

What's Love?

It depends on who you ask: but should it? Most of the time, the answer to the question comes in the form of some human variation of love even though we may be talking about God. At times, loving God is interpreted in the same way as one would be in love with another human being. If this is all that it is, the person without the capacity to experience this type of love is in bad shape in relation to God. When the word 'love' is used in Psalms 91:14, it is used in the sense of cleaving or clinging to God. This makes it doable even for those who have no experience of falling in love with anyone because cleaving can be viewed as a dependence on God.

Loving God is the greatest of the two great commandments (see Matthew 22:37-38). This is because when we cling to God in the way that He wants us to, we open ourselves up to His agape love in a special way. His love then gives us the capacity to love our neighbor in a manner that is not possible for those who do not love God. For this reason, the second great commandment needs to be preceded by the first: it cannot be a substitute for the first. His special agape love for us is a fruit of the Spirit; therefore, it flows into us when God's Spirit is within us (see Galatians 5:22-23); and is not otherwise available for human beings. Without His Spirit within us, it is not possible to experience it. The different aspects of this agape love from God are described in 1Corinthians 13. Without it, our outward displays of love don't do us any good: "And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity [agape love], it profiteth me nothing" (1Corinthians 13:3).

The general love of God towards His creation is not the same thing (see John 3:16). When we tell an unbeliever that God loves them, we are telling them that God wants to be close to them, but this requires them to be humble towards God. Nature

is naturally close to God. Humans need to consciously move towards this closeness because of the Law of Sin which is an alienation from God (Romans 7:14 thru 8:2). We are all born with this law as a result of Adam and Eve's transgression. The human weakness, that we all share, is the direct result of this alienation. We are naturally weak because of this; but we also need to acknowledge it and approach God for inner strength by humility, dependence, and unconditional trust towards Him. This makes us receptive and open to His Divine strength which is also called the fruit of the Spirit temperance or self-control.

The world cannot understand the paradox that, when we admit that we are all weak without God, only then is there the possibility of becoming strong. Will-power alone is insufficient. The world can only see the outward strength of the Christian, but it cannot understand that it is there because of the effects of the Spirit that is within us by our humility toward God. This can only be spiritually discerned by those who have the Spirit.

Closeness to God by humility towards Him is required for opening us up to His special benefits. This humility is best defined in 1Peter 5:5-7 which says: "Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble. Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time: Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you" (see also James 4:6-10, Philippians 4:6-7, Proverbs 3:5-6, Psalms 37:7, 55:22, Isaiah 26:3-4, 55:7-9, and Galatians 5:22-23). This enables us to escape "the corruption that is in this world through lust" (2Peter 1:4), and moderates us.

Philippians 4:5-7 is an important passage that tells us to "Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand. Be anxious for nothing, but in everything, by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made

known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus". This is the same inner peace that is also a fruit of the Spirit which is within us; and it takes us beyond our thoughts of peace into a sustained peace. Leaning on our own understanding and efforts does not produce it. This is the inner rest for our souls that Christ promised us (see Matthew 11:28-30); but we need to be humble towards Him in order to acquire it.

When we have the Spirit of Christ within us, we also have the Spirit of the Father which resides in Jesus (see Romans 8:9-11, Colossians 2:9-10 and John 17:23). Christ is the only way to have the Father's Spirit and His love within us.

For more information and a FREE download of Peter Aiello's entire book, visit .

Email comments to aiello235@.