# The Five Love Languages

*How to Express Heartfelt Commitment to Your Mate*

GARY CHAPMAN

Learning Activities & Leader Guide

Written by Amy Summers

LifeWay Press®
Nashville, Tennessee

Published by LifeWay Press®
© 2007 Dr. Gary Chapman
Reprinted January 2014

No part of this work may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying and recording, or by any information storage or retrieval system, except as may be expressly permitted in writing by the publisher. Requests for permission should be addressed in writing to LifeWay Press®, One LifeWay Plaza, Nashville, TN 37234-0152.

ISBN 978-1-4158-5731-1
Item 005085884

Dewey decimal classification number: 306.872
Subject headings: MARRIAGE \ LOVE

Unless otherwise noted, Scripture quotations are taken from the Holy Bible, New International Version, copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984 by International Bible Society. Scripture quotations marked HCSB are taken from the Holman Christian Standard Bible®, copyright © 1999, 2000, 2002, 2003, 2009 by Holman Bible Publishers. Used by permission. Holman Christian Standard Bible®, Holman CSB®, and HCSB® are federally registered trademarks of Holman Bible Publishers.

To order additional copies of this resource, write LifeWay Church Resources Customer Service; One LifeWay Plaza; Nashville, TN 37234-0113; fax order to 615.251.5933; email *orderentry@lifeway.com;* call 800.458.2772; order online at *www.lifeway.com;* or visit the LifeWay Christian Store serving you.

*Printed in the United States of America*

Adult Ministry Publishing
LifeWay Church Resources
One LifeWay Plaza
Nashville, TN 37234-0152

# Contents

About the Author . . . . . 4

About the Study . . . . . 5

*Week 1:* Learning to Speak Love . . . . . 6
The Five Love Languages Profile. . . . . 18

*Week 2:* Love Language One—Words of Affirmation . . . . . 22

*Week 3:* Love Language Two—Quality Time . . . . . 34

*Week 4:* Love Language Three—Receiving Gifts. . . . . 44

*Week 5:* Love Language Four—Acts of Service . . . . . 54

*Week 6:* Love Language Five—Physical Touch . . . . . 62

*Week 7:* Growing in Love . . . . . 72

Leader Guide . . . . . 82

# About the Author

MARRIED MORE THAN 35 YEARS to Karolyn, Dr. Gary Chapman is the man to turn to for help in improving or healing our most important relationships. His own life experiences, plus over 30 years of pastoring and marriage counseling, led him to publish his first book in the Love Language series, *The Five Love Languages: How to Express Heartfelt Commitment to Your Mate.* Millions of readers credit this continual best-seller with saving their marriages by showing them simple and practical ways to communicate their love to their partner.

Since the success of his first book, Dr. Chapman has expanded his Five Love Languages series to specifically reach out to teens, singles, men, and children (coauthored with Dr. Ross Campbell).

He is the author of numerous other books, including *Five Signs of a Loving Family, The Four Seasons of Marriage, Anger: Handling a Powerful Emotion in a Healthy Way, The Five Languages of Apology, and Hope for the Separated.* Dr. Chapman travels the world presenting seminars, and his nationally syndicated radio program airs on over 100 stations.

Dr. Chapman also serves as senior associate pastor at Calvary Baptist Church in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. He and his wife have two grown children and currently live in Winston-Salem, North Carolina.

**Amy Summers** wrote the learning activities and leader guide for this study. Amy's primary career is chauffeur and social secretary for her children Aaron, Rachel, and Philip. She is also an experienced writer and Sunday School leader. In addition to her parenting and writing responsibilities, Amy works part-time as a writing tutor at the local elementary school. She is a graduate of Baylor University and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. She and her husband, Stephen, raise their children in Arden, North Carolina.

# About the Study

WELCOME TO *THE FIVE LOVE LANGUAGES*![1] Before you begin your study, there are a couple of things I would like to point out. First of all, this book is designed for individual study in preparation for a small-group meeting each week. You will benefit most from the material if you study a portion each day rather than trying to complete all the material for the week at one sitting. This will give you more time to concentrate on the message and what it has to say to you. The personal learning activities are designed to help you apply to your life what you are learning. Please don't skip over these activities. They will also prepare you for your small-group session where you will be asked to share some of your responses.

