

Love Works

Part 3, Marriage by God's Book

Insight from, *"The Five Love Languages"* by Dr. Gary Chapman

Ephesians 5:25-33, *Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to Himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any blemish, but holy and blameless. In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. After all, no one hated his own body, but he feeds and cares for it, just as Christ does the church — for we are members of His body. For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh. This is a profound mystery--but I am talking about Christ and the church. However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband.*

1 Peter 3:7, *Husbands, likewise, dwell with them with understanding [knowledge], giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker [delicate] vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers may not be hindered.*

Proverbs 4:3-4, *Through wisdom a house is built, And by understanding it is established; By knowledge the rooms are filled with all precious and pleasant riches.*

1 John 3:18 *My little children, let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth. 19 And by this we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before Him.*

Today's view of marriage in popular society has changed in ways that we know very well. However, God's view of biblical marriage, which we call Holy Matrimony, has not changed. For believers in Christ, God's word is our guide. We live and walk by the high standards and grace-filled principles of the Bible. A lot of what we see in marriages, that are failing at the rate of 50%, is people walking in their understanding and selfish ways. People certainly have the right to not follow God or obey the Scriptures, but true Christians do not have an alternative—nor do we desire an alternative.

Ephesians 5:25 says, *"Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her...31 For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh. This is a profound mystery, but I am talking about Christ and the church."*

A mystery is not something hidden. It is something revealed to those who have "ears to hear" and "eyes to see" what the Lord is saying and showing. Jesus is either "Lord of all" or He is not "Lord at all" in your life.

The husband is head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church. What is the revealed mystery of Christ's relationship to His church?

1. He makes holy (special, "other than").
2. Provide care and support
3. Loves us more than we love ourselves
4. Unified and not divided: One

Summary: *However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband.*

Respect Defined: A feeling of deep admiration for someone or something elicited by their abilities, qualities, or achievements. Due regard for the feelings, wishes, rights, or traditions of others.

Anyone who has a leadership position has a greater responsibility before God. That includes husbands. Leadership needs follow-ship to be effective. As the old saying goes: *“He that leads and no one follows is taking a walk.”*

1 Peter 3:7, *Husbands, likewise, dwell with them with understanding [knowledge], giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker [delicate] vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers may not be hindered.*

This lesson will provide some insights on how to have “understanding” and “knowledge” of one another.

Have you ever been in a relationship where no matter what you did, the other person felt it just wasn't enough? Have you ever been told repeatedly that you are loved, yet inside you feel empty and separate? Did you wonder what you were doing wrong -- why you just couldn't effectively communicate your connection to someone?

Through his counseling, Gary Chapman has found that there are five main love languages, which are ways in which most of our motivated to act or respond. He has observed that people respond better to some actions more than others.

1. Words of Affirmation
2. Quality Time
3. Receiving Gifts
4. Acts of Service
5. Physical Touch

Married or single, man or woman, being loved and sharing love are essential to all high level relationships, specifically marriage and close friendships. Therefore, in these relationships, it is important to recognize there is one (or perhaps two), of the five love languages that is our “primary language” and crucial to our feeling loved and cared for. If our spouse or other important person doesn't speak to us in our “primary language” we feel as if something is missing, and we feel unloved, even if they are speaking to us in their own “primary language.” The other person may love us totally and completely, but we don't experience what they say or do as being loving toward us. The same is true for them -- we can show great love for them but if we are not using their “primary language”, then they feel abandoned and unloved. So, we need to learn to develop all five love languages, especially those of our spouse.

Your primary love language is evident in two ways: You speak it more often than the other languages, and you feel most loved when it is spoken to you. The languages are the same whether you're a spouse, friend or family member.

The Five Love Languages

1 • Words of Affirmation:

This is when you need to hear, "I love you," as well as other words of appreciation, words of encouragement, praise, kindness and words that build you up. If you don't hear them, you don't feel loved. How does this work? When we emphasize the positive, it encourages other people to be more positive in return. For example, a wife may always seem to be asking her husband to do one thing or another (see Acts of Service below). Let's say she repeatedly asks her husband to wash the cars. If instead, she tells him how much she appreciates how hard he works, and makes a point of commenting just on his positive qualities, magic can happen if this is his primary language. The next thing she knows, the cars are washed. Basically, her affirming comments helped him find the energy and desire to do the job.

Other examples include:

Your spouse tells you how much his or her friends appreciate you.

Your friend says, "You really did a great job on that. I appreciate it!"

Your spouse shares about a recent success you had while talking to friends during a party.

2 • Quality Time:

Spending time listening, sharing, reading or playing games in the same room. Does your spouse always want your undivided attention? Do they get upset when you don't stop what you are doing when they want to talk? Do they want to spend time alone with you without you doing some task or project? Quality time means giving others your undivided attention, being available. It's about talking about things that are important, a conversation or doing something that both enjoy. For example, you go to a symphony concert with me because you know I enjoy going, and you want to share in something I enjoy, even when a style of music isn't your favorite.

Other reinforcing actions include:

1. Your spouse "kidnaps" you for lunch and takes you to your favorite restaurant.
2. Your friend invites you to go on a leisurely walk just to chat.
3. Your spouse plans a special night out for the two of you.

3 • Receiving Gifts:

Does the person like to have surprise gifts that are totally unexpected? A personalized gift says that we cared enough to make the effort to bring pleasure to the other person. To be effective the gift must be something that will please the other person. You don't have to go out and spend a lot of money - we just need tangible little remembrances that you are thinking about us even when we are not with you. For example, a card, something you made, a carefully wrapped piece of fudge that you brought home from the office because someone brought it in to work for the group and you remembered how much I love fudge. It is especially impactful when the gift is something we have wanted, or is unique to one of our little quirks. You may need to give the

gift with a bit of “ceremony”, so that we know you meant it as a token of love. The gift has to be unconditional with no strings attached, rather than a bargaining tool to get something you want in return.

Other reinforcing actions include:

1. Your friend sends you something special through the mail just because it made them think of you.
2. Your spouse brings you home a surprise treat from the store.
3. Your spouse surprises you with a membership to something you always wanted.

4 • Acts of Service:

This is when you do things for the one you love. This could be mowing the lawn, building a house, keeping the house clean, folding the laundry, washing the car. Sometimes you just need to ask what it is you can do for us. Even if we don’t need that particular act of service at that moment in time, we will feel loved because you offered. The act has to be unconditional: “If you do this for me then I’ll do this for you” is not an act of love. Similarly, “Look at all I have done for you” is really just a disguised attempt at manipulation. You must give without expecting anything in return.

Other reinforcing actions include:

1. Your spouse takes the time to complete paperwork that you had hoped to get to this evening.
2. Your spouse volunteers to do a job around the house that is typically your job.
3. Your spouse brings you breakfast in bed.

5 • Physical Touch:

Physical touch is a basic human need. However, some of us need more of it than others to feel loved, such as a hug, a pat on the arm, a stroke on the cheek, a shoulder massage or our back scratched. Are they always reaching to hold your hand? Do they frequently put an arm around you? Do they stand physically close, maintain loving eye contact, rest a hand on your arm or leg? Do you find them sitting in the same room with you even if you are doing different activities, just breathing in the silence together? In a romantic relationship physical love is most important, but we also need the touches and caresses during our daily lives to express closeness in a non-sexual way.

Other reinforcing actions include:

1. Your spouse gives you a massage.
2. Your spouse makes a point to embrace and kiss you before leaving the house.
3. Your spouse gives you a hug just because you are passing by him/her in the room.

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