



BOLD TO SPEAK THE MYSTERY

Volume 1 Issue 3

April 2019

THE CHRISTIAN LIFE OF:

• FAITH

• LOVE

• HOPE

In
CHRIST

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Rightly Dividing: A Test Case—The Sermon on the Mount

Pastor Peter recently finished his series on “Rightly Dividing the Word of God.” He took the 5 basic questions we need to ask about every passage of Scripture if we are to be “approved” workmen who need not be ashamed (2 Tim. 2:15) and applied them to Mat. 5-7, especially to The Beatitudes

and what is commonly called the Lord’s Prayer.

THE BACKGROUND

But first, let’s get some background information. We are told in Mat. 4 that Jesus had begun to preach the Gospel or Good News of Israel’s Kingdom of Heaven—

(Continued on page 6)

1. WHO IS SPEAKING, TO WHOM ARE THEY SPEAKING AND FOR WHAT PURPOSE?
2. IS IT A PART OF PROPHECY OR MYSTERY?
3. ARE THE BLESSINGS CONDITIONAL OR UNCONDITIONAL?
4. IS IT PART OF GOD’S EARTHLY PROGRAM OR HIS HEAVENLY PROGRAM?
5. IS THERE A CLEAR DISTINCTION BETWEEN JEWS AND GENTILES?

The Christian Virtues: (AGAPE) LOVE

In our age, “love” has become meaningless word, worth less than a rusty old one-cent piece. What is true love? Divine Love? Agape Love? I heard a male celebrity say that he considered it true love when he had sexual relations with the woman he was dating. This is most certainly not Agape Love!

In a restaurant I heard a young

lady explain to her Mother that she knew she was in love because her boyfriend made her feel good. This also is not true love, Agape Love.

A co-worker said she was in love and marrying her fiancé because he met her needs and was good for her. Unfortunately, they

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The Christian Virtues: **AGAPE LOVE**

were separated and divorced not long after that. No, this is not Agape Love either.

Human wisdom is light years away from an understanding of true, Agape Love. For that, we must go to the Bible, especially the Letters of the Apostle Paul, where God through Paul took the ordinary Greek word for love—agape—and transformed it into meaning the transcending love that comes from God Himself. This Love is not a feeling or a selfish desire to gain something from a relationship for oneself. That's lust not love.

Some come closer to its true meaning when they define it as a selfless or self-sacrificial love, a love that voluntarily serves others even if it means suffering, like a Mother who runs into a burning house to save her baby, or someone who jumps into the water to save a drowning friend. But even this is not enough. Agape Love means even more than this!

AGAPE LOVE DOES NOT CONSIDER HER OWN THINGS

Charity (Agape Love) suffers long and is kind; Charity envies not; Charity vaunts not itself, is not puffed up ... SEEKETH NOT HER OWN...(1 Cor. 13:4-5)

Rather:

AGAPE LOVE CONSIDERS THE THINGS OF OTHERS

... ye be likeminded, having the same Love ... Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind LET EACH ESTEEM THE OTHER BETTER THAN THEMSELVES. LOOK NOT EVERY MAN ON HIS OWN THINGS, BUT EVERY MAN ON THE THINGS OF OTHERS. (Phil. 2:2-4; 1 Cor. 10:24,33)

Agape Love never wants to “get.” It always wants to “give,” and it can only do that when it is motivated by the Love of God at the Cross of Christ.

AGAPE LOVE IS MOTIVATED BY CHRIST'S LOVE DISPLAYED AT THE CROSS FOR US

For the Love of Christ constrains us ... that He died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them and rose again. (2Cor. 5:14-15)

For this reason, Agape Love can only be practiced by believers. Unbelievers, by very definition, are those who have rejected Christ and His Love for them at the Cross. The Apostle John tells us that **God so loved the world that He GAVE His Only Son** (Jn. 3:16), and the Apostle Paul explains that He GAVE His Son to go to the Cross where He died for sinners, for you and for me, taking the debt and penalty of sin onto Himself. And having taken our death and sin onto Himself, He Rose again and is now offering His life, eternal life, to those who believe.

Only believers have received the Love of God displayed at the Cross of Christ. Only believers can be constrained/motivated by Jesus Christ's sacrificial love on the their behalf. And only believers are empowered by the indwelling Holy Spirit to extend it to others.

THE Christian Virtues: AGAPE LOVE

But what exactly does Agape Love do?

AGAPE LOVE ALWAYS EDIFIES/BUILDS UP

Knowledge puffeth up but **Charity (Agape Love) edifieth.** (1 Cor. 8:1)

And what does Agape Love edify with?

