

The New Testament has over 200 references to “agape” love. *Agape*, and its verb form *agapao*, is one of the several Greek words for love. The Bible also mentions *phileo*, or brotherly love, and has mentions to *eros*, erotic love. The Greeks also spoke of *storge*, which is a love between family members. Only “agape” is used in reference to God-like love. In Colossians 3:14, Paul told the Colossians that God-like love is the grace that binds all other graces together and brings unity.

**Key thought:** When you love like God loves, you will display the right attitude toward others and unify believers.

## LOVE MUST BE A PRIORITY IN YOUR LIFE!

1 Corinthians 16:14

Above all (ἐπὶ πάντων). According to the metaphor of the garment. *Over all*, like an upper garment.

## GOD’S LOVE IS THE EXAMPLE TO FOLLOW - AGAPE

Ephesians 2:4-5; Romans 5:8; 1 John 3:1; John 13:34; Matthew 5:44

“Agape love is selfless love...the love God wants us to have isn’t just an emotion but a conscious act of the will – a deliberate decision on our part to put others ahead of ourselves. This is the kind of love God has for us.” *Billy Graham*

## WHEN YOU LOVE LIKE GOD, IT EMPOWERS YOU TO DISPLAY THE RIGHT ATTITUDE TOWARD OTHERS

1 Corinthians 13; 1 John 3:18

This love, Paul says, is the “bond of perfectness.” Lightfoot defines: “the bond of perfection, i.e., the power which unites and holds together all those graces and virtues which together make up perfection.”

“The love that touches Christ proves itself in the reality of our everyday behavior in the workplace, in relationships, and in the handling of our possessions.” *Joseph Stowell*

## WHEN YOU LOVE, YOU BUILD AND STRENGTHEN UNITY AMONG BELIEVERS

John 13:34-35; 1 Peter 4:8; 1 John 4:8; 1 Thessalonians 4:9

“Love is the beauty of the believer, dispelling the ugly sins of the flesh that destroy unity.” *J. MacArthur*