Consider the following suggestions to make your study more meaningful:

- Release your mind and heart. Be willing to step out of your comfort zone as you learn how to best express your love for your spouse.
- Pray sincerely both alone and with others that you will be open to how to best love your spouse through his or her love language.
- Keep a journal of things you learn throughout your study. Your memory will not always recall these things, but your journal will!
- Share freely with others what you are learning. Listen as others share their experiences as well. You can learn valuable things from each other.

Dr. Chapman said, "I have not written this book as an academic treatise to be stored in the libraries of colleges and universities. I have written not to those who are studying marriage but to those who are married, to those who have experienced the 'in love' euphoria. I have written to those who entered marriage with lofty dreams of making each other supremely happy but in the reality of day-to-day life are in danger of losing that dream entirely. It is my hope that thousands of those couples will not only rediscover their dream but will see the path to making their dreams come true."

1. The content for this workbook comes from The Five Love Languages by Gary Chapman, Moody Press, Chicago, IL, ©1992.

*"Love is something you do for someone else, not something you do for yourself."*

WEEK ONE

# Learning to Speak Love

_____ is the most important word in the English language.

_____ is the most confusing word in the English language.

Inside every child is an _____.

_____ also have a love tank.

## The Five Love Languages

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

Each of us has a _____ love language.

By nature, we speak _____ love language.

We have to _____ how to speak the _____ love language.

When the act doesn't come _____, it's a greater _____ of love.

Love is something you do for _____, not something you do for yourself.

## Discovering a Child's Love Language

1. Observe their _____.

2. Notice what they _____ of you most often.

3. Observe them as they _____ with other children.

**WHAT HAPPENS TO LOVE AFTER THE WEDDING?** The desire for romantic love in marriage is deeply rooted in our psychological makeup. Why is it that so few couples seem to have found the secret to keeping love alive after the wedding? The answer to this question is the purpose of this study.

The problem is that we have overlooked one fundamental truth: People speak different love languages. In the area of linguistics, there are major language groups. Most of us grow up learning the language of our parents and siblings, which becomes our primary, or native, tongue. Later we may learn additional languages but usually with much more effort. These become our secondary languages. We speak, understand, and feel most comfortable speaking our native language. If we speak only our primary language and encounter someone else who speaks only his or her primary language, which is different from ours, our communication will be limited. We can communicate, but it is awkward. If we are to communicate effectively across cultural lines, we must learn the language of those with whom we wish to communicate.

In the area of love, it is similar. Your emotional love language and the language of your spouse may be as different as Chinese from English. No matter how hard you try to express love in English, if your spouse understands only Chinese, you will never understand how to love each other. You must be willing to learn your spouse's primary love language if you are to be an effective communicator of love.

**When it comes to expressing love to one another, I speak English and my spouse speaks:**

☐ **English—We understand each other's expressions of love.**

☐ **Spanish—I don't fully understand my spouse, but I can pick up a few love-phrases here and there.**

☐ **Chinese—My spouse is trying to tell me something, but I have no idea what he or she is saying.**

☐ **Martian—My spouse and I are on completely different planets.**

My conclusion after 30 years of marriage counseling is that there are basically 5 emotional love languages—5 ways people speak and understand emotional love. In the field of linguistics, a language may have numerous dialects or variations. Similarly, within the five basic emotional love languages, there are many dialects.

The number of ways to express love within a love language is limited only by one's imagination. The important thing is to speak the love language of your spouse.

Seldom do a husband and wife have the same primary emotional love language. We tend to speak our primary love language, and we become confused when our spouses don't understand what we are communicating. We are expressing our love, but the message does not come through because we are speaking what, to them, is a foreign language. Therein lies the fundamental problem, and it is the purpose of this study to offer a solution.

Once we identify and learn to speak our spouse's primary love language, we will have discovered the key to a long-lasting, loving marriage. Love need not evaporate after the wedding, but in order to keep it alive most of us will have to put forth the effort to learn a secondary love language. We cannot rely on our native tongue if our spouses don't understand it. If we want them to feel the love we are trying to communicate, we must express it in their primary love language.

