

Love Meets Needs
Pastor Joe Oakley - GFC – 5/25/25

We are in a sermon series entitled Kingdom Family. So far we've taught on the God's Original Intent for Family, which is to:

Reflect the image of God
 Rule as partners together in life
 Reproduce godly children.

Pastor Deb taught us how to have a Proverbs 31 Family which includes:

A culture of honor
 A culture of kindness
 A culture of blessing

Last week I taught on Kingdom Marriage and taught that having a kingdom marriage requires us to leave, cleave and weave.

We must leave anything that comes between us and our spouse/family.

We must cleave together in a covenant of unconditional commitment.

We must weave our lives together so that we become increasingly close rather than drifting apart.

I didn't have time to get into this last week - but I want to talk a little more about unconditional commitment. Some people have wrongly believed that unconditional commitment means that there are no biblical reasons for divorce so they must stay in their marriage no matter what.

But the Bible does give grounds for divorce. Two reasons for divorce are plainly taught in the Bible. In Matthew 19:9 Jesus said:

Whoever divorces his wife and marries someone else commits adultery—unless his wife has been unfaithful.

So, Jesus gives adultery as a reason for divorce. He does not say you must divorce. Forgiveness is always preferable IF your spouse repents.

1 Corinthians 7:15 lists abandonment as a reason from divorce.

If the husband or wife who isn't a believer insists on leaving, let them go. In such cases the Christian husband or wife is no longer bound to the other, for God has called you to live in peace.

So, adultery and abandonment are clear biblical grounds for divorce. I also believe that God does not intend for a person to stay in a marriage where his or her life, health or children are in danger. I've seen people stay in marriages where

the children were being physically and sexually abused - I can't think of anything more wrong!

So that's about it: adultery, abandonment and abuse are legitimate reasons for divorce. I'm not going deep on this today because I'm praying about preaching a whole sermon on divorce.

Today we have no-fault divorce laws and people can get divorced for any reason. In fact, they don't even need a reason! They can divorce because their spouse doesn't make me happy. By the way - your spouse is not responsible for your happiness - you are!

One reason people give for divorce is that their spouse does not meet their needs. The problem is that some people are clueless when it comes to recognizing needs or knowing how to meet those needs.

I'm going to help you with that in a sermon entitled: Love Meets Needs. Remember I've taught you on the different kinds of love. What we call love is usually based on feelings or family ties.

But the highest form of love is God's kind of love which is called Agape. Agape love is not based on feelings. It is the deliberate desire for the highest good of another, which reveals itself in sacrificial action towards others regardless of their condition or worth. In other words, true love can only be known by the actions it prompts.

Agape love is giving, selfless and unconditional. And in the Bible, love is always active, not passive. It is a verb. I John 3:18 says:

Dear children, let's not merely say that we love each other; let us show the truth by our actions.

We know God loves because He did something – He gave His Son. It is not I'll love you if, or I'll love you because but, I love you period.

In other words – God's love is "in spite of" not "because of."
God loves us in spite of who we are, not because of who we are.
God loves us in spite of what we do, not because of what we do.

Most of us do not have much experience with unconditional love because most of what we call love is conditional. We tend to give love if we receive love and withhold love if our needs are not met. But, agape love is much more radical than that. It is doing what is best for the other person whether they deserve it or not.

Love gives and love meets needs! This is the kind of love that God commands us to have! The great commandment is to love God with all our heart, soul, mind and strength and love others as ourselves.

If love is a command, then we can choose to obey or disobey – to love or not love. That means love is a choice.

To understand that, we need to understand true love. Fortunately, God shows us what love looks like in 1 Corinthians 13. As I read this, see if this describes the way you love your family.

Love is patient, love is kind. Love does not envy, it does not boast, it is not arrogant. Love does not behave rudely, does not insist on its own way, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. ... Love always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails.

This describes love and this kind of love is not a suggestion! God actually commands us to love this way! Jesus said in John 15:12

This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.

This is not a command to have loving feelings toward other people. It is a command to do what Jesus did and meet their needs by laying down your life for them. Philippians 2:4 says:

Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.

