

Why Holy Spirit Will Sometimes Tell You What You Don't Want to Hear

Most Christians are probably familiar with the “5 love languages,” made popular by the 1995 Gary Chapman book of the same name. If you are not, here are the five: Words of Affirmation, Acts of Service, Receiving Gifts, Quality Time, Physical Touch. Sounds great. So, what's missing?

Although *The 5 Love Languages* was written over twenty years ago, the list is indicative of more recent trends that had only just begun at the time the book was written. **Love, which carries a great many meanings, has generally been relegated to a soft, tender and unrelentingly positive emotion or sensation.** For more on the definition of love, see our short video, [here](#).

In short, the problem for Christians, and I would suggest the world at large, is that this modern love is not the love of the Bible. A closer look at Jesus' relationships suggests that Jesus had at least one crucial value and expression of love that seems to be left out of our modern understanding and activity. Without further ado ... the 6th love language: Corrective Criticism.

The Giver

A pattern emerges when we look at Jesus' life and the way He loved those around Him. Jesus was, for lack of a better word, harsh. **He was constantly correcting His disciples, His family, His friends, and even the enemies that He commanded us to love.** Interestingly, we are so culturally averse to criticism, that when I went to study this, most blog posts and even some academic sources that I generally respect, pretended that

Jesus was only harsh to the religious leaders. This simply isn't true.

Consider some examples:

Jesus to His mother: "Woman, what does this have to do with Me? My hour has not yet come." (I submit to you that Jesus' use of "woman" was not disrespectful as it may sound in our modern cultural milieu, but this is not the time to extrapolate.)

Jesus to Peter: "But He turned and said to Peter, 'Get behind Me, Satan! You are an offense to Me, for you are not mindful of the things that are of God, but those that are of men (Matt. 16:23).'"

Jesus to James and John: "But He turned and rebuked them, and said, 'You do not know what kind of spirit you are of'" (Luke 9:55).

Jesus to Martha: Paraphrasing, Jesus told her to be more like her sister in Luke 10:40-42

Jesus to all 11 remaining disciples: "Afterward He appeared to the eleven as they sat at supper, and He reprimanded them for their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they did not believe those who had seen Him after He had risen" (Mark 16:14).

Jesus to those in tragedy and mourning: "Unless you repent, you will all likewise perish" (13:5).

Jesus' first words to Paul (after temporarily blinding him, I might add): "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute Me? ... "

Hebrews 12:6 brings the point home for us: "Whom the Lord loves He disciplines, and scourges every son whom He receives."

The Receiver

But it wasn't just Jesus who viewed corrective criticism as a love language. Though ultimately inspired by the Holy Spirit and directed through God's sovereignty, the New Testament was written by men—primarily Jesus' family, friends, followers and even an ex-enemy (Paul) who was responsible for the bulk of the New Testament writings. Interestingly enough, the (earthly) reason that we have access to all of the above-mentioned rebukes is that those closest to Jesus chose to share them with us. After Jesus left, these were the words that stuck with them. **When they were recounting their experience with their Lord and Savior, His criticisms of them are one of the primary expressions of love that they chose to burn into the annals of time.**

Closing Thoughts: What Then?

The message is clear: Correction is a love language. We should probably take this thing slowly to avoid irreparably damaging relationships, but we should go with it nonetheless. We must learn to both give and receive feedback that may not always be what we want to hear. **If we care about being correct, then we must be willing to be corrected.** Start taking some small steps with those you love. See if they are willing to create a safe environment where you can begin helping one another move forward by correcting error when it arises. **WWJD? Jesus would tell those that He loved when they were wrong and we should do the same.**

Chris Townsend spent the first 26 years of his life as an atheist. He now leverages that background to help reach the lost and disciple the found. He has studied supply chain management and business information systems at Texas Christian University, theology at Christ for the Nations Institute (CFNI), church history at Liberty University, and apologetics at Biola. Chris is the president of Redeemed Royalty

Ministries, a professor at Christ for the Nations Institute, and an itinerant apologist for . Chris has written several books including Prove It: The Art and Science of Understanding and Articulating Why You Believe What You Believe and Ekklesia Rising: The Organization Formerly Known as Church. Connect with Chris at .