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1 Corinthians

WALKING **RIGHT SIDE UP** IN AN **UPSIDE DOWN** WORLD

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THE SUPREMACY OF LOVE – PART 2

1 CORINTHIANS 13:1-6

God's love, agape- unconditional love, transcendent love, consuming love, devouring love; love that asks for nothing and in fact will even endure being wronged, hurt, or abused

- Agape love is God's ultimate gift—relationally, physically, mentally, and spiritually.
- Agape love: Jesus had no obligation to die for us, but He chose to, and in doing so redeemed us from the curse of sin and its penalty, death.

WHAT AGAPE IS NOT v. 1-2

All spiritual gifts, no matter how ecstatic, are useless or even destructive if they are not used in God's agape love. Agape love properly viewed becomes the basis for all ministry, even life itself, not an elective add-on!

- 1.** Agape love enriches- adds eternal riches; never harms
- 2.** Agape love edifies- builds up the giver and recipient; never tears down
- 3.** Agape love endures- has an eternal longevity; is never temporary or conditional

RIGHT THINGS, WRONG MOTIVATION

- Do not confuse **right** with **righteous**. Facts can be used with brutality and cause immense harm.
- It is not those with the loudest proclamation or example of spirituality, but those with the deepest evidence of love who are truly the most spiritual.
- Legalism kills, but the Spirit gives life. **2 Cor. 3:5-6**
- Paul's critique here is devastating. Without agape love, that supposedly gifted person is only ***chalkos echon***, a resounding gong or hollow echo—a painful noise!

HOW IMPORTANT IS AGAPE? v. 3

- Having the gifts of tongues and faith is not sufficient evidence of real spirituality. **v. 2**
- How about such total dedication that a person gives everything he or she possesses to the poor? **Zip. Nada.**
- How about someone who even welcomes martyrdom?
- Without love, the life-giver will “*gain nothing.*” **v. 3**

Paul pointed out that without love, the exercise of any and all of these gifts is **NOTHING.**

WHAT LOVE DOES NOT DO v. 4-6

What does this agape look like when you see it in action?

- 1.** Agape love is longsuffering, not impatient, short-tempered, or ill-willed.
- 2.** Agape love is kind, not unkind; it suffers kindly.
- 3.** Agape love does not envy.
- 4.** Agape love does not boast; it is not proud.
- 5.** Agape love is not rude.
- 6.** Agape love is not self-seeking.

SOME FINAL THINGS AGAPE IS NOT

7. Agape love is not easily angered. It has a slow-burning, very long fuse that does not blow up at the first sign of trouble or disappointment.
8. Agape love keeps no record of wrongs. It mirrors God who does not keep a record of our wrongs. **2 Cor. 5:19**
9. Agape love does not delight in evil, but rejoices with the truth.

WHAT LOVE IS NOT: You can gauge your maturity by how you agape. Next week, ***WHAT AGAPE IS v. 7-13***