

## Love is Kind Giving Love in Action

Last week on ***Exciting True Love – The Truth Will Set You Free*** we studied how we are called to be imitators of God, as dearly loved children and to walk in love. Walking in love has little to do with feelings but rather choosing to do loving actions.

That led us to talk about “love languages”, a phrase coined by Gary Chapman to mean the five different ways that people demonstrate and feel loved. We discussed two of the five: *touch* and *words of affirmation*.

*Words of affirmation* are praise such as: “I really admire how you fixed the door. That was clever.”

One friend, after finding out that his wife was parched [as a shamba without rain] because of needing words of affirmation, practiced praising her every day. It was not at all natural for him to do it. He really didn’t need anyone complimenting him so he found it hard to do it for his wife.

But he is imitating God, by doing what might not feel good or natural [to him], and meeting her needs by saying affirming words to his wife every day. As he does this, it becomes more and more comfortable for him to compliment his wife. And she is glowing because she is feeling loved.

*Touch* is the other love language we studied. The kind of touch someone likes varies from person to person. Some people like their hair stroked, some like sitting close to one another, some people like hugging. And some people don’t like much touch at all. I do. My husband knows that when he puts his arm around me at church, I feel so loved that my worship flows.

If you practiced touching your spouse this week, after the initial embarrassment, did they seem to glow as you touched them? Or did it annoy them, or simply not matter much to them at all? Listen to their clues because our goal is to make them feel loved.

### **Lesson:**

You are here with Nancy Crane on ***Exciting True Love – The Truth Will Set You Free***. Let’s look at the remaining three love languages to give you some more ways of showing love.

Gifts is the third love language. After we get married, we often forget about gifts. You may think, “We don’t have any extra money to be buying gifts.” But gifts don’t have to be expensive or costly. They just have to be thought about, planned with that special person in mind.

A husband can buy his wife’s favorite soda as he passes the duka, and give it to her when he gets home. Some other gift ideas: a chicken, buying food from a takeaway restaurant, giving her the money to get her hair and nails done. Of course, fabric is always good – a kitenge or khanga.

Women, can you think of gifts to give to your husbands? How about buying him a pen, socks, underwear, any clothes, taking him out for barbecue, to help him know that you love him?

We’ve talked about three love languages. They are *words of affirmation*, *touch* and *gifts*.

The fourth love language is *acts of service*. That means doing kind actions to show love. It often can mean going against cultural norms and humbling yourself. We can easily see that when Jesus washed the feet of his disciples, which was a chore usually left for the servants.

Daniel started doing acts of service for his wife, trying to see if something really made her feel loved. He spent time interacting with their children. He bathed the baby. He washed and ironed clothes and even washed the windows.

He found that his wife really liked it when he spent time with the children. More than just liking it, he found it made her feel very loved. Therefore, Daniel makes sure he does that often, so his wife feels loved. We could say, Daniel is speaking his wife's love language.

Women: you may think that doing acts of service is simply your role as being a wife. If you have a husband whose love language is *acts of service*, then when you are preparing food for him, taking care of the house and children, he will feel that you really love him, particularly if you do it with an attitude that says you are glad to do it, that you choose to do it.

Attitude, that is important in any of these love languages. If you give a gift with an attitude that you don't like doing it, feel that it was a burden to do it, the effect of your action will be limited. For your spouse to feel loved, you must do these actions willingly, gladly.

Ladies: a few other ideas for acts of service for your husband are cooking his favorite meal. Or, if your housegirl normally cooks, cook for your husband on the weekend.

So we have four of the five love languages: *Words of affirmation*, *touch*, *gifts*, and *acts of service*.

The last is *quality time*. Simply spending time together is important but *quality time* is more than just being in the same place together. It is focusing in on each other.

Ezekiel practices this when he comes home and sits down with his wife while she is preparing dinner and asks about her day. Ezekiel listens attentively to what she has to say, not giving her solutions to her problems, just listening to understand her better. He is open with her as well. That's *quality time*.

It can happen on a walk, over a dinner, at home in the sitting room, or in bed before going to sleep. The thing about *quality time* is that it has to be just the two of you, focusing in on each other. It can be active too – perhaps the two of [you] running errands together or going to the beach,-alone!

Susan knows that *quality time* is important to her husband so she gets up early, bringing tea to their bedroom so she and her husband can have tea alone for 15 minutes before anyone else disturbs them with activities of the day.

In order to have *quality time* with your spouse, children must not be involved. They can be sleeping in another room or busy with another activity while you enjoy quality time with your spouse. Or they can be left in the care of someone else. But they simply cannot be a part of quality time with your spouse. How can a parent focus on their mate if their child is demanding attention? Give your children attention at another time, but this is time for your spouse.

