

# GREAT DATES #5

## UNDERSTANDING LOVE LANGUAGES

Gary Chapman has written a great book called The Five Love Languages. In the book, he theorizes that everyone has one or two ways they prefer to receive love. He suggests that it would be good if each person in a relationship knew the best way to express love to their partner. Unfortunately, most of us give love in the same way we like to receive love, and we may be expressing our love in a way our partner does not recognize or fully appreciate.

Steve and I attended the last Love Languages class held here at the church last Fall. Being a therapist, I had certainly heard of this book and assumed I knew Steve's language. After all, we have been married 32+ years. Lo and behold, I was wrong. All this time, I had assumed his languages were **Quality Time** and **Physical Touch**. These are my languages, not his. His language is **Words of Affirmation**. Now I try to use words on a daily basis to let him know that I love him and appreciate him.

Tonight, talk about the idea of preferred Love Languages. See if you can guess each other's preferred one or two languages.

Gary Chapman also says that we each have an "emotional tank" and that as we go through our day, events and people make either deposits into or withdrawals from our emotional tank. He suggests that couples ask each other daily, "How is your emotional tank?" and "Is there anything specific I can do today to help the level in your tank go up?"

The five Love Languages are:

- Words of Affirmation
- Quality Time
- Receiving Gifts
- Acts of Service
- Physical Touch

I highly recommend this book, if you have not already read it. It includes a test for each of you to take and is full of creative ways to express love to each other. We have it in The Book Place here at church. Stop in and pick up a copy. There is also a Love Languages book for children by Gary Chapman, not to mention his new Five Languages of Apology!

## ASSIGNMENT FOR THE EVENING

1. **What do you think of the idea of “love languages?”** For example, my married daughter did not want to take the test at first when we were doing this as a family because she wanted her husband to do a little of all of them. It does not mean that we don't love and serve each other in all of these ways, but that we can shape our efforts to better hit the mark more of the time. It is a way of better understanding each other.
2. Each of you take a minute to make a list of 5 recent times when you felt loved by your spouse. **“I know I'm loved when you.....”**
3. After sharing your examples, see if you can agree on each other's primary love language. See how many you can incorporate into your date tonight, and then check and see at the end of the evening which meant the most to your spouse.
  - Quality time is spending time focused on each other – like you are doing tonight
  - Words of Affirmation are expressing verbally something you admire about your spouse or something you are grateful for about them or just complimenting them on how they look tonight
  - Acts of Service can be opening a door for someone or offering to help with a project this weekend or helping with the kids tonight as you go home
  - Receiving gifts can be as simple as a love note or sharing a dessert with coffee after dinner. It could be stopping by the grocery store to buy a bottle of wine or some bubble bath for later tonight after we get home and the kids are in bed.
  - Physical Touch can range from pats to hugs to holding hands to making love. Physical Touch is one of my top two and I love things as simple as holding hands when we walk together or holding hands across the restaurant table.
4. Intentionally try to do at least one small thing a week to show love for your spouse between tonight and the next date night.

February Great Date Night is February 20<sup>th</sup>, 6:00-9:00 pm  
Make your reservations now and help us spread the word to other couples who could use a night out together.