

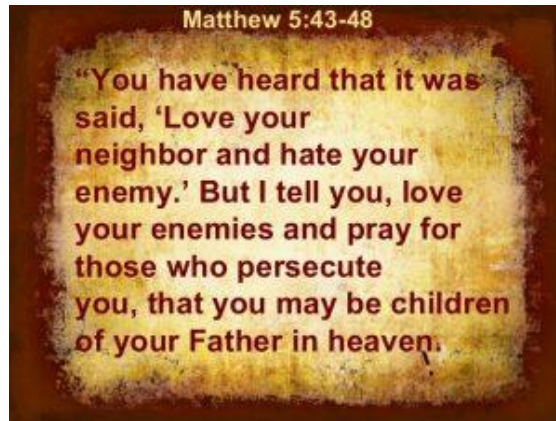
Back to the Father

Your Journey

Journey of Studies

Study on Love

The Standard for Christian Love - Part 5



There are many standards that the world puts forth to define what love is, but the world is not the place to look to find a true standard for what love is to be.

The place to find the answer for this is in the book that contains the greatest love story ever told, the Bible and this we will do. This by no means is a full picture of the subject but will at least show us the path that we should walk.

Matt 5:43-48 "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall **love** (*agapeseis*) your neighbor, and hate your enemy.' 44 But I tell you, **love** (*agapate*) your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who mistreat you and persecute you, 45 that you may be children of your Father who is in heaven. For he makes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the just and the unjust. 46 For if you **love** (*agapesete*) those who **love** (*agapontas*) you, what reward do you have? Don't even the tax collectors do the same? 47 If you only greet your friends, what more do you do than others? Don't even the tax collectors do the same? 48 Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect. (*Luke 6:32*) WEB

- This is a social and moral love, a decision of the will to do that which is right before God.
- How and to whom we express our love is not to be based on the standards of the world but on the charter and heart of God.
- If we truly want to be like God, we must learn to love like him.

Rom 12:9-21 Let love (*agape*) be without hypocrisy. Abhor that which is evil. Cling to that which is good. 10 In *love of the brothers* (Philadelphia) be *tenderly affectionate* (*philostorgoi*) one to another; in honor preferring one another; 11 not lagging in diligence; fervent in spirit; 12 rejoicing in hope; enduring in troubles; continuing steadfastly in prayer; 13 contributing to the needs of the saints; given to hospitality. 14 Bless those who persecute you; bless, and don't curse. 15 Rejoice with those who rejoice. Weep with those who weep. 16 Be of the same mind one toward another. Don't set your mind on high things, but associate with the humble. Don't be wise in your own conceits. 17 Repay no one evil for evil. Respect what is honorable in the sight of all men. 18 If it is possible, as much as it is up to you, be at peace with all men. 19 Don't seek revenge yourselves, beloved, (*agapetoi*) but give place to God's wrath. For it is written, "Vengeance belongs to me; I will repay, says the Lord." 20 Therefore "If your enemy is hungry, feed him. If he is thirsty, give him a drink. For in doing so, you will heap coals of fire on his head." 21 Don't be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good. WEB

- We must avoid those things that would cause our love to be hypocritical and live out the things that are a true expression of phileo towards our brothers and sisters and agape towards those contrary to us.

Rom 13:8-10 Owe no one anything, except to love (*agapan*) one another; for he who loves (*agapon*) his neighbor has fulfilled the law. 9 For the commandments, "You shall not commit adultery," "You shall not murder," "You shall not steal," "You shall not give false testimony," "You shall not covet," and whatever other commandments there are, are all summed up in this saying, namely, "You shall love (*agapeseis*) your neighbor as yourself." 10 Love (*agape*) doesn't harm a neighbor. Love (*agape*) therefore is the fulfillment of the law. WEB

- Our tender affection of phileo towards each other as children of God must be balanced out in our lives with the moral love of agape.

1 Cor 8:1 Now concerning things sacrificed to idols: We know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffs up, but love (*agape*) builds up. WEB

- Agape actively works to build us up into a full-grown mature child of God.

1 Cor 13:4-8 Love (*agape*) is patient and is kind; love (*agape*) doesn't envy. Love (*agape*) doesn't brag, is not proud, 5 doesn't behave itself inappropriately, doesn't seek its own way, is not provoked, takes no account of evil; 6 doesn't rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth; 7 bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. 8 Love (*agape*) never fails. WEB

- Love is not only defined by what it does but also by what it does not do.

1 Tim 1:3-5 As I exhorted you to stay at Ephesus when I was going into Macedonia, that you might charge certain men not to teach a different doctrine, 4 neither to pay attention to myths and endless genealogies, which cause disputes, rather than God's stewardship, which is in faith— 5 but the end of the charge is **love**, (*agape*) out of a pure heart and a good conscience and unfeigned faith; WEB

- Love should be the end result in what we do and say. Not just any love but a love that is pure and clean and untainted.

