

# SPIRIT-EMPOWERED DAD

## Lesson 6: A Spirit-Empowered Dad Creatively Communicates His Love

**Main Idea:** D. Ross Campbell, in his book *How to Really Love Your Child*, says, “A child is the most needy person in our society, and the greatest need is love.” A dad who does not show love to his children can harm them in many ways. In this lesson, you will learn how to communicate with your children in a loving manner.



### SIGHTLINE: Acquire Your Target

One of the most effective plans of action as a dad is to make you communicate love to your family. This communication must begin with your wife. Your children will sense if your love is genuine or conditional with strings attached. They need to see that you are totally committed to your wife.

Selfishness is a relationship killer. It has at its core the idea, “I have to be right and my needs have to be met.” A Spirit-empowered dad understands that when he conquers selfishness, he will be happy in all of his relationships, especially with those closest to him. When you have a disagreement, it is human nature to feel the need to be correct or to feel resentful if your needs aren’t being met. But a Spirit-empowered Dad understands that the most important issue is what is right for the family long-term, not just who is right in the moment or whose needs get the most attention at the time.

You must learn to communicate to your family both verbally and nonverbally. For a more in-depth study on how to do this, Gary Chapman’s book *The Five Love Languages* is filled with practical suggestions.



## CROSSHAIR: Focus On Your Target

Lack of love can lead to low self-esteem and feelings of isolation. Misbehavior is common among children who do not feel loved. A child's misbehavior is often a cry for love. When dads do not show their children love, they may turn to other people or things to satisfy their desire to be loved. This search for love often leads them to very detrimental situations and relationships.

Dads cannot assume that their children know they love them. Even if you are a good provider and do things for them, your children still need to hear three powerful little words: "I love you." The first benefit of speaking love to your child is that it helps them have a healthy view of themselves. When a child hears "I love you" from their dad often, even when they have been acting badly, the child comes to know that they are loved not because of what they do, but because of who they are. Second, expressing love to your child will help them have a greater sense of security. Children who are told they are loved are less likely to develop unhealthy fears and phobias. Their home is a safe place. The third benefit that occurs when fathers speak love to their children is that they develop understanding of their emotions. A Spirit-empowered dad who says, "I love you" with feeling and sincerity helps his children learn about one of the most important emotions in life. Their future relationships will be patterned on spoken expressions of love.

Of course, "I love you" does not always have to be verbalized. A very effective non-verbal way is to put it in writing. Taking time to write your loving thoughts for your child can make a big impact. Saying "I love you" can be communicated in other creative ways. Some families have developed code words or phrases that everyone knows to mean, "I love you." Others have come up with hand signals or some other creative signal that sends this important message. These do not take the place of the verbal expression but are simple ways to add depth and significance to expressions of love.



## **BULLSEYE: Zero In On Your Target**

- Why do dads sometimes have problems saying “I love you” to their children?
- What evidence do your children have that proves you love your wife?
- What evidence do your children have that proves you love them?
- On a scale of 1–4, with 1 being very well and 4 being not well, rate yourself on how well you know each of your children and write a plan to improve in the following:

when your child has a difficult day.

when your child is upset.

the names of your child’s best friends.

what encourages your child the most.

when you hurt your child’s feelings.

strengths and weaknesses of your child.

what motivates your child.

what embarrasses your child.

what disappoints your child.

## NEXT STEP:

This section gives suggestions for how to turn your new knowledge into an action step. Men's Ministries realizes that not all relationships are created equally. If these action steps seem too difficult, adjust your next step so it will fit into your relationship with your child.

- **Courage:** Write a note to each of your children expressing your love for them and what you desire most for their life.
- **Strength:** Commit to read *The Five Love Languages of Children* by Gary Chapman and Ross Campbell in the next 30 days. Work through the study guide at <https://www.5lovelanguages.com/store/62>.
- **Endurance:** With each of your children, work through the love language mystery game and the children's love language quiz at <https://www.5lovelanguages.com/quizzes/3> and <https://media.5lovelanguages.com/6999bbff-1858-40a2-a503-5ac57dd62e8d/5LLChildrenMysteryGame.pdf>.  
What did you learn about your children?

