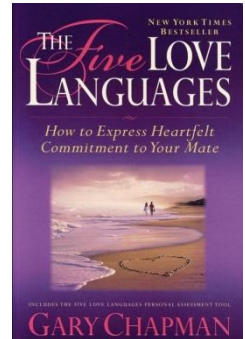


## How God Uses Love Languages

At Christmas time and birthdays I often receive a check as a gift, allowing me to choose a gift that fits my needs. That is a safe way to shop if someone is not sure what the person needs. I am amazed at how well my wife does in shopping for me. She knows me better than anyone on earth, so she always comes up with a well-thought-out gift that zeroes in on something I would enjoy or need. Often it is something I never thought of but really fits me.

In our everyday life, how well does God know you? Do you think He knows your needs? Do you think He knows the type of communication that motivates you? Of course He does. He created you and has big plans for what He knows you can accomplish. He knows what makes you tick.

The New York Times best seller, The Five Love Languages, (written by Dr. Gary Chapman, a noted Winston-Salem area author), identifies five ways to communicate love to someone else. Each language is based on the other person's need. The subtitle of Dr. Chapman's book says, "How To Express Heartfelt Commitment to Your Mate." The word commitment takes it to an entirely different level. While the book focuses on expressing our love to a spouse, the same principles can reflect how God expresses his love and heartfelt commitment to you. What could be more natural? After all, God is love (1 John 4:8).



The "Five Love Languages" identified by Dr. Chapman are: Words of Affirmation; Quality Time; Gifts; Acts of Service; and Physical Touch.

- **Words of affirmation:** God constantly reassures us we can do anything, if we are doing it in His name. We can do this, thanks to God's power in our lives. My favorite personal verse is Philippians 4:13, which says God actively strengthens us to do the right thing. There are countless stories in the Bible of God reassuring people when He asks them to do tasks for Him. Other examples of God's affirmation can be found in Hebrews 13:5, Isaiah 40:31, Jeremiah 29:11, and Exodus 6:6-8. Search in your Bible for many more examples.
- **Gifts:** God gifts us with abilities, equipping us to accomplish far more than we imagined (read Romans 12:6 and 1 Corinthians 12:27-30).
- **Quality time:** God wants us to spend Quality Time with Him. He encourage us to pray unceasingly (1 Thessalonians 5:17). Praying is our primary way to communicate with Him. And He will respond to us.
- **Acts of service** is a natural. We serve God when we serve others, if we serve *because* of our relationship with Him. We don't earn our way to heaven (read Ephesians 2:9), and serving God is not about making us feel better. It is a genuine desire to help someone else. God plays a role in this by placing service opportunities in our path. Be aware of the opportunities God provides you. (Read Deuteronomy 15:11 and Matthew 25:35).
- **Physical touch:** The Bible documents Jesus healing more than 15 people through touch (Matthew 14:36, Luke 8:46, Mark 8:22). Baptism of youth or adults involves touch. God works through us, too. Remember how God places opportunities to serve others directly in your path. If physical touch is something that motivates you, He puts in your life people who will give you a hug, pat you on the shoulder or hold your hand at a critical time. God's love is sometimes expressed through others who are motivated by the spirit.

**Question:** Can you name several ways through which God communicates His love to you?

**Prayer:** Lord, you know us. You know what we need; you know our hearts. We pray we are open to ways you communicate your love to us, and we will help spread love to those we meet. Amen.

## Scriptural Reference Examples

God is Love - *Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love (1 John 4:8).* We empower others when we love them.

### Words of Affirmation

- Philippians 4:13 - *I can do all this through him who gives me strength.*
- Hebrews 13:5 - *Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you.*
- Isaiah 40:31 - *But those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint. (Isaiah 40:31)*
- Jeremiah 29:11 – *“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the LORD, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.*
- Exodus 6:6-8 - *“Therefore, say to the Israelites: ‘I am the LORD, and I will bring you out from under the yoke of the Egyptians. I will free you from being slaves to them, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with mighty acts of judgment. I will take you as my own people, and I will be your God. Then you will know that I am the LORD your God, who brought you out from under the yoke of the Egyptians. And I will bring you to the land I swore with uplifted hand to give to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob. I will give it to you as a possession. I am the LORD.’”*

### Gifts

- Romans 12:6 - *We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your faith.*
- 1 Corinthians 12:27-30 - *Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it. And God has placed in the church first of all apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healing, of helping, of guidance, and of different kinds of tongues. Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? Do all have gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues? Do all interpret?*

### Quality Time

- 1 Thessalonians 5:17 - *pray continually*

### Acts of Service

- Ephesians 2:8-9 - *For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast*
- Deuteronomy 15:11 - *There will always be poor people in the land. Therefore I command you to be openhanded toward your fellow Israelites who are poor and needy in your land.*
- Matthew 25:35 - *For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in,*

### Physical Touch

- Matthew 14:36 - *and begged him to let the sick just touch the edge of his cloak, and all who touched it were healed*
- Luke 8:46 - *But Jesus said, “Someone touched me, for I perceive that power has gone out from me.”*
- Mark 8:22 - *They came to Bethsaida, and some people brought a blind man and begged Jesus to touch him.*

**To be more meaningful to you:** *These are just a few of hundreds of scriptural references that show God’s love as it relates to the key elements of the Five Love Languages. For your own personal growth, add at least 2 Bible references for each of the 5 Love Languages.*