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SERIES: RELATIONSHIPS MATTER
PART 3: THE FIVE LOVE NEEDS OF A WOMAN

Good morning, CVCHURCH. Men have you ever been baffled on why is seems so hard at times to understand your wife or daughter or the important women in your life? I can explain it to you with a picture. **(W&M ‘knobs’ slide)**

Here is another picture that explains the difference between men and women. **(W&M shopping slide)**

It might seem obvious to most of us that men and women are greatly different, but there has been a movement underway in America for the last 50 years that is trying to undermine the fact that male and female are created in God’s image and that He has created us so different intentionally.

Today, I want to focus on the five love needs of every woman. Next week, we will look at the five love needs of every man. Why is this important? Men, if you’re going to be successful relating to women, you need to know how they think, feel and act. As men, we especially need to know what makes a woman feel loved, accepted and valuable.

I recommend that every man and woman get the book, **The 5 Love Needs of Men & Women**, by Dr. Gary and Barbara Rosberg. They are called America’s family coaches.

I. How to meet your wife's (a woman's) need for unconditional love

Would you read with me Ephesians 5:21, 25, 28. Let's begin, **“And further, submit to one another out of reverence for Christ....²⁵For husbands, this means love your wives, just as Christ loved the church. He gave up His life for her....²⁸In the same way, husbands ought to love their wives as they love their own bodies. For a man who loves his wife actually shows love for himself.”**

Paul writes that a husband demonstrates his reverence and respect for Jesus by submitting himself to his wife. The word submit means **“to order oneself under a leader.”** Jesus Christ is our Leader. As we submit to Him, the way we show our submission to our wives is to love her as Jesus loved His church. How does Jesus love His bride? Verse 25 says Jesus gave up His life for her. In vs. 28, Paul says I am to love Kathe as I love my own body, because when I demonstrate my love for Kathe by meeting her love needs, I am actually showing love for myself. This is what is called a win-win situation. By laying down my life for Kathe I can meet her need for unconditional love.

In a survey, women said that their need for unconditional love and acceptance was their #1 need. We all need love, but we need it most when we deserve it least—when we have sinned against someone, or when we have made poor choices or when we have failed them. It is in these situations that ordinary love must become extraordinary love.

Just imagine your spouse loving you completely, without even hesitating over your mistakes. Sounds just like Jesus, doesn't it? It is. That is the core of unconditional love, and Jesus is the exclusive source. Here is the key: unconditional love covers your mistakes and failures, and the results take a couple deeper in their relationship. Here are four ways, men, to meet the unconditional love need of our wives and every woman we relate to.

A. Encourage her

When your wife or a woman fails you or disappoints you, your first response—my first response—will determine whether she folds under the pressure or rises above her circumstances. You can show her unconditional love with phrases like: 1) **“I will never leave you or turn my back on you.”** 2) **“I don't care what you have done; we can work through it.”** 3) **“I love you, and my love will never be something you have to earn.”** 4) **“I forgive you.”** Men, the power of unconditional love and acceptance during a time of difficulty or failure can heal a woman's wounded soul. The soul type messages connect your heart to hers. They literally feed and nourish your wife. This kind of encouragement heals broken hearts. And, husbands and men, every woman has pieces of her heart that have been broken. Your encouragement helps to heal hers, and it causes her to feel closer to you and that she can trust and respect you. Isn't this just what we want from our wives and the women we relate to?

B. Respect her opinion

Husbands, men, you demonstrate your unconditional love when you listen to your wife when she expresses her opinion. You can do so with the following kind of comments: **1) “That’s a great idea.” 2) “You did a marvelous job in a difficult situation.” 3) “Tell me more. I want to understand.” 4) “I wish I could have thought of that.”** These positive statements affirm the fact that she is a vital and positive presence in your life.

