

“We need others physically, emotionally, intellectually: we need them if we are to know anything, even ourselves.”

C.S. Lewis, *The Four Loves*

**Three observations:**

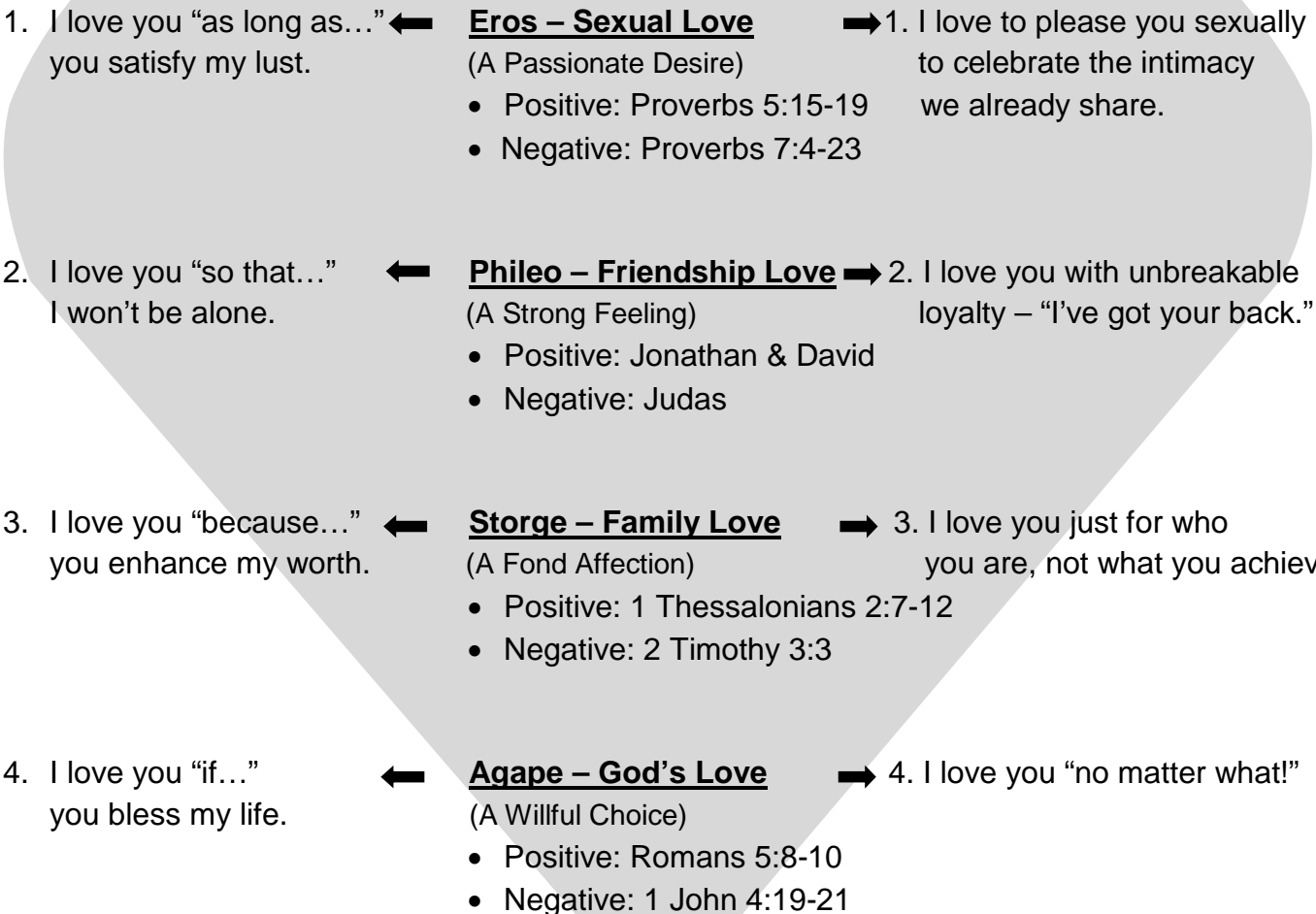
1. We are all hard-wired to need to be loved just for who we really are.
2. No amount of success, fame, education, or power can fill the human heart's need to real love.
3. Real love seems very hard to find.

