

Jesus & The 5 Love Languages (Gary Chapman)

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Luke 7:36-50

Marriages often fail because lovers do not know how to speak the love language of their mate that keeps filling the emotional tank of their lover

³⁶ Now one of the Pharisees invited Jesus to have dinner with him, so he went to the Pharisee's house and reclined at the table. ³⁷ When a woman who had lived a sinful life in that town learned that Jesus was eating at the Pharisee's house, she brought an alabaster jar of perfume, ³⁸ and as she stood behind him at his feet weeping, she began to wet his feet with her tears. Then she wiped them with her hair, kissed them and poured perfume on them.

³⁹ When the Pharisee who had invited him saw this, he said to himself, "If this man were a prophet, he would know who is touching him and what kind of woman she is--that she is a sinner." ⁴⁰ Jesus answered him, "Simon, I have something to tell you." "Tell me, teacher," he said.

⁴¹ "Two men owed money to a certain moneylender. One owed him five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. ⁴² Neither of them had the money to pay him back, so he canceled the debts of both. Now which of them will love him more?" ⁴³ Simon replied, "I suppose the one who had the bigger debt canceled." "You have judged correctly," Jesus said.

⁴⁴ Then he turned toward the woman and said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? I came into your house. You did not give me any water for my feet, but she wet my feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. ⁴⁵ You did not give me a kiss, but this woman, from the time I entered, has not stopped kissing my feet. ⁴⁶ You did not put oil on my head, but she has poured perfume on my feet.

⁴⁷ Therefore, I tell you, her many sins have been forgiven--for she loved much. But he who has been forgiven little loves little." ⁴⁸ Then Jesus said to her, "Your sins are forgiven." ⁴⁹ The other guests began to say among themselves, "Who is this who even forgives sins?" ⁵⁰ Jesus said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you; go in peace."

Our teaching today will not be biblically direct. It is my intention to address the need for marriage enrichment by use of Gary Chapman's book, *The 5 Love Languages: The Secret to Love that Lasts*. I want us to look at Jesus to see how Jesus gave and responded to these love languages in his life and teachings. Chapman's book is essential for helping marriages succeed.

In our day, more than half of all marriages end in divorce, including Christian marriages. This harms the children of those homes. It also often hurts the church in many ways. We often lose members after a divorce. Children of divorce often are left damaged in their understanding of God. So, it is worth it, for me as a pastor, to invest time in helping families be stronger in marriage. What we learn about the love languages can also be applied in the parent – child relationship as well.

Two Key Concepts:

Emotional Love Tank

People respond to others out of an “emotional love tank.”

Feeling loved is a primary human emotional need.

Dr. Ross Campbell, psychiatrist for treating children and adolescents:

“Inside every child is an emotional ‘love tank’ waiting to be filled. When a child really feels loved, he will develop normally, but when the love tank is empty, the child will misbehave.”

Not only do children have an emotional love tank, adults also have an emotional love tank. We all need to feel loved. The problem is that love tanks always leak. It is never enough to just be loved once. We are in need of constant filling to keep our sense of emotional well being at full.

The emotional love tank is a key issue in marriage. Both husband and wife have an emotional love tank. When they are not filled with constant feeling of being loved, one or both begin to feel the marriage is lacking.

Falling in Love vs Real Love

The euphoria of “falling in love” must be replaced with real love that requires actions.

Falling in love is an euphoric experience which never lasts. It is much like getting a soft serve ice cream cone. It is delightful, but you know it is not going to last very long.

Falling in love is an illusion of love. When people fall in love they are blinded to reality. They refuse to look at their love objectively. They are caught up in the emotion of the new experience. Some think this is the real thing, and they keep pursuing it. However, as one psychologist discovered in a study, most “in love” experiences usually end in two years. At some point you have to come down from the clouds and put your feet on real ground and do the hard work of choosing to love your mate.

Real love is a choice you make. It requires energy and actions as well as emotion. The reality is that we need to be loved by someone who chooses to love us, who values us by how they act toward us.

Chapman has observed that marriages work on the basis of five love languages. That is, people usually have a dominant emotional way of relating to love, and they interpret love from their mate by that form of love.

The 5 Love Languages

In Gary Chapman's book, *The 5 Love Languages*, he identifies 5 love languages common to people:

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

1. Words of Affirmation

Words of affirmation build up others rather than criticize.

You champion me.

Speaking words of value that build up your mate is opposite of what often happens when we tell our mate what they do wrong. Critical words will empty the emotional love tank very quickly, and they do nothing to fill it up. Some people think they are being loving by informing the other person of what they need to change, but it comes across as a critical spirit and it leaves a thousand wounds that never stop bleeding. When lovers silence the critical words and start speaking encouraging words, it begins to heal the marriage. Some mates will only understand love when it comes in words of affirmation.

2. Quality Time

Quality time values the presence of the other person.

I feel important to you.

