

MATURE LOVE

Spiritual Maturity

1. Born sp. dead, self centered & self serving, we develop a false belief system based on human logic – through use, these beliefs become our core habits of thinking (Old Man)
2. Born again sp. alive, Christ centered & Christ serving, through transformation we develop a new belief system based on bible doctrine (New Man), intended to replace OM.
3. Reaching maturity (4 stages) frees us from our sin natural commitment to self, enabling us to develop the capacity to choose God's interests in place of our own – occupied with Christ.
4. Mature: **teleios** – **(a)** complete, fulfilled, finished; Jn 19:30 tetelestai – it is finished; Jn 17:4 work is finished, Jam 1:4 endurance has its completed impact; **(b)** perfect like God – Jn 17:23 Jesus prays for Church Age believers to be united together through positional sanctification; **(c)** mature – 1Jn 4:12-18 mature love frees the soul from fear; Jam 1:2-4 God uses adversity to give us spiritual exercises that expose our false beliefs & entrench NM beliefs as we apply BD; Heb 2:10 Jesus brought to maturity through suffering;
5. Maturity frees us from our selfish motives, enabling us to surrender to the Spirit consistently, so that we are able to obey supernatural commands – husband love your wife.
6. Maturity is that status of soul where your life begins to resemble the biblical description of what a Christian is supposed to be like – everything begins to work supernatural like God is in you.
7. 1st goal of CWL: a mature man Eph 4:13; Strength & momentum to use adversity to purify your heart & willingness to suffer unjustly as a witnesses for God in the Angelic Conflict.

Unconditional love (agape) powered by the Spirit is available at every stage of growth, but it is in the adult & mature stages that UL becomes a fixed & determined commitment to edify all mankind, including yourself, able to forgive even yourself for being totally depraved & dependent on God.

Meanings of Christian Words & Phrases

Husband's Role – Agape Love

The ancient Greeks, who were great human thinkers, distinguished 4 categories of love that most men/women experience in their lives. All 4 of these types of love have a place in marriage. All are important but not all share the same importance. In this study we will define each type of love and discuss some applications in marriage.

Primary Point: Unconditional love is the committed love that gives victory in all the stages and through all the struggles of marriage. Unconditional love is more important than any other kind of love.

1. **Familial love – storge** – natural affection; found only in the negative in NT – Rom 1:31; 2Tim 3:3
 - Family love; love of brother, sister, parents, siblings, children, etc
 - Natural affection and loyalty one has for family members
 - Originates for each of us from our family of origin – parents and siblings
 - As a separation from parents forms more deeply, the emphasis of storge changes
 - Separate identity: have own children and develop own traditions

Genesis 2:24 For this cause (marriage) a man shall leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and they shall become one flesh.

- Part of God's human provision for our need to belong – RFG is spiritual provision

2. **Romantic love - eros** – sexual love; hormonal love; Hollywood love
 - Eros – Greek god of love – Cupid's boss
 - Psychology – sexual drive; libido

▪ Mating instinct – God given pleasure drive – designed for pleasure – used for procreation
Genesis 2:25 And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed.

3. **Friendship Love – *philos*** – compatibility love, affection love, admiration, enjoyment, loyalty
 - Very discriminating and selective love – only for the few – based on compatibility
 - Conditional – dependent on return – give to get; love to be loved
 - Friendship in marriage – laughter, common interests, enjoyment
 - Partnership in marriage – working together for common goals – children
 - Compatibility is a key issues in marriage – work together w/out need of extreme compromise
 - Developed over time through working together in shared experiences

4. **Committed Love – *agape*** – unconditional love; virtue love; spiritual love
 - Unconditional commitment to the benevolent benefit of others – mind-set
 - Unconditional because it never depends on the character or behavior of the recipient
 - Commitment – policy, mind-set about the way you intend to treat others – regardless
 - Benevolent – avoidance of all malice – do only good and never intend harm
 - Benefit – spiritual benefit – force for influencing others toward God
 - UL creates an environment of grace and forgiveness – stabilizes the relationship
 - UL allows mate to fail and recover w/out fear of losing the relationship
 - Bible commands all bel's to practice UC toward all – including your mate
 - UL makes marriage an environment where the other types of love can flourish

Summary:

- UL requires that we consider a relationship with God more important than our mate
 - Intimacy with God provides our spiritual, mental and emotional needs
 - Intimacy with God frees us from needing people to meet our needs – free to give
 - Sufficiency in Christ allows us to give others the room they need to grow – stay positive
- a. **A wife is equally worthy of God's love as her husband, but not the reason why he is to love her.**
1Pet 3:7 – required to honor her as a co-heir of grace of life – co-equal in every way.
Gal 3:28 – no racial, gender, economic or distinction of any kind in Christ. We are all the same.
 - b. **Husband's mind-set of UL is focused on wife's spiritual benefit.**
Eph 5:25-27 Christ intends to present church before God, to GF without any type of spiritual defect or problem, having had all of her OM belief problems ironed out through sp growth.
Husband's love is focused on providing her an environment of UL in which she has her best opportunity to grow spiritually. His love desires to help her grow in the Lord.
 - c. **When husband is consistent in UL, it helps his wife develop habit of using beliefs that enable her to submit to him – his surrender to the Lord helps her to also surrender to the Lord.**
Eph 5:33 – husband commanded love his wife *hina* + subj = so that she might respect her husband;
* note: he gets the command to love, but she is not commanded to respect – result of his giving to her
* note: his love produces best environment to foster respect & submission in her & from her.
* note: surrender to God to fulfill marital role produces credibility that persuades others to believe – shows that Christ is for real in you and that you are for real for His sake – this is the best there is!!
 - d. **Spiritual growth to maturity & beyond produces capacity to trust God for self needs & to give your all to Him, for His sake, to pour yourself all out (2Ti 4:6) for Him in service to others, especially your mate –**
Rom 5:5-11 Christ poured out for us, love/God poured into us, filling us up to overflowing as seen in submission & UL – total giving of self to God, to be all in for His sake.