Quality Time
Chapter 5

You can have all the greatest things the world has to offer, you can have money, toys, houses, everything, but without spending time together with your spouse, you have nothing.

Spending time together is important but what is really important is spending quality time together.

By “quality Time” I mean giving someone your undivided attention.

I don’t mean sitting on the couch watching TV together. Because when you watch TV your TV is the one getting your attention, and not your spouse.

What needs to be done instead of watching TV when sitting on the couch is start looking at each other and talking, giving your undivided attention to your spouse.
Giving your undivided attention could mean taking a walk together, just the two of you, or going out to eat and looking at each other and talking.

Have you ever noticed that in a restaurant, you can almost always tell the difference between a dating couple and a married couple. A Dating couple looks at each other with a look of excitement. Longing to know more about each other. While the married couple looks into the eyes of there spouse, with a smile on their face and says, pass the catsup.

When you sit with your spouse and give them 20 minutes of your undivided attention and they do the same for you, you are giving each other 20 minutes of your life.

What a powerful emotional way to communicate love.
We always have to remember that there are different love languages for different people.

Last week we talked about Words Of Affirmation as a love language for some and tonight we see that “Quality Time“ is also a love language for others.

The old saying that one medicine cannot cure all, is true. It is also true in our love languages, one language does not fit everybody.

What makes one person feel loved is not always the same thing that makes another person feel loved.

While words of affirmation may make you feel loved and needed, your spouse may need that quality time to feel loved.

You can see how important it is to find out your spouses love language and to put it into practice.

You have to love your spouse with the right love language or it’s not going to be effective.
It’s not enough to just be in the same room with your spouse, the key ingredient is giving your spouse **quality time** as well as giving them **focused attention**, especially in this age of many distractions.

I remember when I used to play baseball. I played second base as well as right field. And when the pitcher pitched the ball, at that moment I gave the ball my undivided attention. And I would make sure that nothing would distract me from keeping my eye on the ball.

A couple can be in the same house at the same time but still not be together. A wife may be texting while the husband may be watching a ball game. They are both in the same house and even in the same room but still not together, because they do not have each other’s full attention.
Quality time does not mean you have to spend your moments gazing into each other’s eye’s.
It means that you are doing something together, that you are giving your full attention to each other person.

What you do together does not really matter. The important thing is that you are spending focused time with the other. The activity is a vehicle that creates the sense of togetherness.

The husband and wife that play’s tennis together can use that as a way of spending good quality time together, and if it is quality time they will focus more on the time together than on the actual game.

Your spending time together in a common pursuit communicates that you care about each other, and that you enjoy being with your spouse.

Like words of affirmation, the language of quality time also has many dialects.
One of the most common dialect is that of quality conversation.

By that I mean, a caring dialogue, where two people are sharing their experiences, thoughts, feelings, and desires in a uninterrupted setting.

**Quality conversation** is quite different from the first love language that we went over last week, words of affirmation. **Words of affirmation** focuses on what you are saying, while **quality conversation** focuses on what you are hearing.

If you are sharing your love for your spouse by means of quality time and you are going to spend that time in conversation, it means that you will focus on drawing them out, listening carefully to what they have to say.

You may even ask questions in a way that shows you genuinely desire to understand there thoughts, feeling, trials and hopes.
When listening, we all need to remember that a marriage is a relationship and not a project to be completed or a problem to be solved. Unfortunately, many of us are trained to analyze a problem and try to fix it.

But a relationship calls for compassionate listening with a view to understanding the other person’s thoughts, feelings and desires.

We must be willing to give advice, but only, when it is requested and never in a condescending manner.

Because most of us have little training in listening, we tend to be more efficient in thinking and speaking, then in listening. The art of learning to listen may be difficult at first but learning to listen is a must if you want a good marriage, especially if you want to communicate love.

I want to share 5 helpful tips to follow when listening to your spouse.
1. Maintain eye contact when your spouse is talking.
2. Don’t listen to your spouse and so something else at the same time.
3. Listen for feelings. Ask yourself, “What emotion is my spouse experiencing?”
4. Observe body language. Clenched fists, trembling hands, tears, etc.
5. Do not interrupt.

Remember,
Your goal is to discover their thoughts and feelings.
Your objective is not to defend yourself or to set them straight.
It is to understand them.

Learning to talk is as important as learning to listen.

Conversations requires not only sensitive listening but also self-revelation.

Self-revelation does not come easy.
Many of us grew up in homes where the expression of thoughts were not encouraged but looked down on.
And because of this it is hard for some to express there true feelings.
But on the other hand for some it is easy to express our feeling and desires.

In the book Gary Chapman calls this Dead Seas and Babbling Brooks.

The Dead Sea takes in but it does not go anywhere. This personality type receives many experiences, emotions, and thoughts throughout the day. They have a large reservoir where they store that information, and they are perfectly happy not to talk.

However on the other extreme is the “Babbling Brook.” For this personality, whatever enters into the eyes and ears, comes out of the mouth.

Whatever they see, whatever they hear, they tell.

Many marriages are built on Dead Seas and Babbling Brooks.

If you’re a Dead Sea and you date a Babbling Brook, you will have a great evening. The reason is because you don’t have to think about how to keep the conversation going, All you have to do is nod your head and say uh-huh, and the other person will fill up the whole evening with conversation.
On the other hand, if you are a Babbling Brook and you date a Dead Sea, you will have an equally wonderful evening because the Dead Seas are the worlds best listeners. They will listen intently to you and you will go home saying. What a wonderful person.

But after 5 years the Babbling Brook wakes up and says, we've been married for 5 years and I don't know anything about my spouse. While the Dead Sea says I've been listening to my spouse for 5 years and I wish they would stop the flow and give me a break.

The good news is that the Dead Seas can learn to talk and the Babbling Brooks can learn to listen. People are influenced by their personality but not controlled by it.

In closing

In addition to the basic love language of quality time, or giving your spouse your undivided attention, there is another dialect called quality activities.
The emphasis of **Quality Activities** is on being together, doing things together, giving each other your undivided attention.

**It’s not on what you do but on why you are doing it.**
The purpose is to experience something together, to walk away from it feeling your spouse cares for you.

One of the by-products of quality activities is that they provide a memory from which you can draw from in years to come.

You may ask where do we find time for such activities, especially if both of you have busy schedules?
**You make time.** Just as you make time for lunch and dinner.

**Why?**

Because it is essential to your marriage, as meals are to your health.

**Is it difficult? Yes!,**
Does it take careful planning? Yes,
Does it mean you have to give up activities? Perhaps!
Does it mean you have to do something you don’t particularly enjoy? Yes!, Is it worth it? Without a doubt.

You may ask, what do I get out of it?

The answer

The pleasure of living with your spouse who feels loved and knowing that you have learned to speak there love language. A happy marriage.