



Broadcast Transcript

Broadcast: Life Lessons and Love Languages – Part 1

Guest(s): Gary Chapman

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Dr. James Dobson: Well, hello everyone. I'm James Dobson, and you're listening to Family Talk, a listener supported ministry. In fact, thank you so much for being part of that support for James Dobson Family Institute.

Dr. Tim Clinton: You're listening to Family Talk, the broadcast division of the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute. I'm Dr. Tim Clinton, your host. I'm so glad you found today's program as we're having a very special guest join us, Dr. Gary Chapman. You probably know him as the man who wrote about the five love languages. His book, titled *The Five Love Languages*, has sold 20 million copies and has been on the *New York Times* Bestseller List since 2007.

Gary has been directly involved in real life family counseling since the early days of his ministry and has been on the staff at Cavalry Baptist Church in North Carolina for over 50 years. A celebrated author, speaker, he also hosts a nationally syndicated radio talk show that airs nationally on Moody Radio Network and over 400 affiliate stations. Dr. Dobson and I regard Gary as a good friend. That's why I'm delighted he's joining us here today on a special day, Valentine's Day. Gary recently released a new book called *Life Lessons and the Love Languages: What I've Learned From My Unexpected Journey*. That's the title of our topic today on our program. Gary, thank you for joining us on this edition of Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk.

Gary Chapman: Well, thank you, Tim. It's great to be with you. I've always appreciated Dr. Dobson through the years, the impact he's made on my life and many, many other lives. Great to be with you.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Gary, it's Valentine's Day. Love is in the air. You're a little busy this time of the year, aren't you?

Gary Chapman: Absolutely. Everyone wants me to talk about love.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Gary, you've impacted the world by teaching us all that it's not just about loving and being loved, but that we need to know how we love. Let's start right there by having you share a little bit about what that means and the five love languages.

Gary Chapman: Well, Tim, what I discovered years ago in my counseling is that what makes one person feel loved doesn't make another person feel loved, and I think almost everyone agrees that one of our deepest emotional needs as humans is the need to feel loved by the significant people in our lives. If you're married, the most important relationship is the spouse, and if you feel loved by your husband or wife, life is beautiful. If you don't feel loved, life can look pretty dark.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Not a good day.

Gary Chapman: Yeah, so that's what the five love languages is all about is that you have to discover what makes the other person feel loved. I call it their love language, and then speak it, and if you do they'll feel loved. If you don't, you can be sincere but still be missing the other person.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Gary, can you share the five love languages with us?

Gary Chapman: Sure. These are in no particular order of importance, but one of them would be words of affirmation. You look nice in that outfit. I really appreciate what you do. You know, there's an ancient Hebrew proverb that says life and death is in the power of the tongue. We can kill people by the way we talk to them or we can give them life, and for some people words of affirmation is their love language. You give these people critical words it's like a dagger in their heart, so words of affirmation. Then, acts of service, doing something for the other person that you know they would like for you to do. In a marriage, in family, that would be such things as cooking meals, washing dishes, vacuuming floors, washing cars. You know the old saying action speaks louder than words. If this is their love language, that is true, so acts of service.

Then there's gifts. It's universal to give gifts as an expression of love. The gift says they were thinking about me. Look what they got for me, and then there's quality time, giving the other person your undivided attention. I don't mean simply sitting on the couch watching television because someone else has your attention. I'm talking about TV is off, computer is down. We're not answering the phone. We're giving the other person our undivided attention, so quality time. Then physical touch. We've long known the emotional power of physical touch. In a marriage this would be such things as holding hands and kissing, embracing, the whole sexual part of the marriage, arm around the shoulder, sitting around the house and they walk by and you trip them. I'm kidding. I'm kidding. Don't trip your spouse. The simple idea, Tim, is that out of those five, each of us has what I call a primary love language, so if you learn their language and speak it, they're going to feel loved. If you don't, they won't feel loved. It's just that simple.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Gary, I remember early on in my counseling career, learning the love languages and then seeing it come alive in the counseling session. A lot of times the man's like what? I don't get it, and you're right. I'm loving her with everything I've got, and it's like it doesn't matter to her, and here he is lined up, giving everything he's got in what he thinks is love or what he wants, but it doesn't match up with

her, and that's a real aha moment when couples can get that peace, Gary. I want to go back to that statement is that correct again. You can be loving someone with everything you've got and they don't know that you necessarily love them.

