

INGREDIENTS FOR HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS: AGAPE LOVE

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John 15:12 (NLT)

¹² This is my commandment: Love each other in the same way I have loved you.

Matthew 22:39

...‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’

AGAPE IS A COMMAND IN ALL OF OUR RELATIONSHIPS!

LOVE: a strong affection for another arising out of kinship or personal ties, attraction based on sexual desire. - Webster's Dictionary

IT'S IMPOSSIBLE TO APPROACH LOVE THE WAY GOD WANTS US TO IF WE DEFINE LOVE WITH THE WORLD'S DICTIONARY.

"EROS" - Romantic/passionate love

"PHILIA" - Friendship/Brotherly love (camaraderie)

"STORGE" - Family love (parent-child, sibling bonds)

"AGAPE" - Selfless, unconditional, sacrificial love

"Eros honoured without reservation and obeyed unconditionally, becomes a demon." - C.S. Lewis

IN THE CHRISTIAN LIFE, AGAPE IS THE LOVE THAT IS PARAMOUNT AND RULES AND GUIDES OVERALL.

Romans 5:8 (NLT)

But God showed his great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners.

1 John 4:9-10 (NLT)

God showed how much he loved us by sending his one and only Son into the world so that we might have eternal life through him. ¹⁰ This is real love—not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as a sacrifice to take away our sins.

Ephesians 5:1–2 (NLT)

Imitate God, therefore, in everything you do, because you are his dear children. ² Live a life filled with love, following the example of Christ. He loved us and offered himself as a sacrifice for us, a pleasing aroma to God.

Agape is Jesus love — unconditional, self-sacrificing, unwavering, extravagant, constant, enduring.

Agape does not seek its own way but pursues the wellbeing of others despite their actions. It gives without expecting anything in return, reflecting the very heart and actions of Christ.

OUR CALL AS CHRISTIANS IS TO REPRESENT JESUS WITH THIS LOVE!

Colossians 3:12–14 (NLT)

¹² Since God chose you to be the holy people he loves, you must clothe yourselves with tenderhearted mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. ¹³ Make allowance for each other's faults, and forgive anyone who offends you. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others. ¹⁴ Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds us all together in perfect harmony.

"An envious Christian, a malicious Christian, a cold and hard-hearted Christian, is the greatest absurdity and contradiction. It is like a dark brightness, or a sweet bitter, a beautiful deformity, or a good evil. It is a contradiction in terms, and an inconsistency that cannot be reconciled. The spirit of Christ and the spirit of envy and malice are as opposite as light and darkness." God's self-giving love expressed in the self-emptying death of his beloved Son served as both the pattern of and the motivation for love among Christians. - Jonathan Edwards

1 Corinthians 13:4–7 (NLT)

⁴ Love is patient and kind. Love is not jealous or boastful or proud ⁵ or rude. It does not demand its own way. It is not irritable, and it keeps no record of being wronged. ⁶ It does not rejoice about injustice but rejoices whenever the truth wins out. ⁷ Love never gives up, never loses faith, is always hopeful, and endures through every circumstance.

1 John 4:7-8 (NLT)

⁷ Dear friends, let us continue to love one another, for love comes from God. Anyone who loves is a child of God and knows God. ⁸ But anyone who does not love does not know God, for God is love.

LOVE COMES FROM GOD - WE NEED TO EXPERIENCE HIS LOVE FIRST

1 John 4:9–10 (NLT)

God showed how much he loved us by sending his one and only Son into the world so that we might have eternal life through him. ¹⁰ This is real love—not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as a sacrifice to take away our sins.

1 John 4:11 (NLT)

Dear friends, since God loved us that much, we surely ought to love each other.

1 John 4:12 (NLT)

No one has ever seen God. But if we love each other, God lives in us, and his love is brought to full expression in us.

IT'S HIS LOVE IN US THAT WE EXTEND TO OTHERS

Romans 5:5 (NLT)

⁵ And this hope will not lead to disappointment. For we know how dearly God loves us, because he has given us the Holy Spirit to fill our hearts with his love.