

Agape Love

This is the “God kind of love”, the highest form of love, which never fails. *Agape* is eternal and sacrificial and overflows from deep within the human spirit. It is a love that is joyful and spiritual with a deep, unconditional commitment to mankind. It manifests in our acts of charity and service to others and includes those whom we do not know and perhaps do not even like. It loves the unlovable. For this reason *Agape* is not an impulsive love, generated by feelings. Rather it is an exercise of the will, a deliberate choice to make a decision and take action in love, made for the good of another; thus it is a love based in the mind.

In today’s selfish and thoughtless society *Agape* love may be a difficult concept to understand because it has a benevolent nature which requires selflessness in caring for and seeking the best for others, regardless of the circumstances. It transcends differences in race and cultures and shares a commitment to an unconditional, unlimited love for all people

Agape love seeks out the highest good for everyone, without regard to whether they are good or bad. It is a love that is not necessarily deserved by the recipient, whether by their words, actions or attitudes; it is given as a blessing without condition of any kind. *Agape* love sees all people as precious and it doesn’t depend on the other person returning the love given. It enables someone to love another person, no matter what that person does to them. It is self-giving, always forgiving and it never changes.

Agape love is always followed by action, in obedience to the need that presents itself. There are those in this world with just that kind of love, working with the poor and the forsaken; people stripped from their lands and those suffering from diseases which isolate them from society, such as lepers and those with A.I.D.S. *Agape* love says, “I will give up my time and I will live for others. I will give the love I have in me and I will be strong and lift up those who are weak. I will count it a privilege to share myself and the love within me with those in need.”

None of us, however, should fail to show *agape* love to those within our personal sphere of influence. It is too easy to say, “Working with the underprivileged of other countries is wonderful for those who can do it but it is not my scene” and so sidestep our own responsibilities to those around us. It is as necessary to show *agape* love to our family as it is to show it to the destitute on the other side of the world. Most of us know someone who is ill or having difficulty raising a family on too few funds. There are many people with life-threatening or debilitating illnesses who depend on carers, perhaps another member of the family. Those carers would be showing *agape* love day after day, some for many years.

We all need and want love to be shown to us, but if we are prepared to put away selfishness and put on selflessness by showing *agape* love to anyone with needs who

crosses our path in life, we will find that, without asking, we receive a hundredfold back in love and appreciation.

Agape love in action is a different kind of power; a revolutionary kind of love. It makes us master of ourselves and every situation and it is the secret to our success.

Agape love – the love most people want to give and receive and which so often we spend our lives wanting to do it but not always willing to go “the extra mile” to attain it – embodies good-will, kindness, forgiveness, compassion and a complete gift of yourself to someone else (sacrifice). *Agape* is never-ending and life-giving. It may seem difficult to attain but, oh, it is so worth-while if you would only step out of your comfort zone and “give it a go”.

Remember

Our English word ‘love’ is all-encompassing and doesn’t fully explain the many facets of the meaning of love. We have to go to the Greek language for an explanation of all love’s characteristics and qualities to help us fully understand its creative power. As Norman Vincent Peale said, “...(love) is the cohesive force that binds people together in understanding”.