Gary Chapman: Absolutely. I remember the husband who said, "Dr. Chapman," he said, "I start dinner because I get home before she does and sometimes I actually have dinner ready when she gets home. If not, she'll help me. Then we'll eat together. After dinner," he said, "I wash the dishes. Every Thursday night I vacuum the floor. Every Saturday I wash the car. I mow the grass. I help her with the laundry," and he went on. He said, "I do all of that and she says she doesn't feel loved."

I looked back at her and she said, "Dr. Chapman, he's right. He's a hardworking man," and then she started crying and she said, "But we don't ever talk. We haven't talked in 20 years. He's always mowing the grass, washing the dishes, vacuuming the floor, always doing something." He was sincere, but her language was quality time. She wanted him to sit down and talk with her or take a walk with her, and so she was crying for love and he was loving all the time. You're right. It's an aha moment when couples get that concept.

Dr. Tim Clinton: That persistent heart cry in the counseling session, Gary. All I've ever wanted is for someone to love me. There's nothing more beautiful in all the world than to be in a relationship with someone who's supposed to love you and they actually love you. In other words, you feel that. You experience it with them, and nothing more painful than to be in a relationship, Gary, with someone who's supposed to love you and they don't love you. At least you don't feel like they love you. That's a tough spot to be in, Gary, isn't it?

Gary Chapman: Well, it is, and I think when you are there, and unfortunately what happens many times when you go for a few years and you don't feel loved, then you meet somebody else and an attraction starts, and this is the way many divorces start is that out of what I call an empty love tank, and then they start having lunch with somebody and then it develops into an affair, and then they divorce. But the same thing will happen in the next marriage if they don't understand this concept, once they come down off the high, you know, the emotional high of say falling in love.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Yes.

Gary Chapman: That has an average lifespan of two years. It doesn't last forever, and then we get back in the real world, and if we don't know their love language and speak it on a regular basis, then they won't feel loved.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Gary, what is it that's wired into all of us? You go back to the Genesis account and you see that God is big on relationship. In other words, I think the Trinity reflects the social nature of God. I think the creation of angels reflects the social

nature of God. I think the creation of man let us make man in our image and so after creation God looks over everything and says it is good. But then there's that caveat in Scripture when God says, "But it's not good that man be alone. I will make a helpmeet fit for him." Gary, what is it about our relationships here and the power of it and the significance as we relate back to God for a moment, and can you connect some dots here of the power? I'm just thinking about as we move into your story, Gary, and your new book, *Life Lessons and Five Love Languages*, what is it in our heart that makes that cry so strong?

Gary Chapman: I think, Tim, it's what you allude to and that is that we're made in the image of God, and God is a God of love and a God of relationships, and I think deep within human nature, and it doesn't matter whether you're a Christian or not, if you're a human, then you have a deep desire to have intimate, close relationships.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Yes.

Gary Chapman: I mean, sometimes they are romantic relationships, yes, and sometimes they're just deep friendships that we have with people, but there's something in human nature that cries out to have relationship with others. I think that ultimately it is that desire also to have a relationship with God. In our culture that's downplayed, but in reality, the most satisfied people in the world are people who have received the love of God and they have a love relationship with God. That in turn affects everything else.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Gary, during the COVID run that we all had here, God put something in your heart and you went to work on a book called *Life Lessons and Love Languages: What I've Learned on My Unexpected Journey*. As I was going through the book I was thinking this is Chapman gold. This is all that backwater, that narrative that got wired into a boy who takes us on a journey, and what I love, Gary, about your publishers and more and people who know you, and you and I have been friends for a long time, and I mean this in the best sense of the word. You're just another guy on a journey with God, and when you have a conversation with Gary, it's like having a conversation with the guy down the street from you that you've known for 15, 20 years. Gary, tell us about how this came about and then we're going to journey through it together.

