

THE DIVINE FLOW

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Today I want to share some things about how you can begin to start letting God flow through you to minister to other people. Hopefully by this time you've been ministered to and God's done some great things in your life. You now have the power and the anointing of God in you, but how do you get it out to other people? Being able to communicate His power and grace to other people is a necessity if you want to go on to the highest level of relationship with Him. He didn't save you just for you personally but also to make you a blessing. If there had been nobody else, nothing else to do, God loves you enough that He would have expended all that effort on just you, but it's not limited only to you. He wants to bless other people through you.

How do you get the power of God to manifest, flowing out to other people? There are a number of scriptures we can start with. I want to begin with Philemon 6, where Paul is praying for Philemon: "That the communication of thy faith may become effectual by the acknowledging of every good thing which is in you in Christ Jesus." To me, the very first step in having the power of God flow through you to other people is that you have to be full yourself. You have to acknowledge these things and have them functional and working inside you; so the way your faith becomes effective in dealing with other people is by first acknowledging the good things that are inside you. You can't give away what you don't have, but once you know you have it on the inside, some of it will automatically begin to happen. You'll begin to share with other people, show them your excitement, give testimonies of what God has done in your life, and automatically some of them will be helped.

There are other things you can do that will help you flow in the gifts of the Holy Spirit and let God release Himself through you. One of them is found in 1 John 4:7-8: "Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and everyone that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love." There is so much I could say on this. If you would read this in its context, it would be more powerful. Basically what 1 John is talking about is that if we say we love God and don't love the people around us, it's not God's love inside us. If you are truly walking with the Lord, then He is loving you, you're experiencing His love, and it will flow through you to other people. God is love, and the person who doesn't walk in love doesn't really know God, because He is love.

There's another application of this: Anytime you feel love flow out of you toward another person, that's God flowing out of you toward them. That needs to be qualified, because our world says "I love my wife, I love my dog, and I love ice cream" all in the same breath. Hopefully you love all those things in different ways. There are actually four words for "love" in the Greek language, and this is talking about the highest form, "agape" love, which is God's supernatural kind of love. I want to make the distinction that you need to recognize the difference between attraction or desire toward somebody and this supernatural high form of God's love. Whenever you discern God's love flowing out of you toward someone else, it's not self-serving. You can verify this by looking at 1 Corinthians 13:4-8, which gives the qualifications of God's kind of love. It is not envious, selfish, self-serving, easily provoked, etc. You need to analyze what you call love and make sure it's really God's love—that it's not selfish or self-serving—that you don't love a person because of what they can do for you. As you grow in this and literally begin to discern His kind of love, then when you feel it flow through you for somebody else. That's God moving. Once you discern

the love of God flowing through you for someone, all you have to do is follow it with some word of encouragement—do something.

There are times when I've been praying, a person would come to my mind, and I would have God's kind of love and compassion for them. There was no reason for this to happen; it was supernatural. I've learned to call the person, write them a letter, or contact them in some way. Nearly every single time that person will say, "Boy, that was God speaking through you to me, and He touched my life through it." Do you know how that happened? It happened because I sensed this love, this godly compassion flowing out of me toward that person. When I feel that now, I recognize it's not me—it's God. God is love, and when I love other people, it's Him loving other people through me.

An example of this happened in a little church I pastored in Pritchett, Colorado. A woman I'd never seen before came to the church, and she and her husband were in the service. I didn't know anything about them, but the whole time I was ministering, I was drawn to this woman. Outwardly, she didn't look depressed. There was nothing in the physical to clue me in, but in my heart I felt sympathy and compassion for her. I knew she was struggling and was really hurt. Finally, at the end of the service, I called to her and said, "Would you come up here. God has a word for you." I didn't know what I was going to tell her. The Lord hadn't yet told me what to say, but I could feel the compassion flowing, and I've learned that when you feel that God kind of love and compassion flow out of you, it's God trying to minister to a person. He'll always minister through the gifts of His Spirit—a word of wisdom, a word of knowledge, discerning of spirits, a prophecy, or something. So, based on my compassion alone, I asked the woman to come forward.

