

John 14–16, pt.11, 10.4.09

True Friends

Intro

1. Who will you call when you're daughter's car breaks down 300 miles from home? You call a true friend who lives in the area.
2. Context: Jesus is giving final instructions to his disciples...moving from servants to friends...they will have to love one another...remain connected to the Vine...the life and love in the Me will flow through you.
3. Text
4. This command (and it is a command) is huge in John's writing. I believe the reason we see it so prominently in John's Gospel and letters is b/c he was the disciple Jesus was closest to. The gospel of Mark and Luke were written by second generation Christians; Matthew was an apostle, but he wasn't a part of the inner circle as John was. John's gospel is deeper and more personal, b/c his relationship with Js was deeper & more personal. Thus, John emphasizes the most intimate expression of the Christian life, "Love one another."
5. Examples in his writings:
 - a. John 13.34–35
 - b. 1 John 2.7–11
 - c. 1 John 3.10–11
 - d. 1 John 3.14–17
 - e. 1 John 4.7–12
 - f. 1 John 4.20–21
 - g. 2 John 5–6
6. He emphasizes love for others as the true sign of friendship with God. How we love our brothers and sisters in Christ is a clear indicator of whether or not I'm a friend of God. It's a particular type of love called agape.

Agape

Expl the diff type of loves in the Gk language: Agape & Eros. Storgos – natural family affection; Phileo –friendship love; reciprocal love. Storgos & Phileo are healthy types of love, but the love Jesus is calling us to is agape.

Agape is used over 100xs in the NT. It is a distinctly Christian word and is not found in this form in secular literature. Agape is God's kind of love. God doesn't show love; God is love. It's a love that comes from God's nature. It's a love that is unconditional and unselfish or self giving. Its attributes are described in 1 Cor.13.4–7. It's the "one anothers" of the NT. It's not a feeling based love. It's a love that exists by the act of the will. It's a kind of love that says, "Nail me to a cross, but I will still love you."

When we abide in the Vine this type of love flows through our lives to others.

Video – Agape

Illust of Agape Love – Preaching Today, "Son's Killer Becomes Mother's Son"

The Practical Dimensions of Agape

1. A self giving love w/o conditions – 15.13
 - a. It may involve literally dying for another, but it's much larger than an action. It is the idea that you give yourself completely to the person in need. You lay down your life to serve the other w/o any conditions.
 - b. Jesus on the cross. He reached out to the thief; thought about his mother's future needs; asked God to forgive those crucifying Him; and of course, giving His life for our own. His body wracked with pain and he's thinking about others.

- c. Appl – It's when you see a need and respond to it. Your wife/mom is coming inside carrying groceries and you go assist. Your husband is watching his favorite show and you go fix him popcorn. Your brother or sister asks for help with their homework and you gladly do it with no strings. The same applies when you're out in community, school or work place.
- d. This is love w/o a hook.
- e. They will know we are Christians by our agape. Our love for Christ will be obvious in how we love and treat others.
 - i. Illust – Amish farmer approached by a young man who asked him if he was a Christian. The Amish farmer said, "Why are you asking me? Ask my neighbor; my farmhands; my banker; the feed store owner."
- f.

2. Sharing of secrets – 15.15

- a. Servants aren't confided in by their Master's, but friends are. Jesus confided in them and us the secrets of the Kingdom – Mt.13.11. He has revealed to us the mystery of salvation and His will. He didn't hide these people, but through the illumination of the HS, not only can we hear Js' words, but we can understand them.
 - i. In Hebrew, intercessory prayer means to think things through with God. As you pray, you listen for His heart and voice.
- b. Close friends share secrets. At times, they share things that they don't want others to know b/c they would not be appreciated. They would be as pearls thrown before swine...precious truths to be trodden in filth.
 - i. Script – Mt.7.6
- c. As He shared with them, so we share with each other. We share life together. Our experiences, fears, hopes, struggles and all that God has taught us. Willow isn't a place for

perfect people, that place is called Heaven. There is a sharing of needs and burdens and a touching of others people's lives. Being the word

- i. New initiative for 2010
- ii. Illust of Frog story

Agape Vs Eros –from Agape Road by Bob Mumford

It's hard discerning (and I'm not sure you're supposed to) the type of love (agape, storgos or phileo) you exhibit, but there is a clear distinction betw agape & eros. Is the type of love you have agape or eros? Is it a true friendship love or is it a political love?

