

Love Is The Answer



The action of love = righteous behavior in re: persons/things//The affection of love = deep feelings of fondness for persons/things.

1. The action of love is the basis of all God's commands (Rom 13:8-9; Mat 23:36-37; hence why – Joh 14:15; 1Jo 5:1-2; 2Jo 1:5-6).
 2. The action of love is the key to human flourishing/prosperity both temporarily and eternally (t=Rom 13:10; 1Pe 4:8; e=Joh 3:16; Eph 1:5).
 3. The action of love is the definition of forgiveness (Lev 19:18 – “not take vengeance or bear a grudge” = not actively or passively returning evil for evil, but instead continuing to “love” them “as yourself” = treat them righteously – Eph 5:29; 1Th 5:15; this is what Jesus is getting at in re: to our enemies- those who have wronged us/God - Luk 6:27).
 4. When a community is acting according to love in relation to one another there is also:
 - 4.1. Mercy (care for the poor/needly - Lev 19:9-10);
 - 4.2. Truth (honest communication - Lev 19:11-12, 16-17 w/Mat 18:15 and Mat 5:21-24; consider also Pro 26:28, 27:6);
 - 4.3. Justice (making things right thru righteous judgment - Lev 19:13-15 w/Mat 18:15-17).
 5. We must possess both the actions and the affection of love for those in the church if we hope to get to heaven (action = Mat 25:31-46; 1Jo 4:7-21; affection [“agape” = can refer to action and/or affection; “phileo” = refers only to affection] = Rom 12:10; 1Th 4:9; Heb 13:1; 1Pe 1:22, 3:8; 2Pe 1:7; Lev 19:17 – “you shall not hate your brother in your heart”);).
 6. The affection of love is one of the emotions we share in common with God as His image-bearers (Joh 16:27 – “the Father ‘phileos’ you”; Rev 3:19 – “Those whom I ‘phileo’ I reprove and discipline”).
 7. The affection of love is the greatest, most intense, satisfying, fulfilling, and joyous feeling a human being can possess. Hence the reason:
 - 7.1. Everybody seeks it and doesn't want to live without it. *“Tis better to love and lost, than to never have loved at all”* – Lord Tennyson
 - 7.2. People possessing this kind of love for others will do amazing things or endure the most difficult of situations. It is not just the greatest feeling but the greatest force in existence (Tit 3:4-5- “when the ‘phileo’ of our God and Savior appeared, he saved us” = God the Father's affection for us made God the Son/Jesus willing to become human and endure the cross for us).
 - 7.3. Attempting to stop others from seeking to give this affection fully and completely to someone/something is impossible (you are fighting divine design and the greatest force in existence).
 8. The affection of love is why elementary disciplines do not work in stopping self-indulgence (Col 2:20-23 w/2:6-8; “elemental spirits” = elementary/fundamental principles used to promote discipline/structure/responsibility in children - e.g. ABC's, 123's, brushing their teeth, bathing, set bed-times; “no value in stopping” = completely worthless as a solution; “self-indulgence” = seeking to be satisfy our physical and emotional passions – including the emotion/affection of love).
 9. God doesn't want us to tame our affection of love but rather give it supremely to Him since:
 - 9.1. This is the only way to avoid **idolatry** (what we are guilty of when give it supremely to someone other than God since this is what we now worship) **and disappointment** (what we set ourselves up for when we give it supremely to someone other than God since the persons/things of this world will fail/betray us at times). *“But my sin was this, that I looked for pleasure, beauty, and truth not in Him but in myself and His other creatures, and the search led me instead to pain, confusion, and error.”* – St. Augustine
 - 9.2. This is also required to fulfill the greatest commandment and inherit eternal life (Mar 12:20 – “heart, soul, mind and strength” = to the maximum w/all your faculties including your emotions; “phileo” love = Luk 10:25-27; 1Co 16:22).
 - 9.3. This is necessary to fulfilling our prescribed time of discipleship (Deu 6:5-8 – “phylacteries” = little boxes containing pieces of God's Word tied on left arm next to the heart and on forehead next to the brain during the time of discipleship [morning prayer/meditation on Scripture] meant to symbolize the reception of God's Word in our minds and affections).
 - 9.4. This is how we become the kind of faithful, committed, obedient-to-death people that we are called to be even when it hurts/is hard/we don't feel like it (Joh 21:15-19 = Peter has denied Jesus 3x and gone back to fishing. Jesus secures Peter's commitment *unto death* by est'g his affection - “Do you ‘phileo’ Me? [“Feed My sheep”; 18-19]; Phi 2:1-8 = “affection” for Christ gives us the ability to be obedient to God's commands “to the point of death”; Mat 10:37 – “phileo” = Our affection for Jesus must be greater than for our family if we are to be counted worthy of heaven - NO DOUBT b/c it is only those possessing such affection who wb committed to the end; *we know this tb true based on the commitment such affection produces for our children/spouses “in sickness and health”).
 10. Not including our affections in our love for God makes Him nothing more than our enemy since this is how we love them – in action only (“agape” – Mat 5:44; This is also what God becomes if we only fear Him; [btw] fear motivates but does not produce enduring commitment).
- THE BIG TAKEAWAY = To continue to love God in your actions, you must love God with your affections. Parents: plead with your children to give their hearts to Christ. This is the key to revival in the home and the church.