It's a long story, but I prophesied many things to her about how she was discouraged and bereaved because she had recently lost someone. I found out later that her teenage son had died of leukemia a few months before. As I ministered to her, I said one of the things that had caused confusion in her life was that she thought God allowed it, but He didn't do it. I said, "God is not the one that's caused this grief in your life—it's the destroyer. It's the destroyer that has done these things," and I kept emphasizing "the destroyer." After the service she came up and told me about her teenage son dying of leukemia. They thought God placed leukemia on him and He was actually responsible. But about a month before their son's death, as he drove into their little town one day, he looked up and he saw in a vision a demonic power over the town. He cried out to God and said, "What is this?" God said, "It's the destroyer, a demonic power, that's killing you and these other people . . . not me."

He told his parents about it, but they didn't have the depth or maturity in the Word of God to actually apply it. The boy died, but it was a tremendous encouragement to her when I told her exactly what was going on in her life, even using the exact words God had spoken to her son. That ministry to her was started through feeling the divine flow of God's kind of love. When you feel the love of God flow out of you, recognize that it's God.

This is the way Jesus ministered. Matthew 14:14 says, "And Jesus went forth, and saw a great multitude, and was moved with compassion toward them, and he healed their sick." The way the power of God flowed through Jesus was through the compassion and love He felt toward the people He ministered to. In Matthew 8:2-3 a man with leprosy, who was unclean and could not be touched according to Jewish law [no one could come in contact with him or they would become contaminated and become unclean themselves] lifted up his voice and cried to Jesus from a distance, "saying, Lord, if thou

wilt, thou canst make me clean. And Jesus put forth his hand, and touched him, saying, I will; be thou clean. And immediately his leprosy was cleansed.” He was moved with compassion toward the man with leprosy and touched him. As you study the Scriptures you’ll find this compassion, this godly love in many places. It’s not just an emotion but a compassion that flows out through us.

When Jesus was hanging on the cross, He loved the people around Him so much that He said, “Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do” (Luke 23:34). These were the very people who were crucifying Him, yet He had compassion on them and asked God to forgive them. We know He didn’t have goose bumps—it wasn’t just a feeling or an emotion—it was a choice. Nonetheless, He felt it and released it toward other people. Every one of you who is born again has God living inside of you. According to the verse we started with, 1 John 4:8, God is love, and He wants to flow through you to reach other people. To do that, He will release this compassion. You’ll feel it flow out of you toward other people, and when you do, you need to respond.

You don’t always have to do something special. It doesn’t have to be “thus saith the Lord.” Sometimes, if you have a feeling of compassion toward a person, just go over and put your arm around them and say, “God loves you and so do I.” I know one time this worked when I was on the receiving end, in a situation where I was about to be run out of a church. People had lied about me, and one person even threatened to kill me. I was feeling so discouraged like, “God, what’s the use? Nobody appreciates what I’m trying to do.” I was fighting the devil over this, and a friend called long distance. He talked for a few minutes, and I said, “Well, what did you call for?” He said, “I just wanted to call and let you know I love you. I was praying and felt the love of God toward you. I appreciate you.” That’s all he said. He didn’t know anything about the situation going on in my life, but God used that. I knew it was Him loving me through that person, and it kept me in the ministry and changed my life.

It doesn’t have to be profound or necessarily some great word. God is love, and whenever you discern that love flowing through you, it’s the divine flow . . . the divine life of God. When you sense that, you need to follow it up. Go do something, say something, be a blessing to some person. God will put words in your mouth. He will use you, and He will set people free as you are moved with compassion and minister to those around you.

THE DIVINE FLOW (Outline)

1. Two of the main reasons God saved you:
 - A. So you can express His power and grace to other people.
 - B. God wants to bless others through you.
2. How do you get His power and grace flowing out of you to others?
 - A. Philemon 1:6: “That the communication of thy faith may become effectual by the acknowledging of every good thing within you in Christ Jesus.”
 - (1) The first step is to be full of God’s power yourself.
 - (2) Recognize and acknowledge the good things God has put inside you, and share your excitement and testimony.
 - B. 1 John 4:7-8: “⁷Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and everyone that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. ⁸He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.”
 - (1) If we truly love God, we will love others.
 - (2) 1 Corinthians 13:4-8 describes God’s kind of love.
 - (3) When you feel God’s kind of love for another, act on it by giving them help and encouragement. Try to fill whatever need He has shown you.
 - C. Matthew 14:14: “And Jesus went forth, and saw a great multitude, and was moved with compassion toward them, and he healed their sick.”
 - (1) Compassion was the key to God’s power flowing through Jesus.
 - (2) Jesus’ compassion for the people who were killing Him caused Him to ask God to forgive them for what they were doing.
3. If you are born again, you have God living on the inside of you, and GOD IS LOVE.
 - A. When you feel God’s compassion flow through you, respond to it.
 - B. God’s love is a divine flow. Go with it and bless others.

