

Arlington Church of Christ

Wednesday night Bible Study

The Mark of a Disciple



We recognize certain things about people by their characteristics

John 13:34-35

“A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. ³⁵ By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”



Three Biblical Words for Love

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Phileo -

Agape -

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Phileo - brotherly love, friendship, mutual interests

Agape - love like that of God, the love between disciples,
always seeking the best for the other

Matthew 22:34-40

Hearing that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees, the Pharisees got together. ³⁵ One of them, an expert in the law, tested him with this question: ³⁶ “Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?”

³⁷ Jesus replied: “**Love (agape) the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.**’ ³⁸ This is the first and greatest commandment. ³⁹ And the second is like it: **‘Love (agape) your neighbor as yourself.’** ⁴⁰ **All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.**” *(This is the definition of how we are to live)*

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It is a ‘new’ commandment because it a command-able’ love – it is something we can do even if we don’t ‘feel like doing it’. It is love that serves someone else at my own expense. It is ‘I will do the will of God for you even if you don’t deserve it, even if you don’t respond’ – I will still do what is right for you. It is the kind of love husbands are commanded to have for their wives and it doesn’t depend on what she does -

Ephesians 5:25-28

Husbands, love **(Agape)** your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her ²⁶ to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, ²⁷ and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. ²⁸ In this same way, husbands ought to love **(Agape)** their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself.

Do what is needed and what is best for her- to the point of giving up your life for her if times demand it.



Matthew 5:43-48

“You have heard that it was said, ‘Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ ⁴⁴ But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, ⁴⁵ that you may be children of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. ⁴⁶ If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are not even the tax collectors doing that? ⁴⁷ And if you greet only your own people, what are you doing more than others? Do not even pagans do that? ⁴⁸ Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

“Agape love is commandable love”.

John 14:21-23

Whoever has my commands and keeps them is the one who loves me. The one who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love them and show myself to them.”

²³ Jesus replied, “Anyone who loves me will obey my teaching. My Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them.

1 John 5:2-3

This is how we know that we love the children of God: by loving God and carrying out his commands. ³ In fact, this is love for God: to keep his commands. And his commands are not burdensome,

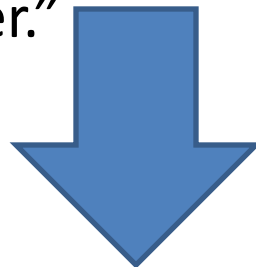
It is much easier to respond in God's way of love (less stress), than in the world's way of selfishness and revenge for perceived wrongs.

Romans 5:6-8

You see, at just the right time, **when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly.** ⁷ Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous person, though for a good person someone might possibly dare to die. ⁸ But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: **While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.**

John 13:34-35

“**A new command I give you: Love one another.** As I have loved you, so you must love one another. ³⁵ **By this everyone will know that you are my disciples,** if you love one another.”



Jesus gives practical example of ‘loving’ (agape) in:

Matthew 5:38-42

“You have heard that it was said, ‘**Eye for eye, and tooth for tooth.**’ ³⁹ **But I tell you, do not resist an evil person. If anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to them the other cheek also.** ⁴⁰ **And if anyone wants to sue you and take your shirt, hand over your coat as well.** ⁴¹ **If anyone forces you to go one mile, go with them two miles.** ⁴² **Give to the one who asks you, and do not turn away from the one who wants to borrow from you.**”

John 15:12-13

My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. ¹³ Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends.

'Lay down one's life' includes not only being willing to die for them, but also being willing to live for them – to put your own interests aside and consider what they need more than what you want.

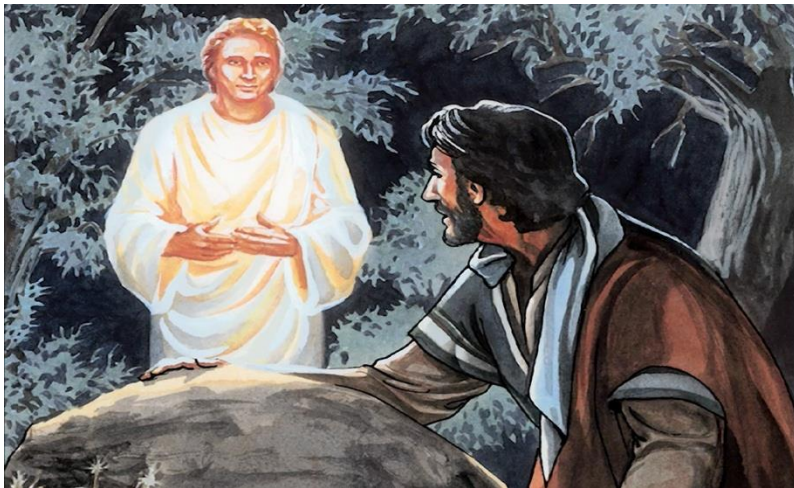


“Not my will, but yours be done” - **Help me to do what needs to be done to for their good .**

John 15:12-13

My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. ¹³ Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends.

