
BIBLE LOVE: ITS MEANING

"If you love Me, keep My commandments," John 14:15

Every student of the word goes to the Greek language when seeking Biblical meaning. But, one doesn't need a Greek text to know what AGAPE means. Most Christians consider AGAPE to be synonymous with God, Himself. AGAPE is God's love. AGAPE is God; **"for God is (AGAPE) love," 1st John 4:8**.

AGAPE describes a kind of love belonging only to God. But, AGAPE is also an emanation from GOD that man may receive. He may even, walk in God's AGAPE.

It is necessary to Look at both ends of GOD'S LOVE, we think. God is at the high end - **"Thou shalt Love the Lord, thy God with all you heart and soul," Mt 22:37**. At the lower end, we see man - **"You shall love your neighbor as yourself," Mt 22:39**.

Without question, true Bible love experiences both spectrums, beginning with God's heavenly high, and going to man's earthly low.

As a spiritual prism, Jesus refracts God's colorful commandments into His own white righteousness. He, then gives God's love to man, in order that we may experience Him and fulfill His will - His commandments.

We all know that Jesus reached down for fallen man, taking him up to His heavenly Father. And, that's the calling with disciples. Jesus expects love to work in our life. That's what we must come to understand, as well.

Bible LOVE, as explained in 1st John 3:24, meshes beautifully with the words of Jesus. **"And the one who keeps His commandments abides in Him, and He in him."**

There is a problem in man that tends to deny Bible Love. Because man isn't perfect, he feels he can love God, all right; but, not man - not all, anyway. He questions, *"How can I love a man that has no quality of love within him?"*

Certainly, with man, this is impossible to do. But, remember, we not looking at what love produces; or, how man feels about what he does. Acts of kindness and other works do not define Bible love; not fully, not in the sense of keeping His commandments.

Our focus is on what love is; not what it does. We see Bible Love as Jesus stated; and, for meaning, add our own words to His. **"If you love Me, then power will be given to you and you will keep my commandments."** We have here, not the doing but, a love of Him; even, His LOVE. Thus, THROUGH LOVE, He does through us.

In the case of a Christian, love - from God and to man, it finds its highest definition in the words of John, the Beloved. **"We love because He first loved us." 1st John 4:19**.

And, love doesn't stop with first love. God's love goes on and on. There is second love, third love and, there is love to be, and do, as He commands.

Bible love isn't natural, however; so, it becomes necessary for man to repeat, over and over, again: "God is love," "God is love." But, we hear men make other statements. They don't say, *'I love God because He first loved me;'* but, *'I love God because I do good things.'*

AGAPE is God's love. Therefore, if our reasoning is within Scripture light, we shall conclude that love is the deciding factor that produces obedience to His commandments.

But, we have to watch out for fleshly thinking, here; something that a FLESHLY world thrives upon. We, as Paul, must learn to die daily against the boasting flesh (1st Cor 15:31).

It is clear that Bible love does not mean that we show our love by doing things. We may do things - even His commandments; but, doing things always comes up short. The opposite is true of Bible love. It never fails (1st Cor 13:8).

In Paul's explanation of BIBLE LOVE, every act performed and every gift given; not only emanates from LOVE, but pales in comparison to Bible Love. When it comes to the kind of love Jesus means, disciples have long known, that Jesus, alone, is full of grace and truth.

The very make-up of His work of love is within the Spiritual. Everything He did on behalf of man was Spiritually based. The blind man of John 9 is a good example of what we mean.

Puzzled over the man's plight, the disciples asked, "**Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he should be born blind?**" To natural man, the Lord's words are astounding.

"It was neither that this man sinned, nor his parents; but it was in order that the works of God might be displayed in him," v 3.

Jesus came to seek and save that which was lost. Yes, Jesus did many physical acts; but, all of them involved bringing man to salvation. Our focus must be centered on His spiritual accomplishments; only then will the works of God be displayed in us.

Sure, we'll rejoice in that the lepers were cleansed and the blind received their sight. But, we must view LOVE within the spiritual; even in the grandest of all acts; that of raising of Lazarus. God is Spirit. God is LOVE.

Bible Love focuses upon His spiritual work of justification and reconciliation. These far outweigh the miracles and healings that were performed within the physical realm. And, where is the miracle or healing, that doesn't demand a deeper meaning; that of the Spiritual?

Jesus is speaking to His Disciples; those who have been saved, baptized and make up the church body. In this passage, we understand that it is LOVE working within that keeps His commandments.

LOVE keeps the disciple in close contact to where Truth is taught; which, is where His commandments are performed. It is not the disciple but, it is the Lord doing the work. LOVE keeps us close (within Him) to Christ.

"For it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure." Philippians 2:13.

We always want to be near those we love. It's no difference with our Lord; we want to be near Him. And, we want to be near His Disciples that He loved. Jesus **"has the words to Eternal Life, John 6:68.**

What Jesus wants us to grasp about Bible love is that it's all about Him, not us. It will be His doing, not our doing. Therefore, it is necessary that He always

remains close to us. And, it is our love for Him that keeps Him close. When He is close to us, He will perform His spiritual work within us.

Once we realize what love truly means; that, "**All things are upheld by Him**" (Col 2:13); we desire to get as close as we can. In a spiritual way, if it is possible, we envy John, "**Lying on Jesus' breast**" (John 13:25).

Bible Love emanates from God to Jesus and to His disciples. On the Day of Pentecost, we see how God's love operates in the church. "**Beloved, if God so loved us, we also should love one another. By this we know that we abide in Him and He is us, because He has given us of His Spirit,**" I Jn 4:11, 13.