THE DIVINE FLOW (Teacher's Guide)

NOTE: In this lesson, we will examine how to let what God put in us flow out to others.

1. According to Philippians 1:6, what is the first step in allowing God to flow out of us?

To realize that God is doing a work in us.

2. According to 1 John 4:7, what is the real source of reaching out to love others?

God, for God is Love (1 John 4:8).

3. A. According to 1 Corinthians 13:4-8, what are some of the characteristics of God's love?

Love is patient, kind, not envious, not boastful, not proud, not rude, not self-seeking, not easily angered, keeps no record of wrongs, does not delight in evil, rejoices in the truth, protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres, love never fails (NIV).

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- B. Have you loved like this? If so, it is God flowing through you.

4. A. According to Matthew 14:14, what motivated Jesus?

Compassion.

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- B. What did He do then?

He healed them.

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- C. Have you ever felt compassion toward someone as Jesus did?

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- D. Did it move you to act? If so, it was God's love flowing through you.

THE DIVINE FLOW (Detailed Teacher's Guide)

NOTE: The following information may be read out loud (a numbered section at a time) with the person(s) being discipled. After each numbered section is read, pause and ask the question(s) that correspond to the paragraph(s), and then discuss them.

¹ Anytime you feel love flow out of you toward another person, that's God flowing out of you toward that person. Now that needs to be qualified because in today's world people say, "You know, I love my wife, I love my dog, and I love ice cream" all in the same breath. Hopefully you love all of those things in a different way. In the Greek language, there are actually four words for "love." I am talking about the highest form of love. The Greek called God's kind of love "agape." This is that supernatural God-kind of love. So you need to recognize that there is a difference between just attraction toward somebody, a desire for somebody, and this supernatural high form of God's kind of love. Whenever you discern God's love flowing out of you toward somebody else, it's not self-serving. You can verify this by looking in 1 Corinthians 13. Verses 4 through 8 give you qualifications of God's kind of love. It isn't envious; it's not selfish; it's not self-serving; it isn't easily provoked, etc. You need to analyze what you're calling love and make sure it's really God's love—that it's not selfish or self-serving. You don't just love this person because of what they can do for you. As you grow in the Lord, you literally begin to discern God's kind of love. Then when you feel God's love flow through you for some person, all you have to do is follow it with some word of encouragement—do something.

² There are times I have been praying and a person comes to my mind that I haven't thought of in a while. There was no reason for this to happen—it's almost supernatural—and a God-kind of love and compassion came out of me toward this person. Now I've learned just to call that person up or write them a letter or say something, and nearly every single time that person will write me back and say, "Boy, that was God speaking through you to me, and God touched my life through you." And you know how all of that happened? It happened by me just sensing His love—this godly compassion—flowing out of me toward that person. When I feel that now, I recognize that it's not just me—it's God. God is love, and when I love other people, it's God loving other people through me.

¹ Andrew states, "Anytime you feel love flowing out of you, that's God flowing out of you."
How does 1 John 4:7 show us this?

² How was Jesus Christ moved in ministering to others? Matthew 14:14.

³ I had this happen one time in a little church in Pritchett, Colorado. I was a pastor of that church, and a woman came whom I had never seen. She and her husband were in the service. This was the first time I had ever seen them. I didn't know anything about them, but the whole time I was standing up and ministering, it was like I was drawn to this woman. She didn't outwardly look like she was depressed. There wasn't anything in the physical to clue me in, but in my heart I just felt a sympathy and a compassion for this woman. I knew she was struggling and that she was really hurt. So I just felt this love and compassion flow out of me toward her. Finally, at the end of the service, I just called her out and said, "Would you come up here? God has a word for you." I didn't know anything I was going to tell her. It's not like the Lord had already told me what to say to her, but I could feel this compassion flowing. I've learned that when you feel that God-kind of love and compassion flow out of you, that God is trying to minister to a person. He'll always minister through some of the gifts of His Spirit—like a word of wisdom, a word of knowledge, a discerning of a word of wisdom, discerning of spirits, or a prophecy. So based on that compassion alone, I just asked that woman to come forward. It's a long story, but basically I prophesied many things to her about how she was discouraged and how she had lost someone and was bereaved. I found out later that her teenage son had just died of leukemia just a few months before this. As I was ministering to her I said, "One of the things that has caused confusion in your life is that you thought God had allowed this, but God didn't do it." I said, "God is not the one who has caused this grief in your life, it's the destroyer. It's the destroyer who has done these things." I kept emphasizing the word "destroyer." After the service was over, she came up and told me about her teenage son dying of leukemia. They had thought that God placed this leukemia on him and that He was actually responsible. However, just about a month before their son's death, as he drove into their little town one day, he looked up and saw in a vision a demonic power over that town, and he cried out to God and said, "What is this?" The Lord said, "It's the destroyer. It's a demonic power that's killing you and these other people—it's not me." They just didn't have enough depth—enough maturity in the Word of God to actually apply it. He went in and told his parents about it, but they didn't do much with it, and so the boy died. But, it was a tremendous encouragement to her when I told her exactly what was going on in her life—even used those exact words. And do you know how all that got started? It was through feeling this love—the divine flow of God's kind of love.