Kevin helped me out of agape love. It was more than friendship or family love. It was love without a hook.

Eros

1. What is eros?
 - a. Def – the desire to possess or control. Eros does not seek to be accepted by its object, but to gain possession of it. It came to mean that which is loved for the purpose of personal satisfaction. It's from this position it took on the sexual & pornographic understanding.
 - i. Ill – you love chocolate. It satisfies you.
 - ii. Ill – Judas' love; did he love Jesus with agape or eros love. I believe he enjoyed Jesus, but he followed him so that he could become somebody. "I love you b/c of what you do for me."
 - iii. It is a love that has personal reward and self-satisfaction as it primary goal and this annuls agape love.
 - iv. It's the worst of all sins. It not only is self-centered, but it becomes self consuming, turning increasingly inward upon itself in a tighter spiral.

v. Illust of the crow who was trying to find the center of the world. He flew to first, second & third tree and saw that there was equal distance on right & left. Then said, "I see. I am the center of the world."

b. The three arrows

- i. Agape – Straight Arrow. Expl
- ii. Eros – arrow with a hook. It's self referential, turning back to yourself. Eros is the cause of the first sin; it causes us to run, hide and shift blame. It can be blatant or subtle
 1. The guy who runs into old friend. He spends the first 15 minutes talking about himself and accomplishments. He then asks his old friend, "We've been talking about me, now let's talk about you. How did you like my new book?"
 - 2.
- iii. Mixture – some of both. We must discern this in us and ask the Father to separate and prune eros from us.

c. Eros Interacting with God & others,

- i. Eros Centered Christianity – "Get your inheritance – get all you can from God." "Demand He keep His Word to you." "We're children of the King and God wants us to live like King's kids." "Tithe and expect God to bless you."
 1. It's appropriate to know what our inheritance is in the Lord along with the necessary conditions. What is wrong is to be motivated not by our love for God, but what we can get out of him.
 2. If there were no promises to tithing would you tithe with a glad heart; if you aren't healed of your disease or the relationship mended will you still joyfully serve God.
 3. Is it, "God I love you, b/c I know what you can do for me."

- a. I believe one reason many have discontinued seeking the Lord is b/c this is the type of faith they had. It's eros Christianity.
 4. When you pray is it an arrow or hook. Do you use God for your personal benefit? God wants to meet your needs, but ultimately it's your Kingdom come, your will be done
- ii. Eros Centered Relationships – you use others to meet certain needs in your life.
1. Clear example are slick salesmen. They act like they are interested in you, but it's to serve their purposes.
 2. Diotrophes – 3 John 9. He loved to be first. He used control and manipulation.
 3. In personal relationships, it looks to others to fulfill certain needs and desires and does so by demonstrating interest and concern for the other. But its intention is self gratification. Haven't you ever felt a person was using you to get certain things from you.
 4. It's a political love. I'm pretending to be one thing to you so that I can get something from you – security, support, money, etc. It usually is a hook & arrow. It's both agape, phileo, storgos & eros is mixed in. A clear indicator this is eros is that you're always thinking, scheming how to extract this from others.
 - a. Ill – of acting hurt to get their attention; doing something for them so that will give some leverage with them
 - b. Over the years, parents telling me the only reason their parents take care of their kids or help them out financially is so that they can still control them and vice versa.

5. This isn't so much about trying to discern whether or not the love others are demonstrating to you is true love or eros, BUT whether or not your love is Agape love.

d. Agape's Interaction with God

i. P.49 &

ii. Agape isn't self referential. It has the attributes of 1 Cor.13. with no thought of how this will benefit the giver.

iii. It responds first. It's how God loved us - 1 J.4.19.

iv. It loves enemies. We unselfishly seeks someone's highest interests and intend to do them good no matter what.

v. P.59 quote from The Agape Road.

e. True friendship with God is evident when we keep Jesus' command - Love/agape one another.

Conclusion:

1. Phil.2.19-21 - Timothy was a true friend
2. Kevin is a true friend
3. Are you?