

Life Notes *Family Matters with Pastor Cory*

1. **Learning Love Languages**

INTRODUCTION

In 1992, Gary Chapman wrote *The Five Love Languages*. The premise of the book is that people get and give love in a variety of ways. More specifically, Dr. Chapman says there are five primary ways: Words of Affirmation, Gifts, Acts of Service, Quality Time, and Appropriate Physical Touch

WHAT'S YOUR LOVE LANGUAGE?

Now, all of us feel loved through each of these languages. But some will stand out more than others. Ask yourself, "Which of these makes me feel most valued/encouraged?" Pay attention to these. It's likely those are the primary ways you give and get love.

WHAT'S THEIR LOVE LANGUAGE?

One way to identify someone else's love language is by simple observation. You can often tell how a person gets love by how they give love. For instance, our Pastor primarily receives love through words of affirmation. How do I know this? Because he expresses his love mainly through words. This is partly why we are his "loved ones."

Unfortunately, I didn't discover this until a few years into my marriage. One weekend while I was traveling, Joy decided she would drive "The Green Machine" (my truck). When I returned, I came back to a completely different vehicle. It had been cleaned, wiped down, vacuumed, and didn't smell like man things. It was spic and span! And it dawned on me. Every time I had been out of town in our marriage, I had come home to a clean home and vehicle. Every. Single. Time. That's when it hit me. I had been speaking to Joy in the wrong language for years.

Now don't misunderstand me. I had always expressed my love to Joy. The problem is I was doing that through words of encouragement or giving her gifts. Why? Because these are *my* primary love languages. I had assumed that she feels love in the same ways I feel love. And we all know what happens when we assume...!

This is a common mistake, but one we cannot afford to make with our families. We must be intentional to love them in the most appropriate and effective ways.

HOW CAN I LOVE EFFECTIVELY?

Jesus made it clear that love is our main objective in this life. As a matter of fact, He said His disciples would be recognized by the love shown to each other. This knowledge of love language gives us power, not to just love, but to effectively love those around us.

Jesus gave us the ultimate example of loving us in these ways. He affirms us with His Word, spends time with us when we draw near, gives us spiritual gifts, served us by taking our place, and touches our hearts when we need it most. It's so reassuring to know that the Lord meets us where we are.

With that said, here are a few ways we can effectively love others:

1) **Words of Affirmation**

"Thank you for making our home feel safe."

"I love how you _____."

2) **Gifts**

Make him his favorite dessert for no reason at all.

Bring her home a new pair of shoes.

3) **Acts of Service**

Give him a foot rub.

Drop them off at the door of the store before parking.

4) **Quality Time**

Make a phone stack at dinner.

Maintain eye contact while talking.

5) **Appropriate Physical Touch**

Give high fives, hugs, or handshakes often.

Wrestle around playfully.

Our families need to experience our love in their own language. Children, parents, siblings, and spouses all need this. And the responsibility falls on us to love them in ways that are meaningful to *them*. So let's be intentional and love them effectively!