***Biblical Love
RO157-01***

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Please open your Bibles to Romans 12:9-21. We begin a new section today, and our subject is "Christian Conduct." This is segment number one.

Practical Christian living requires separation of the believer from the human viewpoint of society to the divine viewpoint of Scripture. So, the apostle Paul has begun the 12th chapter of Romans by telling us to do just that: get our minds cleaned up from human viewpoint; get our minds detached from the opinions of people around us who don't know what they're talking about; and, get our minds filled with God's divine viewpoint so that our minds are actually renewed into His pattern of thought, which can only be done through the learning of the principles of doctrine. In that way, Paul says that you will be able to conform your life to God's plan and pattern, and not be conformed to this evil world system. Human viewpoint will take a lost soul into the lake of fire forever, and there's no second chance. Human viewpoint will take a Christian from the potential rewards that he could have in heaven to great eternal losses as the result of denying him the pursuit of divine good works.

The human viewpoint mentality is, of course, always arrogantly confident outwardly, but it is also inwardly uneasy. I was interested in observing a segment of the Phil Donahue program this week in which he was speaking to a man who is suffering from AIDS, and who, therefore, in the immediate future is doomed to go out into eternity. And the whole program was dealing with that, and there were several people in that category, and it was presenting an upbeat attitude – a positive outlook on life. And this man was saying, "I am a worthy person. I deserve the space that I occupy, and I just feel good about myself." And he said, "You know, people can make a great deal about all this – why something so terrible happens to a person. They talk about it being the judgment of God and His punishment, and other things, but nobody knows."

Then Donahue startled me by saying, "Doesn't it bother you, if you ever stop and think that what if these fundamentalists, who have this viewpoint that AIDS is a divine judgment against the homosexual practice, how do you feel about the thought that: what is their right about that?" And I thought, "Aha, so that's what you're thinking about in the middle of the night, Phil, as you lie in your bed, and you wake up, and you're no longer parading in front of the cameras. I suspected that all along – that in the quietness of the night, that gnawing question is there: what if these Bible people really do have the information, and really do know what they're talking about, and that everything in the Bible really is the way it is portrayed to be? What if it is a great mistake to simply blow it all off, and try to excuse oneself by saying that these are things that nobody can really know about?"

You'd be surprised how many Christians who, for some reason, want to hang on to a human viewpoint outlook, actually take that very game, and say, "Well, we can't really be for sure that this is what the Bible says. We can't really be for sure that we know about these things." But if you understand anything about the Word of God, and if you go on anywhere in spiritual maturity, you know that the Bible clearly evidences, all over its pages, that it is a book which man could not have written by himself. It is the product of the divine mind of God. Therefore, you can't just blow it off. And when the Bible speaks on a subject, you are hearing the voice of the living Creator God.

**Post-Millennialism**

So, Paul says that you must get your mind straightened out from human viewpoint, and get it on track to divine viewpoint with Scripture. The human viewpoint mentality is arrogant, but it is a losing outlook. However, Paul says that no Christian should have an exaggerated opinion about himself, which God does not share. A terrible divine judgment is to come upon the Christian who ignores or distorts the Word of God. And one of the favorite areas, currently, in which the Word of God is being both ignored and distorted is the area of prophecy – the whole concept of reconstruction theology, the idea of a dominion theology, all of which is the idea that Christians are going to take over society. That position holds that Christians are going to move into the power structure of the world, and they are going to turn this society around for God. This is the old post-millennial idea that society is going to become better. You would be surprised what powerful forces have revived that old heresy. And Christians, who would like to see things get better, and would like to have an upbeat, optimistic outlook on life, are being drawn into that serious mistake.

I heard a commentator on radio last week who was discussing this matter, who holds to this dominion theology. He said that people should be prosperous, and that Christians should take over. He said that God has a covenant for us to rule, and not for the unbelievers to rule. And they bring over the Old Testament ideas into the New Testament church. This man said that all of these descriptions of Jesus about terrible times that are to come upon the world have all been fulfilled: "There were all fulfilled in the early church. They're all gone. It's not going to happen." And you might smile and say, "Oh, how can anybody be so naive?" But there are all kinds of Christians who know better who are chasing that will-of-the-wisp, and are chasing down that foolish road such that they actually think that the world is going to get better; that society is going to get better; and, that Christians are going to be the element that are going to lead out, and people are going to fall in line and follow.

