

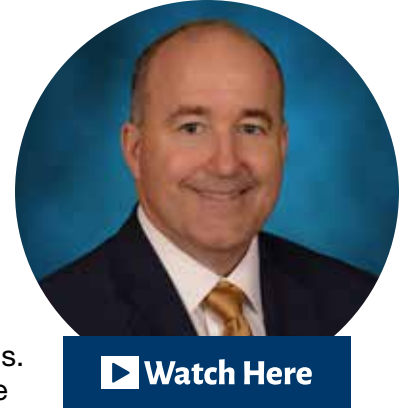


# Relationships

*Devotional featuring Larry Taylor*

Family relationships have their moments of joy and frustration - and really the full spectrum. Whether it's tension in the marriage or a sibling squabble at the dinner table, we are bound to fall to our human frailty. And when that happens, what should we do? The simple answer is to continue to love the same type of unconditional love that Jesus has for you, and parents should have for their children.

First Corinthians 13 is probably the most often quoted scripture about love, and I think it applies to the love we have for family and parents and children. It describes what love is and what it's not. It is patient it is kind, and it keeps no record of wrongs. It rejoices in truth and protects, trusts, hopes, and perseveres. And at the end of the chapter, it says this, "The greatest of these is love." We know that love is greater than all spiritual gifts because first John 4:8 says, "God is love."



How are you loving the closest people in your life? Here are two ways to apply love better. Number one, develop an intentional family plan. I believe there are three parts to a family plan. There is a personal spiritual development plan, a there is a marriage or a preparation for marriage plan, and there is a child discipleship or mentoring plan. All three of these plans, personal spiritual marriage and child mentoring, are interdependent. They all work together, but the end result is to create a routine and rhythm in the busy-ness of life and to elevate our family. This will help us establish that constant conduit of love.

Number two, understand how your family gives and receives love best. The Five Love Languages by Gary Chapman details this well. I encourage you to discover the love language that speaks the most to your spouse and to your children and then try to give love to your family in those meaningful ways. We are all going to have moments of frustration in our relationships. Every family has them. I want to encourage you to remember John 13, verses 34 and 35, "A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another." As you love your family, you will be the hands and feet of Jesus for them. So love big.

## MEDITATE

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## REFLECT

What do we learn about God in John 13:34-35?

How are you loving the closest people in your life?

How can we be the constant conduit of love to our students?