

Let's Talk CHANGE DEVOTIONALS



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AGAPE

Dr. Vanessa Dantzer Ussery | April 12, 2017

In the Greek language, there are various words that express love. Agape is the purest form of love as it depicts the way God loves people. His love is not contingent on whether one accepts or rejects it. He expresses this type of love as stated in John 3:16. The life of Jesus given at Calvary covered the price set for the wages of sin. Since all humans have sinned and Jesus covered the expense, then all humans have the privilege of benefiting from His display of love by dying in our place. The greatest challenge for all who have accepted the gift of life via Jesus Christ is practicing agape in our lives. 1 John 3:18 (AV) puts it this way, "Little children, let us not love [merely] in theory or in speech but in deed and in truth (in practice and in sincerity)." In essence, John's writing makes it clear we are only capable of this type of love if God, who is love, dwells in us. To be so yielded to the Spirit that we are capable of loving our fellowman whether they respond favorably or unfavorably is a true testimony to the power of God to change hearts.



Many of us are not comfortable loving others like that as we fear being hurt, abused or mistreated in some form or fashion. We should not be reluctant to show Godly love because of fear. 1John 4:18 (AV) says, "There is no fear in love (dread does not exist), but full-grown (complete, perfect) love turns fear out of doors and expels every trace of terror! For fear brings with it the thought of punishment and [so] he who is afraid has not reached the full maturity of love [is not yet grown into love's complete perfection.]" May I suggest most of us have not reached the full maturity of love so we skirt around the issue of why we do not love others unconditionally. We must be honest about the matter, as God reads our heart. Confess the truth, loving others and not being loved in return scares most of us. Face it, we are in an eternal love union with God if you are a born again believer. It should be our goal to attain perfection and love is the center of God's being. It's so important that our confidence is in His love for us as that will diminish the power of fear of rejection. In other words, we do not love on others to get love as we know we are already loved. We love on others so they can experience the love of God we already have, expecting to see a change for the better in their life. Agape love must be demonstrated as it is the greatest witness to others that God's love is real and He really loves us all!

Residing in Los Angeles, CA, Dr. Vanessa Dantzer Ussery is the Emeritus Pastor of Home Assembly Church in Los Angeles, is the founder of "Celebrate Change Ministries" and the author of "My Be Attitude: Who Be You?", which is available online in softcover or eBook at MyBeAttitude.org, Xulon Press, Amazon and Barnes & Noble. Dr. Ussery is available for national speaking engagements, empowerment seminars, and lectures. For more information, CelebrateChange.org | Info@CelebrateChange.org | 310-436-6336 x216.

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