The truth of the matter is that anybody who pays attention to what is going on, in all the institutions of society, knows that everything is going downhill. So, a Christian should not have an exaggerated opinion about himself, and about what he's capable of doing, but he should recognize that God has spoken. And to undermine and to belittle God is very serious business.

Revelation 23:18-19, because John knew, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, that people were going to dismiss the terrible things that he wrote in this book, and that he predicted, gave this caution just before he closes the book of the Revelation. In Revelation 22:18-19, John says, "For I testify unto every man that hears the words of the prophecy of this book. If any man shall add onto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book. If any man shall take away from the words of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the tree of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book."

Now, that's easy to apply to the unbeliever: he who dismisses the revelation of prophecy; he who distorts the Word of God relative to the future; he who adds to it, as the reconstruction theologians are doing, and the dominion theologians are doing; and, the people who distort all of this – it's easy to see, if they're unbelievers, that they're going to be out of the picture in heaven. But you must realize that this also applies to Christians. I'm not sure how they will be denied access to the tree of life, for that which is the good things of heaven, but in some respects, there's an implication here that Christians who treat the Word of God in this way are also going to miss out in some respect in heaven itself.

So, it is very important that we have a perspective that is true to Scripture and that we beware of the delivery by God to our willful delusions and to a wasted life, because that's what God will do. If you insist on going for the delusions of our day, eventually, the Lord will turn you over to those things. And you will go down the tube, all the while thinking that you're right on track.

**Use of Spiritual Gifts Earns Rewards in Heaven**

Well, after a Christian has developed spiritual maturity in his soul, he's then ready and qualified to serve God. Paul then told us about nine specific spiritual gifts (or abilities) which God gives believers for their Christian service. We are to identify our spiritual gift, and we are to use it under the leading of the Holy Spirit. Our rewards in heaven are earned by the maximum use of our spiritual gifts. We maximize the use of our gifts by applying the Word of God in our lives.

So, we are to pray for maximum use of opportunities for our spiritual gifts. You not only have to have a gift, you have to have the opportunity to be able to use it. So, we are to give God's service serious consideration – top priority in our life. Not to do so is to have a great regret and a great loss at the Judgment Seat of Christ.

**Christian Conduct – Experiential Sanctification**

So, a Christian need spiritual maturity to use a spiritual gift properly. Godliness is also important in using your spiritual gifts. So, what Paul does, beginning at verse 9, is that he proceeds to talk about how a Christian should live. This is a very practical application of the Word of God. Paul sets forth specific conduct which is required of a Christian. He's dealing with experiential sanctification.

**Love**

I caution you to begin with, that this is not an optional list. So, pay attention. Understandably, he begins with a very key feature that is necessary in the Christian life. In verse 9, he says, "Let love be without hypocrisy. The word "love" is the Greek word "agape." The exact meaning for this word we have to learn from researching the meaning of words. It is very important that you understand this word for "love." There is another word for "love," also in the Greek language. It looks like this: "philos." It also means "love." Sometimes the Bible uses "agape;" and, sometimes it uses "philos." They are totally different. The verb forms mean the same as these noun forms.

**The Latin Word "Diligo"**

So, the question is: what do these words mean? We find out, interestingly enough, the very precise meaning of these Greek New Testament words from the Latin language. And please hang in there. This isn't going to be that complicated. In the Latin language, there is this word "diligo". "Diligo" is a word which means mental esteem for an object, rather than an emotional feelings. "Diligo" means "love," but it means love as an attitude of the mind. It does not mean the love of an emotional nature. That is important for us to observe first of all, and I'll show you the connection in a moment. We know that this "diligo" is mental love.

