

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: _____

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: _____

Colossians 3:12-14

Other resources: *The Intimacy Factor* by David and Jan Stoops
Myers 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: _____

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 6:9-11

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

The Answer: _____

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. _____ God's love!

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

2. _____ one relationship to focus on this week.

3. _____ their primary love language.

See: *The Five Love Languages* by Gary Chapman

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

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

Summary:

- Real love requires supernatural _____.
- Real love is _____.
- Real love is a _____ not a _____.
- Real love is your greatest _____ and greatest _____.