## *Keeping the Love Tank Full*

Psychologists have concluded that the need to feel loved is a primary human emotional need. Child psychologists affirm that every child has certain basic emotional needs that must be met if he is to be emotionally stable. Among those emotional needs, none is more basic than the need for love and affection, the need to sense that he or she belongs and is wanted. With an adequate supply of affection, the child will likely develop into a responsible adult. Without that love, he or she will be emotionally and socially retarded.

Dr. Ross Campbell, a psychiatrist who specializes in the treatment of children and adolescents says, "Inside every child is an 'emotional tank' waiting to be filled with love. When a child really feels loved, he will develop normally but when the love tank is empty, the child will misbehave. Much of the misbehavior of children is motivated by the cravings of an empty 'love tank.'"

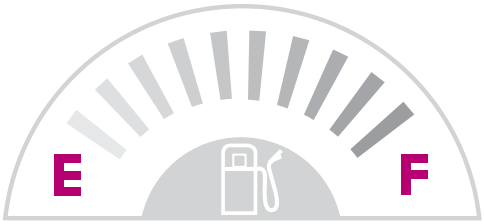
The emotional need for love is not simply a childhood phenomenon. That need follows us into adulthood and into marriage. We needed love before we "fell in love," and we will need it as long as we live. The purpose of this study is to focus on the kind of love that is essential to our emotional health.

***At the heart of mankind's existence is the desire to be intimate and to be loved by another.***

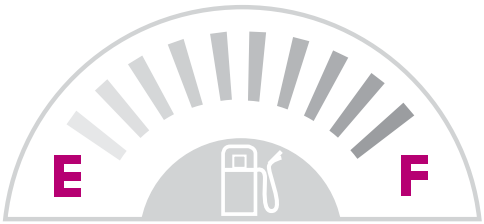
Could it be that deep inside hurting couples exists an invisible "emotional love tank" with its gauge on empty? Could the misbehavior, withdrawal, harsh words, and critical spirit occur because of that empty tank? If we could find a way to fill it, could the marriage be reborn? With a full tank would couples be able to create an emotional climate where it is possible to discuss differences and resolve conflicts? Could that tank be the key that makes marriage work?

I am convinced that keeping the emotional love tank full is as important to a marriage as maintaining the proper oil level is to an automobile. Running your marriage on an empty love tank may cost you even more than trying to drive your car without oil. What you are about to read has the potential of saving thousands of marriages and can even enhance the emotional climate of a good marriage. Whatever the quality of your marriage now, it can always be better.

**Below are two love tanks. Draw a needle on your love tank to signify how much your craving for love is being fulfilled by your spouse. Draw a needle on your spouse's love tank to signify how well you think you are fulfilling his or her need to be loved.**




MY LOVE TANK




MY SPOUSE'S LOVE TANK

**Compare your responses with your spouse's responses. Ask God to use this study to help you and your spouse fill each others' love tanks to full and overflowing!**

# Learning the Five Love Languages

In weeks 2-6 we will look in depth at the five love languages. Here I will simply provide a brief introduction to each.

## Words of Affirmation

Mark Twain once said, "I can live for two months on a good compliment." Verbal appreciation speaks powerfully to persons whose primary love language is words of affirmation. Simple statements such as, "You look great in that suit." or "You must be the best baker in the world! I love your oatmeal cookies." are sometimes all a person needs to hear to feel loved. Another way to communicate through words of affirmation is to offer encouragement.

## Quality Time

Quality time is more than mere proximity. It's about focusing all your energy on your mate. A husband watching sports while talking to his wife is *not* spending quality time with her. Unless all of your attention is focused on your mate, even an intimate dinner for two can come and go without a minute of quality time being shared.

Quality conversation is very important to a healthy relationship. It involves sharing experiences, thoughts, feelings and desires in a friendly, uninterrupted context. Quality activities are also a very important part of quality time. Many mates feel most loved when they spend physical time together, doing activities they love to do.

## Receiving Gifts

Some individuals respond well to visual symbols of love. If you speak this love language, you are more likely to treasure any gift as an expression of love and devotion. People who speak this love language often feel that a lack of gifts represents a lack of love from their mate. Luckily, this love language is one of the easiest to learn.