³ What does Matthew 7:12 teach us about love?

⁴ When you feel the love of God flow out of you, that's God. This is the way that Jesus ministered. Matthew 14:14 says, "And Jesus went forth, and saw a great multitude, and was moved with compassion toward them, and he healed their sick." The way that the power of God flowed through Jesus was through compassion. He felt love toward the people He ministered to. You find in Matthew, chapter 8, that a man with leprosy was unclean and, according to the Jewish law, nobody could touch him. Nobody could come in contact with him, or they would be contaminated and become unclean themselves. But this man lifted up his voice and cried to Jesus from a distance saying, "Have mercy on me. If you will, you can heal me." Jesus said, "I will", and He reached out and touched him. He was moved with compassion toward this man with leprosy and touched him.

⁵ As you study the Scriptures, you will find that compassion—this godly love—is not just an emotion, but it's a compassion that flows out through us. When Jesus was hanging on the cross, He loved the people around him so much that He said, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." These were the very people who were crucifying Him, yet Jesus had compassion on them and said, "Father, forgive them." We know that He didn't have goose bumps; it wasn't just a feeling; it wasn't just an emotion; it was a choice. But, nonetheless, He felt it and released it toward other people.

⁶ Every one of you who are born again has God living on the inside of you and, according to 1 John 4:8, God is love. God wants to flow through you and reach other people. To do that, God will release this compassion. You'll feel it flow out of you toward other people. When you feel that compassion flow, you need to respond. You don't have to always do something special. It doesn't have to be, "Thus saith the Lord. If you have a feeling of compassion toward some person, just go over, put your arm around him and say, "God loves you and so do I."

⁴ What was Jesus' purpose according to 1 John 3:8?

⁵ What was Stephen moved to do in Acts 7:59-60?

⁶ How is love described in 1 Corinthians 13:4-8?

THE DIVINE FLOW (Discipleship Questions)

Read Philippians 1:6

1. What are you to be confident of?
2. When will the good work in us be complete?

Read Philemon 5-7

3. Toward whom did Philemon show his love and faith? _____
4. Was he sharing his faith or keeping it to himself?
5. How is it that your faith may become effective?
6. Why was it that Paul had great joy and consolation in Philemon's love?

Read 1 John 4:7-11

7. Why are we commanded to love one another?
8. If you do not love, what is the conclusion of your relationship with God?
9. How did God show His love toward us?
10. Why, besides love, did God send His only begotten Son into the world?
11. What does verse 10 say that love is?
 - A. We loved God
 - B. God loved us
 - C. We love one another
12. If love is entirely that God loved us, what are we commanded to do to one another?

Read 1 John 4:12-16

13. Has anyone ever seen God?
14. How are we to know that God abides in us?
15. If we love one another, what is perfected in us?

16. What can we conclude if we know He has given us His Spirit?
17. What have we known and believed God for?
18. Who is love?
19. Where do we abide if we love?
20. Where does God abide if we love?

Abide: to continue, dwell, endure, remain, stand, tarry. To persevere, stay behind, to lodge in, to establish, to appoint, to hold fast.

Read 1 John 4:17-19

21. How do we know love has been perfected among us?
22. Is there fear in love?
23. What casts out fear?
24. What does fear involve?
25. If you fear, what have you not been made perfect in?
26. Why do we love Him?

