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## Summer Family Reunion

Love Languages Part 2  
Pastor Ted Cunningham

We are finishing The Summer Family Reunion this week. Next week, we are going to start a series called *All Creation Sings*. We are going to jump right into Genesis 1. Today, we are finishing up Love Languages as part of the series, but then on Tuesday night, we're doing a two-hour workshop. We are going to have a break in that two hours. You're going to be able to fill out a card if you have any questions. We're going to do a little Q and A at the very end of the workshop. But I'm here to tell you the workshop is completely and totally sold out. We've had over a thousand people register to be on campus and online.

We'll give you opportunities in the months and years ahead if you are unable to participate at this time, but we are going to be meeting in the Castle. The Castle is full, but a few hundred are going to be joining us online as well, so we're excited about that.

We've been talking about love languages. It's this assessment that if you registered... a thousand of you have filled out or are getting ready to fill out and you get this 15-page assessment of your love languages. It's a 20-minute fun, fast, engaging test that you can take.

I asked our church on social media this week to please send me their assessment. I would like to get to know you. These are a few of them that I have received. I read every single one of them. Actually, it was the emails that a lot of these pdf documents came with that intrigued me. And I had not thought about this. This is 15 pages about you. So, I get it's vulnerable, and it reminded me that love is vulnerable. Some of you said "I'm sending you this, but do not share my results with the church, so you are not even in this stack up here right now because it would be my tendency to use you as an illustration. But I'm honoring that."

Others didn't send me a 15-page report, but you can also download a one-page summary that doesn't get into the dialects but pretty much just gets into the love language. I started thinking about that, that this is the issue that some of you have. We talk about the heart all the time around here and your heart is either open or closed. For some of you, it's closed right now but you are telling family and friends to check back in at 11: 15. But this is the condition of your heart and some of you right now have a closed heart because of information people had about you and they didn't treat it well. Or they used it against you, or you knew and still neglected and avoided it. It caused you to shut down, close your heart and now other people trying to show you love it's not received. And your ability to receive love starts not with the person; it starts with the source of all love, your true and only source of life and love, which we find in God and through his son, Jesus. And that gives us everything we need to love other people.

So, I want you to think today about the condition of your heart. Maybe people haven't treated it very well. I don't know if you remember Build a Bear. It's still a thing. If you're not familiar with Build a bear, you go in and you buy a \$25 bear and a \$450 outfit. You've been to Build a Bear. They get you in the doors with that cheap bear and then you realize it needs a St Louis Cardinals uniform. It needs a skating outfit, and when it goes to disco, it's going to need that too.

Our kids are grown, and we haven't done this for a while, but I remember going in and they pick out the heart. They rub that heart to make a wish on it. I go, "Don't make a wish on it; that's witchcraft. We don't do that in our house." But I would take that moment to talk to my kids about the value of the heart. The scripture says guard it. Above all else, guard it. You have to have boundaries in place. Now *boundaries* doesn't mean you close your heart toward people, it means you care for your heart, it means you watch and tend over it. In this series and leading into Tuesday Night, we want hearts that are open in relationships to receive this love. Love is a decision. Yes, it's something we feel when we receive it from others, but we don't always feel it, so we have to decide, we have to choose.

Last week we introduced this and if you took the assessment, you know your love languages. All five of them, are ranked according to foreign, secondary, or primary. The **primary love language** defined is the way you receive love, the way you feel most loved. **The foreign love language** is least known to you and for most people in here right now, on this stack, **receiving gifts** is the most common, foreign love language, right behind that, is **physical touch**. But I want to say this very clearly today. Some of you have receiving gifts as your primary love language and you're like, "Does that make me

materialistic?" No. Some of you are like, "My primary love language is physical touch. Does that make me weird? No. Physical touch doesn't mean sex. Some of you are like, "Yes it does." No that's not all it means. We're going to see that. What happens when you start to think *I'm materialist or I'm weird*, is you stop talking about it. That's not where we're going with this. Understanding foreign is least known to me, secondary... And we are going to see in a second, there are seasons of life and circumstances you may go through that a secondary becomes the primary. That's very important. But the primary is what I most prefer.