These gifts need not come every day or even every week. They don't even need to cost a lot of money. Free, frequent, expensive, or rare, if your mate relates to the language of receiving gifts, any visible sign of your love will leave your spouse feeling happy and secure in your relationship.

### Acts of Service

Sometimes doing simple chores around the house can be an undeniable expression of love. Even simple things like laundry and taking out the trash require some form of planning, time, effort, and energy. Just as Jesus demonstrated when He washed the feet of His disciples, doing humble chores can be a very powerful expression of love and devotion to your mate.

Even when couples help each other around the house, they may still fight because they are unknowingly communicating with each other in two different dialects. It is important to learn your mate's dialect and to work hard to understand what acts of service will show your love.

### Physical Touch

Many mates feel the most loved when they receive physical contact from their partner. For a mate who speaks this love language loudly, physical touch can make or break the relationship.

Sexual intercourse makes many mates feel secure and loved in a marriage. However, it is only one dialect of physical touch. It is important to learn how your mate speaks the physical touch language. Take the time to learn the touches your mate likes. They can be big acts, such as back massages or lovemaking, or little acts such as touches on the cheek or a hand on the shoulder. It's important to learn how your mate responds to touch. That is how you will make the most of this love language.

## Discovering Your Primary Love Language

Discovering the primary love language of your spouse is essential if you are to keep his or her emotional love tank full. But first you need to discover your own love language. Having heard the five emotional love languages, some individuals will know instantaneously their own primary love language and that of their spouse. For others, it will not be that easy. Several methods can be used to help determine your love language as well as the love language of your spouse.

## Ask Key Questions

**What Makes Me Feel Most Loved By My Spouse?**

What do you desire above all else? If the answer does not leap to your mind immediately, perhaps it will help to look at the negative use of love languages. What does your spouse do or say or fail to do or say that hurts you deeply? If your deepest pain is the critical, judgmental words of your spouse, then perhaps your love language is words of affirmation. If your primary love language is used negatively by your spouse—that is, he does the opposite—it will hurt you more deeply because not only is he neglecting to speak your primary love language, he is actually using that language as a knife to your heart.

**What Have I Most Often Requested of My Spouse?**

Whatever you have most requested is probably in keeping with your primary love language. Those requests may have been interpreted by your spouse as nagging. They have been, in fact, your efforts to secure emotional love from your spouse.

**How Do I Express Love to My Spouse?**

Chances are what you are doing for her is what you wish she would do for you. If you are constantly doing acts of service for your spouse, perhaps (although not always) that is your love language. If words of affirmation speak love to you, chances are you will use them in speaking love to your spouse.

But remember, that approach is only a possible clue to your love language; it is not an absolute indicator. For example, the husband who learned from his father to express love to his wife by giving her nice gifts expresses his love to his wife by doing what his father did, yet receiving gifts is not his primary love language. He is simply doing what he was trained to do by his father.

**After reviewing the five love languages and considering the three key questions, write below what you think is:**

**your primary love language** _____

**your spouse's primary love language** _____

## Love Is a Choice

If our spouses have learned to speak our primary love language, our need for love will continue to be satisfied. If, on the other hand, they don't speak our love language, our tanks will slowly drain and we will no longer feel loved. Meeting my wife's need for love is a choice I make each day. If I know her primary love language and choose to speak it, her deepest emotional need will be met and she will feel secure in my love. If she does the same for me, my emotional needs are met and both of us live with full love tanks.

***When an action doesn't come naturally to you, it is a greater expression of love.***

Perhaps you are thinking, *What if the love language of my spouse is something that doesn't come naturally for me?* I am often asked this question at my marriage seminars, and my answer is, "So?"

My wife's love language is acts of service. One of the things I do for her regularly as an act of love is to vacuum the floors. Do you think vacuuming floors comes naturally for me? My mother used to make me vacuum. I couldn't go play ball on Saturday until I finished vacuuming the entire house. In those days I said to myself, *When I get out of here, I am not going to vacuum houses. I'll get myself a wife to do that.*

But I vacuum our house now. And there is only one reason. Love. You couldn't pay me enough to vacuum a house, but I do it for love. When an action doesn't come naturally to you, it is a greater expression of love. Ultimately, comfort is not the issue. We are talking about love, and love is something you do for someone else, not something you do for yourself. Love is a choice.