And this love is 'New' in its power – to love like this requires more than our own power – it takes the guidance and power of the Holy Spirit .



Jesus received comfort and help from an angel (Lk 22:43) – we are given comfort and help by the Holy Spirit

1 John 2:3-8

We know that we have come to know him if we keep his commands. ⁴ Whoever says, “I know him,” but does not do what he commands is a liar, and the truth is not in that person. ⁵ **But if anyone obeys his word, love for God is truly made complete in them.** This is how we know we are in him: ⁶ **Whoever claims to live in him must live as Jesus did.**

⁷ **Dear friends, I am not writing you a new command but an old one, which you have had since the beginning. This old command is the message you have heard.** (Remember the two greatest commands – Love God, Love your neighbor)

⁸ Yet I am writing you a **new command**; **its truth is seen in him and in you,** (The way you live is to be so different from the way of the world that others cannot help but notice))

1 John 2:9-11

Anyone who claims to be in the light but hates a brother is still in the darkness. ¹⁰ Anyone who loves their brother lives in the light, and there is nothing in them to make them stumble. ¹¹ But **anyone who hates a brother is in the darkness and walks around in the darkness.** They do not know where they are going, because the darkness has blinded them.

Living as a disciple of Jesus (in the light) opens your eyes to what is really happening and the deceptions of Satan around you, and changes your outlook on things from that of the world (darkness and hate) to that of a disciple (faith and agape love)

John 13:34

“A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another.

This is not a ‘suggestion’ by our Lord – but a command, a requirement. The disciples in Jesus day struggled with this idea of having ‘agape’ love too !

Jesus has just told the disciples that He is going away and where he is going they could not come at this time.

John 13:37-38

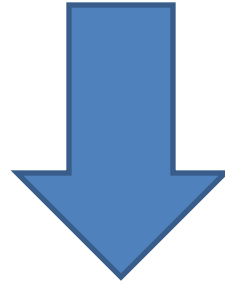
Peter asked, “Lord, why can’t I follow you now? I will lay down my life for you.” (I really ‘love you’ Lord)

³⁸ Then Jesus answered, “Will you really lay down your life for me? Very truly I tell you, before the rooster crows, you will disown me three times!



Colossians 3:12-14

Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. **¹³ Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.** ¹⁴ And over all these virtues **put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.**



To bear with each other and forgive each other you need love for that person. Jesus, knowing what Peter would do, had already forgiven him because of His love.

Matthew 18:21-22

Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, “Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother who sins against me? Up to seven times?” **(the other rabbis said ‘three times in a lifetime’)** ²² Jesus answered, “I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times



1 John 4:19

We love because he first loved us.

‘Agape love’ takes the initiative – God loved us before we asked for it, even when we don’t respond properly to His love for us.

1 John 3:17-18

If anyone has material possessions and sees a brother or sister in need but has no pity on them, how can the love of God be in that person? ¹⁸ Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth.

(Note- this is speaking of helping fellow Christians, not just anyone - that care for each other is what makes the Christian unique.) This is not a command to take care of every needy person in the world!

Mark 14:7 The poor you will always have with you, and you can help them any time you want. But you will not always have me.

Sometimes love requires you to do 'negative' things. - you have to condemn sin even in someone you love. We cannot overlook sin – it is not 'love' to let someone else go to hell because you didn't want to offend them.

Sometimes God disciplines us through circumstances that He sends our way – through His Words, through our conscience, through someone else pointing out our sin and failures – that's the loving thing to do – love sometimes involves punishment, love judges what is right and wrong when we use the Word of God as our standard.

