

BRIDGING THE DIVIDE

John 20:20-23



- **BIBLICAL
“LOVE” IS NOT
ABOUT
FEELINGS BUT
ABOUT ACTS OF
SERVICE,
KINDNESS AND
COMPASSION.**

**Three Greek words translated as
“love” in English:**

1. *Eros* – sensual love (not in NT).

2. *Phileo* –love between friends.

**3. *Agapao* – Christ on a cross;
selfless, sacrificial, unconditional
love.**

- **Jesus is the bridge. He designs it,
we build it according to his plan.**

1. BELIEVERS' LOVE FOR ONE ANOTHER IS TO BE A "SERMON" TO THE WORLD ON THE BEAUTY OF THE LOVE OF GOD.

JN. 17:20-23 "I DO NOT ASK FOR THESE ONLY, BUT ALSO FOR THOSE WHO WILL BELIEVE IN ME THROUGH THEIR WORD, ²¹ THAT THEY MAY ALL BE ONE, JUST AS YOU, FATHER, ARE IN ME, AND I IN YOU, THAT THEY ALSO MAY BE IN US, SO THAT THE WORLD MAY BELIEVE THAT YOU HAVE SENT ME. ²² THE GLORY THAT YOU HAVE GIVEN ME I HAVE GIVEN TO THEM, THAT THEY MAY BE ONE EVEN AS WE ARE ONE, ²³ I IN THEM AND YOU IN ME, THAT THEY MAY BECOME PERFECTLY ONE, SO THAT THE WORLD MAY KNOW THAT YOU SENT ME AND LOVED THEM EVEN AS YOU LOVED ME. (ESV)



**N AFRICAN CHRISTIAN, TERTULLIAN, IN A LETTER TO THE
ROMAN AUTHORITIES DATED 197 AD IN DEFENSE OF
CHRISTIANITY.**

“BUT IT IS MAINLY THE **DEEDS OF A LOVE SO NOBLE** THAT
LEAD MANY TO PUT A BRAND UPON US. **SEE, THEY SAY, HOW
THEY LOVE ONE ANOTHER**, ...; HOW THEY ARE READY EVEN TO
DIE FOR ONE ANOTHER, FOR THEY THEMSELVES WILL SOONER
BE PUT TO DEATH.”

[HTTPS://WWW.NEWADVENT.ORG/FATHERS/0301.HTM](https://www.newadvent.org/fathers/0301.htm)

2. THE CHURCH HAS HISTORICALLY FAILED IN JESUS' COMMAND TO LOVE ONE ANOTHER.

1 COR. 1:10 ¹⁰ NOW I EXHORT YOU, BRETHREN, BY THE NAME OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, THAT **YOU ALL AGREE** AND THAT **THERE BE NO DIVISIONS** AMONG YOU, BUT THAT YOU BE MADE COMPLETE IN THE SAME MIND AND IN THE SAME JUDGMENT. ¹¹ FOR I HAVE BEEN INFORMED CONCERNING YOU, MY BRETHREN, BY **CHLOE'S PEOPLE**, THAT THERE ARE **QUARRELS** AMONG YOU.

GAL 5:15 BUT IF YOU **BITE AND DEVOUR ONE ANOTHER**, TAKE CARE THAT YOU ARE NOT CONSUMED BY ONE ANOTHER.

PHI 2:14, JAMES 4:1, 2TI 2:23.

WHAT IS THE **BIGGEST THREAT TO THE CHURCH** IN A TIME OF GREAT CULTURAL DIVIDE? POLITICS? GENDER ISSUES? OR OURSELVES?

“THERE ARE SO MANY THREATS TO CHOOSE FROM. SOME CHRISTIANS WOULD IDENTIFY HAZARDS LIKE **POSTMODERN RELATIVISM** ... AND THE **RISE OF THE LGBTQ AGENDA**, INTENDING TO TURN TRADITIONAL SEXUAL NORMS ON THEIR HEAD. ... OTHER CHRISTIANS FEEL OUR MOST EXISTENTIAL THREAT IS THE **INABILITY TO ACHIEVE RACIAL JUSTICE**, OR OUR REFUSAL TO **CONFRONT SEXUAL PREDATORS WITHIN THE CLERGY**, OR SEXISM WITHIN OUR CULTURE. ... BUT WITHOUT DENYING THE SIGNIFICANCE OF ANY OF THESE THREATS, WE BELIEVE THE GREATEST THREAT TO THE CHURCH TODAY IS THE SAME AS IT HAS BEEN IN EVERY GENERATION SINCE THE NEW TESTAMENT WAS WRITTEN: **QUARRELING. PERSECUTION STRENGTHENS THE CHURCH.**”