**The Latin Word "Amo"**

There is another Latin word, and that is the word "amo." The word "amo" refers to emotional love. All of this is very clear to the people who study language. We have this brought down in history, and the word "amo" has to do with an emotional affection. So we have two distinct meanings for the word "love."

The Romans orator Cicero makes a statement that illustrates the difference between these two. He says in one of his writings, "I do not esteem," and he uses the word "diligo." Right away you know that he's talking about something of a mental attitude about this person that he's speaking of. He's speaking about a friend. He says, "I do not esteem the man merely, but I love him." And immediately, you know that Cicero is saying, "I do not have only a certain mental attitude toward this man, but I also have an emotional attitude toward him." Or: "I do not esteem the man merely, but I love him." He is saying, "There is something of the passionate warmth of affection in the feeling with which I regard him." That is very interesting. Cicero says, "I not only have a mental attitude love for this man, but I also have an emotional attachment toward him."

**Jerome and the Latin Vulgate**

Along comes a church father and scholar from the fourth century named Jerome. Jerome was a scholar when the Roman church now was increasingly coming into prominence, and he is operating with Latin. The New Testament is in Greek; and, the Old Testament in Hebrew. Jerome decides to translate the Bible into Latin. And he produced a version which we call today the Latin Vulgate. The word "Vulgate" means "the common language of the people who spoke last Latin.

**The Greek Word "Agape"**

Now Jerome knew the exact meaning of these New Testament Greek words for "love," because he lived so close to New Testament times. We today know the exact meaning of the Latin words for "love." So, immediately, we have a connection by which to accurately define what the Greek words, "agape" and "philos" mean, by finding out which word refers to which word in the Latin that we know very precisely. So, when we look into the translation of Jerome, every time he came to the Greek word "agape," he translated it as "diligo," which we know means a mental attitude. That tells us what "agape" love is in the New Testament Bible.

**The Greek Word "Philos"**

Every time he came to the Greek word "philos," he translated it as the Latin word "amo," which indicates an emotional love. So, immediately we have clarified for us that "agape" love, such as Paul speaks of here in Romans 12:9, is not something of a feeling of an emotion, but it's talking about something in your mind. He's back to basics again. He's back to the thinking that he started this chapter with: get your human viewpoint flushed out; and, get divine viewpoint in there. With that divine viewpoint will come an attitude of love. And this mental attitude love is what Paul is speaking about here.

**Mental Attitude "Agape" Love**

So, let's look at mental attitude love. Mental attitude love is a mind which is guided, first of all, by Bible doctrine truth. When we say that we have "agape" love, we are saying that we have a mind that is *free from ill will* toward another person. Now immediately, you can understand what when Paul says, "Let love be without hypocrisy," he's exhorting us to something. If you are a thinking person, and you look at that verse right off the bat, you know that he's telling us, as Christians, that we are to have a quality of love about us. And immediately, if you are a thoughtful person, you are uneasy, because if you think about this in an emotional warmth, you don't have that toward everybody. Furthermore, you are uneasy, if you will admit it to yourself, that you cannot command yourself to have an emotional warmth toward certain people.

Now is that wrong? Is that what Paul is asking? We've already learned, thus far, that when he uses the word "agape," as he does here, he's not talking about emotions. So, you can breathe a sigh of relief. It is possible not to have a mental antagonism or ill will toward somebody that you do not have an emotional warmth toward. When you say that you have "agape" love, it means that you have no jealousy; you have no envy; and, you have no bitterness toward the person. You have no hatred; there's no vindictiveness; and, you do not have an unforgiving spirit. If you have any of those things, then you do not have "agape" love functioning toward that individual.

The mental attitude of esteem toward one another is what Paul is talking about – so that we wish the person well. We are concerned for his well-being, and we are willing to sacrifice in his behalf. That's what "agape" love is. *We have an esteem toward him. We value him. We wish him well. We're concerned for his well-being. We will be sacrificial in his behalf.* That is mental attitude love.

