

Doctrine of Impersonal Love

1. Love comes in five categories.

- Love toward God
- Love toward a right man or a right woman
- Love toward friends
- Love toward all believers with a relaxed mental attitude even if you have no positive feelings toward them. This category is the subject of this doctrine and we shall use a “Thiemeism” for this fourth type of love—**Impersonal Love**.
- Familial love between parent and children

2. Introduction

- At faith in Christ we are freed from the taboos of legalism, shadow worship, the Mosaic law etc.
- We are free to follow the new royal law of liberty and by means of cycling Bible Doctrine with new standards.
- One such standard is how to apply the *Doctrine of Impersonal Love*.

3. The *Doctrine of Impersonal Love* is closely related to the *Doctrine of Agape*.

4. The local church must be a place of privacy for learning doctrine individually based on our own personal needs, and these needs vary.

5. We must all live our lives unto the Lord while remaining in time with many neighbors some of whom you may not like.

6. There are all sorts of believers in varying shades of spiritual growth.

7. Sometimes you must yield to other believers even when they are wrong and you are right.

Rom 14:21 It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine nor anything whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended or is made weak.

8. Impersonal Love is commanded time and again in Scripture.

9. Usually this command to have Impersonal Love is in the Greek as either **AGAPE** or **PHILADELPHIA**.

10. Impersonal Love was best expressed by our Lord on the Cross when He said of those who had used and abused Him:

Luk 23:34 Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. And they parted his raiment, and cast lots.

11. Impersonal Love is that attitude displayed because the Scripture commands a proper mental attitude to others.

11.1 **PHILEO** cannot be commanded because it depends on a response in the soul to an outside stimulus whereas **AGAPE** can be commanded because it is a mental attitude based on who and what you are as the subject and has nothing to do with the appeal or lack of appeal of the object.

Gal 6:10 As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.

12. Meaning, Concept and Etymology:

12.1 The Love of God for the Devil's World is perhaps the best example of the application of Impersonal Love as it relates to an anthropopathism.

Joh 3:16 For God so loved (**AGAPAO**) the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

12.1.1 Webster has this to say of the word anthropopathism: The attribution of human feelings to non-human beings, objects or natural phenomena. Thus God is said to love and to hate but both are anthropopathisms designed to communicate with mankind. God is said to have a hand and this is an anthropomorphism.

13. Unbelievers and believer reversionists are said to love the devil's world and Satan's program more than the Light of the world.

Joh 3:19 And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved (**AGAPAO**) darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.

14. The differences between **AGAPAO** and **PHILEO** are found in the discourse between Peter and the resurrected Lord Jesus as found in Joh 2:15-17

Joh 21:15 So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest (**AGAPAO**) thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love (**PHILEO**) thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs.

Joh 21:16 He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest (**AGAPAO**) thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love (**PHILEO**) thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep.

Joh 21:17 He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest (**PHILEO**) thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love (**PHILEO**) thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep.

14.1 **PHILEO** usually connotes an emotional attachment in which there is approval and appreciation of qualities in the object of the love. In contrast **AGAPAO** may or may not encompass approval of the object.

14.2 On page 653 under **PHILEO** paragraph 3. Thayer in his Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament has the following to say:

“As to the distinction between **AGAPAN** and **PHILEIN**.....**PHILEIN** denotes an inclination prompted by sense and emotion... Hence men are said to **AGAPAN** God, but not **PHILEIN**; ... and God is said to **AGAPESAI TON KOSMON** (**JOH 3:16**) ... because love as an emotion (**PHILEO**) cannot be commanded, but only love as a choice (**AGAPAO**).”

14.3 Much erroneous doctrine has developed with reference to these two words because of the fairly common translation of **AGAPAO** as “charity” in the KJV and **PHILEO** as “love.” Further confusion occurs when translators attempt to translate both as “love.”

14.4 The English word love communicates an emotional response that precipitates sacrificial actions of endearment from one toward another or a thing.

