

A heart shape is drawn in the sand on a beach. The text "Godly Love (Agape)" is written in white over the heart.

Godly Love
(Agape)

John 21:15-17 So when they had eaten breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me more than these?" He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You." He said to him, "Feed My lambs." {16} He said to him again a second time, "Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?" He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You." He said to him, "Tend My sheep." {17} He said to him the third time, "Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?" Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, "Do you love Me?" And he said to Him, "Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You." Jesus said to him, "Feed My sheep.

- **John 21:17 He said to him the third time, "Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?" Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, "Do you love Me?" And he said to Him, "Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You." Jesus said to him, "Feed My sheep.**
- **Many people think that it grieved Peter because Jesus asked him if he loved him three times and that it reminded him of his denial of Jesus three times.**
- **THE REAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS IS ONLY SEEN IN THE GREEK**

John 21:15-17

"Simon, son of Jonah, do you love (AGAPE) Me more than these?"

He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love (PHILEO) You."

{16} He said to him again a second time, "Simon, son of Jonah, do you love (AGAPE) Me?"

He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love (PHILEO) You."

{17} He said to him the third time, "Simon, son of Jonah, do you love (PHILEO) Me?"

Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, "Do you love (PHILEO) Me?"

And he said to Him, "Lord, You know all things; You know that I love (PHILEO) You." Jesus said to him, "Feed My sheep."

**Why was it so
hard for Peter to
simply say that he
loved Jesus with
the word agape?**

I.

**FOUR WORDS
FOR LOVE IN THE
GREEK
LANGUAGE**

A. EROS – NOT IN THE BIBLE

- **Sexual Love**
- **Self-Fulfilling Love**
- **Selfish Love**

B. STORGE – FAMILY LOVE

- **2 Tim. 3:1-5** But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: [2] For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, [3] unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, [4] traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, [5] having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away!

B. STORGE – FAMILY LOVE

- **Romans 1:28-32** And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting; [29] being filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, evil-mindedness; they are whisperers, [30] backbiters, haters of God, violent, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, [31] undiscerning, untrustworthy, unloving, unforgiving, unmerciful; [32] who, knowing the righteous judgment of God, that those who practice such things are deserving of death, not only do the same but also approve of those who practice them.

C. PHILEO - FRIEND

- Be nice to me & I'll be nice to you - 18 times in N. T.
- IN A NEGATIVE CONNOTATION
 - (Mat 10:37) “He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me.
 - (Luke 20:46) “Beware of the scribes, who desire to go around in long robes, love greetings in the marketplaces, the best seats in the synagogues, and the best places at feasts,
- IN A POSITIVE CONOTATION
 - (John 11:36) Then the Jews said, “See how He loved him!”
 - PHILADELPHIA, translated brotherly love 5 times

D. AGAPE – Godly Love

- **I love you no matter what you do**
- **In our study of Godly Love (Agape) we will see why it was so difficult for Peter to use that word with Jesus**

II. WE USE "LOVE" TOO EASILY

- I love ice cream,**
- I love baseball,**
- I love my dog/cat,**
- I love springtime,**
- I love my wife,**
- I love God,**
- We use the same word without qualification to describe how we feel about a multitude of things.**

- **Our use of the word betrays the kind of love we have...**
 - **I love ice cream - because of the way it makes me feel**
 - **I love baseball - because of the way it makes me feel**
 - **I love my dog/cat - because of the way it makes me feel**
 - **I love springtime - because of the way it makes me feel**
 - **I love my wife - because of the way she makes me feel**
 - **I love God - because of the way He makes me feel**

II. WE USE "LOVE" TOO EASILY

- If our feelings ever change then our relationship changes**
- If Jesus had simply asked Peter, "Do you love me," it would have been no more of a problem for him than for us to say we love our pet.**
- But Jesus asked Peter to confirm an "agape" love for Him and Peter could not do it.**

III.

**WHAT IS
"AGAPE"
LOVE?**

A. AGAPE LOVE IS SACRIFICIAL

- (Gal 2:20) “I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who *loved me and gave Himself for me.*
- Agape love is to be totally given over to someone or something.

B. AGAPE LOVE IS UNCONDITIONAL

- Agape love is lavished on others without any thought of whether they deserve or are worthy of the love.
 - GOD'S LOVE FOR US - (Rom 5:8) But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.
 - OUR LOVE FOR ENEMIES - (Luke 6:27-32) "But I say to you who hear: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, {28} "bless those who curse you, and pray for those who spitefully use you. {29} "To him who strikes you on the one cheek, offer the other also. And from him who takes away your cloak, do not withhold your tunic either. {30} "Give to everyone who asks of you. And from him who takes away your goods do not ask them back. {31} "And just as you want men to do to you, you also do to them likewise. {32} "But if you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them.

B. AGAPE LOVE IS UNCONDITIONAL

- **We can agape our enemies regardless of how we feel. If they are hungry, we can feed them; if they thirst we can give them a drink (Rom. 12:20-21).**
- **We can choose to seek the betterment and welfare of others regardless of how we feel.**

C. AGAPE LOVE IS BENEFICIAL

- (Eph 5:25-28) *Husbands, love your wives,* just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, {26} that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, {27} that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish. {28} So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; *he who loves his wife loves himself.*

D. AGAPE LOVE IS INFLUENTIAL

- (John 13:34-35) "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. {35} "*By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.*"

E. AGAPE LOVE IS ESSENTIAL

- (1 Cor 13:1-3) Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal. {2} And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. {3} And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing.

F. AGAPE LOVE IS EXPERIENTIAL

- **(1 Cor 13:4-8) Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; {5} does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; {6} does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; {7} bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. {8} Love never fails.**

G. AGAPE LOVE IS EXCEPTIONAL

- **(1 Cor 13:8-13) Love never fails. But whether there are prophecies, they will fail; whether there are tongues, they will cease; whether there is knowledge, it will vanish away. {9} For we know in part and we prophesy in part. {10} But when that which is perfect has come, then that which is in part will be done away. {11} When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things. {12} For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known. {13} And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love.**

H. AGAPE LOVE IS A DECISION AND A COMMITMENT, NOT A FEELING

- It proceeds from the one giving the love without respect to the attractiveness of the one loved.
- Romans 5:8 But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that *while we were still sinners*, Christ died for us.

IV. WHAT IS THE SOURCE OF AGAPE LOVE?

- (1 Th 4:9) But concerning brotherly love you have no need that I should write to you, for you yourselves are *taught by God to love one another*;
- (1 John 4:19) *We love Him because He first loved us.*
- (Rom 5:5) Now hope does not disappoint, because *the love of God has been poured out in our hearts* by the Holy Spirit who was given to us.

CONCLUSION

- **(1 Pet 4:8) And above all things have fervent love for one another, for "love will cover a multitude of sins."**
- **(1 Cor 13:4-8) Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; {5} does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; {6} does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; {7} bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. {8} Love never fails.**

CONCLUSION

- **Jesus is asking you if you have agape love for Him**
- **Can you say you have agape love for Him?**
- **What about your love for your mate, your parents, your child, your neighbor, your friends, your relatives etc.**
- **Is your love based on how you feel or a commitment that you made?**