

The Greatest Gift: LOVE's Description PT 2

Pastor Jason Dennett's Notes

NKJV - *"Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up.."*

NLT - *"Love is patient and kind. Love is not jealous or boastful or proud."*

WNT - *"Love meekly and patiently bears ill treatment from others. Love is kind, gentle, benign, pervading and penetrating the whole nature, mellowing all which would have been harsh and austere; is not envious. Love does not brag, nor does it show itself off, is not ostentatious, does not have an inflated ego.."*

We've been discussing the nature of true, biblical Agape Love. While it is a beautiful undertaking, it also makes us realize how easy it is to say that we "love" someone, but how hard it is to do it in reality...

I. The Positives - What Agape Love IS: *"Love **suffers long** and is **kind**.."*

II. The Negatives - What Agape Love ISN'T: *"..love does not **envy**; love does not **parade itself**, is not **puffed up**.."*

*Why does Paul use so many **NEGATIVE** descriptions (8) for Agape Love?*

- 1. **Contrast** 2. **Experience** 3. **CORINTHIANS!!**

#3 - Agape Love Isn't "Envious"

This is the word "**ζηλόω**" or "**zēloō**" meaning to burn with zeal; to be heated; to boil with covetousness and anger.

- The Corinthians were **ENVOUS** of each other: 1 Cor 3:3,4 - *"..you are still carnal. For where there are envy, strife, and divisions among you, are you not carnal and behaving like mere men? For when one says, "I am of Paul," and another, "I am of Apollos," are you not carnal?"*
- "**Envy is rebellion** against God's leading in the lives of his children. It's saying that God has no right to bless someone else more than you." - **Erwin Lutzer**
- "Envy is one of the most **cancerous and soul-destroying vices** there is.... It is terribly potent, for it feeds and is fed by pride, the taproot of our fallen nature." - **J. I. Packer**

- "Envy can **ruin reputations, split churches, and cause murders.** Envy can shrink our circle of friends, ruin our business, and dwarf our souls.... I have seen hundreds cursed by it." - **Billy Graham**

- The **Corinthians** were guilty of acting like this...

Gen 4 - Cain was envious of Abel!

Gen 37 - Joseph's brothers were envious!

"**Criticism** is often nothing more than low-grade envy."

Isa 14/Eze 28 - Lucifer was envious of GOD!

"Evil Effects of Envy":

Envy can **destroy** someone (Job 5:2)

Envy **steals** your peace (Prov 14:30)

Envy is **foolish** (Ecc 4:4)

Envy causes you to **act rashly** (Acts 7:9)

Envy characterizes pagans (Rom 1:29)

Envy has **no place** in a Christian's life (Tit 3:3)

- "**Selfish**" form of Envy - "What about **ME?!?**"
- "**Wicked**" form of Envy - "What about **THEM?!?**"
- **1 Kings 3:24-26** - "Then the king said, 'Bring me a sword.' So they brought a sword before the king. 25 And the king said, '**Divide the living child in two, and give half to one, and half to the other.**' 26 Then the woman whose son was living spoke to the king, for she yearned with compassion for her son; and she said, 'O my lord, give her the living child, and by no means kill him!' But the other said, '**Let him be neither mine nor yours, but divide him.**'"

A Biblical Solution to Envy??

- a.) There's always someone **BETTER** than you!

Phil 2:3 NLT - "Don't be selfish; don't try to impress others. Be humble, thinking of **others as better** than yourselves."

"Destroyed by Envy": An ancient Greek legend speaks of a certain athlete who ran well but placed second in the race. The winner was encompassed with praise, and eventually a statue was erected in his honor. Envy ate away at the man who had placed second. He resented the winner, and he could think of little else. Eventually he decided to destroy the statue of the winner. Night after night, he went to the statue under cover of darkness, chiseling away at the base to weaken the foundation. But one night as he chiseled in violent anger, he went too far. The heavy marble statue teetered on its base and crashed down on the

disgruntled athlete. He died beneath the weight of the marble replica of the man he had grown to hate. His own envy destroyed him.

- b.) **Don't COMPETE or COMPARE with other Christians!!**

- **2Cor 10:12** NLT - "Oh, don't worry; we wouldn't dare say that we are as wonderful as these other men who tell you how important they are! But they are only **comparing themselves with each other**, using themselves as the standard of measurement. How ignorant!"
- "One of the **major causes of stress** is combative competition—more accurately, envy. Rooted in a lack of self-esteem, it grows in the soul-soil of comparisons and blossoms in noxious thorns of desire for what others have or achieve." - **Lloyd John Ogilvie**
- This happens w/**Denominations, Churches, and Saints.**
- "**Crabby Crabs**": Fishermen know that one never needs a top for crab baskets. If one of the crabs starts to climb up the side of the basket, the other crabs will reach up and pull it back down.

- c.) **We are to REJOICE when others are blessed!**

Romans 12:15 - "**Rejoice** with those who rejoice.."

"Let us be thankful not for our own blessings alone, but also **for those of others**. In this way we will be able both to destroy our envy and to rivet our charity and make it more genuine, since it will not even be possible for you to go on envying those on behalf of whom you give thanks to the Lord." - **John Chrysostom**

"The envious man is **twisted**, for he feels other's fortunes are his misfortunes; their profit, his loss; their blessing, his bane; their health, his illness; their promotion, his demotion; their success, his failure." - **Leslie Flynn**

- d.) **It is the LORD that every good gift to us!**

James 1:17 - "Every good gift and every perfect gift **is from above**, and comes down from the Father of lights.."