Gary Chapman: You know, I had just crossed the 80 mark. I'm moving into the 80s during COVID, and I thought you know if I'm ever going to reflect on my life and write something of my memoirs, I better get going while my brain is still working, so that's what motivated it. I didn't know how long it would take me. I didn't know, but I just began to reflect on my life and look back at my childhood, and then my educational journey, which for me was a long journey, and then my marriage and how that affected me.

Then my children and how they affected me, and then my vocation, and just started asking, just looking for how did this all happen? What did God use here in this stage of my life to teach me things that later on He would use in a

significant way. It was a personal journey and my hope is it's going to help some other people do the same thing, especially those that are getting older, to reflect back on their life, and even if you never publish it, write some things that your kids and your grandkids and your great grandkids can read. You can have an impact even after you're gone perhaps.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Gary, as I was going through the stories and could sense where you were going, you're giving us a gift of saying hey, listen, you may look back or maybe in your present life be thinking God, where are you? What is this kind of divine story that you're weaving here around my life? Sometimes it may be confusing. It may be difficult or what have you, but nevertheless, as you reflect back, Gary, you can see the hand of God all the way. Isn't that right?

Gary Chapman: Absolutely. The one thing that stands out in my mind and my heart, no matter what might occur in my life, was just to observe the hand of God step by step through all those stages of my life, and to see how, as you said, things that at the time didn't make sense to me. I was thinking a different way, and just God kind of steered me in another direction, which later on affected many, many other things, so I think there is that passage of Scripture that says man makes his plans and God directs his steps.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Yes.

Gary Chapman: We should make plans. We should be thinking about what am I doing, what am I going to do, but just, as I say, keep open because your plans might not be God's plans, and He may steer you to the right or the left, so keep open and when things happen that push you in a direction that you didn't think you wanted to go, ultimately God is going to use that to accomplish His purposes in your life.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Well, in classic Chapman writing style, we go on a journey. Gary, I just wanted to highlight a few pieces of this. First I wanted to talk about when you accepted Christ as a boy at age 10, and the significance of that, and along with that, Gary, if you could just highlight what you were saying in the book. You, through the years, have come to really realize the significance and influence of our families for good and bad.

Gary Chapman: You know, Tim, as an adult and as a pastor, people have often asked me do you think that children can really have a conversion experience? Do you think they really understand enough to become a follower of Christ? My own experience, I know that that is true. I was 10 years old. I had gone to church all my life. My parents were faithful Christians and went to church every Sunday morning, every Sunday night, every Wednesday night. But when I was 10 years old one night at church was the first time it dawned on me I'm not a Christian.

I've never invited Christ into my life, and it was a deep, deep sense. I need to do this, and I didn't want to go forward in the church because in our church that's what you did. You went to the front of the church and somebody prayed with

you in accepting Christ, and I didn't want to walk forward because I thought I don't want people to know that I'm not a Christian.

In my young child mind, I wrestled with that, and I didn't go forward, and then during that week, I thought well, I'll do it next Sunday. I remember I said I'll do it next Sunday. Well, next Sunday I was there in service and I didn't feel that same sense. I didn't have that tugging of what now I know was the Holy Spirit. I didn't feel that at all, and I thought man, did I miss my chance? This is all going through my childhood mind. Did I miss my chance?

