

The Five Love Languages **for your Pastor**

(Adapted from “The 5 Love Languages” by Dr. Gary Chapman, Senior Associate Pastor of Calvary Baptist Church in Winston-Salem, NC)

October is Pastor Appreciation Month! What if you could say or do just the right thing guaranteed to make your pastor and his family feel loved? The secret is learning the right love language! Everyone receives love in different ways. We all speak a different “language” when it comes to feeling loved. Your pastor is no different. Do your best to determine his or her love language and then set about encouraging your pastor in his/her own language. A variety works, too. Most people are multi-lingual when it comes to receiving love!

Words of Affirmation

Actions don’t always speak louder than words. If this is your love language, unsolicited compliments mean the world to you. Hearing the words, “I love you,” are important—hearing the reasons behind that love sends your spirits skyward. Insults can leave you shattered and are not easily forgotten.

Ideas: Card shower, public words of affirmation, make a video with personal messages of appreciation, a wall of encouragement for everyone to add their note of thanks, phone calls, write out your prayers for your pastor and give them to him/her, share a specific lesson you have learned from his teaching and preaching or a way he has ministered to you

Quality Time

In the vernacular of Quality Time, nothing says, “I love you,” like full, undivided attention. Being there for this type of person is critical, but really being there with full attention makes this person feel truly special and loved. Distractions, postponed dates, or the failure to listen can be especially hurtful.

Ideas: Take them out to dinner, invite them to your home, babysit for them so they can spend quality time with their spouse, take one of the pastors’ kids out on a one on one outing, hold a special dinner at church in their honor for the congregation to express their love (this one combines the first two love languages!)

Receiving Gifts

Don’t mistake this love language for materialism; the receiver of gifts thrives on the love, thoughtfulness, and effort behind the gift. If you speak this language, the perfect gift or gesture shows that you are known, you are cared for, and you are prized above whatever was sacrificed to bring the gift to you. A missed birthday, anniversary, or a hasty, thoughtless gift would be disastrous—so would the absence of everyday gestures.

Ideas: personalized gifts, gift cards, handmade keepsakes, gifts that relate to their personal interests, homemade goodies, gifts in their honor to the church or special charity

Acts of Service

Can vacuuming the floors really be an expression of love? Absolutely! Anything you do to ease the burden of responsibilities weighing on an “Acts of Service” person will speak volumes. The words he or she most wants to hear: “Let me do that for you.” Laziness, broken commitments, and making more work for them tell speakers of this language their feelings don’t matter.

Ideas: Offer to help care for a needy family member, babysit, volunteer at church where the need is greatest, cook a meal, provide food when the pastor is hosting guests, help with yard work, paint, clean, fix up the parsonage or church office

Physical Touch

A person whose primary language is Physical Touch is, not surprisingly, very touchy. Hugs, pats on the back and thoughtful touches—they can all be ways to show excitement, concern, care, and love. Physical presence and accessibility are crucial, while neglect or abuse can be unforgivable and destructive. While it is obviously important to show appropriateness expressing love through physical touch, there are still some ways you can speak this language when showing love to your pastor.

Ideas: Have a receiving line for the congregation to shake his hand, give hugs and pats on the back, gather around him and his family to lay hands on him and pray for him.

Most importantly, the best way to show your pastor you appreciate him is to....

LOVE God

YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND. This is the great and foremost commandment. Matthew 22:36-37

The most important way you can encourage your pastor is by loving Jesus Christ with your whole heart and by striving to be everything He has called you to be! Pastors long for their flocks to be close to the Lord and sold out for Him. This Pastor Appreciation month, what would make your pastor feel the most loved and appreciated is that his congregation is passionate about Jesus, living in unity and wholeheartedly devoted to being everything God has called them to be. Find a way to convey to your pastor that you are devoting yourselves anew to following Jesus with your whole heart.

**"If the church wants a better pastor,
it only needs to pray for the one it has."**