

THE BEREANS

ACTS 17:11

1 John 2:8
Lesson #7
Jesus' Way #2
02/13/2022

1 John 2:8

"I am writing a new commandment to you, which is true **in Him** and **in you**, because the darkness is passing away, and the **true light is already shining.**"

John 13:34

"A new commandment I give to you, that you **love one another, even as I have loved** you, that you also love one another."



How are we to apply this?

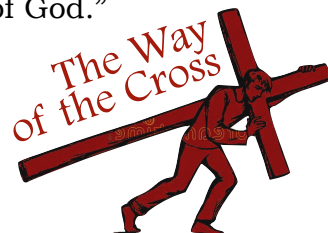
Seven misunderstandings we often have of agape love.

1. We view it as a feeling.
2. We treat it as a minor issue of the faith.
3. We fail to see its evangelistic power.
4. We don't offer it to the "deplorables".
5. We emphasize it as an initiative in life.
6. We apply it primarily at a distance.
7. We feel like we don't know how to do it.

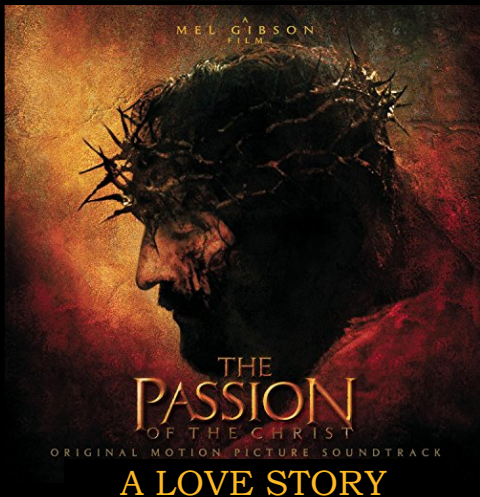
1. View agape love as a choice (not a feeling).

Hebrews 12:2

"fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who **for the joy set before Him endured the cross**, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God."

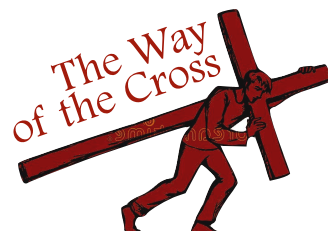


DYING WAS HIS REASON FOR LIVING



2. Make agape Love a major thing.

It is a free choice to move toward someone's soul with a commitment to sacrificially help them reach the deepest desire of their heart, which is peace with God, self, & others.



3. Recognize that agape love is our evangelistic message to the world.

John 17:23

“I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be perfected in unity, **that the world may know that Thou didst send Me, and didst love them, even as Thou didst love Me.**”

The Way of the Cross points back to the Word of the Cross

- NOTE: God’s love is unconditional (in spite of the internal & external circumstances.

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Romans 8

“18 For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us. . .

38 For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, 39 nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

- The Word and Way of the Cross is the stage for the light in this dark age.

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4. Pay special attention to the “least” among us.

Matthew 25:45

“Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did not do it to one of **the least of these**, you did not do it to Me.”

my enemies

the least of these

those who are like me or like me

Me



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4. Pay special attention to the “least” among us.

Matthew 5

“44 **love your enemies** and pray for those who persecute you, . . . 46 For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same?”

God

all who bear God’s image

those who are like me or like me

Me



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When asked about her ministry as a social worker she replied,

“My ministry is not social work, it is worship. My care for the suffering is my love for Jesus.”

Mother Teresa



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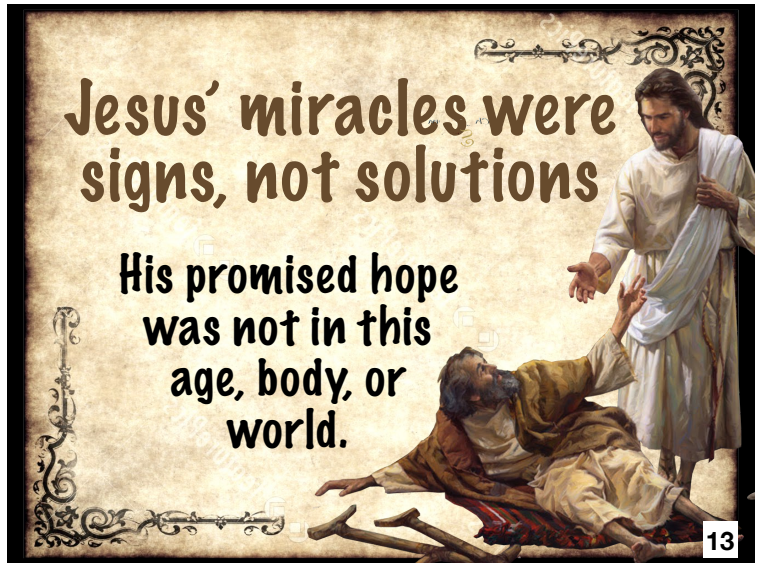
“My chief goal is not to eliminate poverty but to terminate a much deeper hunger - the need for dignity and love.”

“The worst disease in today’s world is not leprosy or cancer: it is the feeling of being uncared for, unwanted, of being deserted and alone.”

Mother Teresa



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1 Cor. 13:4-7

5. View life as an opportunity for a love response.

Love is a response to

patient	trials
kind	insults
not jealous	success of others
does not brag	success of self
is not arrogant	power & authority
is not unbecoming	freedom
not self seeking	competition
is not provoked	confrontation
holds no grudges	injustice
does not rejoice	failure of others
rejoices in the truth	gossip & slander
bears all things	losses
believes & hopes all things	discouragement
endures all things	delayed hopes

The WAY of the Cross

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James 1:19

LOVE

Is quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger

15

6. Start at home and within the faith community.

Ephesians 4:15
 “but speaking the **truth in love**, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him, who is the head, even Christ,”

Galatians 6
 “² Bear one another’s burdens, and thereby **fulfill the law of Christ**. . . . ¹⁰ So then, while we have opportunity, let us **do good to all men**, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith.”

- Social ethics originate in the **heart**.
- Social ethics start in the **home**.
- Social ethics focus on the **church**.
- Social ethics extend to the **culture**.
- Social ethics reach to the **world**.

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7. When you don’t know what to do - Show up, listen, and PRAY.

Ephesians 3
 “¹⁴ For this reason, **I bow my knees before the Father**, ¹⁵ from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name, ¹⁶ that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power **through His Spirit in the inner man**; ¹⁷ so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; and that you, being **rooted and grounded in love**, ¹⁸ may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, ¹⁹ and **to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge**, that you may be filled up to all the fullness of God.”

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Agape love

- L istens to concerns
- O verlooks flaws
- V alues strengths
- E mpathizes with joys sorrows

18

Love
is not a gift,
it is a sign.

Jesus through the
Word and Way
of the Cross
is the gift.

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Agape love is the great commandment.

- It is a choice, not a feeling.
- It extends to all, even one's enemies.
- It responds to this broken world as Jesus did.
 - He gave hope to the poor without changing their circumstances.
 - He expected his followers to remain aliens in this life and follow his example.
 - He addressed social injustice by building a community of faith modeled after the Word & Way of the Cross.

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NOTE how these “angels” operated in every episode:

They were messengers not surrogates.

- Angels are **messengers** - peddling the light, encouragers of the saints, clarifying the truth.

Ephesians 4:15

“but **speaking the truth in love**, we are to grow up in all aspects into him who is the head, even Christ,”

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