

Part Two

Quality Time

The next love language up for discussion is Quality Time. Throughout the Bible we find many examples of quality time being carried out in the Bible. Just in the life of Jesus with His disciples would be a great example of this.

Jesus traveled to many quality places with the disciples.

He went numerous times to Jerusalem.

He went to the countryside.

He went to the other side of the Jordan.

He went to region of the Sea of Galilee.

He traveled to Tyre and Sidon.

He even traveled to the land of the Samaritans.

Jesus had many quality activities with the disciples.

He prayed with them.

He had meals with them.

He went mountain hiking with them.

He went fishing with them.

He carried out miracles before them.

They did mission work together.

Jesus shared many quality lessons with the disciples.

He taught them in parables.

He taught them with situations that arose.

He taught them through example.

Jesus was close to the disciples because He spent three and a half years of quality time with them. The church is also to be spending quality time together. The early saints shared quality time together.

- Rom 12:10-13 Be devoted to one another in brotherly love; give preference to one another in honor; 11 not lagging behind in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; 12 rejoicing in hope, persevering in tribulation, devoted to prayer, 13 contributing to the needs of the saints, practicing hospitality.
- 1 Pet 4:8-10 Above all, keep fervent in your love for one another, because love covers a multitude of sins. 9 Be hospitable to one another without complaint. 10 As each one has received a {special} gift, employ it in serving one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.
- Acts 2:46 And day by day continuing with one mind in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they were taking their meals together with gladness and sincerity of heart,

What quality time in the marriage is not:

- 1) It is not watching television.
- 2) It is not family time with the kids.

3) It is not time on the job.

What quality time is:

- 1) It is your undivided attention.
- 2) It is doing something together that is out of the ordinary.
- 3) It is time that you build special memories together.

This is one of the love languages that I am persuaded that we tend to neglect the most when it comes to the marriage. In the pursuit of the career, raising a family and just the general hectic schedules of life, we fail to spend any meaningful time together as a couple. Many times we allow the fact that here are kids in the family to having to do everything together, but that is not true and beneficial to the family. There must be times spent together with the children and there must be time spent away from them for the good of the relationship. If that is not learned, when the children grow up and move on, then the marriage will suffer, for the pattern can be set.

If this is your spouses primary love language, here are some of the many different dialects that can be spoken.

- Call a babysitter and take only your spouse out on a date.
- Set a once a week date night for just you and your spouse.
- Go on a mini-vacation with only your spouse.
- Go on a walk together once a week.
- Go to the gym together.
- Go shopping together
- Go to a couple's retreat.
- Go on a mission trip together.
- Go to the hospital to visit someone.
- Read a book together before bed at night.

It can be an elaborate plan or a simple plan, but it must be a plan. Generally it will not just naturally occur, but must be carved out of the busy schedule. I have heard many times from husbands and wives that "He just doesn't spend any quality time with me" or "She is always doing stuff with the kids, but never just me." This cycle must end if there will ever be stability in the relationship.

Illustration

Tracie grew up with the symphony. Throughout her childhood, the house was filled with classical music. At least once a year, she accompanied her parents to the symphony. Larry, on the other hand, grew up on country and western music. He never actually attended a concert, but the radio was always on, tuned to the country station. The symphony he called elevator music. Had he not married Tracie, he would have lived his life without ever attending the symphony. Before they were married, while he was still in the obsessed state of being in love, he went to the symphony. But even in his euphoric emotional state, his attitude was, "You call this stuff music?" After marriage, that was the one experience that he never

expected to repeat. When, however, he discovered several years later that quality time was Tracie's primary love language and that she especially liked the dialect of quality activities and that attending the symphony was one of those activities, he chose to go with an enthusiastic spirit. His purpose was clear. It was not to attend the symphony but to love Tracie and to speak her language loudly. In time, he did come to appreciate the symphony and even occasionally enjoy a movement or two. He may never become a symphony lover, but he has become proficient at loving Tracie. (The Five Love Languages page 74)

We have to make sure this love language is not neglected particularly when it is a primary of one of the spouse's. When we do, there will be more harmony for the couple.

Gifting

The practice of giving is as old as humankind and there are many intentions that can be attached.

A gift can demonstrate honor.

- Wisemen demonstrating honor toward the toddler Jesus -Matt 2:11 And they came into the house and saw the Child with Mary His mother; and they fell down and worshiped Him; and opening their treasures they presented to Him gifts of gold and frankincense and myrrh.

A gift can win favor from another.

- Prov 19:6 Many will entreat the favor of a generous man, and every man is a friend to him who gives gifts.
- Prov 18:16 A man's gift makes room for him, and brings him before great men.

A gift can show heartfelt intentions.

