

His Needs, Her Needs – Affection

Matthew 6:5-15

Introduction

Today will be our last lesson before New Year's. I've been teaching lately on things that I think we may need to take inventory of and possibly need to change or reset in our lives. New Year's is always a good time for such contemplation and commitment.

Today we're going to look at a specific word found in a familiar marital passage and see how it can be applied in our marriages.

Bible Passage

Eph. 5:28-33 - ²⁸So husbands ought also to love their own wives as their own bodies. He who loves his own wife loves himself; ²⁹for no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ also does the church, ³⁰because we are members of His body. ³¹FOR THIS CAUSE A MAN SHALL LEAVE HIS FATHER AND MOTHER, AND SHALL CLEAVE TO HIS WIFE; AND THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH. ³²This mystery is great; but I am speaking with reference to Christ and the church. ³³Nevertheless let each individual among you also love his own wife even as himself; and let the wife see to it that she respect her husband.

Bible Study

Paul says that a husband should treat his wife the same care that he treats himself, and uses the word "cherish" to describe that care.

2282 θαλπο thalpo {thal'-po}
probably akin to thallo (to warm);; v
AV - cherish 2; 2
1) to warm, keep warm

2) to cherish with tender love, to foster with tender care

The word is only used one other place, in 1 Thess. 2:7:

⁷But we proved to be gentle among you, as a nursing mother tenderly cares for her own children.

What thoughts does that image provoke? _____

Vine's says the word's primary meaning is "to soften by heat."

Book Resource

We're going to study one of the ten basic needs Harley talks about in the popular book, *His Needs, Her Needs*. He claims that for most wives, the

number one need is affection, and that the degree to which that need is met determines much of her marital satisfaction and her willingness to meet her husband's needs.

You may remember from the book his metaphor of a "Love Bank" and that every interaction you have with your spouse (or your kids, or anyone else) either makes a deposit or withdrawal in your and their love bank. He highlights the importance of this idea with the comment, "needs keep score with relentless precision."

"Of the ten basic emotional needs, the five listed as most important by men were usually the five least important for women, and vice versa."

"Because of this lack of understanding, the couple unknowingly works at cross-purposes, each trying to fulfill the needs he or she feels, not the needs the mate feels. So wives may easily shower their husbands with affection because they appreciate it and want it so much themselves. Conversely, husbands smother their wives with sexual advances, because sex is one of their most pressing needs. Each becomes confused when, at best, the mate responds with mild pleasure and, at worst, becomes annoyed, irritated, or frigid."

He says, "...my experience with thousands of people has taught me an undeniable truth: if any of a spouse's five basic emotional needs goes unmet, that spouse becomes vulnerable to the temptation of an affair."

Lesson Focus

We're going to focus on one of the ten needs: affection. Affection is an expression of care. It symbolizes security, protection, comfort, and approval.

- You are important to me, and I will care for you and protect you.
- I'm concerned about the problems you face and will be there for you when you need me.

How can a husband express affection for his wife? Hugs, notes, massages, flowers, dinner, open doors, phone calls, conversations, walks, holding hands,

What things can be confused with affection? Sex, admiration, groping

What are some affectionate habits to create?

What are some affectionate habits to avoid?

Practical Application

"Sadly enough, most affairs start because of a lack of affection (for the wife) and lack of sex (for the husband). It's quite a vicious cycle. She doesn't get enough affection, so she shuts him off sexually. He doesn't get enough sex, so the last thing he feels like being is affectionate."

This cycle is broken by one or the other giving their spouse what they need, even when their love bank is low.

Conclusion:

How is your love bank with your spouse?

Are you aware of your spouse's greatest needs?

Are you actively striving to make deposits in their love bank and avoid making withdrawals?

What do you need to do in response to this lesson?

Your Emotional Needs

In the space provided before each need, write a number from 1 to 5 that ranks the need's importance to your happiness. Write a 1 before the most important need, a 2 before the next most important, and so on until you have ranked your five most important needs.

- _____ Affection
- _____ Sexual Fulfillment
- _____ Conversation
- _____ Recreational companionship
- _____ Honesty and openness
- _____ Attractiveness of spouse
- _____ Financial support
- _____ Domestic support
- _____ Family commitment
- _____ Admiration
- _____
- _____

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