Now I should tell you right off the bat that you can't produce this on your own. This is a product of the Spirit of God in us. This is part of what the Bible calls the fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5:22. This is the kind of love that enables you to do right toward people. We have a society which talks a great deal about love and compassion, and tries to express what they believe is being loving and compassionate toward people. But that is not real love. It is not the kind of love that God produces, and therefore, it is not the real thing. The love they're talking about is love which comes up out of their sin nature. We'll learn more about that quality in the next session. But I mention this so that you don't attach this to all the frivolous talk about love that goes on in society today.

The apostle Paul is laying upon us as Christians a very serious, demanding quality, and he puts it right up front when he starts talking about what is fitting Christian conduct. Love is number one, even as 1 Corinthians 13 says: Faith is there; hope is there; but, the greatest of all, Paul says, is love." And again, what kind? He uses the word "agape" there – mental attitude love.

So, you may not have an emotional feeling of affection for a person, but you may, without problem, have a mental attitude love which is exercised with justice toward that person. This is a love that only God can produce in us. It is the product of being in temporal fellowship. It is the product of having the Word of God stored in your human spirit.

In John 3:16, we read, "God so loved the world." It is this "agape" word that is used. It described God's mental attitude which provided salvation for undeserving, rebellious sinners. God did not have ill will toward us as sinners. His justice was directed toward our sin and our evil. But until that problem of our son was taken care of, He could not detach His justice from us as well. But it's clear that God does not hate sinners. He has a mental attitude goodwill toward them.

This is the word which is used in Galatians 2:20, when it describes the attitude of Jesus Christ when He died on the cross for the sins of the world. It was because he had a mental attitude of goodwill, and was ready to sacrifice on the behalf of us.

In John 13:1-5, you have described the incident of Jesus washing the feet of the disciples. And in it, he says that: "You have seen Me perform this act of love. So, are you to perform acts of love." And He uses the word "agapao" to indicate that this is an expression of mental attitude love.

**Love toward God**

So, God calls upon us, first of all, to have "agape" love. Specifically, the Bible indicates that God says that this love is to be directed in three directions (or three categories of persons). First of all, Matthew 22:37 tells us that this kind of mental attitude love is to be directed toward God on our part. Matthew 22:37: "Jesus said unto him 'You shall love ('agapao' – the verb form) the Lord your God with all your heart; with all your soul; and, with all your mind.'"

**Love toward our Spouse**

Furthermore, this kind of love, the Bible tells us, is to be directed toward the person that you're married to. Ephesians 5:25 says, "Husbands, love your wives even as Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself for it." Here it uses the word "agapao:" "Husbands, love your wives." And just to be doctrinally precise, the Bible does not tell a wife to love her husband. It tells the wife to respect and esteem her husband. And his love produces love in her. He is to see that he has no mental attitudes of bitterness toward her.

**Love toward our Friends**

Thirdly, this kind of love, the Bible says, is directed not only toward God and toward our spouse, but also toward our friends. John 15:13 puts it this way: "Greater love has no man than this: that a man lay down his life for his friends. There we have the word "agapao" again toward friends.

In Romans 12:9, the love that we are calling upon to be exercised here is love toward all mankind. In verse 10, he talks about love specifically toward Christians. So, you should observe that there's a difference right off the bat. Paul is saying that your attitude toward all humanity is to be an attitude of love – toward Christians, very specifically, an attitude of love.

The Christian is not to have a mental attitude love for certain things, one of which is the world's system of Satan. 1 John 2:15 puts it this way: Jesus says, "Love not the world; neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." John is very explicit in saying, "Love not the world." And he uses the word "agapao." What is he saying? He says that the world has a system that is based upon lust for your eyes, and lust for your flesh. It is based upon pride of life, and the pursuit of all of the things that satisfy those lusts of the sin nature. And you can have a mental attitude goodwill toward those things. And John says, "That's wrong." God the Holy Spirit says, "You should not be kindly disposed toward Satan's evil system."

However, most Christians just walk through the world, and they're just friendly with the world. They're on good terms with the world, even though James says, "If you're on good, friendly terms with the world, you're an enemy of God." The world system and God's system are opposed one to another.

