



2025 | Week 6

# Tangible Affirmation

**Blog Contributors:**

**Rey & Annie Abarca**

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*Many will look forward to February because of the famous Valentine's Day. It's one of those special days when we anticipate receiving 'tangible' affirmation from our loved ones, particularly our spouses.*

*We know that affirmation doesn't always come tangibly, yet we can't ignore the fact that it impacts nurturing a relationship. This week, we'll look at this 'tangible affirmation' in marriage and how it relates to our relationship with God.*

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## DAY 1

It's very common nowadays that as we approach the month of February, our minds are also occupied with the upcoming Valentine's Day celebration. We're not just thinking about how to celebrate, such as having a nice dinner out; our minds are also busy considering what gift we need to get for our spouse. Because the culture today has a very strong, loud campaign that emphasizes this "once-a-year" celebration, we're somewhat persuaded to participate in any way we can or can do so—even if it's just by thinking about it.

The truth is we (humans) desire to experience "tangible affirmation." Affirmations are normally expressed through words (alone), and having them communicated in a material form, such as beautiful flowers or sweet chocolates, triggers excitement in our hearts and minds.

It's not bad to experience "tangible affirmation." In fact, the Bible is filled with stories of God's provisions from both the Old and New Testaments. How can we forget the famous story of the "Five Loaves and Two Fish" (Matthew 14:13-21)? Such an affirmation for those 5,000 people who patiently stayed with Jesus Christ allowed them to experience His blessings. So what's the problem if "tangible affirmation" is present even with God (in the Old Testament) or Christ during His ministry here on earth (in the New Testament)?

We've become materialistic.

This could be a very honest and direct response, but that's the truth. When we first realize this, we're hurt and broken to acknowledge how we've viewed God, each other, and our marriage in a "tangible" manner. Instead of focusing on the "giver," we allow material things to influence how we perceive the "giver."

When we receive something from our spouse, we're quick to assess the material value and its addition to ourselves or the relationship, instead of appreciating the giver's intentions and efforts in such affirmation. We should reflect on the sacrifices they made in going out of their way to communicate this affirmation. Similarly, in our relationship with God, we often let material circumstances define Him, rather than intentionally knowing Him through His recorded works, His promises, and the truthfulness of His attributes. Once we allow ourselves to view this "tangible affirmation" without becoming materialistic, we will experience our circumstances and relationship with God differently.

The antidote is not about eliminating these "tangible affirmations" completely, but rather about enhancing the communication of affirmation clearly and intentionally. Don't just give flowers and chocolates (or any gift); convey your message about why you chose to give such. Perhaps include a short note detailing your appreciation, or take a moment to express your words of gratitude (like a simple "I love you"). Through these simple gestures, you're creating an opportunity for understanding, where the act of "tangible affirmation" goes beyond the value of the gift, including sincere thoughts and gestures. In this way, even if the material gift loses its value, the memory lasts because of the details incorporated in the moment it was given.

Similarly, in our faith, we may easily recognize the blessings that God has given us because of tangible evidence. Yet if we ground such experiences in the attributes of God and the profound testimonies of His grace, mercy, and love, we will view those blessings differently. Such profound experiences add layers to the foundation of our relationship with Him and our knowledge of Him. Even when we hold the tangible affirmations of His blessings, it is the stories of His testimonies that will be wonderfully engraved in our hearts and minds.

***'The unfolding of Your words gives light; It gives understanding to the simple. Your testimonies are wonderful; Therefore my soul observes them.' Psalms 119:129-130***

Keep Journeying with Christ!

Your Fellow Couple,

***Rey & Annie***

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## DAY 2

Sometimes, it's quite difficult to find a good Valentine's gift for our spouses (or other special people) because we've shared so much. Even in an attempt to surprise them, it can be quite challenging since most couples can access their financial information. As a result, traditional flowers and chocolates have become the best options for many.

In yesterday's blog, we mentioned how we can still make this love celebration a little different by intentionally conveying messages of affirmation. This becomes quite challenging if we don't know our spouse's current concerns or interests. There's a strong temptation for married couples, affected by over-familiarity, to let their marital relationship be nurtured by life's responsibilities alone rather than on a foundation of love and understanding. May we be encouraged to make radical changes to how we nurture our marriages. When a situation arises that calls for us to share affirmation with our spouses—whether tangible or verbal—we should

strive to come up with ideas that demonstrate how much we pay attention to them as we continue on this life journey.

Similarly, in our faith journey, if we accept Jesus Christ as our personal Lord and Savior and commit to following Him, we understand that the most tangible aspect of this connection is God's Word—the Bible. Unfortunately, there is a common misconception that our restored relationship with God is defined solely by the religious routines we establish. In reality, our relationship with God through Jesus Christ should define how we anchor ourselves in His Word. By prioritizing His words as essential to our life foundation, we will not only gain profound guidance during our sanctification but also experience powerful encouragement. This encouragement comes through blessings and affirmations that we recognize because we have read, understood, and meditated on His Word.