Here's the bottom line. **My primary love language is how I best receive and feel love, but I want to become fluent in all five to better love others.** That's why I've enjoyed this right here. I've enjoyed getting to know you. Some of them I got from Travis Brawner. I told you to go give him a little squeeze last week. He texted me and said, "No." I'm talking about immediate family. That's because there are other ways I receive love from people outside of my closest circle of influence. It's interesting how all this plays out, but we are learning the five love languages because I want to speak outside of my primary love language.

Seventy-five percent of people regularly speak out of their primary love language. Twenty-five percent can speak out of the other. So, here are mine in order so you don't have to keep getting me gifts other than Milky Way and Little Debbie's, I've told you that. I love those. But then physical touch. Those are foreign to me and it's true for the majority of you in our church. By the way, this stack and the others I received, it fits with the research that Dr. Chapman has gathered over the last 35 years.

My most preferred are words of affirmation, primarily encouragement. And then quality time. For Amy and me, Quality time is both right there as a primary love language, but what we're going to see in the dialects on Tuesday Night, is that Amy and I experience quality time in different ways. I am more future oriented and unscheduled. She is scheduled and present orientated more and you can ask our staff. That's what makes staff meetings a lot of tension. I just want to talk and have fellowship. Like What are we going to do a year or two from now and she's like we've got stuff going on tomorrow. We gotta be on it. Quality time is both our love languages but the way it's experienced is different.

And then the primary for me is Words of affirmation. It's so important to understand how these play out.

I asked you to memorize and meditate on this verse last week and today we are going to pull out the second point of John 13: 24-35. Jesus says, ***A new command I give you, love one another.*** Meaning this is not something we just feel, this is something we do. We are called, commanded to love one another. You claim the name of Jesus; you are called to love your brothers and sisters in Christ. And we don't do this kind of hairsplitting in our church: You may have heard people say it. "I'll love them but, do I have to like them?" We ain't getting into all that hairsplitting. We are to bear with one another. We are to confess our sins to one another. We're to pray for one another. We are called to love one another.

Today, I want to focus on this second part. We are going to see that Jesus modeled this for us. He said, ***As I have loved you, so you must love one another. And by this, everyone will know that you are my disciples if you love one another.*** That's why I'm excited about going through this as a church because it's not just for your family, it's not just for your friends and coworkers. This is for us as the body of Christ to learn how to love one another well.

The bottom line is this. Jesus showed us how to love another. When you read the gospels, you see example after example of Jesus loving people and he was fluent in all five love languages. Jesus was mission focused, other centered. He demonstrated sacrificial love that you and I are called to. He showed compassion for the sick, the marginalized, and the suffering. And he showed us how to love people outside of how we like to be loved. He showed us how to stretch ourselves and even if it's a foreign language for us that we are able to show it to others. And by the way, what drains you emotionally and what drains you in a relationship is not speaking your foreign love language. What drains you in a relationship is not having your primary love language spoken to you. That's different. So, don't be afraid of certain love languages. No. we speak all five to better love others and Jesus showed us how to do this.

Let's start with **quality time**. Jesus spent time with his disciples. And we get example after example in scripture after scripture. I chose this one because some of you who love quality time and as you got through the assessment, there's an introvert/extrovert part and some of you are all the way over on introverted. So you are introverted and quality time. This is why I'm excited about Tuesday Night to show how all this works together. But watch this. These words are going to fill your soul right now.

They left that place and passed through Galilee. ***Jesus did not want anyone to know where they were. And he got alone with the disciples.*** Why? For the purpose of

teaching them. And for some of you, this sounds so good to you right now. Let's go hide from everybody else. Just me and you. We don't want to have to see anybody, we don't want to have to talk to anybody. It will just be the two of us.

Amy and I were discussing it this week. This is why we love going to big cities. We love going to New York City. Some of you don't get it. You're always asking me if we feel safe. We've always felt totally safe there. I love going there because I don't know any of the 8 million people that live there. You're like, *you're surrounded by people*. There are crowds at every restaurant, but I know no one. And, no lie, we were just there a few weeks ago for just two nights and in one day, we met four people we knew. I said, "we can't come to New York anymore." I don't know where we're going next.

But quality time is that undivided attention. Jesus gave it to his twelve, but even within the twelve, Jim, Pete John, he had the three and he spent time with them. He didn't just spend time with his disciples; he spent time with sinners.

Matthew 9:10 While ***Jesus was having dinner at Matthew's house and many tax collectors...*** Remember, when you see tax collectors, they were considered traders to their people because they would charge too much and pocket the difference. ***But many tax collectors and sinners came and ate with him and his disciples.*** He spent quality time with people that others wouldn't give the time of day.

So, let me ask you a question. Who in your family or in your circle of influence, maybe someone you're discipling, could use time from you this week. You're like I don't have a bunch to give, and I don't need it." I'm not asking about what you need right now. Is there someone in your life that could use some of your time this week that moves to words of affirmation. I hope you see... As much as Jesus instructed his disciples, we read his instruction, and we read his words of encouragement to them. I just chose this one. John 16: 33 – ***I told you these things so that in me you may have peace. In this world, you will have trouble...*** So, he didn't shy away from what was coming. He didn't shy away from his death or theirs. He says ***but take heart. I have overcome the world.*** I love the word encourage. The word encourage actually means to inspire courage. Who right now in your life needs to borrow some of your courage? There is a spoken word they need from you, a blessing they need from you. They don't feel like they are measuring up at work or in a relationship. They're struggling with an addiction, or a habit and they just don't feel they have what it takes to do it, and you can inspire courage in them through words of affirmation.

Going on to **physical touch**. I could give so many examples; Jesus healed the sick through touch.

Matthew 8: 2 -3 – a ***man with leprosy came and knelt down before him and said, “Lord, if you are willing, you can make me clean. Jesus reached out his hand and touched the man. I am willing. Be clean. Immediately he was clean and cleansed of his leprosy.*** He also used touch to bless children. In Jesus’ day, childhood was considered an insignificant season of life. So, when children were brought to Jesus, the disciples held them back, “don’t waste his time, stay away from him.” And the bible says what? ***Jesus grew indignant.*** He was mad that people kept the children from him

Mark 10: 16 says, ***Then he took the children in his arms, placed his hands on their head and blessed them.***

I told you last week that Travis Brawner’s primary love language is physical touch and I encouraged Ya’ll to go give him a little something. But I got another one from a staff member and he’s allowed me to share. His initials are Jerad Kolter. But Jared’s email was the same of almost anybody who sent me physical touch as a primary love language in a report and they go, I don’t need this from you, but I’ll take a high five or a fist bump.

There are ways we can bless people with physical touch and we’re going to see that in a moment as well.

**Acts of Service.** Now we are getting into acts of service and receiving gifts and boy do we see Jesus modeling this for us.

Mark 10: 45 – ***For even the son of man did not come to be served, but to serve and to give his life as a ransom.*** Ransom was a price paid to free slaves or hostages. And he gave his life as a ransom for many. Jesus was the ultimate servant and model for us.

I could have picked so many examples of him serving the disciples and others. I went with John 13: 14- 15. ***Now that I, your Lord and teachers have washed your feet, you also should wash one another’s feet.***

You all are clamoring about who is going to be the best in the kingdom. You’re all clamoring about who is going to be at the right and who’s going to take care of this or that, but you’re missing the whole point. If you want to be great in the kingdom, pick up a towel. Start serving. Start washing one another’s feet.

Verse 15 – *I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you*. He was the ultimate example of this.

At the top of this list right now, I have Stephanie Watson's assessment. Her love language is Acts of Service.

Her love language is acts of service, but when you look at her dialect, it's off the charts of any I've ever seen. Her off the charts dialect is anything you can do to serve her and relieve stress.

If you know Stephanie Watson, she's the servant of all. She has four children, eight grandchildren with number 9 on the way. And she's the servant of all.

She's in that seventy-five percent. She speaks out of her love language – Acts of Service

But I texted her this week. Stephanie and I have had a brother/sister relationship for over 20 years. So, we kid each other a lot, there's 'a lot of sarcasm back and forth, but I had to start the text with "Seriously! Stephanie, what is one thing the Watson children can do to serve you and alleviate stress?" She usually will respond to me within minutes. It went pretty much the day. I'm like this is going to be good. She responded with, "I honestly can't think of anything." I said, "You're a liar." But seriously, I go there's got to be something." Does it shock you to know, Lucy, your mom would not answer me. So, I said, you're making me now call out the Watson children in a sermon on Sunday at woodland hills. I didn't want to do this, Lucy, your mom's making me do this because she wouldn't answer my question. I got Roy in the parking lot earlier this morning. What is just one thing you can do to show her you feel love. This is someone who understands how to express this love language, but what would it take to receive it?

Let me ask the question of all of us. Who in your life right now needs you to lend a helping hand this week. Amy's dialect, in acts of service, is not alleviating stress, it's saving time. She wants me to help her save time. And in the morning, I can do two things really quick... I don't know if you ever saw that video of that general at the commencement telling people to make their beds. He wrote a whole book called Make Your Bed. It's one of the best things I do in the morning. Making my bed makes me more productive during the day. I feel like I could be a general in the army by making a bed. And it serves Amy. That one little act that takes me 2 ½ minutes... making the bed is

two and a half minutes. Putting the pillows back 6 to 7 minutes. But I get it all done. that one simple act... It's amazing how that sets us up for the day.

And then the dishes as well. Yeah, it conveys care, but that was low on Amy's dialect. It was more about *hey I got a lot of stuff to do today, any of these to do list checkmarks that you can make will save me a tone of time.* So, who needs that hand today?

And finally, **receiving gifts**. And ultimately... I put this one at the end because when we think about the greatest gifts we've ever received, it's our salvation. We read this in Matthew 7 when we did The Greatest Sermon ever in the sermon on the Mount series and shay spoke about this that as parents, we desire to give good gifts to our children but how much more your heavenly father desires to give good gifts to you. ***For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son.***

And in Ephesians 5: ***Husbands, love your wives just as "Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her. He gave himself up, giving of himself and that's ultimately what we're doing through all of the love languages.***

It leads us to a question a lot of people have been asking – nature or nurture?

On Tuesday night, I'm going to talk about what most psychologists engaging in the love languages said. You can identify your child's love language by about age four. You're obviously not having a four-year-old sit down and take an assessment. But we're going to show you how to do that. But it, but is it something you're born with or is it something that's nurtured. You know I say this a lot. It's both.

Alex Himaya talked a lot about nature/nurture in his message a couple of weeks ago, but Dr. Chapman says this: Like your personality, your primary love language tends to stick with you for life.

I had someone this morning... and I've heard it several times over the last week or two, they said, "We did this at our church 30 years ago in a retreat and I did it again and had things changed or... I said, "Well you might have a better understanding of it or it could be this right here and this is very important. *Circumstances and seasons of life can draw out secondary or foreign love languages and make them primary.* For example. You have two children under the age of five and one on the way. Your primary love language up to being a parent has been physical touch. But now, you're like, "get these children off of me." I have one friend that we were at a theme park and their kids were all over and my

friend and he said, "I feel like a sweaty beluga wale right now. Just get these kids off of me.

So, you might have had a primary love language of physical touch, but a mom with three children under five might like some acts of service. That's why when a friend organizes a meal train, that alleviates stress, that saves time, that conveys care, and that mom is like, In this season right now, bring on the acts of service.

How about words of affirmation. Keep your words of affirmation, serve me. So, yes, circumstances and seasons of life can change, but how about this. I think this is the most powerful teaching of Dr. Chapman. If you grew up in a loving home with all five love language, you receive all of them as expressions of love. Several of you that sent me this You want all of them. They are all top for you. It's because it was coming at you all the time in a loving home, but the opposite side of that coin is true as well.

If you grew up in an unloving home, where the love languages were rarely expressed, you may have learned to accept love in whatever form it appeared. Dr. Chapman puts it this way. If you grew up in an unloving home, the reason your assessment may feel off to you or that you want all of them is because if you grew up in an unloving home, you'll take what you can get. And this is why we are spending so much time on this because we want hearts open to one another, loving one another well. And being fluent in all five love languages.

Let's jump into the definition... So, what I'm going to do right now in the few minutes we have remaining is I'm want to give you an added definition that we looked at the first part of it last week and now I want to add the dialects. We don't have time to get into all the dialects but there are five love languages and 22 dialects under those five love languages. That's why we are doing a two-hour workshop because we are not getting into the weeds.... But we are going to cover them so that you can fine tune your dialects in your relationships.

We define words of affirmation as receiving love through spoken or written words that validate your feelings.

Her are the three dialects that words of affirmation have. It involves kind words conveyed through heartfelt compliments, encouragement, and appreciation.

Mark twain said, "I can live for two months on one good compliment."

That's the person with words of affirmation. They get it from a child, a parent, a co-worker, a friend, a church member, a spouse, and they can run with it. Whether that's compliments, encouragement or appreciation. We know this.

Proverbs 18: 21 – We've quoted it often at this church. ***The tongue has the power of life and death. Those who love it will eat it's fruit.*** And there are some people in your life right now that need you to speak life over them. All they maybe grew up with was hearing *you're not measuring up. Wish you would do more of this. Why can't you be more like this person.* All they received was cursing and death in the home they grew up in. and they have words of affirmation as this great desire to feel loved and you and I get to step in and provide that.

Quality time is receiving love through meaningful conversations and shared activity. Keep this in mind. The activity isn't as important as the conversation and the time together. So, let's get away, let's make sure nobody knows us and let's just be together, the two of us, not bugged or bothered by anyone, but we are going to look Tuesday night at how important it is to find shared activities that fill you both in the relationship. Again, knowing that the activity isn't as important. Undivided attention is the most important thing. Here are the four dialects with quality time. – scheduled or unscheduled. Amy likes scheduled. She's very scheduled. She'll say... these are her words, not mine. Ted, I am open to being spontaneous if you give me three to four days' notice."

But I'm like, *what are we doing this afternoon?* And I'm talking about the dream.

So, she's very scheduled and then we can go back and forth with present oriented verses future oriented. I lean a little bit more future oriented.

In acts 2: 46, this is a passage I quote often. The church spent quality time together. This was the first century church. ***They broke break in their home and ate together with glad and sincere hearts.***

This has become a passage for Amy and I because we are foodies. We love long meals. We were at a meal last night with friends for a couple of hours. We just enjoy not just the food, but the conversation and the time spent. Who in the church needs you... this isn't about inviting me to a meal. This is about finding someone else in the church who you can spend time with.

Acts of service. Receiving love through someone else's time and effort to make your life easier.

And here are the four dialects under Acts of Service. You feel most loved when someone instills security, alleviates stress, conveys care, or saves you time. So, for Stephanie, as I mentioned, Her's is alleviating stress, and for Amy, it's saving time. It's why she hates driving. She hates driving with every ounce of her being because it's a colossal waste of time. I've tried to teach her how to text and drive, but she won't do it.

But this is why most of the staff... I don't do audio messages or audio text. I have a friend here right now that we joke every now and then, we'll send each other a fake one... It's just not how we get... our skin actually crawls. But Amy, because she can do that safely, down the road, she can communicate next step to staff, to family members through an audio text. There are times I look at it and it's 12 minutes!

What she's doing is saving time. It's her passion.