“WINSOME CONVICTION – DISAGREEING WO DIVIDING THE CHURCH” BY MUELHOFF & LANGER

3. THE DIVIDED WORLD DESPERATELY NEEDS THE UNIFYING POWER OF THE LOVE OF GOD.

- “AMERICA IS FALLING APART AT THE SEAMS” BY D BROOKS
- MATT. 24:10-12 AND THEN MANY WILL FALL AWAY AND BETRAY ONE ANOTHER AND HATE ONE ANOTHER. ¹¹ AND MANY FALSE PROPHETS WILL ARISE AND LEAD MANY ASTRAY. ¹² AND BECAUSE LAWLESSNESS WILL BE INCREASED, THE LOVE OF MANY WILL GROW COLD.
- JOHN 13:34-35; 15:12

1Jo 3:11 FOR THIS IS THE MESSAGE WHICH YOU HAVE HEARD FROM THE BEGINNING, THAT WE SHOULD LOVE ONE ANOTHER;

1 JN. 3:18 LITTLE CHILDREN, LET US NOT LOVE IN WORD OR TALK BUT IN DEED AND IN TRUTH.

1Jo 4:11 BELOVED, IF GOD SO LOVED US, WE ALSO OUGHT TO LOVE ONE ANOTHER.

1 JN. 4:7-8 BELOVED, LET US LOVE ONE ANOTHER, FOR LOVE IS FROM GOD, AND WHOEVER LOVES HAS BEEN BORN OF GOD AND KNOWS GOD.

⁸ ANYONE WHO DOES NOT LOVE DOES NOT KNOW GOD, BECAUSE GOD IS LOVE.



4. HOW CAN CHRIST-FOLLOWERS LOVE ONE ANOTHER IN A FALLEN, DIVIDED WORLD?

1. BY HAVING A **HIGHER REGARD** FOR OTHERS THAN FOR MYSELF.
PHIL 2:3, 1 PETER 2:17
2. BY **NOT PASSING JUDGMENT** ON ANOTHER'S **OPINIONS**. ROM 14:1-2
3. BY **ENGAGING OUR DIFFERENCES** WITH **GENTLENESS** AND **RESPECT**.
ROM 12:9-10; 1 PETER 3:14-15
4. BY NOT THINKING **MORE HIGHLY OF MYSELF** THAN I OUGHT TO THINK. ROM 12:3, EPH 4:1-3

PHI 2:3 DO NOTHING FROM SELFISHNESS OR EMPTY CONCEIT, BUT WITH HUMILITY OF MIND REGARD ONE ANOTHER AS MORE IMPORTANT THAN YOURSELVES;

1PE 2:17 HONOR ALL PEOPLE, LOVE THE BROTHERHOOD, FEAR GOD, HONOR THE KING.

ROM. 14:1-2 AS FOR THE ONE WHO IS WEAK IN FAITH, WELCOME HIM, BUT NOT TO QUARREL OVER OPINIONS. ² ONE PERSON BELIEVES HE MAY EAT ANYTHING, WHILE THE WEAK PERSON EATS ONLY VEGETABLES. (ESV)

- ROM 14:5 ONE PERSON ESTEEMS ONE DAY AS BETTER THAN ANOTHER...EACH PERSON SHOULD BE FULLY CONVINCED IN HIS OWN MIND. ... ¹⁰ WHY DO YOU PASS JUDGMENT ON YOUR BROTHER? ... FOR WE WILL ALL STAND BEFORE THE JUDGMENT SEAT OF GOD;

ROM. 12:9-10 LET LOVE BE WITHOUT HYPOCRISY. ABHOR WHAT IS EVIL; CLING TO WHAT IS GOOD. 10 **BE DEVOTED TO ONE ANOTHER IN BROTHERLY LOVE; GIVE PREFERENCE TO ONE ANOTHER IN HONOR;**

ROM 12:3 FOR THROUGH THE GRACE GIVEN TO ME I SAY TO EVERYONE AMONG YOU **NOT TO THINK MORE HIGHLY OF HIMSELF THAN HE OUGHT TO THINK;** BUT TO THINK SO AS TO HAVE SOUND JUDGMENT, AS GOD HAS ALLOTTED TO EACH A MEASURE OF FAITH.

EPH. 4:1-3 THEREFORE I, THE PRISONER OF THE LORD, IMPLORE YOU TO WALK IN A MANNER WORTHY OF THE CALLING WITH WHICH YOU HAVE BEEN CALLED, 2 WITH ALL **HUMILITY AND GENTLENESS,** WITH PATIENCE, **SHOWING TOLERANCE FOR ONE ANOTHER IN LOVE,** 3 BEING DILIGENT TO **PRESERVE THE UNITY OF THE SPIRIT** IN THE BOND OF PEACE. (NAU)

- **NEXT STEP:**

1. Is there a fellow brother or sister in Christ that you are out of fellowship with?
 - What can you do to rebuild the bridge that was once there?
 - Seek help from someone you trust to figure out how to be reconciled.