

A Little More on Love

Godly love (*agape*) was unique to religion until New Testament times. The word is found a few times in the Greek version of the Old Testament. It is more common in the New Testament. In noun form, “*agape*” is found 116 times in the New Testament. In verb form, “*agapao*” appears 142 times in the New Testament.

A Critical Lexicon and Concordance to the English and Greek New Testament defines “*agape*” as “the love which springs from admiration and is a decision of will...” “*Agape*” commits a self-denying and compassionate devotion to the one so loved. “*Agape*” is different from other words for love in that it has to do with the mind, not the emotions. This type of love is “willed” love. “*Agape*” love is not simply an emotion that comes from the heart unbidden, but it is a principle by which one lives.

To love our enemies (to have their best interest at heart) is contrary to our natural inclinations and emotions. Christ Jesus doesn’t demand that we love enemies with the same feelings and emotions that we have for family or spouse. We express emotional, feeling love toward loved ones and intellectual, decided love (*agape*) to all. “*Agape*” is a love that wills good for all. We love our enemies that we may be like God (Matthew 5:43-48). No matter what man does or what he is like, God still loves him. God seeks nothing but his good.

“*Agape*” contains two basic ideas. It seeks man’s highest good and treats man as God would treat him. “*Agape*” is the ultimate love!

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