



“And this is the commandment we have from Him, that the one who loves God should love his brother also.” 1 John 4: 21

Sunday – April 22, 2018

Heart to Heart...

Most of us are familiar with the word love in the New Testament. One of the most prominent words in the Greek for our English word love is “*agape*”. It is a unique word. It is a word that describes the God kind of love. It’s the love God is trying to get us to operate from in our lives. It is a love that has nothing to do with feelings but a choice, a dedication toward the well-being of another despite how they treat us. That sounds like God, doesn’t it? We see it in Jesus as He heads to the cross and His dying. That’s what we find in this Greek word “*agape*”.

But there is something that we miss sometimes when we teach/preach on the word “*agape*” (love). John 12:42-43 says: “*Nevertheless many even of the rulers believed in Him, but because of the Pharisees they were not confessing Him, for fear that they would be put out of the synagogue; for they loved the approval of men rather than the approval of God.*” I underlined the word “*loved*” because it comes from this Greek word “*agape*”. The rulers made a choice and were dedicated more toward their own well-being than Jesus. They loved man’s approval over God’s! (That’s what we call peer pressure when in reality it’s a love / “*agape*” issue.)

Peter speaks of Balaam, the son of Beor, an Old Testament prophet, “*who loved the wages of unrighteousness.*” (II Peter 2:15) The word “*loved*” comes from this Greek word “*agape*”. He chose to sacrifice for unrighteousness over God!

Paul spoke of Demas who, “*having loved this present world, has deserted me and gone to Thessalonica.*” (II Timothy 4:10) Once again, the word “*loved*” is this Greek word “*agape*”. Demas sacrificed more for the world and left Paul and the Lord behind.

John reminds God’s people: “*Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.*” (I John 2:15) Three times the Greek term

“agape” is used in this one verse. If we choose to sacrifice for the world, we will not sacrifice for God or His people. God’s love is not in us!

What do we learn? You can *“agape”* God! You can *“agape”* your brothers/sisters in Christ Jesus! You can *“agape”* the wages of unrighteousness! You can *“agape”* the approval of others more than the approval of the Lord. You can *“agape”* the world and the things in it! You sacrifice and make choices for what / who you love the most. What or who do you *“agape”*? Think about it!!!

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