Quality time is time spent valuing the presence of your mate. When the person feels valued, their tank is filled. For children, QT is understood as TIME. Our mates, like children need our undivided time. For some, it might be time shared together doing things both enjoy like watching TV together. It may be doing activities together. It usually involves talking and listening to each other. Even our pets understand the need for personal time.

3. Receiving Gifts

Some people feel valued when they receive gifts.

You celebrate me.

We often give gifts to our lover at times – Christmas, birthdays, etc. We may give flowers at Valentines day. But the issue with receiving gifts is about the nature of how the other person understands receiving gifts. It is not always everyone's love language to see love as receiving gifts. But if it is your mates, you will need to focus on that nature of love if you are to fill their emotional love tank.

4. Acts of Service

Some people feel connected when the partner shares in the work.

We are in this together.

Acts of service is just what it sounds like. It is doing things for your lover. Love is action based, not merely a feeling we have for another. Remember, real love is based on choosing to love your partner. When you choose to love, you are stepping into actions on behalf of your lover. When a lover understands love as based on what is done in actions, they will see their love tank on empty when their mate refuses to lift a hand to help.

5. Physical Touch

Some people sense love by thoughtful touch.

You care for me.

Physical touch is more than sexual touch. It is much more about conveying love by touching in emotional connection. It is amazing how many senses in the body respond to touch, yet often touching is often ignored by lovers. We get too busy, or we withdraw when feelings are hurt. Touch remains a primary means of expressing love between lovers. Even our pets tell us they need touch. My young dogs are constantly coming to me for touch. They wrestle with each other and usually bring it to me, on top of me, behind me, touching me in some way because touch is a way of belonging.

We will address each of these areas in the coming weeks.

The 5 Love Languages in the Story of Jesus at the House of Simon the Pharisee (who in the story matches *actions* of the love languages?)

Words of Affirmation	Jesus
Quality Time	Jesus
Gifts	Woman
Acts of Service	Woman
Physical Touch	Woman

In the story of the woman who washes Jesus' feet with her tears at Simon the Pharisee's house, we see all of these love languages in some form. We also see the lack of love expressed by Simon toward Jesus.

Simon invited Jesus to his house for dinner. This is Simon the Pharisee. Simon is concerned about following the proper religious rules. It might seem like he is offering Jesus a love gift by the invitation to dinner, but it is just the opposite. Simon wants to get a closer inspection of Jesus. He wants to find fault. That is why Simon did not give Jesus a proper welcome by having his feet washed, pouring oil on his head and giving him a kiss.

Jesus is reclining at the table with dirty feet. A woman comes in behind him and begins to weep. Her tears fall on his dirty feet and she falls at his feet and begins to wipe his feet with her hair. She opens an alabaster jar and pours pungent perfume on his feet. The smell of the fragrant oil filled the room. Simon is aghast. By her dress and makeup everyone knows this is a woman from the red

lamp district. We don't know if Simon has ever visited the woman or not. We do know that Jesus answers Simon for the issue in his heart, even though he never asks it out loud.

Jesus tells a story of two debtors who could not pay their debt. One owed a lot, the other not so much. Both were forgiven. The question is, which one would love more. Simon gets the picture quickly. The one who owed the greatest debt would love the most.

Then Jesus turned to Simon and asked the larger question: Simon, do you see this woman? The answer is that Simon did not see a woman. He saw a thing, an object of scorn. All Simon could see was his religious rules and this woman was not to touch a holy person.

Jesus then turns to the woman and offers her forgiveness of her sins and he tells her that her faith has saved her.

Jesus offers words of affirmation and gives quality time to the woman who comes to express her brokenness and love for Jesus. Jesus gives her no rebuke and allows her to have the time to show her love to him as a repentant sinner without pulling away.

The woman shows love by offering Jesus the gift of perfume for his feet. She gives an act of service to wash his feet and dry them with her hair, in utter humility of service. She also gives attention by physical touch of his feet, kissing his feet as a sign of love and seeking forgiveness for her sin.

Simon, although he offers to have Jesus come to his house for a meal, which is a gift, seems to have ulterior motives. He failed to give Jesus the basic Jewish welcome. He did not give Jesus a kiss or

offer to have his feet washed. He offered no oil for anointing Jesus' head. All of this the woman does instead.

Jesus' reply to Simon is a key to understanding this story. Jesus allows this woman to express her love for him because she finds in Jesus God's forgiveness. Jesus does not reject her. In fact, Jesus does not reject Simon either. Jesus tries to show us God's nature. He tries to show us God's love acted out.

When we think about marriage, we must understand that if love is to be real it must act out. It must become action. The feeling of love will come and go, it will rise and fall, but it always depends on our choosing to act toward our mate with love actions. As we look at these five love languages over the next several weeks, I ask you to pray that the Lord will help you identify your partner's primary love language. I also ask that you and your mate will spend time discussing these love languages so you can make your marriage stronger.