Dan Boerger's Interpreted New Testament says it this way:

Don't only think about what's best for you and your own interests and priorities, but also be concerned about what's best for others.

This is not saying we should not take care of our own interests - it is saying we should also take care of others. Especially those in our family! 1 Timothy 5:8 shows us how serious this is!

If anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for his immediate family, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.

God says that if you don't meet the needs of your family, you are worse than an unbeliever! That's some strong language! 1 John 3:16-17 explains it further.

We know what real love is because Jesus gave up His life for us. So we also ought to give up our lives for our brothers and sisters. If someone has enough money to live well and sees a brother or sister in need but shows no compassion—how can God's love be in that person?

You can tell your family you love them all day long, but if you never do anything loving - you never meet their needs - you never put love into action - they will not believe that you really love them.

I want to speak to husbands because they are leaders in their family. That does not mean that they boss everyone around.

Being a leader implies you have followers. And if you have followers you must be ahead of them. That means that husbands go first and show the way to love!

How do you do that? Ephesians 5:25 tells us how:

Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave His life up for her.

Love involves dying to self and giving your life for those you love. And husbands need to lead the way in loving regardless of how they feel.

I heard about a man who went to his pastor to tell him he wanted to divorce his wife. The pastor asked him why and the man answered, "I don't love her anymore." The pastor said, "Don't you know the Bible commands husbands to love their wives?" The man answered, Yeah, but I just don't feel close to her like a wife." The pastor responded, "Oh, she's more like a sister? Yes.

You know, the Bible commands us to love our families, so if you can't love her like a wife, love her like a sister." To which the man responded, "Well, she's not really close as a sister." So the pastor said, "Oh she's more like a neighbor, not family?" Yes. "You know, the Bible commands us to love our neighbors."

The man said, "Actually, she's not really like a neighbor. We don't get along; we fight all the time." "Oh, so she's more like an enemy?" Yes - that's it - she's like an enemy to me. To which the pastor replied, "You know, the Bible commands us to love our enemies."

Needless to say, this man did not get any easy out from his pastor on his lack of love and I'm not giving you an easy out either! That's because if God commands us to love – then He will provide the ability to love – in fact, He will love through us.

Love meets people's greatest needs and strong families show love to each other by meeting each other's needs. Strong marriages and families exist where people meet each other's needs – but marriages die and families fall apart when needs aren't met!

But before you can meet your spouse's needs – you must know what they are! I can't give you everything I know about this today – so I want to recommend a few books to you.

Love and Respect talks about the single greatest need of a husband and a wife. It's based on Ephesians 5:33 which says

Each man must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband.

Based on this – a husband’s greatest need is respect and a wife’s greatest need is love. I’m planning on preaching a whole sermon on this.

The classic book *His Needs / Her Needs* lists a husband’s needs as:

Sexual Fulfillment – Recreational Companionship – Peace at Home –

A wife who takes care of her appearance – Admiration & Respect.

A wife’s basic needs are: Non-sexual affection – Conversation – Honesty and Openness – Financial Stability – Commitment to Family.

These are not the only needs, there are others. We have a relational needs test that identifies basic relational needs. If you take this test you will identify your basic needs so you can express what they are to your loved ones and tell them what it looks like to meet those needs.

I have attached this test to the end of my sermon notes that are online. So if you go to our messages tab on gfc.cc and download the notes to this sermon – scroll to the end and you will find this test!

One of the best marriage books ever written is called “*The 5 Love Languages*.” It deals with the importance of knowing your spouse’s and your children’s love language. Loving others means to meet their deepest needs. How can we do that if we don’t know their needs?

Their basic needs are met through the 5 love languages, which are: Acts of Service, Gifts, Quality Time, Words of Affirmation and Physical Touch.

Every one of us has a need for all 5 of these expressions of love, but we have 1 or 2 that are the main ways we need love to be expressed to us. If that doesn’t happen, we don’t feel loved. If anyone in your family feels unloved, you’re probably not speaking their love language.