**Emotional "Philos" Love"**

However, we come to this other Greek word "phileo." We will understand "agapao" better if we understand this emotional love. This is an emotion of warm feeling and attraction.

**The Greek Word "Eros"**

It is, however, not to be confused with another Greek word which is not used in the Greek Bible. That is the Greek word "eros," which refers to sensual attraction – erotic love. The Bible does not use this word. And when we say an emotional, warm feeling of attraction, we are not talking about sensual attraction.

"Philos" love comes from an emotion in the soul which is governed by doctrine. As an emotion, therefore, God never commands this kind of love. God commands you to have "agape" love, but the Word of God never commands you to have "phileo" type of love ("philos" love).

Notice in John 13:34. Jesus says, "A new commandment I give you: that you love one another as I have loved you; that you also love one another." Here's a variation of what Paul is saying in Romans 9. But on the basis of what I have told you so far, you should be able to tell me what kind of love ("agape" or "philos" love) is here in verse 34. If you cannot command an emotion, which you cannot, it's obvious that this has to be a mental attitude, because God can tell you to do that. That we can command. That we can have. So, here it is very clear that he says that mental attitude love is what we are to have toward one another.

Matthew 5:44 however, tells us to have an attitude toward our enemies: "But I say unto you to love your enemies: bless them that curse you; do good to them that hate you; and, pray for them who despitefully use and persecute you." Again, you can suspect that that's not "philos" there. He's not telling you to have an emotional attachment toward your enemy, because you can't command that. But he is again using the "agape" very properly, because we can have that kind of mental attitude, even toward an enemy on the field of battle, whose life you are about to extinguish in war. You can still have a lack of personal bitterness. You could, as a matter of fact, have a desire for his well-being. You hope he can become a prisoner. You hope he can escape all those consequences. Yet, a soldier, doing his duty in a time of war, is not in a condition of hatred toward that enemy. He is, in fact, the Bible says, to have this "agape" love. The Bible is very careful not to use the word for emotional love.

Turn to John 11:3, and you can see how both of these words are interestingly illustrated: "agape" love and "philos" love. In the incident about Lazarus and Jesus, Lazarus has died. Verse 3 says. "Therefore, his sisters said unto Him, saying, 'Lord, behold, he whom You love is sick." And here, God the Holy Spirit uses the word "phileo" – the emotional love. So, Jesus had a strong emotional attachment for Lazarus. And the sisters sent to Jesus, and said, "Our brother, for whom You have a warm emotional affection, is sick.

Verse 5 says, "Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus." He's talking about these two women. Interestingly enough, God the Holy Spirit does not use emotional attraction. Now He uses the word "agapao." It would not be fitting to say that Jesus had a strong emotional attachment for these women. But it was fitting to say that He had a mental attitude goodwill; that is, a quality of friendship for them. And the word here is used to describe, in verse 6-7, what the death of Lazarus was to achieve: "When He had heard, therefore, that he was sick, Jesus abode two days still in the same place where He was. Then after that, He said to His disciples, 'Let us go into Judah again.'"

Now when you read this, you might say that Jesus didn't have very much goodwill or concern or sacrifice for those people. He knew the man was dying, but he delayed two days more deliberately. So, the word is carefully used to say, "He had a deep "philos" attachment for Lazarus." Make no mistake about that. And He had great mental esteem for the sisters. There was love of both kinds for this family. Jesus was not indifferent to them. But, in fact, verse 4 tells us why He delayed; that is: "That the glory of God might be demonstrated, and by it, Jesus, the son of God, might be glorified by overcoming death in this man.

In verse 36, the crowd looks upon Jesus, who is weeping when he arrives, and finds Lazarus dead: "Then said the Jews, 'Behold how He loved him.'" What word? Emotional "phileo". Just as the sisters said: "The man that You are so deeply attached to emotionally is dying." The people around Him observed Jesus's tears, and recognized that it was the tears of a man who had an emotional attachment.

