

Introduction: How do you keep love alive?

²⁵ Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the Church and gave Himself up for her, ²⁶ so that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the Word, ²⁷ that He might present to Himself the Church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she would be holy and blameless. ²⁸ So husbands ought also to love their own wives as their own bodies. He who loves his own wife loves himself; ²⁹ for no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ also does the Church, ³⁰ because we are members of His body. ³¹ FOR THIS REASON A MAN SHALL LEAVE HIS FATHER AND MOTHER AND SHALL BE JOINED TO HIS WIFE, AND THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH. ³² This mystery is great; but I am speaking with reference to Christ and the Church. ³³ Nevertheless, each individual among you also is to love his own wife even as himself, and the wife must see to it that she respects her husband.

Ephesians 5:25-33

Very rarely, do we take how Jesus loves the Church and use that as our model for how we are to love one another in marriage.

Your marriage is not just about your
_____ fulfillment.

John 13:1-17, 33-35

Other than the Church of Jesus Christ, your relationship with your mate is the single most powerful testimony of the reality of God.

Principles:

1. Love is not a _____.

Love is giving another person what they need the most, when they deserve it the least, at great personal cost.

2. Love is _____.

Philippians 2:3-4

Eliminate these words from your marriage vocabulary:

- Should
- Never
- Always
- Divorce

3. Love must be _____.

There is no such thing as a winner or loser. It is either win-win or lose-lose.

4. Love is _____.

This takes the supernatural, Holy Spirit power living within you.

Practical Implications:

1. Love is a _____.

2. Love _____ the _____ of the one loved.

3. Love requires extreme _____ and _____.

The tool for transformation:

Learn the five languages of love

- Words of affirmation
- Quality time
- Receiving gifts
- Acts of service
- Physical touch

Two clues as to what your love language is:

- What bothers you the most?
- What do you ask for the most?

Discussion Questions:

1. Why is it so important to clearly define “love” when it comes to building a great marriage? List 2 or 3 of the most common misconceptions about love in our culture.
2. How did Jesus model “loving” the most important people in His life?
3. Which of the principles most challenged your thinking and/or practice of loving your mate?
4. What are your top two “Love Languages”? What are your mate’s top two “Love Languages”?
5. Share with your mate how it makes you feel when he/she serves you with one of your top two “Love Languages”.