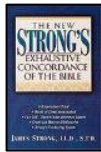




## How is Christian Love Different?

1 John 3:14: (NASB) We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love abides in death.

Love is a big deal. Whether it is the love of a family member or friend, the love of a hobby or team, the love of a favorite place or food, the love of certain music or colors, the love of art or science, love truly encapsulates the most vital portions of the best parts of our lives. As a Christian, we often talk about a higher love - what we call Christian love. Well, what is Christian love? Is it different? Is it higher? Can it change the world around us? Stay with us as we dig into the very fabric of what we as Christians are called to stand for!



### What is the highest form of love?

**Love:** Strongs #25 agapao (ag-ap-ah'-o); to love (in a social or moral sense):

**Love:** Strongs #26 agape (ag-ah'-pay); love, i.e. affection or benevolence

 **Agape - Defined, MenOfTheInfinite, [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com)**

- Agape is different because it is not directed towards any particular thing. It is not experienced as joy as all other loves are, because it comes out of joy... Agape is really an understanding of all things and is hence identical to wisdom and compassion. It is not a desire or a need or a feeling towards one particular thing or concept. It is equal towards literally all things. It does not perceive more beauty in one place than any other.*

So far we seem to be taking a very deep philosophical view of love - not at all what you might expect! It almost sounds like this "love" that we are describing is in some ways distant and unattached. So, can we say that there is any emotion involved in its expression?

John 15:11-17: (NKJV) <sup>11</sup>These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full. <sup>12</sup>This is my commandment, that you **love <25>** one another as I have **loved <25>** you. <sup>13</sup>Greater **love <26>** has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends. <sup>14</sup>You are my friends if you do whatever I command you.

So, here is the example - love as Jesus loves us - and how does he do that? For starters, he died for us!

<sup>15</sup>No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I heard from my Father I have made known to you. <sup>16</sup>You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in my name He may give you. <sup>17</sup>These things I command you, that you **love <25>** one another.



### Observations:

- Love for one another is commanded by Jesus.
- Jesus is THE model of how to express this love.
- We become Jesus' friends when we fulfill this command - this shows no partiality.
- We were chosen to walk this road.



- We are given a connection to the Father if we fulfill Jesus' command to love.

Showing love is like breathing, John Piper, [desiringGod.org](http://desiringGod.org)

- If you were loved by God this way, you "ought" to love this way. He means you ought to do this like a fish "ought" to swim in water. You ought to do this the way birds "ought" to fly in the air. You ought to do this the way living beings should breathe, the way peaches are to be sweet, the way lemons are to be sour, the way hyenas ought to laugh!

This should come out of the very core of your being. It is not something that is put on, but it has to come from the inside out. That is a task because if you don't know what it is, how can you express it the way Jesus did? Jesus expects us to have this love.

Romans 12:10: (NKJV) Be **kindly affectionate <5387>** to one another with **brotherly love <5360>**, in honor giving preference to one another;

Is this text talking about the same thing or something different?

If Christian love is love's highest form, what is love's most basic love?

**First Level:** #5362 philandros, #5387 philostorgos, #5388 philoteknos: The affection between spouses, parents to children and children to parents. Though these expressions are more intimate than the second, they are based on that same fraternal approach. This level is the most basic and instinctive.



Titus 2:3-5: (NKJV) <sup>3</sup>the older women likewise, that they be reverent in behavior, not slanderers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things—<sup>4</sup>that they admonish the young women to **love <5362>** their husbands, to **love <5388>** their children, <sup>5</sup>to be discreet, chaste, homemakers, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be blasphemed."

Romans 12:10: (NKJV) "Be **kindly affectionate <5387>** to one another with **brotherly love <5360>**, in honor giving preference to one another;"

You should be loving fellow Christians as you love your own natural relatives. There is a natural basis for a connection already in existence.

So, is this a *bad* thing? Of course not, it's sacred! This was built into our fabric when we were created.