**For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.**
**EPHESIANS 5:31, HCSB**

Marriage is designed to meet that need for intimacy and love. That is why the ancient biblical writings spoke of the husband and wife becoming "one flesh." That did not mean that individuals would lose their identity; it meant that they would enter into each other's lives in a deep and intimate way. The New Testament writers challenged both the husband and the wife to love each other. From Plato to Peck, writers have emphasized the importance of love in marriage.

Something in our nature cries out to be loved by another. Isolation is devastating to the human psyche. That is why solitary confinement is considered the cruelest of punishments. At the heart of mankind's existence is the desire to be intimate and to be loved by another.

**Read Genesis 2:18 in your Bible. What did God Himself declare after He created the first man, Adam?**

_____

**Read Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 in the margin. Summarize these verses to explain why we all have a deep desire to be loved and intimate with another.**

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

**Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their work: If one falls down, his friend can help him up. But pity the man who falls and has no one to help him up! Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm. But how can one keep warm alone? Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.**
Ecclesiastes 4:9-12

## *Discovering a Child's Love Language*

As a parent you are responsible for filling your children's love tank. You do this best by understanding their love language and communicating to them by speaking their language. Throughout the course of this study as we focus on each of the love languages individually, there will be helps for you to discover and learn to speak your child's love language. Here are some things you can do to help you in this process:

- Observe their behavior.
- Notice what they request of you most often.
- Observe them as they play with other children.

## Take the Five Love Languages Profile

You may think you already know your primary love language. Then again, you may have no clue. The Five Love Languages Profile will help you know for certain which love language is yours.

Using these approaches will enable you to determine your primary love language. If two languages seem to be equal for you, that is, both speak loudly to you, then perhaps you are bilingual. If so, you make it easier on your spouse. He or she has two choices, either of which will strongly communicate love to you.

Two kinds of people may have difficulty discovering their primary love language. The first is the individual whose emotional love tank has been full for a long time. Her spouse has expressed love in many ways, and she is not certain which of those ways makes her feel most loved. She simply knows she is loved. The second is the individual whose love tank has been empty for so long that he doesn't remember what makes him feel loved. In either case, go back to the experience of falling in love and ask yourself, "What did I like about my spouse in those days? What did he do or say that made me desire to be with him?" If you can conjure up those memories, it will give you some idea of your primary love language. Another approach would be to ask yourself, "What would be an ideal spouse to me? If I could have the perfect mate, what would she be like?" Your picture of a perfect mate should give you some idea of your primary love language.

## How to Use the Five Love Languages Profile

Words of Affirmation, Quality Time, Receiving Gifts, Acts of Service, or Physical Touch? Which of these is your primary love language? The following profile will help you know for sure. Then you and your spouse can discuss your respective love languages and use this information to improve your marriage!

The profile consists of 30 pairs of statements. You can only pick one statement in each pair as the one that best represents your desire. Read each pair of statements and then circle the letter that matches the statement you choose. It may be tough at times to decide between two statements, but you should only choose one per pair to ensure the most accurate profile results. Once you've finished making your selections, go back and count the number of times you circled each individual letter. List the results in the appropriate spaces at the end of the profile. Your primary love language is the one that receives the most points.

Take the profile when you are relaxed and not pressed for time. Do not take the profile immediately after a disagreement with your spouse. Choose a time when you are in a fairly good mood and have a sincere desire to learn something about yourself which may enhance the emotional climate of your marriage.