So, the mental attitude love of Romans 12:9 is a very specific kind of love that we are capable of producing through the Word of God and the fruit of the Spirit of God the Holy Spirit in the life of a Christian who is in temporal fellowship. God is love, and this quality is to be reflected in His children. Paul makes mental attitude love the primary factor in Christian living.

**Love without Hypocrisy**

So, we have one more thing. Paul says, "Love (have mental attitude esteem), and to do it without hypocrisy." The Greek word for "hypocrisy" is "anupokritos" – "without hypocrisy." This means literally "without wearing a mask." It means "Have a genuine love rather than to being two-faced toward people." This is love that is sincere toward people, or love without pretense.

You have the same idea expressed elsewhere in Scripture. For example, in 2 Corinthians 6:6, we have this quality of love: "By pureness; by knowledge; by longsuffering; by kindness; by the Holy Spirit; by love unfeigned" – by love which is unhypocritical. That is how you are to demonstrate your Christian commitment.

1 Peter 1:22 adds the same word: "Seeing that you have purified your souls, in obeying the truth, through the spirit unto unhypocritical love of the brethren." Do we have hypocritical love among the brethren? I'm afraid so. We have the smiling face with a dagger held in the hand behind the back. God demands love from Christians which is genuine, and which is not just pretense – that pretense of words that Christians like to throw around toward one another, and don't really mean it. They have mental attitude bitterness while expressing nice words with their lips.

**Truth**

1 John 3:18 puts it specifically this way: "My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue, but in deed, and in truth." You don't just love by what you say. You love by what you do, and you do it in truth. Love goes with truth.

There's a good proverb that also points out this quality of duplicity in the matter of Love. Proverbs 10:18 says, "He, that hides hatred has lying lips." This means, "I talk to you as one that I love, and I talk to you as one who is significant to me, but in my mind, I have bitterness against you. I don't want to treat you the way I think of you." This is a hypocritical love. It is forbidden in Scripture because it is a blow to the believer's personal integrity.

This is so keenly illustrated in what Jesus said to Judas when Judas came and kissed Him to identify Him in his betrayal in Luke 22:48. Obviously, when you kiss a person, you are telling the person that you do have an affection. You have a mental attitude love, or in some cases, different kinds of kissing, you have an emotional attachment. And in any case, a kiss conveys love of one kind or the other. So, when Judas kisses Jesus, we read, "Jesus said unto him, 'Judas, do you betray the Son of Man with a kiss?" How gross can you be? How low can you get? Here is one of the prime expressions of affection and of love. And you use it for treachery? Christians must not merely wear the mask of love. They must really be loving. The capacity for this kind of love is not your determination to do it. It is the product of doctrine in the human spirit, and the filling of the Holy Spirit because known sins are confessed, and you are in temporal fellowship. Then the fruit of the Spirit starts growing in your life.

John 14:15 says, "If you love Me, keep My commandments." Aha, there is some kind of a connection between "agapao" love and doctrine – the commandments of Scripture.

Notice John 14:21: "He that has My commandments and keeps them, he it is that loves Me. And he that loves Me shall be loved of My Father, and I will love him, and will manifest Myself to him." Now it's very clear from that verse that if I want to have "agape" love, I have to learn doctrine. I have to learn Scripture. I have to learn the commandments of God, or I can't keep them. If I learn the commandments of God, and keep them, then love will blossom in my soul. You know that this is something that you do not come by naturally. It's a love that God has to give us. And it is a byproduct of doctrine in the soul.

Notice John 14:23-24: "Jesus answered and said unto him, 'If a man loves Me, he will keep My words. And My Father will love Him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him. (We will be in temple fellowship with him). He that does not love Me does not keep My sayings, and the Word which he hears is not Mine but the Father's who sent Me."