**SO... What IS real love? Where does real love come from? How do you find real love in real life?**

## Four Kinds of Love

### Pseudo Love = "To Get..."

### Real Love = "To Give..."

- 
- |   |   |   |   |  |
|---|---|---|---|--|
| 1. I love you "as long as..."<br>you satisfy my lust. | ← | <b><u>Eros – Sexual Love</u></b><br>(A Passionate Desire) <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Positive: Proverbs 5:15-19</li><li>• Negative: Proverbs 7:4-23</li></ul>    | → | 1. I love to please you sexually<br>to celebrate the intimacy<br>we already share. |
| 2. I love you "so that..."<br>I won't be alone.       | ← | <b><u>Phileo – Friendship Love</u></b><br>(A Strong Feeling) <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Positive: Jonathan &amp; David</li><li>• Negative: Judas</li></ul>       | → | 2. I love you with unbreakable<br>loyalty – "I've got your back."                  |
| 3. I love you "because..."<br>you enhance my worth.   | ← | <b><u>Storge – Family Love</u></b><br>(A Fond Affection) <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Positive: 1 Thessalonians 2:7-12</li><li>• Negative: 2 Timothy 3:3</li></ul> | → | 3. I love you just for who<br>you are, not what you achieve.                       |
| 4. I love you "if..."<br>you bless my life.           | ← | <b><u>Agape – God's Love</u></b><br>(A Willful Choice) <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Positive: Romans 5:8-10</li><li>• Negative: 1 John 4:19-21</li></ul>           | → | 4. I love you "no matter what!"  |

Love is **CHOOSING** to give another person what they need the most,  
when they deserve it the least, at great personal cost.

## What have we learned about real love?

1. We are **ALREADY** deeply and completely love by God. Romans 5:8
  
2. We must receive His love by **FAITH** before we have the power to love Him, each other, our families, neighbors, and enemies. 1 John 4:19
  
3. Pseudo love promises life but **DESTROYS** us and our relationships. Romans 6:23  
Proverbs 14:12
  
4. God has a specific **DESIGN** and process for us to experience REAL love in REAL life. 1 John 4:9-11
  
5. Love NEVER **FAILS!** It covers our past, our faults, our mistakes, and our sins. It redeems, restores, forgives, and births new life and new relationships. 1 Corinthians 13

*Love is patient, love is kind and is not jealous; love does not brag and is not arrogant, does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong suffered, does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails.*

1 Corinthians 13:4-8a

**Application: After going through this message...**

1. How would you define real love?
2. Where does real love come from?
3. How will you go about finding real love?
4. How will you go about giving real love?
5. How will you go about receiving real love?

## Introduction:

1. We all have legitimate needs and longings that only real love can fulfill.
2. God originally designed parents, family, friends, and spouses to be the major tools in His hands to meet those needs and longings.

3. Real love is....

*Love is very patient and kind, never jealous or envious, never boastful or proud,*

*Never haughty or selfish or rude. Love does not demand its own way. It is not irritable or touchy. It does not hold grudges and will hardly even notice when others do it wrong.*

*It is never glad about injustice, but rejoices whenever truth wins out.*

*If you love someone, you will be loyal to him no matter what the cost. You will always believe in him, always expect the best of him, and always stand your ground in defending him.*

1 Corinthians 13:4-7

4. If we all long to be loved and want to be loving, why is real love so hard to find?

## Four Barriers to Love:

### 1. Spiritual Barriers: Sin, Shame, Selfishness

Genesis 3

- **Differences** - Originally designed to compliment and complete one another; have become sources of friction, confusion, and competition.
- **Sharing** - Has turned to shame.
- **Givers** - Have become takers and manipulators.
- **Builders** - Have become blamers.
- **Openness** - Has given way to hiding.

