



Love Thy Neighbor

What value do you bring to others? Do you love according to Agape's Code of Conduct? Do you live in the shadows of despair and defeat? Or, do you walk in the brilliance of eternity's quest for its masses to embrace each other in love? Perhaps one of the greatest outcomes of loving thy neighbor is captured in the following verse.

For we have great joy and consolation in thy love, because the bowels of the saints are refreshed by thee, brother. (Philemon 1:7)

The innermost feelings of people are refreshed by the love of the brethren. "Love" is "agape."



When you practice agape with your fellow Christians, you have the power of refreshment! And, how many people need this today?

Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you. We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death. (1 John 3:13-14)

The manifestation of agape is the

manifestation of life. Agape is literally the transition from the world's ways to the Word's Ways. It is your passing from death unto life. With agape, you prove to the world that you have beat it, have cast it down, have trodden it underfoot, have become it's successor, have epitomized Super Christian Conqueror-hood. You are now the mighty one in Christ. Agape shuns death. It gasps at its uncomliness. It abhors its coverings. It rejoices in the absolute victory of eternity. It embraces the care of others.

Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him. (1 John 3:15)

Hating your Christian brothers is

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akin to murder. Each and every Christian has eternal life abiding in him. Therefore, it is impossible to truly hate another Christian once you become a Christian.

Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. (1 John 3:16)

Agape becomes the foundation of care and concern. It spawns nurture, and emboldens compassion. It protects the very beating of another's heart. It guards another's breath. It rises up against and casts down every soul's enemies. It throws itself into battle and gives itself so that others can live to give another day. We ought to embrace it wholly!

But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother

have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? (1 John 3:17)

Agape feeds the masses. It supplies the needs of the saints. It pours out its guts in labor so that others can taste God's goodness, God's abundance, and God's wealth. God's agape illuminates the cattle on a thousand hills. It is truly the oil that ran down Aaron's beard. It is the cup that runneth over. It is the *exceeding abundantly above* extravaganza of Ephesians, and it is the "I can do all things" of Philippians. It is the open doors of the upper terrace of Solomon's temple facing in all earthly directions, and it is the open heart of Christ. It is the "come unto me" of the Gospels and the "go forth" of the Christian's calling. It is heaven's goods.

My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in

deed and in truth. (1 John 3:18)

Agape is the deed of Christ. It is John's baptism. It is Peter's "sermon on the mount." It is the giving of Stephen as he proclaimed the Word for earth and heaven to hear. It is Paul ministering to the ship wrecked. It is Peter proclaiming God's deliverance to the Gentiles. It is Peter and John's silver and gold in the city streets. It is the 12 Apostles seated in the Pentecost Temple. It is Ananias removing Paul's scales. It is the about three thousand souls continuing in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship and breaking of bread and in prayers. It is Peter's confrontation of Ananias and Sapphira's theft from the Christian Church. It is Peter's shadow healing the sick. It is the angel of the Lord releasing the 12 Apostles from prison.

And this commandment have we from him, That he

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who loveth God love his brother also. (1 John 4:21)

These two go hand in hand. Christians who don't love their fellow Christians' really don't love God.

Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. (Matthew 5:43-45)

The greatest act of love you can have on this earth is to love your neighbour.

Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law. (Romans 13:8-10)

One of the primary goals of the Mosaic Law was to see the masses embrace love for each other. When you love others, you have ended eternity's quest.

For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. (Galatians 5:14)

I want you to identify with agape.

I want you to embrace agape. I want you to allow it to become your code of conduct. I want you to seek its worth, value, wealth and fortune. I want you to drink in its living water and then serve it up to others.

Do you bring value to others? If so, what sort of value it is? Agape's value is mostly intrinsic, but also can be without. What sort of value do you bring to others? Do you mostly sit and wait for another's? Or are you the sort that seeks to fill others with the fullness of compassion and care that can only be Christ like? What value are you to your family, friends and fellow-workers? Do you bring value to others?

God expects you to become His most valuable player. He wants you to come out from the shadows into the brilliant noonday sun. He wants you to seek the good

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of others so that they may have what He has so abundantly made available to you.

If you are not bringing value to others, you have not yet entered into Christian service.

His service demands that you reach in and touch other people's lives. Whose life have you touched lately? Have you ever touched another person's life? Have you ever touched another with your compassion? Have you ever touched another with Christian usefulness, thus removing a burden from them? Have you ever cast down your pride so that another is built up? Have you ever subdued your thinking so that another is allowed a place beside yours? Have you ever controlled your actions so that others might believe? Have you ever put your worldly searches away so that others could find Christ? Have you ever cast down your anger so that

Christ's compassion could shine forth? Have you ever shunned evil so that good could thrive?

What value do you bring to others? Most people don't bring any value at all. The Christian slave does. Are you yet chained to the dictates of eternity, or are you still snarled by the world's snares. What value do you bring to others? Do you sit on the sidelines, begging for assistance? Or are you running with the ball towards the goal posts of another's life? What value do you bring to others? Most people bring no value at all.

What value do you bring to your friends? What value do you bring to your family? What value do you bring to your marriage? What value do you bring to your parents? Do you bring any value at all?

In God's eyes, you are His most valuable player. How do you see yourself? Become His most

valuable player by coming out of the dark shadows of depression and worthlessness. Step out into the brilliance that only a burning desire for the promotion of agape and all of its worth can cause. Take the first step, second, and many more into the hearts and lives of your neighbors, fellow Christians, friends, family, parents, and children. Step out and into them. Become their most valuable asset until they learn to value their own. Guide them into value by being God's worth and value to them.

Learn to live according to agape's conduct codes so that the law is fulfilled in you and eternity's quest is fulfilled in others. No longer worthless; ever giving, ever valuable to others!

Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, Doth not

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behave itself unseemly, seeketh
not her own, is not easily
provoked, thinketh no evil;
Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but
rejoiceth in the truth; Beareth
all things, believeth all things,
hopeth all things, endureth all
things. (1 Corinthians 13:4-7)

In His Service!

Jerry D. Brown