**Spiritual Callouses**

So, the capacity for mental attitude love is a product of doctrine in the human spirit and the filling of the Holy Spirit. It is spiritual callouses on our soul that make us incapable of love of this kind toward mankind. A Christian can become so loaded down with these callouses from his negative volition that he simply cannot love anybody. And many Christians have this kind of problem. They simply have no mental attitude love. They do not have doctrine in their spirits. They do not have confession of their sins. They do not have the Spirit of God working in them. So, what can they do? They have to fake it. They have to put on. And a great deal that goes on in Christian communities is all fake love. It's sugary, syrupy sentimentality, but it is not the "agape" love that we have learned today, which is a mental attitude. Spiritual callouses on your soul (on your emotions) will hinder you from this kind of love. Now you're talking about loving the Lord, but you have no doctrine flowing through your mind to enable you to do so.

**The Church at Laodicea**

Jesus says, "You can't love Me if you don't know doctrine." So, think of all these ignorant Christians who are out there, and they are ignorant. They do not know the Word of God. They talk about praising the Lord. They talk about serving the Lord. They talk about loving the Lord, and they are not capable of doing any of that. That's why it is a sobering thing to realize that some of the largest religious institutions and churches are operating a system in which God has no part. And they don't really need Him. As long as they have the money, and they have the people, they can carry on without Him very well. The Bible calls that the Laodicean church, who thinks it has it made, but lacks the quality of love.

**The Church at Ephesus**

The Ephesians church, in the Ephesians letter – the first thing that Jesus said to them was, "I must tell you that you have been a noble church. You've been under suffering. You have served me well. But I have to tell you, I have this against you. Your mental attitude "agape" love is cooling off, and that is a very serious matter." And to the Ephesian church, Jesus said, "Stop it; turn it around; get straightened out; resolve the problems; get your sins confessed; get yourself in doctor; start functioning on the Word of God; and, let the Spirit of God blossom out that mental attitude. Do not let that die, or all will be lost.

**Satan**

Satan creates enormous pressures, therefore, to keep Christians from the instruction in the Word of God. You have only to look around this auditorium to see how successful Satan is from week-to-week in keeping Christians out of this place, because they think that they can make it on their own. And those are the people who very often have the greatest delusion that they have the quality of love about them. So, when they don't, they have to fake it. And that's what we see: faking; eyes on self; producing religion; and, calling it love.

**The Exodus Jews**

Back in the Old Testament, the Exodus Jews faced this problem. God was very gracious to give them information. They had the Word of God. But they had no love for God, and they had no mental attitude "agape" love. And the result was that they had no confidence in His guidance. That's a serious problem. If you do not have mental attitude love, then you don't have confidence in the guidance of the Spirit of God. And the result was, for the Exodus generation, that when they came to the Promised Land, they looked at the inhabitants, and they melted in tears. They said, "We can't go in. We can't whip those people."

**God has not Given us Fear**

It's interesting that 2 Timothy 1:7 says, "For God has not given us the spirit of fear." We Christians have not been given the spirit of fear. What have we been given? We've been given power, and love, and a sound mind. Isn't that interesting? God has not given us fear, but instead He has given us spiritual power. He has given us mental attitude love. Therefore, He has given us mental stability. And how has He given us that? In the same way that Paul, says at the beginning of Romans 12: "It is the Word of God that has renewed your mind." It is doctrine that removes fear. It is a doctrine that flushes fear out of you so that you have confidence in life; so that you have mental stability in life; and, so that you have a capacity of genuine mental attitude love.

**Psychiatry and Psychology**

Do you see why we have great reservations toward the psychologists and psychiatrists? They are trying to deal with genuine problems of the soul. The problems of the soul can only be solved by spiritual principles. You do not need anything from any psychiatrist. You do not need anything from any psychologist. They cannot offer you anything. You must understand that these are not scientific principles. These are things that he takes out of the air and says, "I think that this is how this works. I think that this is how human beings work," So, now there are 250 different viewpoints and treatments in the psychotherapy community. And I'm sorry to hear (and I hope it's not as bad as I think) that my old alma mater, Dallas Seminary, has now opened a department of biblical counseling. That is because the words "biblical counseling" usually means that into the Bible is being brought in what the psychologist has discovered of truth. And you must remember that he is getting his truth from Freud, and Jung, and, Masilo, and Rogers, who are the worst anti-God, anti-biblical creatures that ever breathed on the face of the earth. And they are going to give us insight on how we can function and solve our problems, and our tensions, and our depressions as human beings? Don't you believe it. Those are witch doctors out there.

