First Love Ministries
Prayer Study #398

LOVE

Jesus tells us in John 13:35 the main characteristic that separates Christians from the world: ***"By this shall all men know that you are my disciples, if you have love one to another."*** The Apostle John beautifully expounds on this theme in 1st John. 1st John 4:7-10 says, *"Beloved, let us love one another; for love is of God, and everyone that loveth is born of God and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love. In this was manifested the love of God toward us, that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins."*

The Greek scholar Rick Renner tells us that the word used for God's love and for the love we are called by Jesus to show is the word *agape. Agape* is a word filled with so much emotion in the Greek that it is very difficult to translate into English. "*Agape* occurs when an individual sees, recognizes, understands, or appreciates the value of an object or a person, causing the viewer to behold this object or person in great esteem, awe, admiration, wonder, and sincere appreciation. Such great respect is awakened in the heart of the observer for the object or person he is beholding that he is compelled to love it. In fact, his love for that person or object is so strong it is irresistible. You see, *agape* is a love that loves so profoundly that it knows no limits or boundaries in how far, wide, high and deep it will go to show that love to its recipient. If necessary, *agape* love will even sacrifice itself for the sake of that object or person it so deeply cherishes. *Agape* is the highest form of love- a self-sacrificial type of love that moves the lover to action.

"The best example of *agape* is found in John 3:16: *For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.* This means when God looked upon the human race, He stood in awe of mankind, even though man was lost in sin. God admired man; He wondered at man; He held mankind in the

highest appreciation. Even though mankind was held captive by Satan at that moment, God looked upon the world and saw His own image in man. The human race was so *precious* to God, and He loved man so deeply that His heart was stirred to reach out and do something to save him. In other words, God's love drove Him to action."

Interestingly, the love that is the fruit of the spirit is *agape* love, and the love that Jesus calls us to love each other with is *agape* love. And the love that John writes about is *agape.* Brethren and sisters, let us *agape* the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and let us *agape* each other!

LOVE
Emmet Fox

There is no difficulty that enough love
will not conquer; No disease that enough love
will not heal; No door that enough love
will not open; No gulf that enough love
will not bridge; No wall that enough love
will not throw down; No sin that enough love
will not redeem.

It makes no difference how deeply
seated may be the trouble, How
hopeless the outlook, How muddled the
tangle, How great the mistake; A
sufficient realization of love will dissolve
it all. If only you could love enough
you would be the happiest and most
powerful being in the world.

We as Christians know that this kind of love is possible only through walking in the *agape* of love. How we should pray for the Holy Spirit to baptize us in this kind of love!