David knows *quality time* is important to his wife and he makes these things happen. He arranges for the maid to stay late when he plans a date with his wife. Then he enjoys the company of his wife in a way that we keep telling youth not to do!

Somehow we forget, in our admonitions, to remind married couples to do what is off limits for those who are not married! Spend time together, just the two of you, going out to dinner. Leave your children with your parents for the night and enjoy the fun of being in your house alone. Make a list of those things that you couldn't do when you weren't married and start doing them together with your spouse. Have some fun.

Practice these three new love languages this week – *gifts*, *acts of service* and *quality time*. If your spouse has been asking you to do something, do it– that is an *act of service*. Think of a *gift* you can give and also set aside some time for just you and your spouse. Plan a date – even if it is just 15 minutes. That’s *quality time*. See how your spouse reacts to each.

After you have been practicing these different ways of loving for a month or so, you might find that your spouse likes one or two of these love languages more than the others. Concentrate on doing those love languages. Your goal is to do what makes YOUR spouse feel loved.

We have just touched a little on this excellent material. If you want to know more about love languages, Gary Chapman has a very helpful website at [www.fivelovelanguages.com](http://www.fivelovelanguages.com)

#### **Afterword:**

Have these lessons on love languages given you some insight into your marriage? Maybe you are like Hannah whose love language is quality time. When her husband would come home late from work, she would feel unloved because she needed him to spend time with her to feel loved. Often, to apologize he brought her a gift, but gifts don’t mean much to Hannah.

When she realized that *gifts* is his love language, Hannah said this “Now I understand that when my husband brings me home a gift, he’s showing me love and I should not feel rejected.” Now that she realizes that her husband is acting in love, she can accept the gift as a show of love.

Hannah now makes sure that she gives her husband plenty of gifts so that he is feeling loved since that is his love language. And maybe someday her husband will understand that spending time alone with Hannah is really what delights her, since *quality time* is Hannah’s love language.

These love languages help us to realize that love is not so much about feelings, but about doing. It’s about “walking in love”. That is not feelings.

We are often looking for the right person to marry – as though there is exactly one and we don’t want to miss that person. We do want to find a good person, one who is easy for us to love and respect, one with similar values but marriage is not so much about finding the right person, but about being the right person. Showing the other person love, understanding the other person like Hannah did, even if they aren’t meeting our needs.

Are you thinking, “Why should I even try these love languages? My marriage has no hope.” If you are in a desperate, difficult marriage, there are some truths you need to know. No situation is hopeless because of who God is. He wants good marriages and He will work with you to change your difficult marriage. You may think that there is too much hurt in your marriage, or too many years of treating each other poorly to change those habits. You may think that you married the wrong person. You may think that your marriage is too broken to be fixed.

God wants to work with you in your marriage. He says that who you are married to is just the right person and He desires to bless your marriage. Horrible situations have been turned around, and marriages have been healed.

If you are having difficulty with your spouse, perhaps another man or woman seems attractive to you. However, remember that your current husband or wife was attractive to you at one time as well. Why would it be that a new marriage wouldn’t fall into this same poor behaviour that your current marriage has?

What is needed is healing in your present marriage. Many times that is possible. A desperate, difficult marriage can be improved even by just one of the persons showing love to the other.

It may seem that you have only two options: living in misery, or divorce. It may feel that way, but that simply isn't true. Although we cannot change a person, we can influence them. This is not through manipulation, trying to force them to do something. It is not by being nice to them so that they will do something good for us.

We can influence them by showing love to them, even if our husband/or wife does not act loving towards us. We do not have to be controlled by their behaviour. We can find qualities in our spouse to praise and tell them. We can give them gifts, we can touch them gently, we can listen to them and we can do things for them. We do not have to hold a grudge and be bitter. We can be kind, even when they are not.

Listen to the Bible in **Ephesians chapter 4 verses 31 to chapter 5 verse 2**

Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you. Be imitators of God, therefore, as dearly loved children and live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

We can show love to our spouses and influence them through that love. "Love is the most powerful weapon for good." says Gary Chapman.

This week, practice showing love to your spouse or, if you are not married, practice on your parents, your family, or a friend by giving them a gift, doing something for them and spending some time with them one-on-one.

Notice how they react to each demonstration of love through *gifts*, *acts of service* and *quality time*. Then, next week join me, Nancy Crane, on ***Exciting True Love*** to learn how a husband having a good friendship with his wife will bring him closer to God ....  
AND help him have a great sex life!