Matthew 19:3-6: (NASB) <sup>3</sup>Some Pharisees came to Jesus, testing him and asking, Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any reason at all? <sup>4</sup>And he answered and said, Have you not read that He who created them from the beginning made them male and female, <sup>5</sup>and said, For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh? <sup>6</sup>So they are no longer two, but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate.

This most basic love - that love between spouses and families - is sacred in the eyes of God - we were made as humans to exemplify this love! It should maintain its sacredness throughout our whole lives. We can use this type of love as a stepping stone to get to the Agape love for which we are striving.



The next clip describes a fatal error to this sacred binding power of love:

**Narcissism defined, *BeyondToday.TV***

- *In ancient Greek mythology, there is a tale of a handsome young man named Narcissist. He was so consumed by his own desires, he was not able to love others. One day Narcissist sees his own reflection in a pool of water and falls hopelessly and madly in love with himself! Of course every time he tried to touch the watery image, it dissolved. He eventually dies of a broken heart.*
- *This dysfunctional view of life has become common in our society. The narcissistic belief says to be happy, all you need to do is act sexy, demand rights and privileges and party, party, party!*

**This "All About Me" idea sounds like a familiar story from the Bible:**

Isaiah 14:12-14: (NASB) <sup>12</sup>How you have fallen from heaven, O star of the morning, son of the dawn! You have been cut down to the earth, you who have weakened the nations! <sup>13</sup>But you said in your heart, I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars of God, and I will sit on the mount of assembly in the recesses of the north. <sup>14</sup>I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.

It was all about "I" instead of God the Almighty. Satan as the "father of lies" began the lie of allowing a swelled ego to influence and then manipulate one's life and then believing that the results are good.

**Love Your Neighbor, I felt uncared for, [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com)**

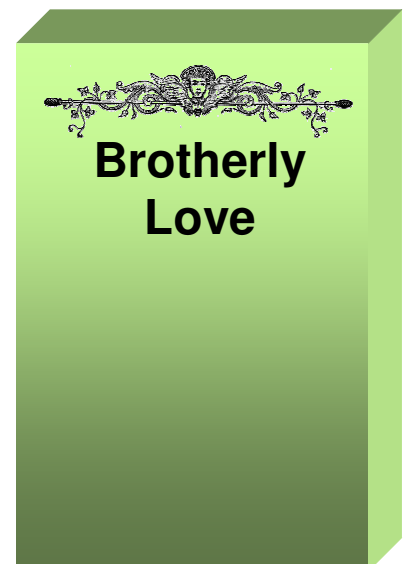
- *(When Steve was homeless) I felt that no one cared about my situation and I got to a certain point in my life where I didn't have a lot of care for myself either. When you lose hope that things can't possibly turn around and get better, it's a scary place to be. You lose your sense of self, your sense of self worth. The fact that people wanted to honestly help me with nothing in return impressed me. I remember saying to myself that if I was ever in a position to do the same, I would be more than glad to.*

1 Peter 3:8: (NKJV) Finally, all of you be of one mind, having compassion for one another; **love as brothers <5361>**, be tenderhearted, be courteous...

What's this...another kind of love?

**So is brotherly love different from Christian love?**

**Second level:** #5360 philadelphia, #5361 philadelphos: Brotherly love - fraternal affection, fondness. After familial love, this is the most common expression of love among mankind. Families have it, teams have it, those who serve in the military have it, even gangs have it. It is common to all, for it is a form of give and take, protect and be protected. It is expressed in the "I've got your back" sense of loyalty. There is a connection from a common goal or activity.





Hebrews 13:1-2: (NKJV) <sup>1</sup>Let **brotherly love** <5360> continue. <sup>2</sup>Do not forget to entertain strangers, for by so doing some have unwittingly entertained angels.

1 Peter 3:8-9: (NKJV) <sup>8</sup>Finally, all of you be of one mind, having compassion for one another; **love as brothers** <5361>, be tenderhearted, be courteous; <sup>9</sup>not returning evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary blessing, knowing that you were called to this, that you may inherit a blessing.