When your wife says things you disagree with, before trying to straighten her out or fix her thinking, express your unconditional love by your willingness to hear her out and ask her questions for clarification. This kind of respect and acceptance will allow her to process her thoughts, lessen her anxiety and respond positively to your response.

C. Talk to her and listen

Husbands, men, your wife, the women in your life have the need to talk and be heard. It is important that we create a safe environment for her. You can do so by the following: **1) Set up regular times to ask her about her thoughts, dreams, hopes, and fears. 2) Listen carefully when your wife expresses a hope or dream, and ask her how you might help her fulfill her dream or hope. 3) Refuse to fix the problem when your wife describes an embarrassing situation she’s had. Assure her of your love for her,**

especially if she's done something that made her or you look bad. 4) Call her in the middle of the day to find out how her day is going. Your wife feels loved unconditionally when you take the time to listen to her and take her seriously.

D. Serve her

Hey guys, the best time to serve your wife and the women in your life is when she annoys you, disappoints you or you feel she doesn't deserve your love. Love her with the kind of love that Christ shows you. Why? This is exactly what Jesus did for you. Romans 5:8 says, **“But God showed His great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners.”**

II. How to meet your wife's (a woman's) intimacy need: Talk

“So stop telling lies. Let us tell our neighbors the truth, for we are all parts of the same body. ²⁶And don't sin by letting anger control you. Don't let the sun go down while you are still angry, ²⁷for anger gives a foothold to the devil.” Ephesians 4:25-27.

Regardless of what our culture tells us, men and women are wired differently neurologically, physically, emotionally, and biologically. A man spells intimacy “sex,” a woman spells it “TALK.” Men, our sex drive is connected to our eyes; you become aroused visually. Your wife's sex drive is connected to her heart; she is aroused only after she feels emotional

closeness and harmony. Guys this is a fact. Once you learn it, you stand the best chance of having your needs met.

A. Listen to her

Men, we can't be encouraged on this issue enough. Your wife will be more open to you and your need to connect with her physically if you take the time every day to listen to her thoughts and feelings that she has experienced throughout the day. Don't just hear her words, but truly listen to them. What are they telling you? Are you hearing the same comments over and over again? Do you always argue about the same things? We need to wake up—this is a sign of unresolved issues! They are eating away at your wife, and she might not even realize it. Even worse, you might not be realizing it. If I just say, "That's just Kathe," I am allowing something very negative to exist in our relationship. Are there any unresolved issues with your wife, girlfriend, fiancé, or female friend? Ask your wife if she is aware of any, and begin actively listening to her. This is how she experiences intimacy with you. When she feels heard and understood, she then feels love.

B. Give her attention and affection

Has your wife or girlfriend or sister or daughter ever said, "You are not paying enough attention to our marriage, relationship or friendship?" What she is really saying is that, "I feel emotionally distant from you, and you're not paying enough attention to me!" How did you win her heart in the

first place guys? You sought her out, and you gave her your focused, undivided attention. Point out the positive changes that she is making in her life and tell her verbally. Your wife needs your closeness, so your nonsexual touch communicates genuine caring and reminds her that you love her. Your gentle touch communicates to her, “I’m here. You’re not alone. I enjoy you. I’ll take care of you.”

C. Resolve conflict

Ephesians 4:26-27 says, **“And don’t sin by letting anger control you. Don’t let the sun go down while you are still angry,²⁷ for anger gives a foothold to the devil.”** Paul says you allow anger to control yourself and your relationship when you allow your irritation to go unresolved. Dr. Hoehner writes, **“This word for anger is provocation, exasperation, violent anger, or a ‘state of being intensely provoked.’ A good rendering is ‘festering anger, provocation, or irritation.”** In other words, the Bible says when anger festers for long periods of time it leads to angry outbursts, which cause one to sin. What’s even worse—we give a foothold to the devil. The Greek word translated foothold can be rendered opportunity, possibility, and chance.

