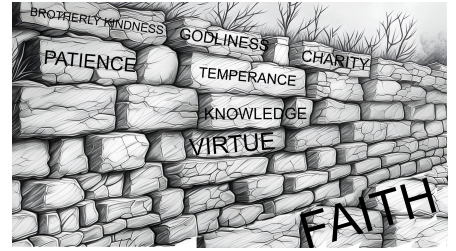


Add To Your Faith - L9 “Agape Love”

Introduction - We’ve come a long way looking at what the Lord has given to us in **2 Peter chapter 1**. In **1 Peter 4:8** we read, “*8 And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins.*”



Couched in a passage dealing with the return of Christ, the Apostle Peter tells us of the importance of charity. **Charity** is a wonderful word found in our English translation of the Bible to signify the highest form of love. In the Greek language, as many know, there are several words used to speak of what we translate as the word ‘love.’

There is a “phileo” love. The stem of that word in the Greek signifies a **relational love**. Then there is a second word for love in the New Testament. **It is the word ‘Storge’ (store—ghee).**

Lastly, there is a third word used in the New Testament. **It is the word ‘Agape.’** This word is translated 84 times as our English word ‘love’ and 28 times as the word ‘charity.’ It is especially used as “God’s love.” (**John 5:42, 15:9-13; Romans 5:5, 8:39; 2 Corinthians 13:13**). We think about one of the most precious verses in all of the Bible, **John 3:16** “*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.*”

Any progress toward this highest form of love, will have to come **through our fellowship with Him.**

1. What is _____?

Nine of the 28 times it is used are found in one chapter of the Bible. It is what many call the great love chapter _____. Let’s look at these descriptive words given to us.

A. _____ **vs. 4**

1 Corinthians 13:4 “*4 Charity **suffereth long**, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up,*”

B. _____ **vs. 4**

The Greek word that is used there means “*to show oneself useful.*” It is the act of goodwill toward others— it is not just in words but in deed. We can show kindness in our _____. We can show kindness in our _____.

But then, interestingly enough, the many verses in this chapter show what charity is not.

2. What Is _____ Charity.

Charity is not envious.

A. _____ vs. 4

To envy means 'to covet' or 'to be jealous over.' Real love, does not envy, but rejoices in the prosperity of others. It is a terrible thing **when we cannot be happy for others**. But then the Bible tells us that Charity is not proud.

B. _____ vs. 4

The word 'proud' means 'to boast or inflate oneself.' Now in the 4th verse we read, **1 Corinthians 13:4** *"4 Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; **charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up,**"*

1 Corinthians 13:5 *"5 Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil;"*

C. _____ vs. 5

Again, we can see the idea that godly love is not seeking for oneself. This goes beyond just what we might say is proper etiquette, but is honest toward the benefit of others.

D. _____ vs. 5

"...seeketh not her own..." (vs. 5)

E. _____ vs. 5

1 Corinthians 13:5 *"5 Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, **is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil;**"*

F. _____ vs. 5

1 Corinthians 13:5 *"5 ... thinketh no evil;"*

G. _____

1 Corinthians 13:6 *"6 Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth;"*

2. What does real godly love look like then?

In **verse 6 in 1 Corinthians 13**, we move from what charity is not, to what charity looks like.

A. Charity _____ Fails

1 Corinthians 13:7–8 *"7 Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. 8 Charity **never faileth**: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away."*

Notice the contrast of things that cease.

Prophecies

Tongues

Knowledge

These things vanish.

“In the New Testament (which at that time was not completed) we have a complete revelation, but our understanding of it is partial.” (Wiersbe)

Look down at **verse 13**.

1 Corinthians 13:13 *“13 And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.”*

B. _____

1 Corinthians 8:1 *“1 Now as touching things offered unto idols, we know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth.”*

Again, true love, godly charity is concerned for others.

C. _____ A Multitude Of Sins

1 Peter 4:8 *“8 And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins.”* I believe Peter is quoting from

Proverbs 10:12 *“12 Hatred stirreth up strifes: But love covereth all sins.”*

Godly love helps us to be gracious and personally forgiving to others.

4. How Shall We _____ Charity?

A. _____ After It

This simply means to pursue it.

There are things to we are to ‘follow after’ in the Bible and things to ‘flee’ from.

1 Corinthians 6:18 - Flee fornication.

1 Corinthians 10:14 - Flee from idolatry.

1 Timothy 6:1-11 - Flee from worldliness and the love of money.

2 Timothy 2:22 - Flee from youthful lusts.

A good question for us to ask ourselves is what am I pursuing? **1 Corinthians 14:1** *“1 Follow after charity, and desire spiritual gifts, but rather that ye may prophesy.”*

B. By _____ It On

This is the exercise of love in your life. **Colossians 3:14** *“14 And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness.”*

C. By Being An _____

You know the truth is that everything we do whether in word or deed, we are teaching something.

5. Who Should Charity Be _____?

It begins first with:

A. The _____

Matthew 22:37 “37 Jesus said unto him, **Thou shalt love the Lord thy God** with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.”

B. Your _____

Ephesians 5:25 “25 Husbands, **love your wives**, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;”

C. Your _____

1 John 3:14 “14 We know that we have passed from death unto life, because **we love the brethren**. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death.”

D. Your Neighbor

Matthew 19:19 “19 Honour thy father and thy mother: and, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.” (**Galatians 5:14; James 2:8**)

E. Your Enemies

Perhaps the most difficult area of all is not our families, it is not the brethren, or even our neighbors- but the Lord declares, we are to love our enemies.

Matthew 5:43–48 “43 Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. 44 But I say unto you, **Love your enemies**, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; 45 That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. 46 For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same? 47 And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so? 48 Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.”