Read 1 Corinthians 13:1-8

27. If you have the tongues of men and angels without love, what do you sound like?
28. What ingredient would make all of our knowledge and understanding and faith come to nothing?
29. Why are we given the gift of prophecy and understanding of all mysteries and all knowledge?
To keep for ourselves or to benefit and encourage others
30. What does it profit you if you give away all you have and offer your body as a sacrifice if you don't have love?
31. List the sixteen things that describe what love is and is not in verses 4-8
 - A. _____
 - B. _____
 - C. _____
 - D. _____
 - E. _____
 - F. _____

G. _____
H. _____
I. _____
J. _____
K. _____
L. _____
M. _____
N. _____
O. _____
P. _____

Read 1 Corinthians 13:13

32. "And now abideth _____, _____ and _____."
33. Which is the greatest of the three?

Read Matthew 14:14

34. When Jesus saw the multitudes, what moved Him?
35. What did He do as a result of His compassion?
36. Have you ever been moved by compassion for somebody?
37. Did you follow through on your compassion?
38. If you did, do you recognize now that it was God compelling you to help that person?

Compassion: a feeling of sorrow or pity for the sufferings or misfortunes of another. Tender, kind, merciful, and sympathetic.

Read Matthew 25:33-46

39. What did God give to the sheep that were separated and placed at His right hand?
40. What did the sheep do for those who were in need?
41. Were these things done directly to Jesus?
42. What is Jesus' explanation in verse 40?
43. Jesus went through the same scenario with the goats, and they asked the same question of when they saw Him naked, thirsty, and hungry. What was Jesus' response toward them in verse 45?

44. Can you see from this parable how our love and compassion for each other is the same as our love and compassion for Christ?

Read 1 Peter 4:8-11

45. What are we to have toward one another?
46. Why?
47. What are we to do with the gifts that the Lord has given to each of us?
48. Why are we to use these gifts according to the ability to which God supplies?

Read 1 Peter 2:21

49. Why did Christ leave us the example of Himself?
50. If we are to “follow His steps,” how are we to act toward one another?

Read Matthew 5:43-48

51. _____ your enemies.
52. _____ those who curse you
53. _____ to those who hate you
54. _____ for those who spitefully use you and persecute you.
55. Why must we act this way toward our enemies? (Verse 45)
56. Is there a reward for us if we only love the lovable?
57. If we love our enemies, what shall we be according to verse 48?

THE DIVINE FLOW (Discipleship Answer Key)

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| 1. God will complete the good work in me | 21. That we may have boldness in the day of judgment |
| 2. When Jesus comes | 22. No |
| 3. Jesus – Saints | 23. Love |
| 4. Sharing his faith | 24. Torment |
| 5. By acknowledging every good thing in me in Christ | 25. Love |
| 6. Because Philemon refreshed the hearts of the saints | 26. Because He first loved us |
| 7. Because love is of God | 27. A sounding brass or clanging cymbal |
| 8. You don't know God | 28. Love |
| 9. Sent His Son to die on the cross for us | 29. To benefit and encourage others |
| 10. That we might live thru Him | 30. Nothing |
| 11. B. God loved us | 31. A. Patient |
| 12. Love | B. Kind |
| 13. No | C. Doesn't envy |
| 14. If we love one another | D. Is not proud |
| 15. His love | E. Not puffed up |
| 16. That we abide in Him & He in us | F. Is not rude |
| 17. His love | G. Is not selfish |
| 18. God | H. Is not provoked |
| 19. In God | I. Doesn't think evil |
| 20. In us | J. Does not rejoice in iniquity |
| | K. Rejoices in truth |
| | L. Bears all things |
| | M. Believes |
| | N. Hopes |
| | O. Endures all things |
| | P. Never fails |
| | 32. Faith – hope – love |
| | 33. Love |

- | | |
|---|-------------|
| 34. Compassion | 56. No |
| 35. Healed them | 57. Perfect |
| 36. Yes | |
| 37. Your answer | |
| 38. Your answer | |
| 39. The Kingdom | |
| 40. Provided what they needed | |
| 41. No | |
| 42. Inasmuch as you did it to the least of my brethren you did it to me | |
| 43. Inasmuch as you did it not to the least of my brethren you did it not to me | |
| 44. Yes | |
| 45. Fervent love | |
| 46. Love covers a multitude of sins | |
| 47. Minister them to one another | |
| 48. So that Christ may be glorified | |
| 49. So that we should follow in His steps | |
| 50. With love | |
| 51. Love | |
| 52. Bless | |
| 53. Do good | |
| 54. Pray | |
| 55. That you may be sons of your Father in heaven | |

