

Lesson in Living

Express Love

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Words: Just three little words, "I love you," yet how much influence they have had! Some of us use them blithely without much thought; others of us use them with deep meaning. Most of the time their use falls between the two extremes. Written and spoken words do much to express love. Greeting card companies pay well for prose that stirs hearts and bonds people closer together. Besides written and spoken words, there are at least four other ways of expressing affection.

Deeds: When we remember birthdays and special occasions, we send messages that we care. When we treat a person with kindness, we show respect. When men open doors and seat their women folks they demonstrate courtesy. When females bake special goodies for their loved ones, they say, "I am thinking of you." When they keep track of family affairs, they bring order to their lives. Seeing mothers and fathers taking their children to music lessons and ball games makes us feel like all is well in the world.

Odors: How can odors express love? Let me tell you how I did it: When I was a full time homemaker, I welcomed loved ones home with the aroma of sautéing onions and baking bread sticks. It gave me joy to do so. I ground grain and made 100% whole wheat bread regularly; it was the main staple of our diet. Later, when I had to go back to work, we still enjoyed homemade bread; I prepared the dough before leaving in the morning and hurried home to heat the oven and insert the bread sticks so there would be tantalizing aromas greeting my returning loved ones. To me, this was an act of love. But what other ways can odors express love? Is there a sweeter scent than that of a freshly bathed infant? And why would we wear perfume and cologne except to be more appealing?

Body Language: The most important body language is a pleasant smile! Children and pets respond quickly when we show them happy faces. Smile! Smile! Smile! Hugs, kisses and affectionate touches also draw people closer. However, it is important that physical affection be a private matter. It seems irreverent to me to see family members scratching and rubbing each other in public. Quiet sitting is the body language of reverence. Looking people directly in their eyes is the body language of attentiveness.

Sounds: If we can identify the love theme of a movie, we can know when romance is about to take place. Why can't we have appropriate background music in our homes? Listen how professionals use a variety of tones to give the same word different meanings. How softly they "coo" when expressing love! Can we imitate them and speak more softly and lovingly in our homes? In my own family we achieved this by setting a goal to have a "heavenly sounding home." It worked like magic! Try it, you'll like it!

Note from Elma: *At times, it is well to ask ourselves: "How would I feel if my loved ones treated me the way I treat them?" Bear in mind that the way others feel about us is largely determined by the way we make them feel about themselves when they are around us. Remember the Golden Rule? "Do unto others as you would have others do unto you." Study my Picture Sermon to find other ways of expressing love in word and deed. Note the ways we express negative, LOVES ME NOT's. And I'll bet most of us do these without even realizing it. We need to replace them with positive LOVES ME's.*