The Answer: SALVATION

2 Corinthians 5:14-17

Other resources: The Daily Walk Bible  
*The Miracle of Life Change* by Chip Ingram

### 2. Psychological Barriers: Personality Differences

Psalms 139:13-15

- Introvert vs. Extrovert
- Assertive vs. Easy Going
- Factual vs. Abstract
- Systematic vs. Spontaneous

The Answer: APPRECIATION

Colossians 3:12-14

Other resources: *The Intimacy Factor* by David and Jan Stoops  
Byers Briggs, DISC Assessment, StrengthsFinder

### 3. Gender Barriers: Male / Female Differences

1 Peter 3

#### MALES TEND TO BE...

- More achievement focused
- More theoretical and generalist
- More information oriented in communication
- More action oriented
- More facts oriented
- More goal oriented

#### FEMALES TEND TO BE...

- More relationally focused
- More specific and detail oriented
- More emotion oriented in communication
- More verbal oriented
- More intuitively oriented
- More supportive and nurturing oriented

From *To Understand Each Other* by Paul Tournier

The Answer: APPRECIATION

1 Peter 3:7-8

Other resources: *His Needs, Her Needs* by Willard F. Harley, Jr.  
*Men are from Mars, Women are from Venus* by John Gray

### 4. Historical Barriers: “Our Baggage” from the Past 1 Corinthians 6:9-1

- Family Upbringing
- Traumatic Events
- False Beliefs / “Games We Play”
- Rejection and Past Relationships

The Answer: KNOWLEDGE

Proverbs 20:5

Other resources: *The Search for Significance* by Robert S. McGee;  
*Telling Yourself the Truth* by William Backus

## Your action plan to break through the Love Barriers:

1. RECEIVE God's love!

“You can't impart what you don't possess.” Howard Hendricks

2. PICK one relationship to focus on this week.

3. IDENTIFY their primary love language.

See: *The Five Love Languages* by Gary Chapman

- Quality time
- Words of affirmation
- Gifts
- Acts of service
- Physical touch

4. CHOOSE to love them in that way, every day, for the next 7 days, regardless of how they respond.

## Summary:

- Real love requires supernatural POWER.
- Real love is HARD\_ WORK.
- Real love is a CHOICE not a FEELING.
- Real love is your greatest NEED and greatest REWARD.



**Introduction: It all started with “the car.”**

**The issue:** Communication or Chaos

**Understanding the communication process:**

- **Definition:** The meeting of **MEANINGS** .

“Communication is the privilege of exchanging vulnerabilities.”

Norman Wright

“Communication is the process of sharing yourself verbally and nonverbally in such a way that the other person can both accept and understand what you are saying.”

Norman Wright

- **The Complete Message**

Words Alone = 7% of meaning

Tone of Voice = 38% of meaning

Facial Expression }  
Gestures - Posture } = 55% of meaning  
Total Non-Verbal }

- **Five Levels of Communication**

Level	Type	Description
Level 1	Cliché Conversations	Safe, shallow, polite
Level 2	Reporting Facts	Refers basically to third person
Level 3	Ideas or Judgments	Risk begins here (attachment of self with facts)
Level 4	Feelings and Emotions	Laying self on the line
Level 5	Open Communication	Total honesty, "mutual understanding," vulnerability

From *Why Am I Afraid To Tell You Who I Am?* by John Powell

## 5 Principles that will transform communication in your home:

1. **BE HONEST** - Speak the truth in love.

*...but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all {aspects} into Him, who is the head, {even} Christ...*

*Therefore, laying aside falsehood, speak truth each one of you with his neighbor, for we are members of one another.*

Ephesians 4:15, 25

2. **BE ANGRY** - Deal with anger appropriately.

*Be angry, and yet do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, and do not give the devil an opportunity.*

Ephesians 4:26-27

3. **BE DILIGENT** - Work hard on your relationships.

*He who steals must steal no longer; but rather he must labor, performing with his own hands what is good, so that he will have something to share with one who has need.*

Ephesians 4:28

4. **BE POSITIVE** - Don't wound with your words.

*Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such a word as is good for edification according to the need of the moment, so that it will give grace to those who hear. Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice.*

Ephesians 4:29-31

5. **BE FORGIVING** - Be the first to say, "I'm sorry."

*Be kind to one another; tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in God in Christ also has forgiven you.*

Ephesians 4:32

**Practical skills and suggestions to enhance communication:**

• **The conference** - A tool for **LISTENING**

Ask Three Questions: 1 - What are you concerned about?  
2 - What do you wish?  
3 - What are you willing to do?

