



Christian Life Fellowship
Becoming fully devoted followers of Christ



Essentials of Marriage II

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Introduction:

Today we are going to focus our thoughts on essentials of a great marriage. How did you do with our challenge last week? Were you able to walk the truth of **Phil 2:3 - Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves.**

Last week we talked about commitment to one another and the Biblical concept of marriage between one man and one woman 'till death parts us'. Today we are going to talk about the essential of love in the marriage. What does it look like to love your spouse?

Without question, Paul's discussion in **I Cor. 13** - is a wonderful discourse on love. A marriage will not last, nor will it be a great marriage if the essential quality of love is not cultivated.

So let's read it responsively this morning. **I Cor. 13:4-8** :

Love is patient, love is kind.

It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud.

It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered,

It keeps no record of wrongs.

Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth.

It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.

Love never fails.

If you truly love someone you will communicate with them. Understand that men and women communicate differently. Girls and women are blessed with greater language abilities than boys. Every counselor knows that the inability or unwillingness of husbands to reveal their true feelings to their wives is one of the more common complaints of women.

Communication is something that can be learned. It is an acquired skill. I have done public speaking for many years, but I don't feel I have arrived in my communication skills. There are times that I do connect and convey truth to those listening and then other times I don't do very well. Sometimes I think I have truly conveyed truth

and communicated only to find out that I didn't say all I thought and left blanks instead of getting my point across.

Paul talks about love and indicates these are love's qualities: selfless, giving, not rude, not proud, not easily provoked, patient, kind, not easily angered, protective, trusting, persevering, hoping, and unfailing. These qualities can be applied to the many ways of communicating that will strengthen and enhance your relationship. In fact, applying these traits of love to our skills of communication is essential to having a great marriage. How do you communicate your love to your spouse? Remember communication is not always verbal.

Jesus spoke in every one of these love languages. He affirmed His disciples when they followed His directives, telling them that he loved them, assuring them that He would not abandon them and leave them without a helper. He spent quality time with the disciples. He walked with them, ate with them, prayed with them, fished with them, gave of Himself to them. He also touched people – the lepers who were unclean, the blind man, the lame man, the child with a fever. He communicated love through His touch. He performed acts of service – turning the water into wine.

I. Love languages

In communicating there are five love languages. It is important that you find out what language you can use to communicate your love to your spouse.

1. Words of Affirmation

Thanks for your help! Great Job! I like the way you did that, you worked hard. I appreciate what you did. You look beautiful. You are strong. I love you.

These are important words and express affirmation. For the individual whose primary love language is words of affirmation, these are the emotional life blood.

2. Quality Time

This involves giving your spouse your undivided attention. This time may be spent in a variety of ways; going for a walk, reading together, listening to favorite music, going out for dinner, cooking a meal together or gardening. These are all ways to give attention to your spouse. The words "I love you", apart from giving quality time, are meaningless.

3. Physical touch

Research tells us that babies who are touched frequently in a loving way grow up with better emotional health than those who are left unattended. Touch is crucial to every human being. If physical touch is your love language, there is nothing better than having your spouse wrap their arms around you to hold you. There

is assurance, comfort, strength, protection and security in that touch that is communicated.

4. Receiving gifts

Giving and receiving gifts is a universal expression of love. A gift says, "I was thinking about you. I know what you like, I know your tastes, your desires, your needs, and through this gift, I want you to know that you are valued, loved and cared for." Expressing love through gifts is truly the thought that counts and not the value of the gift.

5. Acts of service

Doing things for your spouse can also communicate your love. Preparing a meal, doing laundry, going out of your way to offer transportation, helping with the responsibilities the spouse would normally take care of in the relationship. To someone whose primary language of love is acts of service, these acts become the emotional well-being and life-line to that individual.

Out of these methods of communication, people have a primary and secondary language of love. If you are speaking in those languages, your spouse will feel loved. If you do not speak consistently in those languages, even though you do love your spouse, they may not feel it.

II. Ways to determine your spouse's love language

1. Observe how they express love to you. If they express themselves in terms of what a great job you do mowing the lawn or cooking a meal, then most likely their primary love language is words of affirmation.

2. If your spouse always wants to hold your hand, hug you, touch you, then you should suspect the primary language of love is physical touch.

3. If your spouse does things that would be helpful to you, it most likely is acts of service.

4. If your spouse wants to always be with you whatever you are doing, then probably their language is quality time.

5. Listen to your spouse's requests carefully until you hear a pattern emerging. At times people are most critical in the areas of their

primary language. For example, if your spouse says, "You never hold or touch me", then guess what, their language of love is probably physical touch.

When you find that language and use it to communicate your love to your spouse, s/he will be more receptive to you. Yesterday was Valentine's Day. I do hope you expressed your love to your spouse in their love language. I hope that you don't just wait until a special day to express your love but that every day you seize the opportunity and lovingly communicate your love to your spouse. If you are going to have a great marriage it is essential that you be committed to communicating your love in ways your spouse can understand.

God's word directs us in our relationship to one another. Jesus showed us by His example of unselfishness how to love and how to communicate love in a variety of ways.

Conclusion:

To have a great marriage, "My advice is that you change that which can be altered, explain that which can be understood, teach that which can be learned, revise that which can be improved, resolve that which can be settled, and negotiate that which is open to compromise. Create the best marriage possible from the raw materials brought by two imperfect human beings with two distinctly unique personalities." pg 64 *Love for a lifetime* by Dr. James Dobson.

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