

January 4, 1994 Florida

### Phileo and Agape Love

Here are some of the wonderful words of life that we have been hearing at our gatherings. We know that we have passed out of death into life because we love, not because we have love. When we were baptized His love was poured out into our hearts. 1 John 3:16 is the definition of love, "We know love by this, that He laid down His life for us — and we ought to lay down our lives for one another."

There are two kinds of love that we talked about. The first is *phileo* love. It is the inclination of the mind or emotion, brotherly love, friendship. You like a person because he is likable and has desirable characteristics. If we only love like this we will eventually get into clicks (of those who are like you). 1 Cor 12:23, "...and those members of the Body that we think less honorable we clothe with greater honor and our less respectable members are treated with greater respect." It is no coincidence that 1 Cor 13, the love chapter, follows this. We are to love those who need it most. We are to love them to make up for the lack in them. When you do not love it is like listening to a clanging symbol. Would you want to be around that all day?

*Agape* love is unselfish, outgoing, tender, affectionate. It is a personal commitment. It does not depend on a grateful response. If there is an ungrateful response, *phileo* love will stop. It is conditional. *Agape* love is unconditional. It goes beyond our human nature — not demanding anything in return. When people do not love you, do you lock up, shut down and quit loving? That is not how our Master loves. Keep on loving. Love as He loved. That is how you know you have passed out of death into life. This love seeks a person's highest good on a basis of a decision of our will. We are inclined to love. We must overcome the flesh. The flesh is against God. Don't let it keep you from loving.

How bad do you feel when you fail in your love, when you pass up an opportunity to love? We are disciplined if we do not love with the love that we have, the love that has been poured out into our hearts. If we are really willing to do His will, He will give us the strength to do His will. *Phileo* love is a loving friendship based on common interest. It has warm feelings and affection. It is good to have *phileo*, but we must have *agape* too. We must have both. It is easy to love a person that is lovable — so it has to be a decision of our will to love a person who is unlovable. Even the world can love up to a point. God's love goes beyond our natural love.

1 Pet 1:22, "Now that you have purified your souls by your obedience to the truth so that you have genuine mutual love, love one another deeply from the heart." 1 Pet 4:8, "Above all maintain constant love for one another, for love covers a multitude of sins."

One more thing, 1 Cor 16:22, "Let anyone be accursed who has no love for the Sovereign..." We should have an affectionate love for Him. Do we ever tell Him that we love Him? If we don't we are going on in our natural impulses. Our Master is lovable. 1 Pet 1:8, "Although you have not seen Him, you love Him."

I was encouraged to hear about love. Have you ever lived with someone you found it hard to love? Someone who is not like you? Who rubs you wrong? Or maybe who seems obstinate and ungrateful? God's love is poured out in your heart. You have it. It must be a decision of your will to be unselfish and tender toward this person. Let us consider how our Master loves us. He looks beyond all the faults in us. He has loved us from the beginning. We must be thankful for His kindness toward us. We must love with *phileo* and *agape* love.

Pray for our Father's will to be done in Florida. We need to be sensitive to His voice.

We have not yet loved enough.