John 3:27 - "John answered and said, "A man can receive nothing unless **it has been given to him from heaven.**"

#4 - Agape Love Isn't "Boastful"

This is the word "**περπερεύομαι**" or "**perpereuomai**" meaning "a self display, extolling one's self excessively, to brag, to be a wind-bag, to be a

peacock parading itself around."

This is **PUBLICLY**...out of your own mouth!

- *"Few people need voice lessons to sing their own praise." - E. C. McKenzie*
- *"Do you wish men to speak well of you? Then never speak well of yourself." - Pascual*
- *"If a fish escapes, it was a big one." - Malay Proverb*
- *Dr. Tony Compolo says that when he was a boy growing up in a congested and bustling city, his mother arranged for a teenage girl who lived nearby to walk home with him at the end of each school day. For this, she was paid by his mother. But Tony rebelled in the second grade and told his mom, "I'll walk myself to school, and, if you give me the money, I will be extra careful." Little Tony finally got his way. For the next two years he walked himself back and forth to school. Many years later at a family party, **he boasted and bragged** about his independence and reminded his family of **how he had taken care of himself** as a boy. His mother laughed and added the rest of the story. "Did you really think you were alone?" she said. "Every morning when you left for school, I left with you. I walked behind you all the way. When you got out of school at 3:30 in the afternoon, I was there. I always kept myself hidden, but I was there and I followed you all the way home. I just wanted to be there for you in case you needed me."*

The **Corinthians** were guilty of acting like this...

- **1 Cor 4:6,7** - *"..that none of you may be **puffed up on behalf of one against the other**. For who makes you differ from another? And what do you have that you did not receive? Now if you did indeed receive it, **why do you boast** as if you had not received it?"*

Did JESUS act like this??

- **Phil 2:5-8** NLT - *"You must have the same attitude that Christ Jesus had. 6 Though he was God, he did not think of equality with God as something to cling to. 7 Instead, **he gave up his divine privileges**; he took the **humble position of a slave** and was born as a human being. When **he appeared in human form**, 8 he **humbléd himself in obedience to God** and died a criminal's death on a cross."*

JESUS purposefully concealed His miraculous abilities, until the the end of His ministry!

- **Mark 9:9** - *"Now as they came down from the mountain, He commanded them that **they should tell no one** the things they had seen, till the Son of Man had risen from the dead."*
- *"Do not take pride in your good deeds, for God's judgments differ from*

*those of men, and what pleases them often displeases Him. If there is good in you, see more good in others, so that you may remain humble. It does no harm to **esteem yourself less** than anyone else, but it is very harmful to **think yourself better** than even one. The humble live in continuous peace, while in the hearts of the proud are envy and frequent anger." - Thomas A Kempis*

#5 - Agape Love Isn't "Arrogant"

This is the word "*φυσιώω*" or "*physioō*" meaning "to inflate, blow up, to cause to swell up, to have inflated ideas about your own importance."

"Spears & Shields" - There was a man who sold shields and spears. First he praised his shields, saying, "**My shields are so strong that nothing can pierce them**"; then he praised his spears, saying, "**My spears are so sharp that nothing can stop them.**" Then someone said to him, "What if one should use your own spears to attack your own shields?" To this the man was unable to answer.

"Pastor & A Dog" - A pastor was walking along a road saw a crowd of boys surrounding a dog. "What are you doing with the dog?" asked the pastor. "**Whoever tells the biggest lie, he wins the dog.**" "Oh, my, my, my," exclaimed the minister, "when I was a little boy like you here I never told a lie." There was a moment's silence. "**Here,**" said one of the little fellows, "**you win the dog.**"

- The **Corinthians** were guilty of acting like this...

1 Cor 5:1,2,6 - *"It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and such sexual immorality as is not even named among the Gentiles—that a man has his father's wife! And **you are puffed up**, and have not rather mourned, that he who has done this deed might be taken away from among you...**Your glorying is not good.**"*

- This is **PRIVATELY** in your own mind.

There By Grace: *After worrying for half an hour that we wouldn't get on an overbooked flight, my wife and I were summoned to the check-in desk. A smiling agent whispered that this was our lucky day. To get us on the plane he was bumping us up to first class. This was the first and only time we've been so pampered on an airplane - good food, hot coffee, comfy chairs, and plenty of legroom! **For fun, we started to play a little game, trying to guess who else didn't belong in first class.** One man stuck*

out like a sore thumb. He padded around the cabin in his socks, restlessly sampling all the magazines, playing with but never actually using the in-flight phones. Twice he sneezed so loudly we thought the oxygen masks would drop down. And when the attendant brought linen tablecloths for our breakfast trays, he tucked his into his collar as a bib. **We often do the same thing spiritually. We think we see supposed misfits in the Church, too - people who, in our minds, don't belong, people who embarrass us and cause us to feel superior and arrogant . But the truth is...we don't belong there any more than they do!**

"If we were aware of a serpent nestling by our bed, we would take the trouble to kill him. But when **the devil nestles in our souls**, we fancy that we take no harm, but lie at our ease; and the reason is that we do not see him with the eyes of our body. And yet this is why we should rouse ourselves even more and be alert. For against an enemy whom one can perceive, one may easily be on guard; but one that cannot be seen, if we are not continually armed, we will not easily escape." - **John Chrysostom**