• **Word pictures** - A tool for **UNDERSTANDING**

**Discussion Questions:**

1. What did you learn about communication that was new or helpful to you?
2. Which of the Five Biblical Principles concerning communication from Ephesians 4 do you do well?
3. With whom do you need to communicate better?
4. Which of the Five Biblical Principles of communication do you need to work on?
5. Which of the skills shared do you think would help your relationships the most?  
The conference? Word pictures? Why?
6. What specific step of faith are you going to take to improve your communication with friends, family, coworkers?

Other resources:

Communication – Key to Your Marriage by Norman Wright

Relationships by Drs. Les and Leslie Parrott

## **Hollywood's Prescription for Lasting Relationships:**

### **A. 4 steps to follow!**

1. **FIND** the right person.
2. **FALL** in love.
3. **FIX** your hopes and dreams on this person for your future fulfillment.
4. If **FAILURE** occurs, repeat steps 1, 2, and 3.

### **B. The success rate:**

### **C. The pain, the fall-out, and the damage:**

## **God's Prescription for Lasting Relationships:**

*Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children; and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you, and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma.*

Ephesians 5:1-2

### **A. 4 steps to follow!**

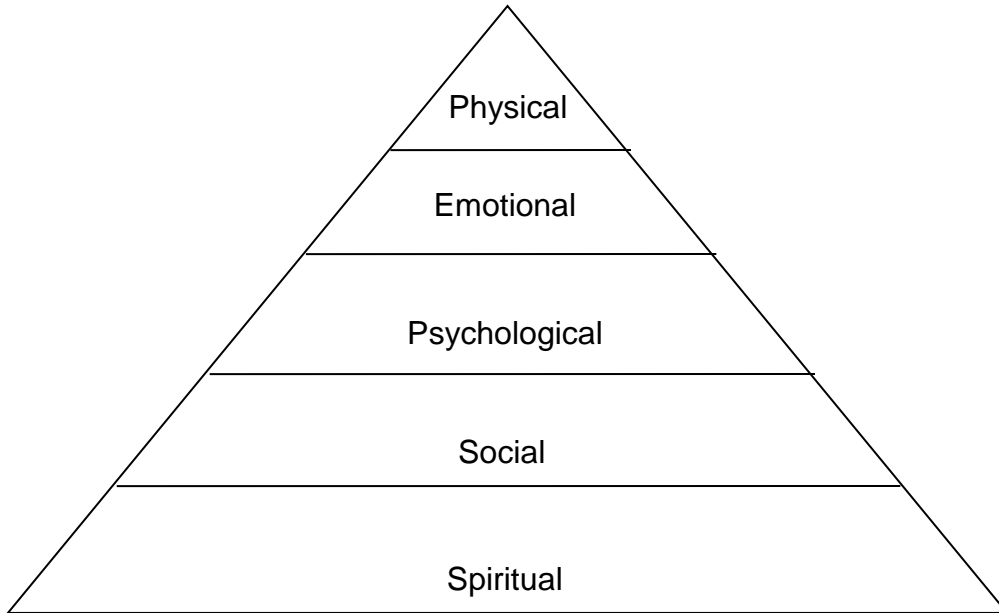
1. **BECOME** the right person.
2. **WALK** in love.
3. **FIX** your hope on God and seek to please Him through this relationship.
4. If **FAILURE** occurs, repeat steps 1, 2, and 3.