AGAPE LOVE EDIFIES WITH MYSTERY TRUTH

Now to Him that is of power **to establish you according to my (Paul's) Gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ according to the revelation of the Mystery**, which was kept secret since the world began...(Rom. 16:25)

Paul's Epistles reveal God's Mystery Truth, which is His Truth for today. Freely sharing this Truth with others is the most important thing, the most loving thing believers can do today because it is the only thing that can save the lost and build-up and establish the saved.

With all of this in mind, a full definition of Agape Love goes something like this:

Agape Love is always the believer's thankful response to God for the Love He displayed at the Cross of Christ, which motivates the believer to want to serve God by serving others for the sole purpose of building them up and establishing them in God's Truth for today.

This is what God the Son, the Lord Jesus Christ did:

Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. (Phil. 2:5-8)

Even though the Lord Jesus Christ is absolute God, He didn't think of His Own things but of the things of others, our things. He didn't use His divine prerogatives, advantages and attributes for His Own advancement but for the advancement of others. He used them on behalf of sinners, the ungodly, His enemies, in other words—US!

This is what the Apostle Paul did as well:

For yourselves, brethren, know our entrance in unto you ... But even after that we had suffered before, and were shamefully entreated ... we were bold in our God to speak unto you the Gospel of God with much contention. (1 Thess. 2:1-2)

Paul had benefits as God's apostle and riches as Christ's servant, but he didn't use them for his own benefit but for the benefit of others. He used them to impart God's Gospel, God's Good News, to an undeserving world so that sinners might be saved and those who have been saved might be built-up in His Truth.

This is Love, AGAPE LOVE!

If you would like to hear more about Agape Love, click below:

[AGAPE LOVE Pt. 1](#)

[AGAPE LOVE Pt. 2](#)

CHRISTIAN LIVING: HEALTHY DEPENDENCY

THE PROBLEM

The problem with the world is that fallen humanity has rejected God and His Glory. **“God made Himself known to them but when they knew God, they glorified Him not as God neither were they thankful ... professing themselves to be wise, they became fools; and changed the Glory of the Incorruptible God into an image like to corruptible man ... and worshipped and served creation rather than the Creator. (Rom. 1:18-25).** What a passage. Let’s look at some of its truths:

God created humanity to be in a dependent relationship with Him as its Creator, its Benevolent Master. Instead, we rejected God and His Glory, declared our independence from Him, and thought ourselves wise in doing so. But all it really showed was our utter foolishness. We thought that in declaring our independence from God we would actually become *independent*—our own little “g” gods, our own bosses. When, in fact, all that really happened was that we were handed over to another Master, Master Sin who brings in death, and now we are born into the world dependent on him and his cronies, **worshipping and serving the creation rather than the Creator.**

Fallen humanity exchanged God’s Incorruptible/Immortal Glory, for dying, decaying creation, thereby rejecting the only thing that could meet its most basic needs, leaving us with an empty, God-shaped void that can only be filled by an infinite and eternal God. Only God can supply INFINITE Love, COMPLETE Forgiveness, PERFECT Peace, TOTAL Redemption, UNCONDITIONAL Acceptance and ETERNAL Security. Only God can meet our most basic needs.

Fallen humanity threw this all away in unbelief, and having done that, we now de-

pend on dying creation to meet these basic needs through unhealthy dependencies. Instead of relying on God, we rely on self, others and things, which is a recipe for disaster because no one—not self, not others—and no amount of things are big enough to meet our most basic needs. What results is a broken world made up of broken communities, broken homes, broken lives, broken relationships and broken hearts.

The old saying tells us that “money can’t buy happiness.” And it is even more certain that self, others and things can’t provide Infinite Love, Complete Forgiveness, Perfect Peace, Unconditional Acceptance, Total Redemption and Eternal Security! When we call on them to do what only God can do, it is like demanding a million dollars from someone who doesn’t have a cent to their name. We can ask all we want, but it just isn’t going to happen. There will never be enough. And the more we ask and the harder we try to get it, the more frustrated and despairing we become.

The problem is pervasive, affecting every relationship we have. When parents rely on their children to fill their most basic needs, it puts a strain on that relationship that it wasn’t designed to bear, resulting in disappointment. When children rely on their parents for these most basic needs and find that their parents are woefully inadequate, the resulting hurt sometimes lasts a lifetime. When husbands and wives rely on their spouses to meet these needs, they soon discover that their spouse can’t; they just aren’t big enough, resulting in discontent and many times divorce. When people rely on their friends to meet these needs, they stretch the bond beyond the breaking point because their friends can’t do it either.

When we rely on self, others and things to do what only God can do, we place an unbear-

CHRISTIAN LIVING: HEALTHY DEPENDENCY

able burden on our relationships that wreaks havoc on them. God has a word for this, and it is IDOLATRY!