Because I knew the story about Peter, you know, denying Christ, so I said okay. I went home that week and the next week I again sensed God calling me, and I almost ran to the front of the church that day. I just ran down there with tears, and then I just said Lord, I want Jesus as my Savior. I want you to come. I don't know all the words that I said, but that was my heart pouring out to God, and it was real for me. I knew that I was accepting Christ, and obviously I didn't know all the ins and outs of Scripture, but I was accepting him as a baby Christian. I was coming into the family.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Gary, as you go on that journey, there are life experiences that then begin to push back or maybe cement that relationship with God and Christ. One of the fascinating stories in your book was the story of Beau, that tough kid who had the smokes wrapped up in his shirt sleeve, and he confronted you one day and said are you a Christian? You could imagine kids in school getting a lot of pushback, made fun of, et cetera, because hey, you go to a public school, what have you, Gary, and you're trying to live out, not cuss, do different things, and you're different than say the other kids, and that's where that kind of pushback comes. But tell that story a little bit. I thought it was just fascinating because it did something in your heart.

Gary Chapman: Yeah. It was not long after I had become a Christian. It was at the bus stop where we got the public school bus every morning, and Beau was a senior in high school. Of course, I was, again, 10 years old, and Beau walked up to me at the bus stop and he said somebody told me you're a Christian. Are you? Man, I looked up at him and he was bigger than me. As you said, he had his cigarettes wrapped up in his sleeve.

Dr. Tim Clinton: I could see him.

Gary Chapman: Yeah, and I said not me. He said well, good, and he walked off. All that day I just felt so guilty. I felt so down. I felt like I had let God down, which I had. That night I just poured my heart out to God and I said God, forgive me please. I didn't stand up to you. I was just like Peter. I denied that I knew you. I just poured my heart out to God, and God always forgives us when we come to Him with a broken heart. I said Lord, help me to never, ever do that again. Looking back I regret it that I never went back to Beau and just walked up to him and said hey, man, I lied to you. I am a follower of Jesus.

Dr. Tim Clinton: This is the wiring, by the way, that is in the DNA of Dr. Gary Chapman, who begins this walk with God, who sees what it means to be loved by God, and then knows that he made us to have love for one another and to make sure that we're endeared to each other, and this endearment that's in Gary's heart that we're talking about today on Family Talk is coming out of a new book called *Life Lessons and Love Languages*. You know Dr. Gary Chapman and his *New York Times* bestselling book, *The Five Love Languages*, and how God used him mightily all over the globe.

He's such a good friend, and Gary, so enjoying this conversation. A couple other things that stood out in the book to me, there are all kinds of stories, but I love it. It's like sitting on the front porch and having conversation together, was a story about you and your dad having to go get your grandpa, who was drunk one night, and I think in a ditch or something. Gary, do you mind sharing that? Because again, these are the things that wire deep down inside of us, and they're life lessons that challenge us and push us in a direction.

Gary Chapman: Yeah, Tim, I think I was 12 or maybe 13 years old at this time, and one night a man knocked on the back door of our house, and my father went to the door, and the man told him your father is drunk up there beside the highway in a ditch. You better go get him. Well, I knew my grandfather drank and my dad said to me get your coat on, because it was rather cold. He said get your coat on. I want you to go help with grandpa. I walked up, it was a tenth of a mile up to the main highway, and sure enough, there was my grandfather in a ditch drunk. My dad got under one arm and I got under the other and we walked him home, and all the while he was mumbling about why he didn't need our help.