It can be very frustrating to love someone and they don’t feel loved. What we usually do is try to love them with our love language. We do for them what makes us feel loved, but if it’s not their language, they won’t feel loved.

Deb and I have known each other’s love languages for years. We know what it takes to meet each other’s deepest needs. Her love languages are conversation and acts of service. She has a deep need for us to talk a lot and for me to do things around the house for her. I don’t have either of those needs!

My main love language is meaningful touch, or affection. So I need lots of hugs and kisses from her. Now, since affection is my love language, I show her lots of affection. So, I can be affectionate with her all day long, but if I never spent time talking to her or doing things around the house, she would not feel loved.

Why? I’m not speaking her love language.

So if your spouse's love language is time and you don't spend much time with them, they won't feel loved no matter what else you do. You could bring them a gift home every day, but they will not feel loved. You could be affectionate and they won't feel loved.

So, are you speaking your family's love languages? Do you know what they are? Make it a priority to figure it out!

Don't assume you know what love looks like to the other person.

Ask them: what would it look like for me to meet your need for love?

Get the specifics on what you can do to make them feel loved.

My notes also include a chart on how to speak the love languages.

Why go to all this trouble? Because Love Meets Needs!

By the way: there are some needs that a person cannot meet – only God can!

And there's nothing worse than having someone look to you to meet a need that only God can meet.

Also – a big problem arises in marriages when your needs clash. This happens when one has a need to save money and the other has the need to spend.

One has the need to be on the go and the other has the need to sit at home.

One has the need for sex every day and the other has the need every leap year or not at all.

One has the need for a clean orderly environment and the other has the need to not clean.

You get what I'm saying.

You can really see this in the way people travel.

Some people want to get up early and get on the road – some want to sleep in and leave whenever they feel like it.

Some people want to schedule the restroom breaks – you get to go at 10:30 in the morning and 3:45 in the afternoon.

Others want to stop at every rest stop!

Some want to go on vacations to relax and do nothing.

Others – like me – want to see and do every possible thing there is to see and do.

So what do you do? Who gets their need met?

Well – this is where compromise comes into play.

Somebody's got to leave a little later that they want to and somebody's got to leave a little earlier than they want to.

Someone's got to do a little more than they want to on the trip and someone's got to do a little less than they want to.

When it comes to money – it means one of you will probably save less than you want to and the other will spend less than they want to.

This way – everybody's needs are partially met and no one is dominating the others and just getting their needs met!

If one person does all the giving – this is not a true partnership.
 One person is being totally selfish – just expecting their needs to be met while
 doing nothing to meet the needs of others. Nothing could be more unChristlike!
 You see, Jesus did not say, “Love people when they’re loveable.
 Love them when you feel like it. Love them when it’s convenient.
 Love them as long as they are meeting your needs.”
 NO! Jesus allows no excuses.
 He says, “Whatever they do to you, you love them anyway!”
 That’s the radical way He loved.

On the day He was crucified, He was beaten, mocked, a crown of thorns was
 pressed into His head and He was nailed to a cross.
 He did nothing to deserve any of this.
 Yet He chose to love those who crucified Him anyway.
 He chose to forgive them anyway.
 That’s the radical way Jesus loves. He loves anyway.
 Aren’t you glad He loves you anyway?
 In spite of yourself?
 We have all sinned, but Jesus loves us anyway!
 We have all made mistakes, but Jesus loves us anyway!
 We are all unlovable at times, but Jesus loves us anyway!

This is totally opposite of how the world loves.
 Jesus is our example of how we are to love others by meeting needs.

People are sinful. *Love them anyway.*
 People will fail you. *Love them anyway.*
 People can be illogical and unreasonable. *Love them anyway.*
 People can be self-centered. *Love them anyway.*
 People can be everything from inconsiderate to outright mean and cruel.
Love them anyway.
 People will hurt you and use you. *Love them anyway.*
 People you’re counting on will let you down. *Love them anyway.*
 People won’t always love you unconditionally. *Love them anyway!*
 People won’t always meet your needs. *Love them anyway!*
Meet their needs anyway!

