



Lesson 4 Love, Love, Love!

1 John 3:1a

See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are!

1. Because of God's love, I am **God's child**.
2. Because of God's love, my spouse is **God's child**.
3. Now I want to say, **"Thank you."**

Definitions:

- Eros: **the love of passion. "I love pizza."**
- Phileo: **friendship love**
- Agape: **the love which is driven by the will. "I choose to love you, whether you're lovable or not."**

In marriage, all three are valuable, and worth working on. In this lesson, we'll focus primarily on agape love.

Some helpful passages:

John 3:16

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

John 15:13

Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends.

Romans 5:8

But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

The previous passages describe God's love for us. Pick out at least 2-3 key thoughts.

God's love is giving. It gives the best. It knows no limits. It's unconditional (his love led Christ to die for us when we were still sinners.)

As you read the passage below, fill in the "Agape love" chart below.

1 Corinthians 13:4-8

Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. ⁵It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. ⁶Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. ⁷It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. ⁸Love never fails.

Agape love <u>is</u>: (list 7 things)	Agape love <u>isn't</u>: (list 7 things)

The left side of the chart lists "deposits," which you can make toward your marriage, the things listed on the right are "withdrawals." Pick out one "withdrawal" that you could stop making; pick out one "deposit" that you could begin making (or making more fully).

All of the things listed are different aspects of what love is/isn't, kind of like facets on a diamond. So, if you work on one of the "facets," you are working on love in general. But only working on one thing likely feels more attainable for most people than trying to work on all of these. So, give the encouragement to work on one thing from each side of the chart.

Ephesians 5:33

“However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband.”

Husbands are urged to _____ their wives. Wives are urged to _____ their husbands.

This passage was in the previous lesson. Emerson Eggerichs, the author of *Love and Respect* suggests that men are prone to give respect, while women are prone to give love, likely because men tend to crave respect and women tend to crave love. So, God tells each sex to give what it would be unlikely to give, but which the spouse craves.

What follows is an overgeneralization; there are exceptions, but this is Eggerichs’ take.

He’d suggest that when a man’s male boss says, “The work you’re doing is excellent; I’m very pleased with it,” the man feels great, because he feels respected. If the man’s boss were to say, “I really care for you,” most men might feel pretty weird about it. (To be clear, that second example isn’t meant to be thought of in regard to a romantic advance.)

By contrast, many women are more relational. When they hear, “I really respect the work you’re doing,” it likely means less than, “I care for you, I cherish you.”

Again the above are generalizations.

Love “languages”

Because God has knit us together as unique individuals, each of us has a unique way of giving love and a unique way in which we prefer to receive love; understanding that can be quite helpful in a marriage relationship. The following is one example of a break-out of the ways in which people give and receive love.

Most likely no one fits totally into one category, but it’s likely that you prefer one or two of the categories. Fill in the chart on the next page. What is your primary “love language?” Your spouse’s? What could you do to communicate love to your spouse in THEIR language?

Gary Chapman wrote the book *The 5 Love Languages*, and this is his five-fold break-out. You’ll find other ways of addressing this.

To teach this:

1. Talk through each of the love languages, very briefly. (A couple of notes are below.)
2. Ask each person to fill this out, both noting their own love language(s) and their spouse’s language(s).
3. Ask them to each say what they think their spouse’s love language(s) is, and why. Then let the spouse respond. (e.g., the husband says, “I think my wife’s love language is _____ or maybe it’s _____.” The wife responds with affirmation or redirection. Then the wife takes a turn.)

Quality time: That can mean different things to different people. For some, it’s setting aside a short time to be focused only on each other. For others, it’s spending time watching TV or a movie or playing a board game. For this author, “quantity time” is even more important, as it’s “not good for the man to be alone.” The point of this “language” is that the person wants some time that is clearly couple time (or maybe family time, if there are kids).

Receiving gifts: These can be small. (i.e., picking up a single rose for a wife). The idea that the person thought about them is probably worth more to the receiver than the gift itself.

Meaningful touch: Yes, this can include sex, but it can be holding hands, hugging, putting an arm around the spouse, etc.

Love Language	Yours	Your spouses	Ways to communicate
Encouraging words			
Quality Time			
Receiving Gifts			
Acts of Service			
Meaningful Touch			

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Assignment:

Watch any three of these Marriage Moments, all dealing with the subject of “love” (#31-39). Come to the next session with 2-3 thoughts that you found helpful/challenging/interesting, or about which you had questions.

31 - <https://vimeo.com/540248210>

32 - <https://vimeo.com/540251114>

33 - <https://vimeo.com/540253163>

34 - <https://vimeo.com/540255698>

35 - <https://vimeo.com/540259549>

36 - <https://vimeo.com/540262141>

37 - <https://vimeo.com/540265040>

38 - <https://vimeo.com/540270696>

39 - <https://vimeo.com/540802032>