THE ANSWER: GOD AND HIS GLORY

Fallen humanity got into this lost, sinful predicament because it rejected God and His Glory in “unbelief.” Therefore, the only answer God provides to be saved from this predicament is “FAITH,” believing God, which is the very opposite of idolatry. Through Faith, God turns us away from the idolatry of self, others and things and returns us to our creaturely dependence on Him. **“You are saved by grace through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God”** (Eph. 2:8). **“What must you do to be saved? Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall be saved”** (Acts 16:31).

Dear Reader, if you are a believer, know with certainty that through Christ and His Cross you have God’s:

INFINITE LOVE

For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son that whosoever believes in Him shall not perish (Jn. 3:16).

EVERLASTING LIFE

For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ your Lord. (Rom. 6:23)

COMPLETE FORGIVENESS

God has forgiven your sins, past, present and future: **In whom we have the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of His Grace**, which are infinite! (Eph. 1:7)

PERFECT PEACE

God reconciled you to Himself. **You now have peace with God.** (Rom. 5: 1, 10-11)

UNCONDITIONAL ACCEPTANCE

You have access to God (Rom. 5:2) and are accepted in the Beloved (Eph. 1:6).

TOTAL REDEMPTION

You are justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus (Rom. 3:24).

ETERNAL SECURITY

Nothing can separate you from Christ and His Love. Nothing in the past, present or future. Nothing in the physical realm. Nothing in the spiritual realm. Nothing! Not even God Himself can separate you from Christ and His Love! (Rom. 8:31-39).

The moment you believed the Gospel of God’s Grace, His provision for you in the Death and Resurrection of Christ, all your needs were instantly and eternally met by God. Now, for the first time, you can truly relate to others, not to gain something for yourself but to freely give the things of God to others, pointing them to the One who can meet their needs as well.

Once we receive the never ending blessings of God we are set free to extend blessings to others, and we can do so fearlessly with wild abandon. Since these blessings come from an infinite and eternal source, we need not fear that they might diminish or be depleted. Believing parents, children, spouses, friends no longer need to use each other to get things for themselves, but can now lavishly serve God by serving others for the sole purpose of building them up in His truth for today.

That’s not just life. It’s ETERNAL LIFE!
That’s not just love. It’s AGAPE LOVE!

To learn more, click below:
[THE MOST IMPORTANT LIFE IN THE WORLD](#)

A Test Case In Rightly Dividing: The Sermon on the Mount

the long-prophesied Kingdom that would bring God's rule over the earth through the Nation Israel—was finally at hand (Mat. 4:17). This is not a Kingdom “in” heaven but a Kingdom “of” or from Heaven that is established on the earth (Mat. 5:5).

The promise of this Kingdom was woven into Israel's history, going all the way back to the promise God made to Abraham: **“And I (God) will make thee (Abraham) exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee and kings shall come out of thee,”** a promise that included not only the Land of Canaan (Gen. 17:6-8) but the whole earth as well (Gen. 18:18). Later, Moses described it this way: **“And all the people of the earth shall see that thou (Israel) are called by the name of the LORD”** (Deut. 28:10) because God will make Israel **“the head of the nations rather than the tail”** (Deut. 28:13).

God's promises to David go even further: **“Thine (David's) house and thy kingdom shall be stablished forever before thee: thy throne shall be stablished forever”** (2 Sam. 7:16). God promised that He Himself would establish this Kingdom by “enfleshing” Himself into the line of David, so that He could be Israel's Redeemer, Deliverer, Avenger, Blessor and be her King in that Kingdom.

The Gospel of Matthew announced the Good News that this was at that time being fulfilled. God the Son, in the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ, had entered into the line of David through the Incarnation, and now that He had arrived, the Kingdom could not be far away. In fact, it was at hand, so close they could almost touch it. With this background in mind, let's follow Jesus up the Mount with His disciples where He preaches a Sermon that will prepare them for what will happen between that day and their fu-

ture entrance into the Kingdom.

But let's pause for a moment and “rightly divide” the Scriptures by answering some of the questions Peter lists:

1. Who is speaking?

Jesus in His earthly ministry.

2. Who is He speaking to?

His Jewish disciples, some of whom would become members of the believing remnant, the “little flock.”

3. What is He speaking about?

He was teaching them about what lays ahead for them—persecution, the Great Tribulation, the Return of Christ, and, finally, entrance in the Kingdom.