Love people regardless of their condition or their worthiness.
 Love them in good times and bad.
 Love your family, love your friends and love your enemies!

I’m telling you right now, none of us can do this in our own strength.
 We all fall short in loving others.
 But we can no longer excuse it.

We need to cry out to God to change our hearts and ask God to love the unlovable
 through us and forgive the unforgivable through us!

We need to pray that God will show us how to meet the needs of those we love – because love meets needs!

Discovering Relational Needs

While we all have the same needs, the priority of these needs is different for each person. Your greatest need may be for **affection**, while your partner's may be **security**. One child may have an acute need for **comfort**, but another sibling's may be **encouragement**. **Appreciation** may be at the top of the list for one team member, while another needs **approval**.

An important aspect of learning to love an individual is taking the time to know them and discover what their unique needs are. Perhaps this is what Peter meant when he admonished husbands to, *"Live with your wives in an understanding way."* (1 Peter 3:7). It may also be a part of how a woman, *"Watches over the affairs of her household."* (Proverbs 31:27) It is, no doubt, part of parents "unwrapping" the gifts that God has given them through children, *"Children are a gift from the Lord."* (Psalms 127:3)

Instructions

Personally respond to these questions by placing the appropriate number beside each sentence.

<i>Strongly Disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Neutral</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>
-2	-1	0	+1	+2

- ___ 1. It's important that people receive me for who I am – even if I'm a little "different."
- ___ 2. It's very important to me that my financial world is in order
- ___ 3. I sometimes become "weary in well doing."
- ___ 4. It's vital to me that others ask my opinion.
- ___ 5. It's important that I receive frequent physical hugs, warm embraces, etc.
- ___ 6. I feel good when someone "enters into my world."
- ___ 7. It's important for me to know "where I stand" with those who are in authority over me.
- ___ 8. It is particularly meaningful when someone notices that I need help and then offers to get involved.
- ___ 9. If I feel overwhelmed, I want someone to come alongside and help me.
- ___ 10. I feel blessed when someone recognizes and shows concern for how I'm feeling emotionally.

- ___ 11. I always like to know if what I do is of value and is meaningful to others.
- ___ 12. It is important to me to express myself—what I think, feel, etc.—to those around me.
- ___ 13. It means a lot to me for loved ones to initiate saying “I love you.”
- ___ 14. I resist being seen only as a part of a large group – my individuality is important.
- ___ 15. I am particularly blessed when a friend calls to listen and encourage me.
- ___ 16. It’s important to me that people acknowledge me not just for what I do but also for who I am.
- ___ 17. I feel best when my world is orderly and somewhat predictable.
- ___ 18. When I’ve worked hard on a project, I am pleased to have people acknowledge my work and express gratitude.
- ___ 19. When I “blow it,” it’s important to me to be reassured that I’m still loved.
- ___ 20. It’s encouraging to me when others notice my efforts and accomplishments.
- ___ 21. I sometimes feel overwhelmed and discouraged.
- ___ 22. I want to be treated with kindness and equality by all, regardless of my race, gender, looks or status.
- ___ 23. I like to be greeted with a handshake, hug or other appropriate friendly touch.
- ___ 24. I love it when someone wants to spend time with me.
- ___ 25. I am particularly blessed when a superior says, “Good job.”
- ___ 26. It’s very important to me for someone to express care for me after I have had a hard day.
- ___ 27. When facing something difficult, I usually sense that I need other people’s input and help.
- ___ 28. Written notes and calls expressing sympathy after a tragedy (the death of a loved one, health problem, divorce, etc.) are very meaningful to me.
- ___ 29. I feel good when someone close to me shows satisfaction with the way I am.
- ___ 30. I enjoy being spoken of or mentioned in front of a group of people.
- ___ 31. I would be described as a person who likes hugs or other caring touch.
- ___ 32. When a decision is going to affect my life, it’s important to me that I have a “say so” in the decision.
- ___ 33. I am particularly blessed when someone shows interest with current projects I’m working on.