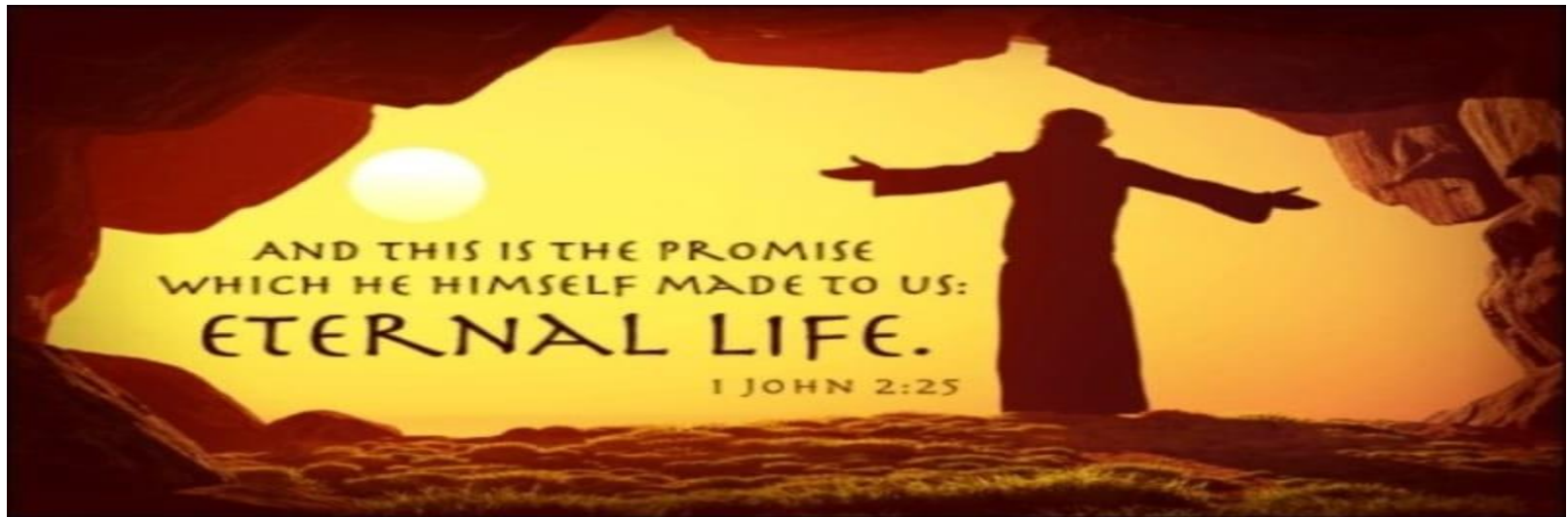
John 13:34-35

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Jesus is giving the world the right to ‘examine’ our credibility – to see if we really are who we say we are. When the world sees us loving (doing the right thing for others) even when they don’t love us back-then they will wonder why and we have a chance to tell about Jesus and what it means to be a Christian.

John 13:34-35

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Showing of our love in discipleship is the indication of the promise of the eternal life that God has given us. It indicates our uniqueness to those who observe how we act.

Luke 6:32-35 (The uniqueness of the disciple)

“If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners love those who love them. ³³ And if you do good to those who are good to you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners do that. ³⁴ And if you lend to those from whom you expect repayment, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, expecting to be repaid in full. ³⁵ But love your enemies, do good to them, and lend to them without expecting to get anything back. Then your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High, because he is kind to the ungrateful and wicked.

Acts 2:36-41

“Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Messiah.”

³⁷ When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, “Brothers, what shall we do?” ³⁸ Peter replied, “Repent and be

baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. ³⁹ The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call.”

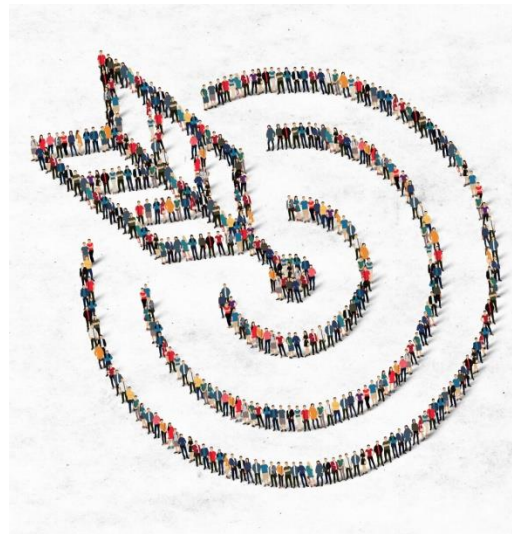
⁴⁰ With many other words he warned them; and he pleaded with them, “Save yourselves from this corrupt

generation.” ⁴¹ Those who accepted his message were

baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day.

By this all will know that
you are My disciples, if you
have love for one another.
— John 13:35 (NKJV)

Sin is “missing the
mark” – but agape
love is ‘hitting the
mark of discipleship’.



**HITTING
THE
MARK**