True Christian love is pro-active, enduring, and serving. #25 agapao, #26 agape: This is a level of selflessness and benevolence that surpasses brotherly love as it encompasses a level of giving that has no thought of reciprocation. It is only concerned with the well-being of those to which it is given. This is the level to which we are commanded to aspire.

### Results of Narcissism, BeyondToday.TV

- Results of this selfish approach to life are: broken relationships, lack of civility, callousness towards others and emotional trauma. When you're tired of the emptiness of selfishness, it's time to return to your Creator and Jesus' instruction to love God with all your heart, mind and soul and to love your neighbor as yourself.



Notice how **family love** is admonished by the Apostles but not commanded by Jesus.

Notice how **brotherly love** is admonished by the Apostles but not commanded by Jesus.



### "They Will Know We are Christians," (Verse 1) Jars of Clay

We are one in the spirit,  
we are one in the Lord...  
and we pray that all unity may one day be restored  
and they'll know we are Christians by our love

So, how do we live this? Hint: We apply that which is already wired into the human heart as a foundation! The first two levels must be in place to properly execute the practice of Christian love.

**First Level** Titus 2:4: (NKJV) that they admonish the young women to **love** <5362> their husbands, to **love** <5388> their children.

Romans 12:10: (NKJV) Be **kindly affectionate** <5387> to one another with **brotherly love** <5360>, in honor giving preference to one another;

**Second Level** Hebrews 13:1: (NKJV) Let **brotherly love** <5360> continue.

1 Peter 3:8: (NKJV) Finally, all of you be of one mind, having compassion for one another; **love as brothers** <5361>, be tenderhearted, be courteous;



## Is this highest form of love the property of Christianity only?

**Warning!** The following condition is extremely dangerous to one's health and to the wellbeing of those who come in contact with it - **DO NOT TRY THIS AT HOME!**

 **The Narcissist - Relationships are hard, *BeyondToday.TV***

- Relationships are difficult, maybe moreso for someone like me than your Average Joe, your common man. I won't lie, beautiful women want me. They do desire me. There is a sense of pride and privilege that these women get in my presence - why should I deny them that?*

There is another kind of love mentioned in the New Testament:

**Third Level:** #5363 philanthropia (fil-an-thro-pee'-ah); fondness of mankind, i.e. benevolence ("philanthropy"). This level moves out of the relationships which are natural or forged by common ground and into relationships of no previous commonality, love being generously expressed without previous ties or obligation from the one who expresses it. This third level is where we find the basis of "philanthropy"; this word is only used twice in the Bible.

**An example of this love for mankind in action:**

Acts 28:1-2: (NKJV) <sup>1</sup>Now when they had escaped, they then found out that the island was called Malta. <sup>2</sup>And the natives showed us unusual **kindness <5363>**; for they kindled a fire and made us all welcome, because of the rain that was falling and because of the cold.

**An example of God having this love for mankind - so it must be good:**

Titus 3:3-6: (ASV) <sup>3</sup>For we also once were foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, hating one another. <sup>4</sup>But when the kindness of God our Savior, and his **love <5363>** toward man, appeared, <sup>5</sup>not by works done in righteousness, which we did ourselves, but according to his mercy he saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, <sup>6</sup>which he poured out upon us richly, through Jesus Christ our Savior;

Here's a question: If God himself has this kind of love, then why are Christians never admonished to develop it anywhere in the New Testament?

 **Pay it forward, even from a kid I'll take it, *Pay it Forward (Movie)***

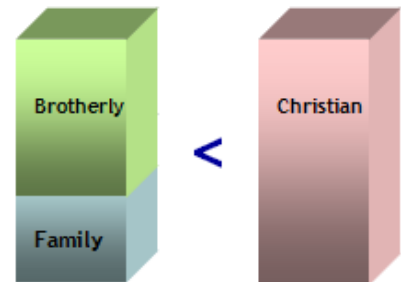
- (Homeless man reacting to a little boy helping him) He wanted to help somebody, he wanted to get somebody back on his feet, so he gave me a little money. Bought clothes and shoes and got the job... somebody comes along like your son and gives me a leg up, I'll take it, even from a kid I'll take it.*





**Fourth Level:** 25 agapao, 26 agape: This is a level of selflessness and benevolence that surpasses philanthropy as it encompasses a level of giving that has no thought or need of reciprocation. Philanthropy is generally accompanied by some manner of public recognition, but this fourth level has no concern for such things - it is only concerned with the well-being of those to which it is giving.

