

3 Intriguing Truths You Don't Often Hear About God's Love

While I was studying *agape* love, I saw something new. ... something I'd never seen before.

Agape love is a funny thing.

When we study what the Bible says about God's love, we see that God commands us to love with His love, but that love is a kind of love that can only come from Him. With that same love that He gives us, we love Him by keeping His commands, one of which is to love others the way He loved us.

Are you confused yet?

1. Love is a command.

Jesus said to him, "‘You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ ‘This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets” (Matt. 22:37-40).

A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another (John 13:34-35).

We can sum up all of the Ten Commandments like this:

The first four are "You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind."

The other six are "Love your neighbor as yourself."

Do you love yourself?

This can be so hard! I don't know about you, but often do not love myself very much. I see in myself so many shortcomings and idiosyncrasies that I sometimes even hate myself!

Then Jesus gave a new command when He said to love one another as He loved us. Not as we love ourselves, but as He loved us.

That is a new and greater form of love.

2. Agape love is given by God.

I don't know about you, but it isn't very easy to love as Jesus loved us. He loves us the way we are. ... and He loved us when we hated Him, when we didn't want anything to do with Him.

He showed us the greatest form of love when He gave His life for us, without calculating what it meant for Him, without considering whether or not we'd actually be grateful for His sacrifice.

But what really amazes me is the command that we love Him with the kind of love that only comes from Him.

We can't love God until we receive His love with which we must love Him!

Just let that blow your mind for a second: "We love Him because He first loved us" (1 John 4:19).

3. We love God by keeping His commands.

How do we love God?

This is something that really confused me for a long time, because I often didn't feel love for God. Often I didn't feel like reading the Bible or spending time with Him in I doubted whether I actually loved Him at all.

But if we look at my definition of love in a human sense, then any time I don't feel ooey-goey feelings for my husband, it

means I don't love him anymore.

Hmmm. ... I think our feelings don't really define love very well!

Then I found a verse in which Jesus tells us the kind of love He wants from us:

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

This is something so amazing! When we compare Christianity with every other religion, we see that the followers of other religions agonize over how to fulfill the vague and often shifting desires of their gods, hoping they somehow succeed.

But Almighty God, the one, true God, didn't just tell us exactly how to please Him, He gives us the tools to please Him so that we can keep His commands!

He gave us the command so we would know how to do His will.

But, He knew that in our own strength it is impossible to do His will.

So He gave us what we need to fulfill His will!

Grace and peace be multiplied to you through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord. His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness through the knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence" (2 Pet. 1:2-3).

This is why, my dear sister, love is a fruit of the Spirit.

This love cannot grow in us without the Holy Spirit!

Without the Holy Spirit we can only give human love:

love based on feelings,

love with strings attached,
love that manipulates,
love with hidden motives,
love that isn't really love!

God's love—perfect love, pure love, *agape* love, comes only from the Holy Spirit and grows in us because He lives in us and bears fruit in our life.

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