

10/17/24

Sermon – Agape Love: Week 1 (1COR13)

Scripture – 1 John 4:7-21, Mathew 5:43-48, Acts 7:58-59

Main Message – Perfecting the art of Love with God as the teacher may just change everything.

One of the biggest challenges in life is to live a life of love. It is not easy. This series on Love all through the holidays will be the topic and we are starting this week. If you think that many weeks in a row is overkill for a topic, I will tell you that this will barely scratch the surface. In making this I have learned a great many things. In fact, I will ask you to do something you will find as difficult as any other claim I can make. You may have to unlearn the idea of love. We often miss the mark with our definition of love and you know what miss the mark is right? “Sin!”

I will be using some Greek understanding of love through this because they have several words for it. Those root words help bring clarity to the concept, type, and application of love. Those words are: agape, eros, philia, storge, philautia, and xenia. Grasping these, how they are used or applied in the Bible from both New and Old Testament examples will help us perfect our love. The old Testament which is not written in Greek will also have Love often used and there are similar distinctions there as well. SO practice makes perfect. As is feasible and possible, you should try and put into practice these loves. Make a note and put it on your fridge how you can love passionately someone that needs it. For the ultra-committed, love an enemy. The only exception there might be Eros, or erotic love. I don't want anyone to get carried away.... :), but don't think for a moment I won't cover that topic in the wholesomeness of God's intent.

Now to be clear, just like we use love all the time and its understood to be very wide in its application, so too is the word in Greek, Agape. It is used more generally because it can often embody a broader sense of love. When it says in 1st John 4 that “God is Love,” that word is Agape. It is probably the most used word in the New Testament. To be certain, I could make a years' worth of messages on Agape' alone from just the new testament.

Read 1st John 4

Expository reading of Mathew 5:43-48

When Jesus is speaking this action of *Loving your enemies* does that sound suggestive or commanding? Clearly it is a defining quality of being a Christian believer. It is *the* Quality of a SAINT.

Read Acts 7:59-60

Stephen learned the way. He applied the way. This is how you change the world. These days you may not get stoned in the physical sense, but being filled with love towards those who hate you is exactly the same thing Christ did for us.

As Jesus would say, Go and Do Likewise.