

Spice Up Your Love Life!
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I've had the honor of doing over 100 weddings during my ministry. For each one I include a "prop" of some kind to help them remember the message based on the scripture they choose. Recently, a couple asked me to preach on 1 Peter 4:8 "*Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins.*"

We began by examining what the phrase "covering over" might mean. I reminded the groom and his brother of their youth when Mom and Dad asked them to make their beds and they simply pulled the covers over the "crap" on the bed, but did not really deal with the mess.

God is not suggesting that love in our relationships should simply "cover over" sins, leaving them hiding under the surface to re-emerge at a future date. I suggested a gift that would help spice up their marriage and love life. After encouraging the mother of the groom to take a deep breath, I produced a spice rack for their kitchen. Since the bride and groom were both health professionals I knew they would appreciate my research confirming that many of our common spices have significant antimicrobial properties. Spices such as cloves, cinnamon and oregano actively prevent and even reverse the effect of spoilage.

Peter's words on love carry the same message for all of us. Love covers over, and even transforms, a multitude of sins. Christ's love on the cross has the ultimate transformative effect on our sinful condition. In our human relationships, by responding with forgiveness and kindness, understanding and compassion (all different "flavors" of love), we change the nature of the things hidden under the covers. Something that was spoiled, tasted bad or could make you sick is transformed with God's love. Even sinful interactions are transformed by God into something that can be nourishing, pleasant to the palate and an opportunity for creative expression (like cooking with various spices). You, too, have the ability to spice up your love life in the ways you approach those who sin against you, those whom you sin against and especially in your relationship with the Lord. Let His love and spice (remember the references to salt) transform you so that you can spice up the lives of others by loving them the way you have been loved! Go be "spicy" today!