The concept of selfless love is not the sole property of Christianity. The history of our world is filled with those who lived lives in selfless giving, yet were not Christian.

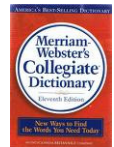


**al·tru·ism**

- 1: unselfish regard for or devotion to the welfare of others
- 2: behavior by an animal that is not beneficial to or may be harmful to itself but that benefits others of its species

**be·nev·o·lence**

- 1: disposition to do good
- 2a: an act of kindness b: a generous gift
- 3: a compulsory levy by certain English kings with no other authority than the claim of prerogative



**So, how do we get Christian love to actually be expressed through us?**

**1 John 3:1-3:** (NASB) <sup>1</sup>See how great a love the Father has bestowed on us, that we would be called children of God; and such we are. For this reason the world does not know us, because it did not know Him. <sup>2</sup>Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is. <sup>3</sup>And everyone who has this hope fixed on Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.

- Acknowledge the great love of God that we are called his children and not just servants.
- This position separates us from the world.
- This position is a purifying process.



**The Narcissist - Women like beauty, BeyondToday.TV**

- *There is also an insecurity that I get from them. Women like beauty. They respect it, but they don't want to compete with it. Unfortunately, that's going to be a factor for any woman who will be with me!*

**1 John 3:11-18:** (NASB) <sup>11</sup>For this is the message which you have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another; <sup>12</sup>not as Cain, who was of the evil one and slew his brother. And for what reason did he slay him? Because his deeds were evil, and his brother's were righteous.



- Our command to love one another is based on the purified position given, not on evil as with Cain and his brother. Jealousy undermines our ability to fully love.

<sup>13</sup>Do not be surprised, brethren, if the world hates you. <sup>14</sup>We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love abides in death.

- Passage to life is dependent on loving the brotherhood - it will be surrounded by controversy. It's not easy but it is commanded of us.

<sup>15</sup>Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer; and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him. <sup>16</sup>We know love by this, that he laid down his life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.

- We have an unmistakable model for this love as well as an unmistakable consequence for *not* living this Christian love.



**Pay it forward - It gets big really fast, *Pay it Forward (Movie)***

- *I'm not allowed to pay back Trevor (the boy that gave him money). I'm paying it forward.*
- *(Trevor explaining the process) That's me and that's three people and I'm going to help them, but it has to be something really big, something they can't do by themselves, so I do it for them. Then they do it for three other people - that's nine. And nine do three more... that's 27, so it gets big really fast, you know?*

<sup>17</sup>But whoever has the world's goods, and sees his brother in need and closes his heart against him, how does the love of God abide in him? <sup>18</sup>Little children, let us not love with word or with tongue, but in deed and truth.

- Our love *must* be expressed by action - that's what Jesus did!

Other examples of the practical application of this love:

**Love what is right:**

Hebrews 1:9: (KJV) *Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.*

**Is there a difference between Christian love and this highest form of love anywhere else?**

Christian love says to love those around you after the example of God and Jesus, "stepping up" that which is natural to the higher level. Start with what you know and build upon it with the grace of God.

Ephesians 5:25: (KJV) *Husbands, **love <25>** your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;*

1 Thessalonians 4:9: (NKJV) <sup>9</sup>*But concerning **brotherly love <5360>** you have no need that I should write to you, for you yourselves are taught by God to **love <25>** one another;*

John 15:9: (KJV) *As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love.*



**Jesus was forsaken by all his friends right after he said this:**

John 15:12: (KJV) *This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you.*

 **The Narcissist - I can't deny what I am, *BeyondToday.TV***

- *This is me! This is what I am! Am I supposed to make myself less attractive? Am I supposed to deny this face and this incredible body - I can't do that! To deny myself, my being? This is who I am!*