- ___ 34. I appreciate trophies, plaques, and special gifts that are a permanent reminder of something significant that I have done.
- ___ 35. I sometimes worry about the future.
- ___ 36. When I am introduced into a new environment, I immediately search for a group of people to connect with.
- ___ 37. The thought of change (moving, new job, etc.) produces anxiety for me.
- ___ 38. It bothers me when people are prejudiced against someone just because they dress or act differently.
- ___ 39. It's necessary for me to be surrounded by friends and loved ones who will be there "through thick and thin."
- ___ 40. Written notes and phrases of gratitude particularly bless me.
- ___ 41. To know that someone is constantly praying for me is very meaningful.
- ___ 42. "Controlling" people particularly bother me.
- ___ 43. I am blessed by unmerited and spontaneous expressions of love.
- ___ 44. I am pleased when someone looks me in the eye and listens to me speak.
- ___ 45. I am blessed when people commend me for a godly characteristic I exhibit.
- ___ 46. I never want to be alone when experiencing hurt and trouble.
- ___ 47. I really don't enjoy working on a project by myself; I prefer to have a partner.
- ___ 48. It's important for me to feel a "part of the group."
- ___ 49. I really respond to someone who tries to understand me and who shows me loving concern.
- ___ 50. When working on a project, I would much rather work with a team of people than by myself.

**Please use the next page to add up your
totals and discover your main top three needs.**

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Interpretation of Questions

Assign the appropriate number value and add up your responses to the following sets of questions. Then record the three highest totals below.

	1 _____		2 _____
	19 _____		17 _____
	36 _____		35 _____
	38 _____		37 _____
	48 _____		39 _____
Acceptance	Total _____	Security	Total _____
	4 _____		5 _____
	14 _____		13 _____
	22 _____		23 _____
	32 _____		31 _____
	42 _____		43 _____
Respect	Total _____	Affection	Total _____
	7 _____		8 _____
	11 _____		9 _____
	25 _____		27 _____
	29 _____		47 _____
	45 _____		50 _____
Approval	Total _____	Support	Total _____
	10 _____		6 _____
	26 _____		12 _____
	28 _____		24 _____
	46 _____		30 _____

	49	_____		44	_____
Comfort	Total	_____	Attention	Total	_____
	3	_____		16	_____
	15	_____		18	_____
	21	_____		20	_____
	33	_____		34	_____
	41	_____		40	_____
Encouragement	Total	_____	Appreciation	Total	_____

My Main Three Relational Needs are:

What would it look like for others to meet your needs?

HOW TO SPEAK YOUR SPOUSE'S LOVE LANGUAGE { }

WHICH LOVE LANGUAGE?	HOW TO COMMUNICATE	ACTIONS TO TAKE	THINGS TO AVOID
 WORDS OF AFFIRMATION	Encourage, affirm, appreciate, empathize. Listen actively.	Send an unexpected note, text, or card. Encourage genuinely and often.	Non-constructive criticism, not recognizing or appreciating effort.
 PHYSICAL TOUCH	Non-verbal - use body language and touch to emphasize love.	Hug, kiss, hold hands, show physical affection regularly. Make intimacy a thoughtful priority.	Physical neglect, long stints without intimacy, receiving affection coldly.
 RECEIVING GIFTS	Thoughtfulness, make your spouse a priority, speak purposefully.	Give thoughtful gifts and gestures. Small things matter in a big way. Express gratitude when receiving a gift.	Forgetting special occasions, unenthusiastic gift receiving.
 QUALITY TIME	Uninterrupted and focused conversations. One-on-one time is critical.	Create special moments together, take walks and do small things with your spouse. Weekend getaways are huge.	Distractions when spending time together. Long stints without one-on-one time.
 ACTS OF SERVICE	Use action phrases like "I'll help...". They want to know you're with them, partnered with them.	Do chores together or make them breakfast in bed. Go out of your way to help alleviate their daily workload.	Making the requests of others a higher priority, lacking follow-through on tasks big and small.

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BASED ON "THE 5 LOVE LANGUAGES", A BOOK BY DR. GARY CHAPMAN