- Isaac winning the heart of Rebekah -Gen 24:22 Then it came about, when the camels had finished drinking, that the man took a gold ring weighing a half-shekel and two bracelets for her wrists weighing ten shekels in gold,

A gift can provide for a need.

- The Philippians really wanted to help prisoner Paul in his need. -2 Cor 8:4 Praying us with much intreaty that we would receive the gift, and take upon us the fellowship of the ministering to the saints. (KJV)
- Paul gladly accepted the assistance. -Phil 4:15-18 And you yourselves also know, Philippians, that at the first preaching of the gospel, after I departed from Macedonia, no church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving but you alone; 16 for even in Thessalonica you sent {a gift} more than once for my needs. 17 Not that I seek the gift itself, but I seek for the profit which increases to your account. 18 But I have received everything in full, and have an abundance; I am amply supplied, having received from Epaphroditus what you have sent, a fragrant aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, well-pleasing to God.

God is the greatest giver of all.

God gave Jesus His Son.

- John 3:16 "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life.
- John 15:13 "Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends."

God gives salvation to His people.

- Rom 6:23 For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.
- Eph 2:8 For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, {it is} the gift of God;
- 2 Cor 9:15 Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift!

God gives His Holy Spirit.

- John 4:10 Jesus answered and said to her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who says to you, 'Give Me a drink,' you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water." (note: living water is said to be the Holy Spirit in John 7:38-39)
- Acts 2:38 And Peter {said} to them, "Repent, and let each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Nobody has nor ever will be a greater giver than God. We as Christians have so much to be thankful to God for. It is because of this gratefulness that we are to be a cheerful giver to His kingdom.

- Acts 20:35 "In everything I showed you that by working hard in this manner you must help the weak and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He Himself said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'"
- 2 Cor 9:7 Let each one {do} just as he has purposed in his heart; not grudgingly or under compulsion; for God loves a cheerful giver.

With that as the backdrop, let us apply it to the marriage relationship. There are some spouses that respond quite well to the reception of a gift from the other spouse. If this is their primary love language, then a thoughtful gift is always a winner.

IMPORTANT: Gifts can or cannot be expensive, but either way must be thoughtful. It is the thought that matters in the giving of the gift.

For the Husband:

- A hand-made coupon for a free-back rub.
- A love letter or home-made card.
- Organize a photo-album for her with all the leftover photos from the closet.
- Perhaps an article of clothing (socks, shirt, tie).
- Make his favorite dessert or meal.
- Tickets to his favorite sporting event.

- A new socket-set, screw-driver set or some other tool that he has been wanting.

For the Wife:

- A bouquet of flowers or a box of candy.
- A poem or a nice card.
- A picture frame with your latest family photo.
- Maybe she would appreciate something like an antique or something that goes with the home décor.
- A gift certificate to a day-spa or to her favorite clothing store.
- Maybe a nice car if you are feeling blessed.

If one of the spouse's has the primary love of gifting, then this will definitely enhance the relationship. No two people are alike because the love of gifting has many dialects. The can be for the handmade items, poetry, electronics, clothing, flowers or even the gift of time by just being there. Simply just listen and you will know what it is that they really appreciate in the gifting love.

Reader's Digest Article on Gifts Not to Get Your Wife.

1. Don't buy anything that plugs in. Anything that requires electricity is seen as utilitarian.
2. Don't buy clothing that involves sizes. The chances are one in seven thousand that you will get her size right, and your wife will be offended the other 6999 times. "Do I look like a size 16?" she'll say. Too small a size doesn't cut it either: "I haven't worn a size 8 in 20 years!"
3. Avoid all things useful. The new silver polish advertised to save hundreds of hours is not going to win you any brownie points.
4. Don't buy anything that involves weight loss or self-improvement. She'll perceive a six-month membership to a diet center as a suggestion that's she's overweight.
5. Don't buy jewelry. The jewelry your wife wants, you can't afford. And the jewelry you can afford, she doesn't want.
6. Finally, don't spend too much. "How do you think we're going to afford that?" she'll ask. But don't spend too little. She won't say anything, but she'll think, "Is that all I'm worth?"

As a minister I have heard many times from struggling couples the following:

- "He used to buy me flowers all the time, but now he does not."
- "She used to take the time and pick out the nicest card and write a note in for me, but now she does not know that I exist."
- He used to take me out to a nice eating place every week, but now he won't spend a dime. He says it's too expensive."
- "She used to make the nicest meals for me, but now she offers me this slop."

How many marriages might have been saved if the husband or wife would have simply picked up this clue and loved the giver in they way that they were begging to be loved? How many times could have they heard the words, "I love you" through a card or a single rose? Now you know, but what will you do in response?

