

Sin – Limited & Diminished Love

- Human love only endures while it is pleasant and enjoyable. Once the joy and profit of a relationship is gone, this love dies.
- Human love is very unstable
- Promises, vows, commitments, feelings, memories, gradually fade like autumn leaves.
- Before Jesus came this is what love means.
- In cultures where the gospel never came ...
- The concept of unselfish sacrifice for others is not natural – It is learned from God.
- This is what the gospel brought to our culture.

The Word was Right – But Limited

- *Then one of them, a lawyer, asked Him a question, testing Him, and saying, 36 "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?" 37 Jesus said to him, "'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.' 38 This is the first and great commandment. 39 And the second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' 40 On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets." Matt 22:35-40*
- Big enough to cover every law in Law of Moses.

They were Subjective Open to Change

- *with all **your** heart, with all **your** soul, and with all **your** mind.'*
- *'You shall love **your** neighbor **as yourself***
- Rationalizations:
- **Who** is my neighbor?
- **How much** do I love myself?
- What is the definition of “**all**?”
- Everyone free to define it as they chose.
- The more selfish, the more loosely defined...

A New Commandment

- A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have **loved** you, that you also love one another. 35 By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another. Jn. 13:34-35
- New – Could never have been given before
- Incomprehensible without Jesus' example
- Needed a new word **agape** to describe it.
- Needed a new standard of degree **as**

The New Commandment: Objective

in proportion as



Broadened By Other Examples

For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. 7 For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die. 8 But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. 9 Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. 10 For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. Rom 5:6-11

A Demonstration

- *For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. 17 For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. John 3:16-17*
- We are introduced to *agape* as the reason why God sent His Son and saved us.

A Manifestation

- *Beloved, let us love one another, for **love is of God**; and **everyone who loves is born of God and knows God**. 8 **He who does not love does not know God, for God is love**. 9 **In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him**. 10 **In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins**. 11 **Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another**. 1Jn. 4:9-11*

A Scale – Practical Definition

- Love **suffers long** and is **kind**; love does **not envy**; love does **not parade itself**, is **not puffed up**; 5 does **not behave rudely**, does **not seek its own**, is **not provoked**, **thinks no evil**; 6 does **not rejoice in iniquity**, but **rejoices in the truth**; 7 **bears all things**, **believes all things**, **hopes all things**, **endures all things**. 1 Cor 13:4-8
- Even today many of these things are not in our definition or understanding of love.
- How many times have we fallen short in our love for our wives, children, brethren?

Paul Prayed for the Ephesians

- *For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, 15 from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, 16 that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man, 17 that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; Eph 3:14-19*
- Takes Great Effort on our Part
- Needs God's Help through the Holy Spirit
- Until Christ dwells in our Heart - Impossible

The Full Extent of *agape* – Love

- *that you, being rooted and grounded in love, 18 may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height — 19 to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.*
- 1. Rooted and Grounded in *agape*
- 2. Able to comprehend
- 3. Width, Length, Depth, Height
- 4. Know the Love of Christ
- 5. Passes Knowledge
- 6. Filled with all the fullness of God

Rooted in Love

rhizo-o to cause to strike root; strengthen with roots.

The roots of the tree gives it both stability and sustenance.

All that we have learned about love must come first, until we are rooted the rest is impossible



Grounded in Love

to lay the foundation

Until we know and can practice *agape* –
love there is nothing to build upon.



Know the Love of Christ (Passes Knowledge)

- *the width and length and depth and height —*
- A phrase to reveal the incomprehensible vastness of agape – love
- No matter how much we know:
- It is still deeper, wider, higher and longer...
- Never rest – Never satisfied – Always abounding and seeking for more.
- It is the root and the foundation.

To Know the Love of Christ

- *that you may be filled with all the fullness of God*
- The scope of this is vast.
- Knowing the love of Christs will fill us with all the fulness of God.
- *Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. 8 He who does not love does not know God, for God is love. 9 In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. 1 John 4:7-10*
- Do we see it yet?

The Love of God and Christ is Sacrifice

- *having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. 3 Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. 4 Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others. 5 Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, 6 who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, 7 but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. 8 And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross. Phil 2:2-9*

Bringing Jesus' Mind into our Mind

- 1. Christ Jesus mind in you
- 2. Existing in the form of God
- 3. Being on an equality with God
- 4. Did not need to cling to that equality.
- 5. Emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant
- 6. Made in the likeness of men;
- 7. Found in fashion as a man
- 8. He humbled Himself,
- 9. Becoming obedient unto death
- 10 Wherefore also God highly exalted Him

He Who Keeps My Commands Love Me

if you do not **believe** that I am He, you will die in your sins." Jn. 8:24

unless you **repent** you will all likewise perish. Lk. 13:5

if you **confess** with your mouth the Lord Jesus and **believe** in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. Rom. 10:9-10

Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. 16 He who **believes** and **is baptized** will be saved; Mk. 16:15-16

Repent, and let every one of you **be baptized** in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins Ats 2:38

If we **confess our sins**, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.