We walked him home and put him to bed that night, and my dad didn't give me a lecture. He didn't say anything about drinking that night, but that's the night I decided I'm never going to mess with alcohol, and that's a decision I made then. I've never rescinded that decision, and everybody else can do what they want to do. I made my decision and as I began to grow, I realized how alcohol and drugs, of course, has messed the brain of so many people up, and I wanted a good brain. I needed a good brain, so I didn't want to mess it up. Yeah, those are decisions that we make along the way. You look back on them and say Lord, thank you that that happened and you taught me that lesson and made that decision so in the teenage years I didn't get strung out on alcohol like so many kids did, but for which I've been very, very grateful.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Yeah. Gary, there was an endearment that was happening too inside your own family because you saw sacrifice. You didn't see perfection, but you felt loved, and God was at work in your heart. Gary, we're pressing toward the end of our first day here. There's so much to talk about. There's so much story here, but Gary, as a part of closing our first day, I wanted to address, I want to come back to Valentine's Day. At the end of the day, you're weaving a story of love, and the essence of life Ovid said was to love and be loved. God wired us that day. Some listening right now, they're in great relationships and they're enjoying it. Others who are listening right now, this is not a good day for them. This is a hard day.

Gary, maybe they're in a dark season. Maybe they've gone through loss. Maybe they're in a toxic relationship or they're just alone. What do you say to them? Because at the end of the day, like the Psalmists cried out, "Thou my mother and father forsake me," maybe the relationships in my life are all trashed and garbage. There is one who loves me and who will deliver me up.

Gary Chapman: Yeah, what I would say, Tim, is exactly in response to the truth that you just shared, and that is in your loneliness, in your hurt, in your brokenness, in your sense that no one cares, in your sense of loss, run to God. Run to God. He's always there. His arms are always open, and even though sometimes you don't understand even what's happened, maybe you've lost a relationship or maybe someone in your family has died, and you said God, why? Why did you let this happen at this stage?

Listen, we don't always understand the things that happen in our lives, but wherever we are, and whatever is happening, God loves us. So, on this Valentine's Day, I would say just spend some time consciously talking to God. If you're angry with God, tell God you're angry. It's okay. You're not going to hurt his feelings. He knows it anyway. I don't understand this, Lord. It's okay to pour out your heart to God, but then end up with saying but Lord, I want to give my life to you. I want to walk with you through this journey, so hold my hand and then read Isaiah 41, Tim, where God says He will be with you and He's going to hold you with His right hand.

Dr. Tim Clinton: To all of our listeners out there today, a special word of appreciation for all of you from Dr. Dobson and his wife Shirley and the entire team. Happy Valentine's Day, praying that God would sow seeds of deep love into your heart, that are anchored in and rooted in our relationship with God and Christ, and then to those you hold dear. May that be the blessing of your day. Dr. Chapman, thank you again for joining us. On behalf of Dr. Dobson and the team here, we salute you and I can't wait to jump into our conversation tomorrow. Thank you again for joining us.

Roger Marsh: You're listening to Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk. I'm Roger Marsh and we have just heard part one of a conversation featuring our co-host, Dr. Tim Clinton and bestselling author, Dr. Gary Chapman. They talked about Dr. Chapman's new autobiographical book called *Life Lessons and Love Languages*. Gary Chapman is, of course, the author of the bestselling book, *The Five Love Languages*, but did you know that he did not set out to be an author? In fact, *The Five Love Languages*, along with his many other books, are the result of real life conversations he has had during the thousands of hours he spent counseling couples at his church. Make sure you join us again tomorrow as Dr. Chapman will share more stories from his life in ministry and the wisdom he's learned from serving the Lord.

Now if you want to learn more about Gary Chapman, the five love languages, or listen to any part of the program that you might have missed on today's broadcast, please visit drjamesdobson.org/broadcast. That's

drjamesdobson.org/broadcast, or give us a call at (877) 732-6825. Now in the spirit of Valentine's Day, I want to tell you all about a free marriage devotional series that we've created just for you and your sweetheart this February. It runs for 10 days and if you and your spouse want to build a closer relationship with each other and with the Lord, this email series is for you. Learn more when you visit drjamesdobson.org. That's drjamesdobson.org Thanks again for listening to Family Talk, and be sure to join us again tomorrow to hear the conclusion of Dr. Tim Clinton's conversation with Dr. Gary Chapman, and from all of us here at the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute, Happy Valentine's Day.

Announcer: This has been a presentation of the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute.