Rev. Caroline Braskamp

Preston Hollow Presbyterian

21 February 2021

**5 Simple Ways to Strengthen Your Marriage:**

**Discover & Speak Each Other’s Love Language**

**Welcome**

* 3rd week of 5-week marriage & relationship enrichment series based on the book, 5 Simple Ways to Strengthen Your Marriage… When You’re Stuck at Home Together by Gary Chapman

**Purposes for gathering today**

* Quick review of the first 2 skills
* Discuss the 3rd skill: Discover & Speak Each Other’s Love Language
* Have a conversation with your spouse (notes for a future conversation)

**Opening Prayer**

**Review**

* Skill #1: Call a Truce on Throwing Verbal Bombs
* Words have power to heal or to hurt (bombs vs. balms)
* Difference between feedback and bombs: about a specific issue or a general personal attack
* Skill #2: Tear Down Emotional Walls
	+ About having a deeper emotional connection (how you handle mistakes and hurts)
	+ Metaphor: a failure or hurt that is not dealt with is an emotional block in the wall between two people… many blocks build a wall
* Only one way to remove the blocks: through apology and forgiveness
* Apology formula at our house: “I am sorry for \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. It made you feel \_\_\_\_\_\_\_. Next time I will \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. Is there anything I can do to make it better?”
* Forgiveness in the Bible
	+ OT: send away, cover, remove, wipe away (sacrificial system)
	+ NT: send away, loose, be gracious to, pass over
	+ Letting go of wrongs against you

**Scripture: 1 John 4.7-13**

* NT letter that focuses on love
* Connection of human love to God’s love

7Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. 8Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love. 9God’s love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him. 10In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. 11Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another. 12No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God lives in us, and his love is perfected in us. 13By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit.

* A lot of meaning in one word: love
* Several different words in Greek
* Agape: self-giving love, loving with the other person in mind
* Love is our connection to God
* Love is how we show God is real and how we manifest God in the world

**Discover & Speak Each Other’s Love Language**

* Review of The Five Love Languages, Gary Chapman’s blockbuster book
* “the deepest emotional need we have as humans is the need to feel loved by the significant people in our lives” (36)
* 2 false assumptions:
	1. We don’t need to work on our marriage, love will just happen
	2. What makes me feel loved will make my spouse feel loved
* 5 Love Languages
	1. Words of Affirmation: “you are simply using words to express your love”
	2. Acts of Service: “doing something for your spouse”
	3. Receiving Gifts: “gift giving as an expression of love”
	4. Quality Time: “giving your spouse your undivided attention,” might be doing something together
	5. Physical Touch: “meaningful affirming touches”
* Ways to Discover Your Spouse’s Primary Love Language
	1. Observe their behavior: “we tend to speak our own love language”
	2. Observe what they complain about most often
	3. Observe what they request most often
* Resources: 5lovelanguages.com, “Love Nudge” app
* Quizzes for children and teenagers as well
* Remember the power of influence

**Conversation with your spouse**

1. If you already knew your spouse’s love language, how faithful have you been in speaking it (on a scale of 0-10)? What can you work on?
2. If you did not know your spouse’s love language, find out using the 3 observations, the quiz, or just talking about it.
3. On a scale of 0-10, how much love you do feel coming from your spouse? On a scale of 0-10, how much love does your spouse feel coming from you? What can I do to raise the score?
4. What does your spouse need during this pandemic? How can you speak your spouse’s love language during this season?

**Closing Prayer**

**Looking Ahead**

* Feb 28: Learn the Value of Teamwork