

Agape

A Series on the Holiness of God

The Bible is the only religious book that places a focus on love, a type of love that surpasses human comprehension. What god(s) of any religion would send their only son to die for the sins of mankind? Only the Bible presents the means of salvation as a work of God (John 6:29) and only achievable through the simple and genuine belief that Jesus is a real Being who died for our sins and engenders a trust in His words.

1. One does not get a sense of God's love until Jesus introduces the Greek noun for God's love "agapē" found nowhere else in extrabiblical literature contemporary to the time, which He passes on to His disciples (John 14:10). This is only possible to observe with a study of Greek which the New Testament translations were based on and see where agapē and its cognates are used. What do you observe about "agapē" (John 3:16; 16:27-28; 1 John 4:7-8, 19)?

2. The meaning of agapē is in sharp contrast to culture's contemporary meaning of love, which is often more used in the context of an emotion. Observe carefully the verses (Matt 22:36-38; John 13:1; 14:21-23; 17:25-26; 1 John 4:9-10, 15-18) and discuss the contrasts.

3. The contrasts between the meaning of agapē and culture's contemporary meaning of love abound further when in the context of relationship between human beings (Lev 19:17-18; Matt 5:43-48; 22:39-40; Rom 13:8-10; Jam 2:8-13). How do you love someone who may be unlovable?

4. Of particular note is that Jesus had to emphasize agapē within the context of a certain type of relationship twice during His last supper on earth (John 13:34-35; 15:12-14; 1 John 4:11-13, 20-21)! Discuss what you should do.

5. What is your definition of agapē?