I stress this because the one thing that all of them strike against is that it is not important to specialize in knowing doctrine. But the Word of God says, "This is where it comes from." Once you have mental attitude love, that mental attitude love will grow out into "philos" love toward certain people. You'll have deep emotional attachments. In the next session, we shall look at a grand, great emotional attachment between two virile, powerful, military leaders of Scripture that had a deep affinity for one another, because their affinity was a mental attitude love, but which also expressed itself in warmth emotionally toward each other. The Word of God tells you that you do not have fear. You do not have these mental disruptions. You have a sense of purpose and power. How? Because you know what the Creator is doing, and you know how to function. Apart from the Word of God, you have nothing.

That's why we keep hammering away at the fact of: what are we doing when we stand up in this pulpit in our services? You know what we're doing? We are giving you counseling. And the people who pay attention, and the people who remember – they are people whose lives blossom out. When I get letters from these tapers, these papers have nothing but the tape. They have no group around them. They have no distractions. They sit there by themselves. And once they get a taste for the Word of God, they listen, and they listen, and they listen. Then they write me letters, and they're using all of our terminology, and they're reminding me of all the things I said, and all the things that I have expressed.

One lady came by one time. Her husband and she were traveling. And they said, "We heard on one of your tapes that the sign painter in your church said that you looked like Lucky Luciano when you came into the shop one day, and we wanted to come and see if you really did. They come for everything. And what they're coming for is because they want to see: where is this counseling coming from that we're getting? It's the Word of God, and here are the people who learn it from this simple place. Yes, we are counseling every time you walk in here. You get an hour of free counseling. Please thank me for it when you leave, and show your appreciation at the offering box, because that's where it will count.

So, a lack of mental attitude love can only lead to one other thing, and that is self-love. And what are we being told today? All the psychology boys say, "Hey, we finally figured it out in the last half-dozen years. The problem is that you people don't love yourself. You have to love yourselves. And we want you to love yourselves more. Stand in front of the mirror and love yourself." What was that poor guy dying from AIDS saying on the Donahue show? That's what he was saying. He was being told, "You've got to have big love for yourself. I'm okay."

There was a book written: I'm OK, You're OK. I heard of a Christian psychologist that I have to tell you about. I hate to use such a term. I think they call it an oxymoron in English. It's mutually exclusive terms. It seems like saying, "a young old man." But anyhow, this Christian psychologist knew enough to say that that book I'm OK, You're OK is wrong. I'm not OK; and, you're not OK. And he said, "I'd like to write a book entitled I'm a Mess, You're a Mess," which would be exactly on target. That would be biblical. But this poor guy on the Donahue show is saying, "I'm OK," but you're not OK. He said, "I should love myself." Do not love yourself. Love what God can make of you, because what you are is not very good, and it's not lovable, and it's not desirable.

But there is a capacity for mental attitude love. These Jews of the Exodus generation so hardened their hearts that they did not have mental attitude love toward God. When they faced those inhabitants in that land, they had fear. Had they had mental attitude love, the way Joshua and Caleb did, they would not have had fear. They would have charged right in there, and taken the land as they were supposed to. Instead, they were disciplined with dying in the desert. And the next generation came along, and they were positive to the Word of God. They had mental attitude love toward God. So, when God told them to go in, they went in.

This is very important – this simple little statement of the apostle Paul in Romans 12:9: "Let love (mental attitude love) be without hypocrisy." Don't be putting on. Don't be pretending you have it when you don't have it. Don't be trying to treat and deal with Christians on a love that comes from your sin nature. That's what most people in our society do. That's all the unsaved people can do. But have a love that God can produce in you. That is the love that will carry you through right into heaven itself.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1977

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[**Back to the Bible Questions index**](http://www.christiandataresources.com/allarticles.htm)