

IMPORTANT WORDS – PART 1 – LOVE (continued)

July 8, 2018

REVISITING OUR DISCUSSION FROM LAST WEEK

1. From Matthew 5:43-48, we learn that in some sense, God loves all people, for Jesus commands us to love our enemies – so that we may be sons of our Father who is in heaven – for he makes his sun rise on the evil and the good. The idea of the passage is that of emulating our Father – and the word used is agapate – the verb form of agape.
2. We also discussed that throughout Scripture, the term love is also accompanied by a descriptor of that love – steadfast – the Greek term here is eleos and is translated mercy in the KJV, lovingkindness in the NASB, and steadfast love in the ESV – it connotes mercy, pity, clemency, and compassion.
3. We discussed different aspects of love.

Example 1: for the Father himself loves you, **because you have loved me and have believed that I came from God.** (John 16:27)

The verb here for love is phileo and has a meaning of devotion or emotion toward someone. Phileo is used to describe the “disciple whom Jesus loved” and to describe what the people said as Jesus wept concerning Lazarus – “see how he loved him”.

Example 2: Greater love has no one than this, that someone **lay down his life for his friends.** (Joh 15:13)

The verb here for love is agape and has a meaning of showing love – it is more of an action than a feeling. It is the form of love used when God commands husbands to love their wives as Christ loved the church.

4. We discussed the fact that the love God shows for the unbeliever is quite different than the love God shows to the believer. Phileo + Agape versus Agape
5. We discussed the fact that however we understand God’s love for the unbeliever, we must interpret in such a way as to accommodate his hatred for the unbeliever and his corresponding pouring out of wrath upon the unbeliever.

For you are not a God who delights in wickedness; evil may not dwell with you. The boastful **shall not stand** before your eyes; **you hate all evildoers.** You **destroy** those who speak lies; the LORD **abhors** the bloodthirsty and deceitful **man.** But I, through the abundance of your steadfast love, will enter your house. I will bow down toward your holy temple in the fear of you. (Psa 5:4-7)

Then I saw an angel standing in the sun, and with a loud voice he called to all the birds that fly directly overhead, "Come, **gather for the great supper of God, to eat the flesh** of kings, the flesh of captains, the flesh of mighty men, the flesh of horses and their riders, and the flesh of all men, both free and slave, both small and great." And I saw the beast and the kings of the earth with their armies gathered to make war against him who was sitting on the horse and against his army. And the beast was captured, and with it the false prophet who in its presence had done the signs by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped its image. **These two were thrown alive into the lake of fire that burns with sulfur. And the rest were slain by the sword that came from the mouth of him who was sitting on the horse, and all the birds were gorged with their flesh.** (Rev 19:17-21)

Now we continue with point #5 from last week

Point # 5 – The problem: Lack of understanding as to the definition of love

God is Love

Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and **whoever loves has been born of God** and knows God. **Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love.** In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God abides in us and his love is perfected in us. (1Jn 4:7-12)

1. Whoever loves has been born of God **and knows God**
2. And this is eternal life, that they know you the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. (Joh 17:3)
3. Those without eternal life do not know God, and therefore do not love in the way that Scripture describes **this type of love.**
4. So, this form of love is in no way applicable to the unbeliever.

How is this love defined? Obedience

And this is love, that we walk according to his commandments; this is the commandment, just as you have heard from the beginning, so that you should walk in it. (2Jn 1:6)

"If you **love me**, you will **keep my commandments.** (Joh 14:15)

Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him." (Joh 14:21)

Whoever says "I know him" but does not keep his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him, **but whoever keeps his word, in him truly the love of God is perfected.** By this we may know that we are in him: whoever says he abides in him ought to walk in the same way in which he walked. (1Jn 2:4-6)

If anyone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen. And this commandment we have from him: **whoever loves God must also love his brother.** (1Jn 4:20-21)

By this we know that we love the children of God, **when we love God and obey his commandments.** For **this is the love of God,** that we keep his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome. (1Jn 5:2-3)

Point # 6 – A right understanding of the love of God will assist in a right understanding concerning the Doctrines of Grace

We love because he first loved us. (1Jn 4:19)

Total Depravity: In his natural state, man does not have the love of God.

Unconditional Election: God chose a people, before the foundation of the world, to possess the love of God

Limited Atonement: Christ loved us (the church, the elect, his people, his friends) and gave himself for us – securing for us the love of God.

Irresistible Grace: I made known to them your name, and I will continue to make it known, that the love with which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them." (Joh 17:26)

Perseverance of the Saints: Through the power of God unto salvation, we are kept in the love of God.