if that was the end of the story it wouldn’t be of any value to us. It is because He also rose again and lives for us that Christ is the ultimate example of true love.

So if you’re having difficulty finding someone who gives real love, look to Christ. Or if you’re having trouble being a loving person, look to Christ. His love will fill you and change you so that you can live a life of love.