14.5 There are many words in the New Testament demanding rejection of simple meanings such as **HAGIOS**, **KARDIA**, **GNOSIS** and **EPIGNOSIS** etc.

14.6 Words such as **PHILEO** and **AGAPAO** demand a categorical approach to evolve a technical meaning.

14.7 The term **AGAPAO** is inimical with much of what we know as love in the 21st century. A few examples will illustrate:

15. John chapters 10 and 11 commands not to even greet people presenting any doctrine contrary to grace.

2Jo 1:10 If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not take him into your house or welcome him.

2Jo 1:11 Anyone who welcomes him shares in his wicked work.

15.1 This concept of grace vs. legalism is an essential as opposed to a non-essential and therefore cannot be compromised.

- The National Council of Churches would of course look with askance at any believer who would not welcome a person of the Moslem faith, a homosexual or an abortion rights activist.

15.2 Paul commands the Church at Corinth not to associate with certain immoral Believers. These again are essentials and cannot be compromised.

1Co 5:11 But now I am writing you that you must not associate with anyone who calls himself a brother but is sexually immoral or greedy, an idolater or a slanderer, a drunkard or a swindler. With such a man do not even eat.

15.3 In 1Ti 1:20 and 2Ti 2:17 and 18 Paul calls certain false teachers cancers who will be disciplined.

2Ti 2:17 And their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus;

2Ti 2:18 Who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some.

1Ti 1:20 Of whom is Hymenaeus and Alexander; whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme.

15.4 Pre-Tribulation eschatology is therefore an essential that cannot be compromised.

16. Christ used certain inimical terms in His earthly ministry.

Luk 9:41 And Jesus answering said, O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you, and suffer you? Bring thy son hither.

Luk 11:29 And when the people were gathered thick together, he began to say, This is an evil generation: they seek a sign; and there shall no sign be given it, but the sign of Jonas the prophet.

Luk 9:5 And whosoever will not receive you, when ye go out of that city, shake off the very dust from your feet for a testimony against them.

Mat 10:5 These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not:

Mat 10:6 But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

Mat 7:6 Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you.

Mat 23:27 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness.

Mat 23:33 Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?

17. Impersonal Love in the New Testament:

17.1 Instead of keeping the Mosaic law Paul says I want you (among other things) to show Impersonal Love toward one another by walking in the Spirit. Gal 5:13-14

Gal 5:13 For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love (**AGAPAO**) serve one another.

Gal 5:14 For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love (**AGAPAO**) thy neighbor as thyself.

17.2 Brotherly love of others in the faith is demanded (here we find **PHILADELPHIA** used).

Heb 13:1 Let "brotherly love" continue.

Heb 13:2 Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.

Heb 13:3 Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them; and them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body.

17.3 In 1Jo 4:7-11 there are a number of commands to manifest Impersonal Love toward others.

1Jo 4:7 Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God.

1Jo 4:8 He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.

1Jo 4:9 In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.

1Jo 4:10 Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

1Jo 4:11 Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.

17.3.1 Every one of the "loves" in the above verses (1Jo 4:1-11) is derived from a form of **AGAPE** or **AGAPAO**.

17.4 Jesus early in His Kingdom message incorporated the concept of Impersonal Love.

Mat 5:43 Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love (**AGAPAO**) thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy.

Mat 5:44 But I say unto you, Love (**AGAPAO**) your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecuteth you;

17.5 As we have already seen the same concept is taught in many of the Epistles to the Church.

1Th 4:9 But as touching brotherly love (**PHILADELPHIA**) ye need not that I write unto you: for ye yourselves are taught of God to love (**AGAPAO**) one another.

18. Like all divine good it can only be done by the consistent use of the two power options.

19. There are always people you like and even love but there will be some who are in your view persona non grata.

19.1 You are to treat these people graciously if forced in their periphery.

19.2 You should not feel pressure to socialize with these types.

20. Impersonal love demands you disapprove of the sin and not the sinner.