“Opportunity” gives the best sense in this text. Festering irritation gives an opportunity to the devil to get involved in your relationship. The Greek word, “diabolos,” means slanderer; adversary and foe. Satan is a liar and a deceiver. He twists and distorts the truth. If there is no quick resolve, anger intensifies, and dissension and revenge often result. Husbands, be quick to resolve the conflict with your wife.

D. Safeguard your relationship

I am going to say this bluntly—it can be very easy for a man to capture another woman’s heart. You think you’re having an enjoyable conversation with a woman on a coffee break, not realizing that might be the only enjoyable conversation she has all week. Here are some danger signals to be aware of in other women: flattery, intense eye contact, inappropriate gushing, excessive reference to your importance, wanting to talk about intimate topics, talking more about you than about her husband. Guard your wife and your relationship.

III. How to meet your wife’s (a woman’s) need for spiritual intimacy

Please read out loud with me 1 Peter 3:7, “...you husbands must give honor to your wives. Treat your wife with understanding as you live together. She may be weaker than you are, but she is your equal partner in God’s gift of new life. Treat her as you should so your prayers will not be hindered.”

At the heart of spiritual intimacy lies trust. Your wife trusts you—not because of your rank or position, or even just because you are her husband. It’s true that a measure of trust is built during courtship and in your commitment to the wedding vows, but complete trust is established over time and under the pressure of daily life. A woman needs to trust her husband in the following areas.

A. Encourage her spiritual growth

Guys, encourage your wife to be reading the Bible every day and to develop a time of prayer. Take the lead in getting your family to church and involved in all of the different ministry opportunities we have available. Encourage her to go around the bases through our Life Development process. Encourage her to get involved in a small group. We have CR small groups called Step Studies. We have women's small groups and other small groups. You don't demand and order, but you can suggest and encourage her spiritual growth.

B. Support her relationships with other women

Just the other day Kathe mentioned to me specific women she has in her life that are just strategic to her relationship with Jesus. I have gone to several of them and let them know just how much their relationship with Kathe means to me. She is a better wife, mother and friend because of their influence in her life. Husbands, support her relationships that are good for her.

C. Encourage her to utilize her spiritual gifts

One of the best things you can do in this area, guys, is to encourage your wife and the women in your life to get to our LD 301 seminar. Our ministry team is great, and they will help you discover your God-given shape, and then help your wife find a place to serve using the spiritual gifts that the

Holy Spirit has given to her. Your wife's greatest sense of fulfillment will come to her as she engages her life, you, your children, and the people in her life with her spiritual gifts.

D. Encourage her with your prayers

Men, when your wife is frustrated, stressed out, overwhelmed, or just exhausted, one of the best things you can do for her is to take her by the hand and pray for her. Throughout your day as you think about her, pray God's presence, protection, favor, and strength are her experience.

IV. How to meet your wife's (a woman's) need for encouragement

Please read out loud with me 1 Peter 3:7b, **“Treat your wife with understanding as you live together.”**

A. Understand her wiring

Encouragement literally means to give courage; to inspire with courage, spirit or hope. It means to hearten your wife and the women in your life. One of the best ways to gain understanding of how your wife is wired is to watch her talk with another woman. Notice how intense they are. Listen to the tone of their voices. Notice how connected they sound. Notice how the conversation moves back and forth like a tennis ball. Sometimes they even finish each other's sentences, and they will stand there and laugh about it. At the end of a long day, men, your wife, girlfriend or fiancé wants

to share her feelings with you—without fear of judgment. She’s not looking for solutions. She wants to share her intimate thoughts so that her difficulties can be lifted and her emotional ties to you strengthened. When you listen to her share her feelings and thoughts, she feels cherished and valued. She feels validated when you remind her of what she did right. She is refueled and energized, no matter how many responsibilities are facing her.

When it comes to processing an issue, women tend to talk through it aloud. After they monologue—and sometimes dialogue—it through, they’re ready to take on the world. Depending on the situation, her emotions can come into play, also. It has to do with how your wife and women are wired. Men, you must become an expert in how your wife is wired.