# The Five Love Languages Profile

| | |
|---|---|
| 1. I like to receive notes of affirmation from my spouse. | A |
| I like it when my spouse hugs me. | E |
| 2. I like to be alone with my spouse. | B |
| I feel loved when my spouse gives practical help to me. | D |
| 3. Receiving special gifts from my spouse makes me happy. | C |
| I enjoy long trips with my spouse. | B |
| 4. I feel loved when my spouse does things to help me. | D |
| I feel loved when my spouse touches me. | E |
| 5. I feel loved when my spouse puts his/her arm around me. | E |
| I know my spouse loves me because he/she surprises me with gifts. | C |
| 6. I like going most anywhere with my spouse. | B |
| I like to hold my spouse's hand. | E |
| 7. I value the gifts my spouse gives me. | C |
| I love to hear my spouse say he/she loves me. | A |
| 8. I like for my spouse to sit close to me. | E |
| My spouse tells me I look good, and I like that. | A |
| 9. Spending time with my spouse makes me happy. | B |
| Even the smallest gift from my spouse is important to me. | C |
| 10. I feel loved when my spouse tells me he/she is proud of me. | A |
| I know my spouse loves me when he/she helps me. | D |
| 11. No matter what we do, I love doing things with my spouse. | B |
| Supportive comments from my spouse make me feel good. | A |

| | |
|---|---|
| 12. Little things my spouse does for me mean more than things he/she says. | D |
| I love to hug my spouse. | E |
| 13. My spouse's praise means a lot to me. | A |
| It means a lot to me that my spouse gives me gifts I really like. | C |
| 14. Just being around my spouse makes me feel good. | B |
| I love it when my spouse touches me often. | E |
| 15. My spouse's reactions to my accomplishments are so encouraging. | A |
| It means a lot when my spouse helps with something I know he/she hates. | D |
| 16. I never get tired of my spouse's kisses. | E |
| I love that my spouse shows real interest in things I like to do. | B |
| 17. I can count on my spouse to help me with projects. | D |
| I still get excited when opening a gift from my spouse. | C |
| 18. I love for my spouse to compliment my appearance. | A |
| I love that my spouse listens to me and respects my ideas. | B |
| 19. I can't help but touch my spouse when he/she is close by. | E |
| My spouse sometimes runs errands for me, and I appreciate that. | D |
| 20. My spouse deserves an award for all the things he/she does to help me. | D |
| I'm sometimes amazed at how thoughtful my spouse's gifts to me are. | C |
| 21. I love having my spouse's undivided attention. | B |
| It makes me feel good when my spouse does some act of service for me. | D |
| 22. I look forward to seeing what my spouse gives me for my birthday. | C |
| I never get tired of hearing my spouse tell me I am important to him/her. | A |

23. My spouse lets me know he/she loves me by giving me gifts. C
    My spouse shows love by helping me without me having to ask. D

24. My spouse doesn't interrupt me when I'm talking, and I like that. B
    I never get tired of receiving gifts from my spouse. C

25. My spouse is good about asking how he/she can help when I'm tired. D
    It doesn't matter where we go, I just like going places with my spouse. B

26. I love when my spouse kisses me unexpectedly. E
    I love surprise gifts from my spouse. C

27. My spouse's encouraging words give me confidence. A
    I love to watch movies with my spouse. B

28. I couldn't ask for any better gifts than the ones my spouse gives me. C
    I love that my spouse can't keep his/her hands off me. E

29. It means a lot when my spouse helps me despite being busy. D
    It makes me feel good when my spouse tells me he/she appreciates me. A

30. I love hugging and kissing my spouse after we've been apart for awhile. E
    I love hearing my spouse tell me he/she believes in me. A

A: _____ B: _____ C: _____ D: _____ E: _____

A = Words of Affirmation
B = Quality Time
C = Receiving Gifts
D = Acts of Service
E = Physical Touch

## Interpreting and Using Your Profile Score

Your primary love language is the one that received the highest score. You are "bilingual" and have two primary love languages if point totals are equal for any two love languages. If your second highest scoring love language is close in score but not equal to your primary love language, then this simply means both expressions of love are important to you. The highest possible score for any one love language is 12.

You may have scored certain love languages more highly than others, but do not dismiss those other languages as insignificant. Your spouse may express love in those ways, and it will be helpful to you to understand this about him or her. In the same way, it will benefit your spouse to know your love language and express affection for you in ways you interpret as love. Every time you or your spouse speak each other's language, you score emotional points with one another. Of course, this isn't a game with a scorecard! The payoff of speaking each other's love language is a greater sense of connection. This translates into better communication, increased understanding, and, ultimately, improved romance.