

Developing Unconditional Love

The greatest manifestation of the CWL is unconditional love. Agape is defined as a mind-set of absolute commitment to the benefit of another regardless of response. This love directed toward others finds its fulfillment in a love relationship with God. This love is not natural to man and must be developed through spiritual growth. This study will discuss why this love is so difficult to sustain and how we develop it in Christ.

Eph 5:1-2

- 5:1 – become imitators of God – **mimetes** – mimic, copy behavior
- 5:1 – as dearly loved children – hos – analogy – children influenced by parents
 - § Analogy is to children adopting the views and behavior of a parent
 - § As children in God’s household, we are observe Him and mimic Him
 - § Children adopt the views and beliefs of their parents – more than behavior
 - § As He has dearly loved us, we are to mimic His love toward others
- 5:2 – walk in love – walk in love toward others, as God has loved you
- 5:2 – as Christ loved you – gave Himself over as a sacrifice
 - § Christ’s sacrificial love for us is motivation and an example of love.
 - § Gave Himself up – He had no “me-centered” belief system to overcome
 - § His giving up of self gives us a clue as to how we develop love within ourselves.

1. The fall of man had devastating results on the destiny and heart of man.

Destiny – lost +R standing; condemned; spiritual death, Lake of Fire

Heart – man’s psychological development – corrupted belief system

- a. Man’s design: empty & made to be filled by God, total need, helpless, dependent
- b. Condition at birth: separated from God, w/out knowledge, extreme need, devil’s world, sinful parents, sin nature – issue is physical and emotional survival
- c. Man is designed to develop in stages – under the perfect parenting of God
- d. Man develops all of his beliefs and attitudes in the devil’s world w/out God.
- e. Man builds a “me-centered” belief system – self protection and find love
- f. Each of us build our own unique system to (1) protect ourselves against the harshness of life in the devil’s world, (2) Find love, approval and belonging
- g. We all build an old belief system to survive the devil’s world w/out God.

2. Our original approach to life is the total opposite of God’s approach

Old – self as center	New – God as center
Old – human conclusions	New – absolute truth
Old – empty -meet own needs	New – filled - needs met
Old – protect self	New – protected by God

- a. At salvation our destiny is changed but our old belief system is not changed
- b. We carry our old beliefs into the CWL – saved but still operating on old system
- c. At salvation we are enabled to change our belief system – GHS & word/God
- d. Enabling doesn’t guarantee that we will exchange our thinking for God’s – choice
- e. Bel can live out their life believing, thinking, feeling and acting like unbeliever
- f. Bel can renew the surface issues and leave the core issues unchanged - poser

3. Man's old belief system can't conceive of grace – everything is conditional

- Finding +H in devil's world – everything is conditional
- In devil's world – no free lunch; something for nothing; give & take
 - a. Old man: desperate protect self and meet hunger for love, approval & belonging
 - b. Old man: can't afford to give away love w/out getting love in return
 - c. Old man is empty, deprived of God's love – no resources for grace – blood/turnip
 - d. Unconditional love is impossible for unbel – no power or resources
 - e. Every believer came into the CWL committed to conditional love system
 - f. Immature bel's operate on a conditional system with God: works – reward/punish
 - g. How can we know the truth & believe that it is true and yet not experience it
 - h. Bel operating from the old man tries to apply unconditional love – will power.
 - i. Bel operating from will (flesh) is erratic at best – self interest reasserts control

4. Capacity for grace / unconditional thinking is developed by transformation.

- j. Rom 12:2 – renewing the mind – exchanging old thinking for God's thinking
- k. Eph 4:22-24 – taking off the old, renewing the mind, putting on the new
- l. There are 3 steps to renewing the mind: rejecting, renewing, replacing
- m. All 3 steps are under the direction and powered by GHS – spiritual work

Rejecting – discover & stop believing the old – reject the old as valid – refuse to believe

- § Prayer for insight into your thoughts looking for old man beliefs - **GHS**
- § Observation of OM thinking as it operates – produces sin, relational conflict
- § Observation of neg emotion – fear, guilt, need, anger, bitterness, depression
- § Observation of inner dialogue and images causing the neg emotion/behavior
- § Confrontation /rejection of self talk telling you lies – take it off

Renewing – learning and mentally processing the truth from God's word – **GHS**

- § Faith perception – assimilation of biblical principles – CBD
- § Faith processing – thinking through and arriving at a new viewpoint
- § Faith preparation – committing self to the use of CBD to life

Replacing – Embracing the truth under pressure as a replacement for the old

- § Rejection of an old view leaves a void in the belief/operating system
- § Embracing and using the truth replaces the old with the new – obedience
- § Using the truth in place of the lie is the same as completing the faith cycle
- § Choosing self talk and images that reflect the truth of God's word – **GHS**

5. The depth of transformation determines the depth of grace thinking.

- n. The original OM program continues to run until it is rejected and replaced.
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- p. Level of OM thinking still operating determines the level of conditional thinking
- q. When OM thinking is allowed to remain in the heart, truth cannot be utilized
- r. As OM thinking is rejected, truth can be embraced to change the heart
- s. As OM is rejected & replaced with truth, deeper capacity for grace is enabled
- t. As truth is embraced, personal relationship with God is enhanced – personal needs are experientially met & self-protection becomes unnecessary.
- u. God fills the heart with love and security – overflows to others unconditionally