B. Give her 1st place

You learn how to give her first place as you learn to meet her unconditional love need, her intimacy need, her spiritual intimacy need, and her need for encouragement. As you encourage her, respect her opinion, you talk with her, and listen and serve her, she feels that she is 1st in your life. When you give her affection and attention; when you safeguard your relationship with her, and you are bullish on resolving conflict, she feels she is 1st place in your life. When you actively encourage her spiritual growth and support her relationships with other women, and you encourage her to use her God-given gifts, and you shower her with your prayers, she says to herself, “I’m 1st place in his life.” Every time you

take a loving action on your wife's behalf, you're sending her the message that she is 1st place. One of the fastest ways to communicate she is 1st in your life is when she asks you to make a specific change in your life that will impact her, and you respond, she will be convinced that she is 1st in your life.

C. Point out her potential

Barbara Rosberg, wife and co-author of the book where I am getting my information, tells the story of how she took a night class in painting. The instructor was well known, but his methods of criticism were way extreme. One evening in class she had spent the entire class time on a certain painting. The instructor stopped beside her, took her canvas from the easel, and verbally ripped it apart. She was devastated and went home in tears, determined to never paint again.

The next day her husband came home with two packages. Inside were an easel and a wooden box full of Rembrandt pastels. "Enough of your wallowing!" he said. "God gave you a talent, and you're going to paint. Get moving—now!" None of this was said harshly. But it was said firmly, with love, as he affirmed the truth of her abilities. Men, point out your wives potential and be her lead cheerleader to be all that God has planned for her to be.

D. Appreciate her contribution

How can you and I do this? Praise her three different times during the day. This is your wife's soul food. This is how you

nourish her. You can say things like, “I love to be in your company.” You are such a great mother. Brag about her to your friends. Let her catch you at it. She will live on that for several days.

V. How to meet your wife’s (a woman’s) need for friendship

“She may be weaker than you are, but she is your equal partner in God’s gift of new life.” 1 Peter 3:7c

A. Do things together

This is something Kathe is always asking me to do with her. It almost doesn’t matter what it is, but she wants to do it together. I have not taken this as seriously as I am beginning to. God said it was not good that Adam was alone. The woman He made as his counterpart is wired for friendship. Friendship grows as you take the time to do lots of things together. Start today, men.

B. Create a safe place

One of the greatest needs our women need from us men is that we are safe. Women can trend towards fear. It’s important that we’re not the source of their fear. As you continue to demonstrate your trustworthiness, she will feel safer with you every day. Men, that needs to be one of your leading goals.

C. Step into her world

Do you know your wife's dreams? She could have some, and just not tell you. It is your job to ask her on an ongoing basis what dreams she has and how you can help them come to pass. Has she wanted to explore a creative gift? How can you encourage her to go for it? Does your wife like to read? Ask her what she's reading, and have her tell you about it. Listen for the little things, and then please her with a gift of something she mentioned. Do you discuss what you're thinking and feeling with her? Step into her world.

D. Create benchmark times

Get away frequently and reflect on your marriage and friendship. Take a road trip together. One of our favorite times of the year is our vacation in Scottsdale. We love being together. It's very bonding. Have a date night every week. Use your anniversary celebrations to look back on God's work in your lives. Plan your future together.

COMMUNION

“Then He took a cup of wine and gave thanks to God for it. Then He said, ‘Take this and share it among yourselves. For I will not drink wine again until the Kingdom of God has come.’ He took some bread and gave thanks to God for it. Then He broke it in pieces and gave it to the disciples, saying, ‘This is My body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of Me.’ After supper He took another cup of wine and said, ‘This cup is the new

covenant between God and His people—an agreement confirmed with My blood, which is poured out as a sacrifice for you.” Luke 22:17-19

Prayer.