Galatians 5: 13 – ***You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. Do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh..*** In other words, it's not about you, satisfying you, ***rather serve one another humbly inn love.***

We looked at it last week. Your love language is not your spiritual gift, not your Christian act of service and it's not the fruit of the spirit. We're talking about something different. but in 1 peter, speaking of spiritual gifts that you receive at the moment of your salvation, ***each of you should use whatever gift you have received, this supernatural measure of faith to serve others.***

That's how the body of Christ works. As faithful stewards of God's grace in it's various forms.

Receiving gifts. Both of my children, Corynn and Carson, have receiving gifts as a primary love language. Receiving love through thoughtful gifts as tangible expressions of care and connection.

And here are the dialects, which makes it fun.

From heartfelt to practical, my daughter leans heartfelt, not practical, and simple to extravagant, she's right in between, which means we can afford the jewelry that speaks her love language. This is low for me, but my dialect is I like practical and extravagant,

that's why I believe in Yeti, not Stanley. I don't know why. I'm never going to have an igloo cooler, but Yeti, for some reason, just draws me in. But it says you know me, and you were thinking of me.

My son is between heartfelt and practical, but on the extravagant side and he's into watches right now, which means Rolex. He will not be getting any love from the Cunningham home for a long time to come. We had to dig into one of his secondary love languages.

I want to remind you that this is the foreign language for most. You're not materialistic. And I love how Dr. Chapman Talks about his. This is cross cultural. I remember being in Tanzania and... again, when we take a mission trip, it is our desire as a church to bless the missionaries we are going to visit. It's our desire to bless the people we are going to serve. But it happens almost every trip I take... The missionary or maybe one of the nationals will say, I want to take you into town and get something for each member of your family. The first thought is No, no, no. I don't want to do that, but it's something we receive from them. I have experienced this in every culture un the world from Haiti to Tanzania to Kenya. It's cross cultural and universal

In receiving gifs, Paul says this in Philippians 4: 18 and it's just important to see how people are refreshed in this. He shares this a lot when he talks about the gifts he has received while in prison or to continue in his ministry. He says, ***I received full payment and have more than enough. I Am amply supplied. Now that I have received from paraedrites the gifts you sent. They are a fragrant offering, an acceptable sacrifice, pleasing to God and the desire here is to refresh others with gifts.***

You know me and you were thinking of me.

Physical touch. Receiving love through meaningful touch when words fail. So, this may now be your primary love language, but when you get the phone call that a family member has passed away, it's in that moment that a hug... I can't tell you how many times I've stood by a grave with no words to share with the person who is mourning, but an arm around the shoulder and just standing there. We talk about this a lot. We're called to rejoice with those who are rejoicing and mourn with those who are mourning. You don't have to say anything. The Ministry of presence, just being there. A hand on the shoulder, an arm around the person, a hug. Physical touch has seven dialects. We'll look at these Tuesday. Comforting, romantic, expressive, affectionate, protective, restorative, and tickling.

In 1 Timothy 4: 14, Paul says, ***Do not neglect your gift which was given to you through prophecy through when the body of elders laid their hands on you.*** This is signifying the elders commission, the elder's recognition of God at work in Timothy's life. We see it all through scripture.

I'm excited for Tuesday night, excited for next Sunday as we start a new series. Grateful for you, Woodland Hills as we seek to love one another better

Father, thank you for what you continue to do in our church. For the one who does not know you as the true and only source of life and they have a closed heart right now, I pray for the holy spirit to convict them, call them by name, that their heart would be open so that they could declare with their mouth, Jesus is Lord and believe in their heart that he has been raised from the dead and be saved.

For everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved, and I pray that today many are turning to the true and only source of life.

Continue to bless our church. May we be known in this community around the Ozarks, Southwest, Missouri, Northwest Arkansas as people who love one another, serve one another, care for one another, bear with one another, confess our sins to one another, and pray for one another.

We pray all of this in the authority of the name of Jesus. And everyone agreed and said... Amen