THE BEATITUDES (Mat. 5:1-9)

No doubt many of Jesus' followers wondered about who will enter the Kingdom, and how they will get in. Before Jesus arrived, all they knew was the “righteousness” of the Pharisees, which was no “righteousness” at all. Jesus told His disciples that their “righteousness” must exceed that of the Pharisees (Mat. 5:20). The Kingdom belongs to the poor in spirit. There, the mourners will be comforted and the meek will inherit the earth. The Kingdom will be the place of filling for those who seek after righteousness. There, the merciful will receive mercy, those of pure hearts will see God and the peacemakers will be called His children. In short, the Kingdom is for God's friends, beginning with the believing remnant of Israel, expanding to all Israel and then covering the whole earth.

4. Are these blessings conditional or unconditional?

They are conditional blessings.

Is this Prophecy or Mystery?

Prophecy, it refers to what was spoken by the prophets throughout Israel's history.

A Test Case In Rightly Dividing: The Sermon on the Mount

This is very different from the way God deals with us today. Today, God *refuses* to bless on the basis of who we are or what we do (Rom. 4:4-5). Rather, today He blesses on the basis of who His Son is, and what He has done for us. Through the Apostle Paul, God announces that “**all are under sin,**” “**there is none righteous,**” “**there is none that seeks after God**” and “**there is none that does good: NO NOT ONE**” (Rom. 3:9-12). Today God isn’t blessing His friends! He’s blessing ungodly sinners, His ENEMIES! (Rom. 5:6-10).

God is doing far more today than He ever did before. On the Mount, Jesus said that those who “**seek after righteousness,**” will be filled. Why would we go back to that provision when today the Risen Lord tells us through the Apostle Paul that we, *who did NOT seek after righteousness,* have been “**made the righteousness of God in Christ**” by faith! (Rom. 9:30; 2 Cor. 5:20). This provision is far better.

THE LORD’S PRAYER (Mat. 6:9-15)

Millions upon millions of professing Christians recite this prayer every day in direct violations of Jesus’ instructions about prayer in Mat. 6:7 where He said: Do not pray using vain repetitions! Setting this observation aside, let’s ask an even more basic question: Is this prayer appropriate for believers today?

Jesus instructed His disciples to pray “**Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven.**” This prayer request will be especially relevant to the believing remnant because they will be going through a time of Great Tribulation, during which the powers of darkness will take the world as far away from God’s Will as possible in an attempt to destroy His people. At that time and in obedience to God, the believing remnant will refuse the mark of the Beast and, therefore, will be unable to buy and sell for food or other provisions and will for safety’s sake flee to the mountains (Rev. 13:15-17). It is for just such a situation that

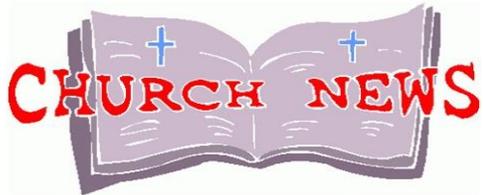
Jesus instructs them to pray for God to miraculously “**give us this day our daily bread,**” and in Mat. 6:30 He adds their clothing.

Having provided for their physical needs, Jesus next provides for their spiritual needs. They were to pray that God would “**forgive our debts as we forgive our debtors**” (Mat. 6:12), which He explains further in Mat. 6:14-15: **For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: but if you forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.**

This too is very different from the way God deals with us today, as members of the Body of Christ. We do not pray for forgiveness of sins. Rather we pray thanking God for the forgiveness He has already given us, not in accord with our forgiving others, but in accord with the infinite RICHES OF HIS GRACE! (Eph. 1:7). Christ instructs us to give forgiveness to others not to get God’s forgiveness but because God has already given us His forgiveness! (Eph. 4:32).

Everything in Matthew 5-6 has to do with the fulfillment of Israel’s Prophetic Program, which will culminate in her long-promised Kingdom being established on the earth. Everything in Paul’s Epistles, however, has to do with the fulfillment of the Body of Christ’s Mystery Program, which will culminate in our being seated together with Christ in the Heavenlies. When we return to Israel’s Prophetic Program for our provisions, we despise God’s Riches now being dispensed through the Apostleship of Paul! (Rom. 2:4; 11:12)

To Hear More, click here:
[Keys To Rightly Dividing](#)



There will be a one day Ladies Retreat on Saturday, April 6.

There will be singing and a Bible study about the women in the Bible

If you would like more information, contact Debbie Gollwitzer.

The new Church Directory is available!

We preach *Christ Crucified*¹; we worship *Jesus Christ According to the Revelation of the Mystery*²; and we study the Bible using the principle of *Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth*³.

1. 1 Cor. 1:23 2. Rom. 16:25 3. 2 Tim. 2:15

We meet every Sunday morning at the *Rolling Meadows Community Center* located at 3705 Pheasant Dr.

www.gbcrm.org

Fellowship and Refreshments: 9:30 - 9:55

Morning Service: 9:55 - 11:15

We have Sunday School for all children

Please visit our website for Directions: [Directions](#)

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