

Loving Jesus Through Serving  
March 11, 2018

In his book, The Five Love Languages, Gary Chapman presents five different ways that people express love. He calls these different ways love languages. He writes that some people express love primarily through physical touch. Others express love primarily through quality time. Others do so through gifts. Some do so through words of affirmation. And a fifth group primarily expresses love through acts of service.

Chapman writes that each of us feels love in one primary way. Let us imagine, for example, that I feel loved when people give me words of affirmation, compliment me, or express gratitude for my ministry. When I hear those words from people I will feel loved. So when my wife compliments me I will feel that she loves me and my need for love will be satisfied.

In this made up example, let us also imagine that my wife's primary love language is acts of service. That means she will feel loved by me when I do my chores, and when I do things to help her.

The problem comes when I try to express love towards her in MY primary love language instead of hers. Let us pretend that I give her a compliment and tell her how much I appreciate having her as my wife. She says, "Thank, you." But she may think, "That's nice, but if he really loved me, he would mow the grass, which is getting way too tall and unsightly." You see, I tried to express my love for her in MY primary love language instead of hers. So she did not feel loved by what I said.

Chapman says most people don't recognize that there are different love languages and try to determine what the love language of their spouse is. So they may try to communicate love, but do so in a way that doesn't come across as love. Couples need to explore together what their personal love languages are so that each can show love to the spouse in a way that love is actually felt by the other person.

Our Lord and Savior, Jesus, knew a lot about love. When we read the Bible we see that Jesus used all of the love languages. Sometimes Jesus touched people. At other times He spoke words of affirmation to them. At times He gave gifts of healing, of food, or guidance. He spent quality time with His disciples, but also with Mary, Martha, and Lazarus. And he did acts of service.

If you have your Bibles, and I hope that you do, turn with me to the book of John, the 13<sup>th</sup> chapter. In this passage we see Jesus expressing love in an act of service to His disciples.

**John 13:1, 4-5, 12-17 (NIV) It was just before the Passover Feast. Jesus knew that the time had come for him to leave this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he now showed them the full extent of his love.**

**"... so he got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around his waist. After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples' feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him.**

**...When he had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place. "Do you understand what I have done for you?" he asked them. "You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and rightly so, for that is what I am. Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. I tell you the truth, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them.**

Notice what it says at the end of verse one. **"Jesus showed them the full extent of His love."** Jesus expressed His love for them through His humble service of washing their feet. In that same way, we show Jesus the full extent of our love for Him by our humble service to each other. Jesus will feel your love for Him through your acts of service. That is why God planned good works for us to do, as we see in Eph. 2:10.

**Ephesians 2:10 (NIV) For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.**

God has placed you in this church family, in part, as a place to express your love for Jesus through serving. You help build us up in Christ through the work you do in the church. **Jesus planned for all of us to serve all of us as an expression of our love for Him.**

Just as Jesus is an expert at expressing love through all the five love languages, so Jesus also feels love through all the five love languages. Jesus feels our love through words of affirmation, through quality time, through touch, through gifts, and through acts of service. Whenever we treat others with love in His name, Jesus says that He accepts it as us expressing our love for Him. In Matthew 25 Jesus speaks of different ways of ministering to people. He concludes with this statement...

**Matthew 25:40 (NIV) "... whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me."**

In our church family you can see different expressions of love. And all five of the love languages can be seen in our members. There are some in our church who express love with greeting cards or with words of encouragement, like "I'm praying for you." There are some who make the effort to spend quality time with each. They get together for meals on Sundays and during the week. There are some who give gifts to each other for birthdays and Christmas. There are some who love through touch, giving hugs and shaking hands. Then there are some who tend to do acts of service for others. They go out of their way to do things to help people, like delivering a meal to a family. In our church Christians are expressing love in all five of the love languages. Individuals are helped and Jesus is glorified.

Through service you can express love to the whole church. Now, you can't hug a church. You can't spend quality time with a whole church. You could give a gift to a church. You can express appreciation for a church. But the primary way of expressing love to the whole church is through acts of service. When you serve in ministry in the church Jesus feels your love.

Jesus wants you to learn how to love Him through serving in His church. Jesus wants you to... **Discover the joy of service**. Look again at what Jesus says in John 13:17.

**John 13:17 (NIV) Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them.**

You will experience the joy of service when you fulfill your service. Not all of us can preach. Not all of us can change diapers. I can change diapers, but since I usually preach, I rarely change a diaper. But if I am going to specialize in preaching, others will have to specialize in diapers.

My brother was a pro at diapers. He could flop one of his kids down on the living room floor and in less than a minute the child was back to running around the room in a fresh diaper. It was a delight to watch that man work. He didn't mind doing it at all. In fact, he enjoyed being able to do it so well.

I believe Jesus found great joy in washing the disciple's feet. It brought Him joy because He did it as an act of love. And they felt His love in that action.

As you serve in the church for Jesus you will find joy in your serving. You will discover the truth of the statement, "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

Jesus wants you to discover the joy of serving. To do that you need to... **Discover your place of service**.

God has a place for each of us to serve in the church family. Our effectiveness as a church depends on you fulfilling the ministry God prepared for you to do in His church.

As we all do the good works that God has prepared in advance for us to do, God will bless our church family.

So, who's feet are you washing for Jesus? We don't actually wash each other's feet. We believe Jesus meant for us to humble ourselves and do what we can in the church. Your service in the church may not be what you would choose for yourself. I never would have chosen to be a pastor or a preacher. Some of you have become teachers, despite the fact that you would not choose that for yourself. Others in the church saw that God could use you in that way and guided you to that ministry. Once in that ministry, you saw God bless through your service. You received the joy of that blessing. Not all can teach. Not all can lead a committee. But all can serve. So, as you desire to show your love to Jesus, find a place of service and serve.

### Invitation

If anyone here is not a Christian, Jesus invites you to receive Him today as Savior and Lord. There is a sample prayer at the end of the outline that covers what you need to communicate to Him.

If you are already a Christian do you feel Jesus urging you to love and serve Him in His church? Respond to Him this morning as we pray.