You'll be surprised at how amazing God is when we journey through life anchored in His Word. Collecting testimonies of how we experience the reality of His words in our lives today strengthens our connection with Him. By His grace, we can recognize His affirmations even amidst life's challenges—just as a deeply nurtured relationship with our spouse can bring genuine affirmations that truly reflect God's great blessings of marriage. This happens when we commit to anchoring our marriage to God and continue our journey with Christ Jesus.

Our intentionality in this life journey defines how we view affirmation.

'What was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and touched with our hands, concerning the Word of Life— and the life was manifested, and we have seen and testify and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was manifested to us— what we have seen and heard we proclaim to you also, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ. These things we write, so that our joy may be made complete. ' 1 John 1:1-4

Keep Journeying with Christ!

Your Fellow Couple,

**Rey & Annie**

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## DAY 3 | For Husbands

I still remember the day I had to visit one of the famous shoe brands because Annie had been eyeing a particular pair. I never expected to find myself standing in that well-lit store, learning about the various factors to consider when purchasing expensive shoes. Of course, as expected, Annie was happily surprised when I bought a pair for her.

This is just one of many instances in our marriage when the expression of “tangible affirmation” was something to look forward to and was noticeable in our bank account. When we started to experience God’s humbling season, it wasn’t an easy transition, and there were many moments of discomfort and challenging temptations. Even today, the effect of loud narratives on social media that trigger comparisons about who has the better gifts is indeed very tempting.

When we chose to make significant changes in our lives and marriage, it wasn’t easy, and we certainly felt the profound impact and the price of following Christ. We still deal with this today, but His grace allows us to improve our responses, especially when temptation reminds us of those former happy days. I’m grateful to God for what He has done for my wife. I’ve witnessed how drastically she has changed regarding material possessions. Although her closet still contains some branded and expensive items, the lack of interest is very noticeable.

When God released us from the stronghold of material possessions that had become our status quo, we started to have a clearer view of other blessings that we had taken for granted. Annie and I began to recognize and share affirmations that contribute to better memories and deeper connections in our relationship. Indeed, it’s only God who can change our hearts. The modeling of Christ’s humility and the power of the Holy Spirit enables

us to withstand temptations. Even in times when we may have failed, His grace allows us to hold onto the living hope of deliverance.

In this materialistic world, we live in today, it’s not easy to face the temptations of desiring beautiful tangible affirmations, nor is it easy to be a generous giver of those wonderful things that only fuel pride. One of the many great blessings God has given us is the freedom from this culture of “branded” tangible materials. When instances arise that come to our attention, or when we see ourselves amidst them, they no longer speak to us in the same way they used to. God has transformed our hearts, and whatever He did has brought us genuine joy and contentment that we had never experienced before.

As Valentine’s Day approaches, may it be an opportunity for us to go beyond the beauty of tangible affirmations. Rather, may it be the start of a new way to share affirmations that clearly communicate love and deeper connection. This is only possible if we let God work in our hearts and minds.

***‘ “Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal; for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. ’ Matthew 6:19-21***

Keep journeying with Christ Jesus.

Your Fellow Husband,  
**Rey**

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## DAY 4 | For Wives

Rey and I will surely have many stories related to this week’s topic. Although our experiences may resonate with many, I’d rather share a story that impacted me since the first time I heard it.

When Rey’s stepfather, Joe, passed away from cancer, our attention shifted to his mom. Her eyes evidently showed deep grief, and her actions reflected immense sadness.

Our small family tried to be there as much as we could and even convinced her to adopt a dog to help her feel less lonely at home. One day, I had the chance to ask her what she would miss most about Joe. Initially, she said there would be a lot, but eventually, she mentioned one thing Joe was very consistent with: he would bring bottled water to her bedside table and ensure she had enough. Whenever Mom would wake up in the evening, she could drink some water. Although Joe was generous in expressing his love—especially on special occasions like Valentine’s—those simple gestures, like providing bottled water, remained deeply etched in her heart. Bottled water may seem insignificant compared to expensive perfumes, but it was the consistency that resonated deeply with Mom. Additionally, Joe’s attention to every occasion and his effort to bring the family together impacted us all.

Since I heard that story, I’ve noticed how many small gestures and tangible affirmations Rey consistently shares with me. Sadly, I didn’t give them much attention as they occur during regular days. The temptation of materialism often draws more focus to special occasions, when in fact, he generously expresses his affection throughout the year. Even during challenging times or uncertainties, he still manages to do so. By God’s grace, when special occasions arise, whether I receive a gift or not, it doesn’t concern me much. I’d rather look forward to having a restful day with Rey. This practice wasn’t part of my life before, and the transition hasn’t been easy. It’s only through Jesus Christ that my heart and perception have evolved. Looking back on those days makes me appreciate our decision to anchor our marriage in Jesus Christ even more.

