



“Shower the people you love with love, show them the way you feel...”

No matter what our taste in music, from James Taylor’s ‘Shower the people’ to Coldplay’s ‘Violet Hill’ we are urged to let those we love know the fact!



How do we go about showing that love?

Gary Chapman’s book ‘Five Love Languages’ offers ways to express your love. More on this below.

Now here I am presuming that we love those in our families, but when you think about it, it is those in our families for whom we reserve not only the best, but also the worst of ourselves. This is probably due to the fact that we know they will still accept

us despite our faults. It is where we are at our most real. Indeed Jesus invited those seeking to know him to ‘come and see’ where he lived and probably meet the family. They often define a large portion of who we are.

So who is our family?

We have our blood family, of course, and relatives near and far flung. Jesus himself asks the question ‘Who is my mother? Who is my brother?’ I think he asks this question in the same vein as he answers the question ‘who is my neighbour?’. Our family includes those we share our faith with and indeed those with whom we sometimes share little...we are all God’s creation, and

thus children of God, and so brothers and sisters in Christ.

Can you think of a time when you felt a profound sense of gratitude for your ‘family’?

In answer to this question I am often told stories of crisis, or of great tenderness. I am told of moments of great understanding and selfless love. This is the reality of family love; it’s messy, requires flexibility and is dynamic.

Family life is a challenge because the stakes are so high. Which other relationships can hold out so much promise: a life-long sense of belonging, a rare depth of intimacy, the shelter of each other’s arms?

It is where life to the full happens!



How do you let them know?

What would you not do for a family loved one?

How often do you express that love?

How do you express it? Chapman suggests we might affirm those we love, or offer them our time. Throughout the stages of life this way of showing our love might be the most squeezed by our

hectic life styles. We could offer gifts or acts of service. My personal favourite is a gentle touch. But here is the key; we need to discover which expression of love is the favourite for each member of our blood or faith family in order for them to feel that love! So DO talk and communicate. Pray for and WITH one another.

Thank one another, take time to get to know one another’s stories, what thrills them, what disappoints them. ‘Come and see’, really see them!

Have a read of http://www.ncfliving.org/bk_107_not-enough1.php for one American parent’s story...

Try this...

Find an old photograph of yourself as a young child or your own children when they were little - can you remember the time the photograph was taken? What memories does it bring back to you? How does it inform or transform your thinking of those in the picture?