### **B. The success rate:**

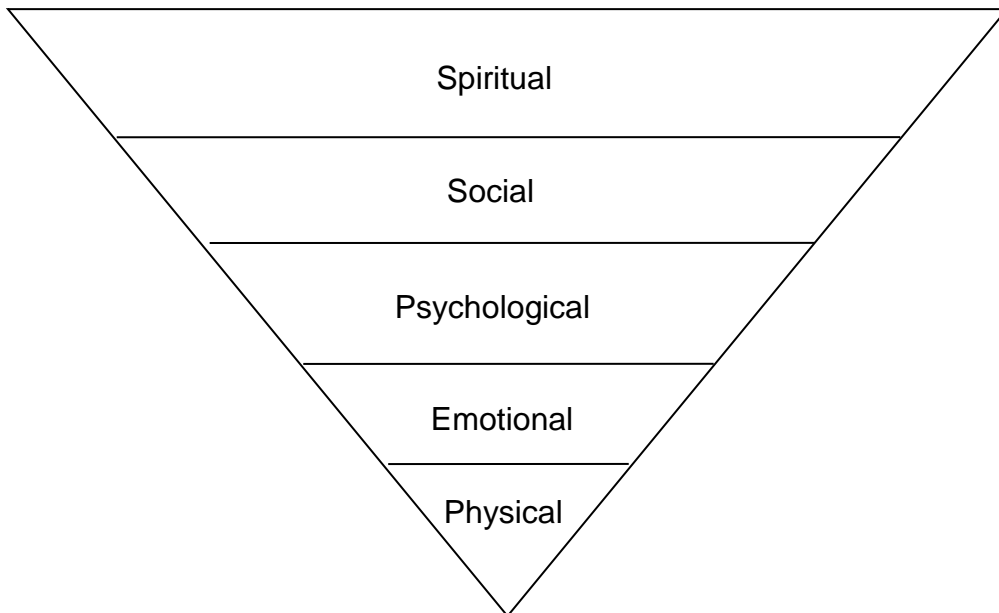
### **C. The reward, the legacy, and the blessing:**

**Pictorial Summary: 2 models for a LASTING relationship**

**God's Model**



**Hollywood's Model**



**Personal evaluation and analysis:**

1. Which triangle most represents your approach to building a lasting relationship?
2. What would you like your present and/or future relationships to look like; God's model or Hollywood's model?
3. What specific steps do you need to take to begin implementing **God's secret** to a lasting relationship?

4. A word to . . .
- . . . uninvolved singles.
  - . . . involved singles.
  - . . . divorced/widowed.
  - . . . married couples.

Reference: Judith Wallerstein & Mavis Hetherington – University of Virginia  
*U.S. News Weekly*



## Introduction: Piercing Words – Wounded Lives

The **ROOT** cause of interpersonal conflicts is our consuming passion for **SELF - GRATIFICATION**.

*What is causing the quarrels and fights among you? Don't they come from the evil desires at war within you? You want what you don't have, so you scheme and kill to get it. You are jealous of what others have, but you can't get, so you fight and wage war to take it away from them. Yet you don't have what you want because you don't ask God for it. And even when you ask, you don't get it because your motives are all wrong. You want only what will give you pleasure.*

James 4:1-3

- Our Problem:
- The Symptoms:
- Our Strategy:
- The Results:

### God's diagnosis: Our quarrels reveal...

- We've believed a lie.
- We've betrayed a trust.
- We've become an enemy.

*You adulterers! Don't you realize that friendship with the world makes you an enemy of God? I say it again: If you want to be a friend of the world, you make yourself an enemy of God. Do you think the Scriptures have no meaning? They say that God is passionate that the Spirit He has placed within us should be faithful to Him. And He gives grace generously. As the Scriptures say, "God opposes the proud but give grace to the humble."*

James 4: 4-6

**God's Prescription:** HUMBLE YOURSELF and God will heal your relationships.

*So humble yourselves before God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Come close to God, and God will come close to you. Wash your hands you sinners; purify your hearts, for your loyalty is divided between God and the world. Let there be tears for what you have done. Let there be sorrow and deep grief. Let there be sadness instead of laughter, and gloom instead of joy. Humble yourselves before the Lord, and He will lift you up in honor.*

James 4: 7-10

**Steps to Diffuse Conflict:**

1. GIVE IN TO GOD.  
"Submit yourselves therefore to God . . ."  
James 4:7a
2. GET TOUGH WITH SATAN.  
"Resist the devil and he will flee from you."  
James 4:7b
3. GET CLOSE TO GOD.  
"Draw near to God and He will draw near to you."  
James 4:8a
4. GET RIGHT WITH GOD.  
"Cleanse your hands . . . purify your hearts . . ."  
James 4:8b

**God's promise for the humble is: He will LIFT you up.** James 4:10

## **Application:**

1. What is at the core of our conflicts with other people? Briefly define “hedonism” in your own words.
2. Why is hedonism a lie? How are we influenced to unconsciously “buy into” its philosophy daily?
3. How does God view our strategies to gratify ourselves apart from Him?
4. What is the solution to interpersonal conflict? What specifically is involved in “humbling ourselves” before God and others?
5. Is there a specific relationship that needs attention in your life? What would humbling yourself look like in this situation?