



DATE	February 26, 2017
SPEAKER	David Smith
TITLE	The Difference Between Love and Sex
SERIES	There's a lot of relationship advice out there. So what's God's prescription for healthy relationships? Let's take a closer look at the book of Ephesians to learn more about God's plan to help our relationships thrive.

Introduction: In this week's message, Pastor David Smith focused on the importance of addressing conflicts in relationships.

1. Read *Ephesians 5:1-16*. How do you think v.1 sets up thoughts the Apostle Paul says in the following verses? What key ideas do you see in v.1 that impact those thoughts?
2. Pastor David said the difference between love and sex is physical intimacy and soul intimacy. The physical intimacy side of sex is obvious, but what do you think is distinctive about soul intimacy? How is it demonstrated in a marriage/romantic relationship? Is it the same or different between Believers and non-Believers? If so, how?

3. Read Romans 12:17-18. Pastor David said that in resolving conflicts...

- Sometimes it's just not possible
- You can't control the reaction and response of someone else

Discuss this from the standpoint of general relationships (work, friends etc.) and marriage/romantic relationships. How might this idea apply to a marriage/romantic relationship that has dissolved? What various conflict dynamics might have to be worked through?

4. Read the corresponding scripture passages below and discuss the effects of unresolved conflict. How do you see these effects played out in life?

- Blocks my relationship with God - *1 John 4:18*
- Prevents answered prayer - *1 Peter 3:7, Mark 11:25*
- Hinders my happiness - *Proverbs 10:12*

5. Pastor David mentioned three responses to conflict. Which ones most accurately represent how you respond? What might addressing it in God's power of love involve?

- Distance ourselves
- Become defensive
- Demanding—by controlling the situation

6. Read Matthew 5:23-24. We generally consider a relationship to God as our first priority. And yet, Pastor David pointed out that, "reconciliation takes priority over worship." Why do you think this is the case?

7. Pastor David said, “time does not resolve conflict, but there should be “timing in conflict” (right time, right place). Discuss conflict resolution timing strategies and principles. What are ways you’ve used timing effectively and ineffectively. What do you think made the difference?

8. Read through the scripture passages below and discuss the various points. What lessons have you learned in each area? Which ones do you need to work on? What other scriptures or Biblical truths do you think apply?

- Confess my part of the conflict - *Matthew 7:3,5*
- Listen for the hurt - *James 1:19*
- Consider their perspective - *Philippians 2:4-5*
- Tell the truth tactfully - *Proverbs 12:18, Ephesians 4:29*
- Fix the problem, rather than placing blame - *Colossians 3:8, Romans 14:13*

Conclusion: Individually or perhaps as a group, consider who you may need to initiate a conversation with. Perhaps your prayer should be: *God, fill me with your love so I have the courage to talk to _____.*