It’s only through Jesus Christ that we can have a deeper understanding of love expression. The life of Christ while on earth solidifies the amazing unconditional love that we seldom see in others. Such love comforts us while humbling us in God’s authority. The natural “love tank” in our hearts that we mistakenly believe can be filled with the satisfaction of tangible affirmations can truly only be filled with the love we experience through God. As His children (believers and followers), we are capable of sharing a sincere love that profoundly impacts our relationships, especially in marriage.

***'Little children (believers, dear ones), let us not love [merely in theory] with word or with tongue [giving lip service to compassion], but in action and in truth [in practice and in sincerity, because practical acts of love are more than words]. ' (1 John 3:18, AMP)***

Keep journeying with Christ!

Your Fellow Wife,

**Annie**

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## DAY 5

For the past four days, we’ve been reflecting on how a very simple and beautiful effort of tangible affirmations has been employed in various contexts. Sadly, it has become an object of unpleasing objectives and intents. It has transformed into a driving force of temptations and triggers, leading us to be more attracted to materialism instead of finding genuine contentment in God.

On the other hand, God’s words encourage us to be generous and to bless others (2 Corinthians 9:6; Hebrews 13:16; Proverbs 11:25), and we can view the participation of “tangible affirmations” in this light. Just as it says in 2 Corinthians 9:7:

'Each one must do just as he has purposed in his heart, not grudgingly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. '2 Corinthians 9:7

If we look deeper at this verse, the message is not centered on the objects but rather on the condition of our hearts. If our heart condition is not right, we can’t be “cheerful givers” (v.7). In every tangible affirmation that we have the opportunity to express, it’s not about the value tied to the object but the sincerity of the heart behind that effort. In this broken world, filled with temptations and misconceptions, we can only maintain a Godly perspective on sharing tangible affirmations if our hearts are grounded and anchored in Christ. He is The Model we should look to, who shared the most precious tangible gift: His life, which demonstrates His great unconditional love.

This coming Valentine's Day, or any special celebration that honors the love in your marriage may serve as a constant reminder that it's not the value of the gift but the true condition of our hearts that matters. To share sincere love with our spouse, the best we can do is to anchor our hearts to Christ. Only such a connection with Him enables us to sustain love despite the shortcomings that surround us.

On a practical note, think of a gift that will surprise your spouse, perhaps something you don't usually share. It could also be something needed, reflecting how intentional you are about this/her role. You might consider something memorable that encapsulates the intent and effort of making this marriage journey a collection of loving memories. Sometimes, a simple letter filled with reflections on the journey so far and hopes for the future can be the most meaningful gift of all.

Have a memorable Valentine's Day celebration. We pray that it is not the only day for love affirmations but rather an annual celebration of the amazing journey of love filled with affirmations shared throughout the year.

Your Fellow Couple,

**Rey & Annie**

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Let's embark on a comprehensive learning experience with this week's topic by following the **D.R.A.S.H. - 5 Steps of Learning Method!**

***Step 1 | Discover the Truth***

- From the shared Biblical truths, Biblical perspectives, and testimonies, what struck you most about sharing tangible affirmation?

***Step 2 | Reflect and Meditate on the Truth***

- How does this week's topic relate to your current season in marriage?

***Step 3 | Apply the Truth***

- After this week's discussion about tangible affirmation, are there any changes you plan to make with the insights you gained from this week's topic?

***Step 4 | Share***

- Using a storytelling concept, compose a short story about how you will share the truths you discovered in this week's topic with your spouse or other married individuals journeying with you. You may want to consider a 1-minute or 5-minute storytelling technique.
- You can use the following guiding questions in your composition:
  1. What truths did you discover and reflect on in this week's topic?

2. How are these truths and reflections related to yourself and your current marital status?
3. What actions do you plan to take in the coming days that relate to this week's learning?

### **Step 5 | Help in Navigating the Truth**

- Besides your spouse, identify another person (or member/s of your small group) who will journey alongside you as you take intentional actions based on this week's learning. Consider what additional help you may need, such as further discussion or a regular prayer partner.

We pray that you encounter God through this week's topic. May His grace turn your learning experience into a transformative journey, leading to testimonies of breakthroughs that further strengthen your walk with Christ Jesus!

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## **Let us know how this guide has helped you!**

May this study tool be effective and helpful for every fellow seeker and believer who is intentionally journeying with Jesus Christ. We would be grateful to hear how this tool has significantly impacted your journey and your relationships with your spouse and others. Please share your feedback or experiences through this [link](#) (or scan QR Code)



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