

Charity, The Greatest of All
Pentecostals of Dadeville – Rev Andrew Salinas
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Read Aloud – 1 John 4:7-21 Agape love is God’s highest expression of love, which gives, cares, and covers, and it is the greatest of all Christian Principles.

Focus on - John 15:13 Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

The essential nature of light requires that it shine; light can only be light when it shines. Fire must burn to be fire. It should be no surprise then that love cannot be love until it’s given away.

A bell’s not a bell ‘till you ring it
A song’s not a song ‘til you sing it.
Love in your heart wasn’t put there to stay,
Love isn’t love ‘til you give it away!
Oscar Hammerstien (1895-1960)

1 John 4:8 He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love. **1 John 4:16** And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him.

Love is NOT an attribute of God; He is Love. After a Pharisee asked Jesus which commandment was the greatest, He responded.

Matthew 22:37 Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.

38 This is the first and great commandment. **39** And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

- **Love Expressed**

John 13:35 By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another. Love is expressed in two forms---by word and by action.

Paul described the expressions of love (charity) 1 Cor. 13-the love chapter. Characteristics of believers: tongues (verse 1) prophecy (verse 2) faith (verse 2) generosity (verse 3) and sacrifice (verse 3). Love must be the basis of all Christian live and experience.

- **The Greatest of These**

John 3:16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. The vastness of the love of God transcends human comprehension.

1. **Eros, Physcal or Erotic Love. Genesis 1:27** So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.

2. **Phileo, the Love of Friendship. John 21:15** ¶So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs. **16** He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep. **17** He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest 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 thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep.

3. **Agape, God's Sacrificial Love. Romans 5:5** And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us. **Romans 5:8** But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. **John 10:11** I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.

- **Three Expressions of Christianity**

1. **Faith—the basis of all Christian experience. Hebrews 11:6** But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him **Ephesians 2:8** For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:

2. **Hope—the potential of all accomplishment. 1 Peter 1:3** ¶Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, **4** To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you,

3. **Charity—(love) —the power of all expression. Colossians 3:12** ¶Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; **13** Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. **14** And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness.

4. **The Greatest is Agape Love—**He loves us anyway—in spite of our shortcomings and imperfections! While we are jagged, imperfect, and unlovely, we marvel at Christ's love for us, yet we rejoice in our knowledge of its vastness! Oh, how He loves us!

- **Commanded to Love**

John 13:34 A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.

The new commandment is not an option. We must love one another; even to the degree He loves us! His example is our standard.

1. **Loving One's Enemies-- Matthew 5:44** But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;
45 That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.
2. **Loving Friends—Mark 2** tearing the roof off.
3. **Loving Family-- Ephesians 5:33** Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband.
Ephesians 6:1 ¶Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right.
4. **Loving One Another in the Church—**The church is the family of God, and it should be as easy to show love to members of the church family as to express love for natural family members. We often refer to each other as “Brother and Sister,” acknowledging that we are indeed family. Loving one another in the church is the reflection of the love of Jesus Christ through believers, and it fulfills the commandment of Christ.
5. **Loving God-- Deuteronomy 11:13** And it shall come to pass, if ye shall hearken diligently unto my commandments which I command you this day, to love the LORD your God, and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul,
1 Timothy 2:8 I will therefore that men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting.

1 John 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.

8 He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.

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.

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.

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

12 No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us.

13 Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit.

14 ¶And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world.

15 Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God.

16 And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him.

17 ¶Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world.

18 There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love.

19 We love him, because he first loved us.

20 If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?

21 And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also.

Our prayer should be to understand that the greatest of all abiding virtues is love, we must have the Spirit of God, who is love, to belong to God , and we must express His love to a love-starved world. **Love changes everything it touches..**