

You are Loved by God

THE DEFINITION OF "LOVE"

THE GREEKS HAD FOUR WORDS WHICH WE TRANSLATE "LOVE"...

1. **EROS** - carnal, sexual love
2. **PHILIA** - the love of close friendship
3. **STORGE** - the love of family relationships
4. **AGAPE** - that love which seeks only the highest good of others

It is Agape love that Paul defines in 1 Cor. 13:4-8

1 Cor. 13:4-8

Love is patient, love is kind *and* is not jealous; love does not brag *and* is not arrogant, does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong *suffered*, does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

Jesus uses the same word in Matt 5:43-48:

Matt 5:43-48

"You have heard that it was said, 'YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR and hate your enemy. "But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for He causes His sun to rise on *the* evil and *the* good, and sends rain on *the* righteous and *the* unrighteous. "For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? "If you greet only your brothers, what more are you doing *than others*? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? "Therefore you are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

A CLOSER LOOK AT "AGAPE"

1. "Agape has to do with the mind: it is not simply an emotion which rises unexpectedly in our hearts; it is a principle by which we deliberately live. Agape has supremely to do with the will."
(Barclay)
2. "Agape can be translated as "charity" meaning benevolent love. Its Benevolence, however, is not shown by doing what the person loved desires but what the one who loves deems as needed by the one loved...as in John 3:16... He gave not what man wanted, but what man needed as God perceived his need, namely His Son who

brought forgiveness to man. God's love for man is His doing what He thinks is best for man and not what man desires. It is God's willful direction toward man. But for man to show love to God, he must first appropriate God's agape, for only God has such an unselfish love." (Zodhiates)

3. It is a caring love one which becomes involved with the need of others.
4. It does not depend upon the one being loved having to earn such love.
5. It is not an exclusive love...
 - a. Expressed only to select few
 - b. But an all-embracing benevolence, shown toward all

THE PERFECT ILLUSTRATION OF "AGAPE"...

It begins with the **God of love** - cf. 2 Cor. 13:11

2 Cor. 13:11

Finally, brethren, rejoice, be made complete, be comforted, be like-minded, live in peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you.

His love is a completely **undeserved love** - Rom. 5:8

"But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

His love is an **inseparable love** - Rom. 8:35-39

Rom. 8:35-39

"Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? "Just as it is written, "FOR YOUR SAKE WE ARE BEING PUT TO DEATH ALL DAY LONG; WE WERE CONSIDERED AS SHEEP TO BE SLAUGHTERED." "But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Indeed, His love is a great love willing to save sinners! - Eph. 2:4-7

Eph. 2:4-7

But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly *places* in Christ Jesus, so that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

It finds its complete fulfillment in Christ God's love reaches its peak in His Son Jesus Christ - Rom. 8:39 Jesus has fully demonstrated such love – John 15:13. Therefore we come to know what love really is when we look at Jesus Christ - 1 John 3:16

1 John 3:16

"We know love by this, that He laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren."

When it comes to God, He loves us with unconditional "agape" love. That love is real and expressed in our obedience or in our disobedience. There is nothing we will ever do to separate ourselves from the Love of God. When it comes to our love for our fellow man we are commanded to "love" (agape) one another (John 13:34). Even when we "do not like someone", or "feel like it" we can still "love" them (seek their highest good) with agape love.

1. Why did God send Jesus Christ to die on the cross? John 3:16

2. How did God demonstrate His love for you? Romans 5:8

3. How am I to respond to God's love? Gal. 2:20

4. What cannot happen to me as a child of God? Romans 8:38-39

5. What does the Bible say love symbolically fulfills the requirement of? Romans 13:10

6. List one characteristic that let's us know we are born again? 1 John 4:7

7. The Bible commands us to love three things what are they? Matthew 22:37-39

8. What two things does the Bible say the elect of God are? Colossians 3:12

9. What are we urged to do above all things? Colossians 3:14

10. How did Jesus sum up what love is? Gal. 5:14

11. How does the Bible define God's love for us? 1 Corinthians 13:4-8

12. Love is the fruit of what? Gal. 5:22

13. God chose us and _____ us as sons. Eph. 1:4, Eph. 2:4

14. What is so great that it passes knowledge? Eph. 3:19

15. God the Father loves me as much as He loves _____. John 17:23

16. What should I do as a result of God's love for me? John 15:9-10, 17

17. What kind of love does God have for us? Jer. 31:3

18. How did God demonstrate His love for us? 1 John 4:9, 10, 16

19. God is _____. 1 John 4:8

20. What is Paul praying that the believers in Ephesus would understand? Eph. 3:18-19

21. Have you prayed for this same understanding? If not do so now.