THE DIVINE FLOW (Additional Information)

W. E. Vine describes agape love as “the love (that) can be known only from the actions it prompts. . .this is not the love of complacency, or affection, that is, it was not drawn out by any excellency in its objects (Romans 5:8). Christian love (agape), whether exercised toward the brethren, or toward men generally, is not an impulse from the feelings, it does not always run with the natural inclinations. . .(agape) seeks the welfare of all (Romans 15:2) and works no ill to any (Romans 13:8-10); (agape) seeks opportunity to do good to all men.”

It would be wrong to say I can't love my husband or wife because my feelings are not in it. I would be a hypocrite. Remember Jesus did not feel like dying, and He was no hypocrite. Agape love is the only kind of the four kinds of love that can be commanded, for it is not an emotion but rather the exercise of the divine will (of God) in deliberate choice (W. E. Vine). That is why the Apostle John says, “And this is love, that we walk after his commandments [ways, or principles]” (2 John 6).

Some scriptural examples of agape love being commanded and carried out by God's grace (Galatians 5:22) and deliberate choice (Romans 8:13) are:

1. Love your enemies. . .bless them. . .do good. . .and pray for them (Matthew 5:44);
2. Love thy neighbor as thyself (Matthew 19:19);
3. If ye love me, keep my commandments (John 14:15);
4. Let love be without hypocrisy (NASV) (Romans 12:9);
5. By love serve one another (Galatians 5:13);
6. Love is the bond of perfectness (Colossians 3:14);
7. And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins (1 Peter 4:8);
8. Let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth (1 John 3:18).

There is much confusion on the subject of love today, because we have only one English word (love) to describe a broad aspect of meanings. For example, if I said, “I love my wife, I love apple pie, and I love my dog,” obviously I am not talking about love in the same degree or definition.

In the New Testament, there are three major Greek words that describe the various kinds of love. One of these words, “eros,” was not actually used in the New Testament, but it was alluded to. The following is a brief definition of these three major words.

EROS: Sexual passion; arousal, its gratification and fulfillment. The Greek word is not used in the New Testament, probably because its origin came from the mythical god Eros, the god of love. It is implied in many scriptures and is the only kind of love that God restricts to a one-man, one-woman relationship within the bounds of marriage (Hebrews 13:4; Song of Solomon 1:13; 4:5-6; 7:7-9; 8:10; 1 Corinthians 7:25; Ephesians 5:31).

PHILEO: Friendly love based on feelings or emotions. We can describe PHILEO love as tender affection, delighting to be in the presence of; a warm or good feeling toward someone that may come and go with intensity.

This verb with its other related Greek words are found 72 times in the New Testament. Although PHILEO love is encouraged in the Scripture, it is never a direct command. God never commands us to PHILEO love anyone since this type of love is based on feelings. Even God did not PHILEO the world. He operated in AGAPE love toward us.

The following are some scriptures in which PHILEO or a form of it is used, (John 5:20; 11:3, 36; 12:25; 16:27; 20:2; Acts 28:2; Romans 12:10 [kindly affection]; 1 Timothy 6:10; 2 Timothy 3:4; Titus 2:4; 3:4; Hebrews 13:1; 3 John 9; Revelation 3:19).

AGAPE: God’s type of love; the highest kind of love. AGAPE seeks the welfare or betterment of others even if there is no affection felt (a paraphrase of happiness, explained by Bob Rigdon). AGAPE love does not have the primary meaning of affection nor of coming from one’s feelings.

Jesus displayed this AGAPE kind of love by going to the cross and dying even though He didn’t feel like dying. He prayed, “O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt” (Matthew 26:39; Mark 14:36; and Luke 22:41-43). Jesus sought the betterment of you and me regardless of His feelings.

We, too, can AGAPE love our enemies even though we don’t have a warm feeling of affection for them (Luke 6:35). If they are hungry we can feed them; if they thirst we can give them a drink (Romans 12:20-21). We can choose to seek the betterment and welfare of others regardless of how we feel.

The Apostle John said, “Let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth” (1 John 3:18). Jesus referred to His love for others (John 13:34; 15:9,12), but He never directly told anyone, “I love you.”