1 Peter 1:22 Seeing you have purified your souls in your obedience to the truth through the Spirit in sincere brotherly affection (philadelphian), **love** (*agapesate*) one another from the heart fervently: WEB

- The exhortation to love one another is grounded on the purification of the believer; this purification is a result of their obedience to the truth, and in turn results in a sincere love for fellow believers. Purification leads to sincere love for fellow believers. Literally, the expression used here is "sincere brotherly love," which was formerly used to refer to the love between actual brothers and sisters. In the New Testament, however, "brothers" has come to mean fellow believers. The adjective sincere means negatively, free from hypocrisy or deceit, and positively, "genuine"

After laying the groundwork, Peter moves on to the imperative: love one another earnestly with all your heart. The exhortation to love one another already appears in 1 Peter 1:17 and will be mentioned again in 3:8 and 4:8. Earnestly appears again in 4:8, and in both instances contains the elements of steadiness, ferventness and constancy. Taken as a whole, to love earnestly with all your heart is to involve the whole being in the task of fervently and constantly loving others. UBS Handbook Series

- Not only are we to be sincere in phileo but in agape as well. (2 Cor 6:3-10)

2 Peter 1:5-10 Yes, and for this very cause adding on your part all diligence, in your faith supply moral excellence; and in moral excellence, knowledge; 6 and in knowledge, self-control; and in self-control patience; and in patience godliness; 7 and in godliness **brotherly affection** (*philadelphian*) ; and in **brotherly affection** (*Philadelphia*) , **love**.(*agapen*) 8 For if

these things are yours and abound, they make you to be not idle nor unfruitful to the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9 For he who lacks these things is blind, seeing only what is near, having forgotten the cleansing from his old sins. 10 Therefore, brothers, be more diligent to make your calling and election sure. For if you do these things, you will never stumble. WEB

- The last thing on the list is love, which appears also in other New Testament lists (2 Cor 6:6; Gal 5:22; Eph 4:2; 1 Tim 4:12; 6:11; 2 Tim 2:22; 3:10; Titus 2:2; Rev 2:19; and so on). As contrasted with brotherly affection, love is first of all not limited to family members or to fellow-believers but is universal in scope and has as its object all people. Secondly, love is unmotivated, that is, it doesn't expect anything in return, whereas brotherly affection has the element of a mutual love, which will be returned by the other person. Love in this context, then, is not referring to "love for God" but "love for others" and should be translated in this way. UBS Handbook Series
- Love without morality will never be made perfect.

1 John 3:11-18 For this is the message which you heard from the beginning, that we should love (agapomen) one another; 12 unlike Cain, who was of the evil one, and killed his brother. Why did he kill him? Because his works were evil, and his brother's righteous. 13 Don't be surprised, my brothers, if the world hates you. 14 We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love (agapomen) the brothers. He who doesn't love (agapon) his brother remains in death. 15 Whoever hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life remaining in him. 16 By this we know love, (agapen) because he laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers. 17 But whoever has the world's goods, and sees his brother in need, and closes his heart of compassion against him, how does the love (agape) of God remain in him? 18 My little children, let's not love (agapomen) in word only, neither with the tongue only, but in deed and truth. WEB

- Our entire way of life needs to be based on a sincere, true and active love. It should become part of our nature just as it is part of our Heavenly Father's.

1 John 4:7-12 Beloved, (agapetoi) let us love (agapomen) one another, for love (agape) is of God; and everyone who loves (agapon) is born of God, and knows God. 8 He who doesn't love (agapon) doesn't know God, for God is love. (agape) 9 By this was God's love (agape) revealed in us, that God has sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. 10 In this is love, (agape) not that we loved (egapekamem) God, but that he loved (egapesen) us, and sent his Son as the atoning sacrifice for our sins. 11 Beloved, (agapetoi) if God loved (egapesen) us in this way, we also ought to love (agapan) one another. 12 No one has seen God at any time. If we love (agapomen) one another, God remains in us, and his love (agape) has been perfected in us. WEB

- The words "His love" do not refer to our love for Him, nor to His love for us, but to the love which is peculiarly His own, which answers to His nature (*Vincent*). "Is perfected", "to bring to completion, to accomplish, finish." If saints have this love (*agape*) habitually for one another, that shows that this love which God is in His nature, has accomplished its purpose in their lives. It has made us loving and self-sacrificial in our characters. This love has been brought to its human fulness in the lives of the saints. The verb "is perfected" is perfect in tense, speaking of a past completed act having present results. Wuest's Word Studies from the Greek New Testament

1 John 5:1-2 Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God. Whoever **loves** (*agapon*) the father also **loves** (*agapa*) the child who is born of him. 2 By this we know that we **love** (*agapomen*) the children of God, when we **love** (*agapomen*) God and keep his commandments. WEB

- Loving God and loving his children go hand in hand. Love is what binds us together and makes us one with God and each other. (*1 John 4:20-21*)

In the center of love is God. The love that he has shown to us is the standard that we are to be conformed to and live by. This will take place as we allow our relationship with him to deepen and grow.