

Biblical Love

Intro:

1. Love can mean so many things to you.
 - a. Do you love your wife the same way you used to love your girlfriend?
 - b. Do you love your children the same way you love your wife? How about loving strangers?
 - c. Do you love people the same way you love hamburgers?
2. Do you know what love really is?
3. What kind of love would God be pleased with? His love - surely!
4. To be a successful lover, you need to find out what God's love is & then duplicate that!

I. What is Love?

- A. The present world's concept of love. ILL: "Love".
- B. The ancient world's concept of love from the Greek language.
 1. Each of these words have the basic idea of **giving of yourself to satisfy someone else' need**.
 2. **Erao** (ἐράω) = giving of yourself to get satisfaction in return. Used for immoral sex. We get our word "erotic" from this word. "I love hamburgers". Not found in the New Testament.
 3. **Stergo** (στέργω) = giving of yourself to your marriage partner, congenital obligation or duty. Marital love which may or may not involve genuine affection. Not in the New Testament.
 4. **Phileo** (φιλέω) = giving of yourself because of a relationship you choose. This is the love that shows genuine physical affection which is also the word for "kiss". We get our words "Philadelphia" from this word. Found in the New Testament several times.
 5. **Agapao** (ἀγαπάω) = giving of yourself to satisfy someone else' need simply because the need is there.
- C. God's love for you is **agapao**.
 1. This is the love that gives sacrificially to satisfy someone else' needs - regardless of how attractive they are; how deserving they are or whether you ever get anything back in return.
 2. This is the love God wants you as His child to have for everyone else. He commands it!

II. How is This Love Expressed?

I Cor 13:4-7 - Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.

- A. **v4** - Love is expressed through **patience**.
 1. Literally it is "slow to express your temper".
 2. When one trial after another keeps hurling its fiery arrow - do you complain, "Why me, Lord!"
 3. Or - do you raise your shield of faith & attack with your sword of the Spirit. Eph 6:16-17 - **In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.**
 4. **v7** - Remember - "love endures all things"!
- B. **v4** - Love is expressed through **kindness**.
 1. Literally "serviceable" - like going the second mile (Matt 5:41).
 2. ILL: **King Phillip of Spain was the most devout religious person of his day. He was responsible for the Spanish Inquisition!**
 3. You can be zealous for your faith - but your faith must be balanced with love!
 4. When the woman was caught in the very act of prostitution, would you have her executed - or say with Jesus, "Go & sin no more" (Jn 8:1-11).

- C. v4 - Love is expressed by **not being jealous**.
1. Are you jealous of your wife or girlfriend? That's not God's love!
 2. Are you jealous of someone else's successes?
- D. v4 - Love is expressed by **not bragging** or being inflated with your own importance.
1. How humble are you, really?
 2. What do you think about your own abilities & achievements?
 3. Rom 12:3 - For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: **Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you.**
 4. Your prayer needs to not only be "Lord, build me up & encourage me" when you need it - but also "Lord, help me to look at myself realistically!"
- E. v5 - Love is expressed by acting graciously & **not insisting on your own rights**.
1. **Grace** (χάρις) = showing favor to others - not being selfish.
 2. When you make decisions, is it to please God & help others - or to advance your own interests?
 3. Where does my freedom in Christ end & my responsibility to Him begin?
 4. I **am responsible** for what others think of my Christian faith!
 - a. Rom 14:15 - **If your brother is distressed because of what you eat, you are no longer acting in love. Do not by your eating destroy your brother for whom Christ died.**
 - b. Rom 15:1 - **We who are strong ought to bear with the failings of the weak and not to please ourselves.**
 - c. Also Rom 14:21 - **It is better not to eat meat or drink wine or to do anything else that will cause your brother to fall.**
 5. By sacrificially giving - you can actually "give 'til it hurts!" (or "til it feels good!")
- F. v5 - Love is expressed in **not being easily angered**.
1. Do you have a quick temper?
 2. You need God's love to fix that.
 3. God would have you be "slow to become angry" (Jam 1:19).
- G. v6 - Love is expressed by rejoicing **when truth** rather than falsehood **is proclaimed**.
- H. v7 - Love is expressed in believing in, hoping in & enduring the **cares & burdens** of others.

Let's do more than just talk about love. If you are sincere about pleasing God, start doing something about it! Love without expecting love in return and you'll be loving the way God loves! Husbands, love your wives. Parents, love your children. Families, love strangers into the kingdom the way God intended. Love not just in words only - but in actions!