

## Discipleship - Session 12

### Continue the 8 Characteristics Of A True Disciple Number 8 - Love (Agape)

Things we will cover this lesson:

1. The difference between agape love and phileo love.
2. Many think they walk in agape love when they really walk in phileo love.
3. What it means to love with agape love.
4. Review of the 8 Characteristics Of A True Disciple.

Assignment:

1. Continue ALONE prayer log. (One day -- 1/2 hour.)
2. Communing Word log.
3. Also go over the material you learned this session. Look up all the scriptures. Put this lesson to practice in your daily life.

Read again the 8 characteristics from 2 Peter 1

2 Peter 1:5-7

<sup>5</sup>But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge,

<sup>6</sup>to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness,

<sup>7</sup>to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love.

Characteristic Number 8 is **Love**.

**Love (Agape) - Definition:**

- The Greek word is *agape*.
- It is best translated by the work “love”. The old King James Version translation of the word was “charity”. This is good in the sense that when we give to a charity, we do not expect anything in return. So *agape* is the giving of love without expecting anything in return.
- *Agape* is love because of the nature of the giver without any consideration of merit or worthiness on the part of the recipient. In other words it is the ability to love unconditionally.

*Agape* (and the corresponding verb form *agapao*) is the most characteristic word of the of New Testament. This word is found in **over 200 verses** in the New Testament. The word was used very little outside the New Testament. The Spirit of God was revealing something previously unknown by the use of this word. It is a word that is above the impulse of feelings. It reaches out to the unlovely as well as to the lovely. It reaches out even when it knows it will receive nothing in return.

*Phileo* is a love that desires love to be returned. This word is used in **only 21 verses** in the New Testament. It is more nearly represented by the term “tender affection”. *Phileo* is a very good word. It is what most of us have experienced all our lives in healthy family relationships. Most good marriages and good homes are filled with *phileo* love. It is simply love that usually expects love in return. *Agape* is a much higher love because it does not expect anything in return. *Agape* can only come from a heart that has been changed by God; for God is the source of *agape*.

Many Christians think they walk in *agape* love when in reality they only walk in *phileo* love. This can be seen in John 21 when Jesus speaks with Peter about what happened the night of the denial. It is very important to note the use of the Greek wording in which this was originally spoken and written.

John 21:15-19 <sup>15</sup>So when they had eaten breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "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." He said to him, "Feed My lambs." <sup>16</sup>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." He said to him, "Tend My sheep." <sup>17</sup>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. <sup>18</sup>"Most assuredly, I say to you, when you were younger, you girded yourself and walked where you wished; but when you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and another will gird you and carry you where you do not wish." <sup>19</sup>This He spoke, signifying by what death he would glorify God. And when He had spoken this, He said to him, "Follow Me." (NKJV)

Jesus was showing Peter his heart. Peter thought he had *agape* love for Jesus when in reality it was *phileo* love. It seems to me that in verses 18 and 19 Jesus is promising Peter that he will arrive at *agape* love in his life.

If we will “follow Jesus”, we too will learn about this great love. *Agape* love is God’s goal for us. It takes *agape* to truly fulfill the two greatest commandments. To learn to love God with an *agape* love means we love Him completely for Who He is; not for what we can get out of Him or what we expect from Him. Maybe these are written in the future tense because our Lord knows that it has to be a growing experience for us to be able to arrive at this place in our lives. We do not begin our Christian walk loving God like this.

Mark 12:28-31

<sup>28</sup> Then one of the scribes came, and having heard them reasoning together, perceiving that He had answered them well, asked Him, "Which is the first commandment of all?"

<sup>29</sup> Jesus answered him, "The first of all the commandments is: 'Hear, O Israel, the LORD our God, the LORD is one.

<sup>30</sup> 'And you **shall love** the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.' This is the first commandment.

<sup>31</sup> "And the second, like it, is this: 'You **shall love** your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these." (NKJV)

Agape is more identified by the action it prompts than it is by the claim of ownership. See the action it prompts in 1 Corinthians 13:4-8.

	KJV	Better translation -- meaning
verse 4 -	suffereth long	<i>is patient</i> - not to lose heart; to persevere patiently and bravely even while enduring misfortunes and troubles
	is kind	( <i>good trans.</i> ) - to show one's self mild, pleasant, gracious, benevolent
	envieth not	( <i>good trans.</i> ) - to be heated or to boil with envy, hatred, anger
	vaunteth not itself	<i>does not boast</i> - a self display, employing rhetorical embellishments in extolling one's self excessively
	is not puffed up	<i>arrogant</i> or <i>proud</i> - to inflate, blow up, to cause to swell up
verse 5 -	does not behave itself unseemly	<i>is not rude</i> - to act inappropriately
	seeketh not her own	<i>does not insist on its own way</i> - to seek for self; "I want it my way."
	is not easily provoked	<i>stirred up to anger</i> - to irritate
	thinketh no evil	<i>not resentful</i> - to logically reason out or to justify (wrong action)

verse 6 -	rejoiceth not in iniquity	<i>does not delight in unrighteousness</i>
	rejoiceth in the truth	<i>delights in the truth</i>
verse 7 -	beareth all things	<i>protects</i> - by covering to keep off something which threatens
	believeth all things	( <u>good trans.</u> ) - to place confidence in
	hopeth all things	( <u>good trans.</u> ) - to wait with full confidence
	endureth all things	( <u>good trans.</u> ) - to persevere
verse 8 -	never fails	( <u>good trans.</u> ) - to fall out of or away from; to perish

In 2 Peter 1 *agape* is the final attribute in the list of eight things. *Agape* is something we grow into. We become.

We will study this word more in a later lesson.

**SUMMATION STATEMENT: God's goal for our life is to do everything from the motivation of *agape* love. It is how God operates. The source of all of God's actions is *agape*. May it become true in all of His children. It is last in the list of the eight characteristics because everything is building us toward this in our life.**

Now let us review the 8 Characteristics of a true disciple.

1. **Faith** - Confidence to the point of trust.
2. **Virtue** - Exhibiting correctness of character and behavior.
3. **Knowledge** - Understanding life from God's perspective.
4. **Self-Control** - Mastering my desires and passions.
5. **Perseverance** - Immovable from my deliberate purpose of walking with God.
6. **Godliness** - Devoutness in doing that which is well pleasing to God.
7. **Brotherly Kindness** - Having affection for my church family as my own.
8. **Love** - To love expecting nothing in return.

Remember we are to add these to our lives. Notice also how each one is to be added to the one it followed. Yet all of them should be in the process of being added at the same time. In other words we do not have to wait for the full completion of one in order to add the next.

Read again 2 Peter 1:1-15. Thank God for giving you this powerful and wonderful list. Note again those wonderful promises. As you have these 8 characteristics abounding in your life, you are well on your way to becoming a true disciple of Jesus!

Make copies and then cut out the handy reference below for a bookmark if you wish. Put one in your Bible; another in your wallet; another on your refrigerator; etc. This will help you keep these 8 things before you. Pray them into your life regularly.

**TRUE DISCIPLES**

**8 Characteristics**  
**Of A True Disciple**  
**(2 Peter 1:1-15)**

**8. LOVE**

**7. Brotherly Kindness**

**6. Godliness**

**5. Perseverance**

**4. Self-Control**

**3. Knowledge**

**2. Virtue**

**1. Faith**

**Add these until they abound!**

I made this reference in reverse order because **Faith** is the foundation we add to and build on and **LOVE** is our goal at the top with the other six characteristics being well established in-between.