**Christian love says the implementation of this love is a catalyst for our actions and not a result of our actions:**

Galatians 6:9-10: (NKJV) <sup>9</sup>*And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart.* <sup>10</sup>*Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith.*

**To live such a life, we must always be looking for opportunities. Though it may be draining and at times discouraging, these are not reasons to quit.**

(Source: Wikipedia) "Have I Told You Lately" is a hit song written by Northern Irish singer-songwriter Van Morrison and recorded for his 1989 album *Avalon Sunset*. It is a romantic ballad often played at weddings although it was originally written also as a prayer.



**"Have I Told You Lately," Rod Stewart**

You fill my heart with gladness  
take away all my sadness  
ease my troubles, that's what you do  
For the morning sun in all its glory  
greets the day with hope and comfort too  
You fill my heart with laughter  
and somehow you make it better  
ease my troubles, that's what you do  
There's a love that's divine  
and it's yours and it's mine like the sun  
and at the end of the day  
we should give thanks and pray  
to the One, to the One  
Have I told you lately that I love you  
that there's no one else above you  
You fill my heart with gladness  
take away all my sadness  
ease my troubles, that's what you do

**Christian love says this love is to be intense and filled with pure intention:**

1 Peter 1:22: (ASV) <sup>22</sup>*Seeing ye have purified your souls in your obedience to the truth unto **unfeigned <505> love of the brethren <5360>, love <25> one another from the heart fervently <1619>**:*

**Unfeigned:** Strongs #505 without dissimulation, without hypocrisy, undisguised, sincere

**Fervently:** Strongs #1619 earnestly, fervently, intensely



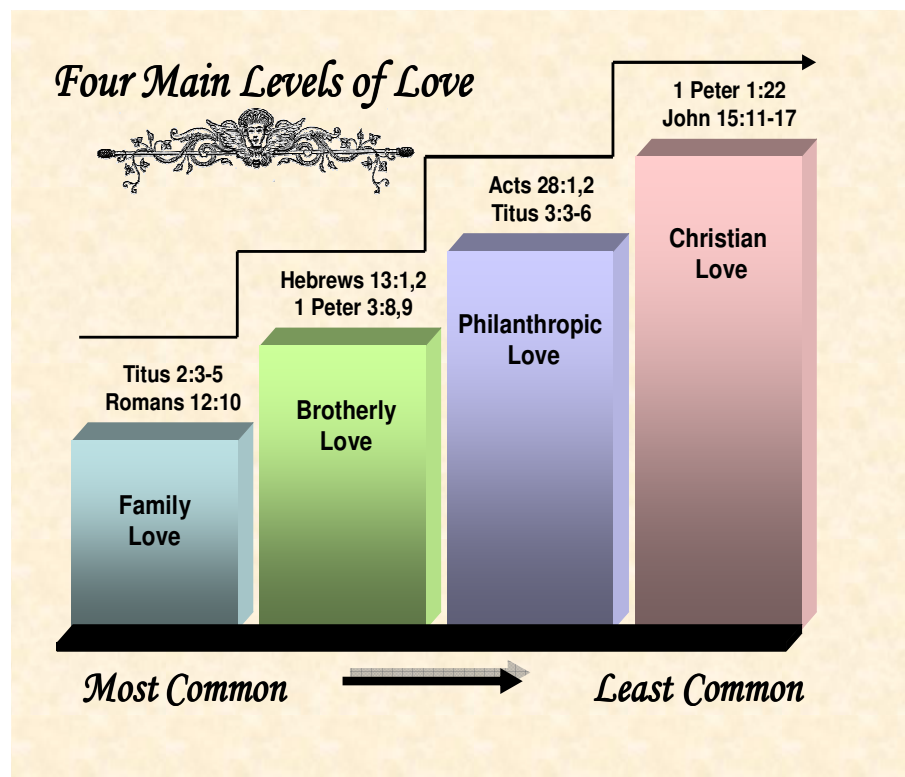
We want to try to step out of our own little world into a larger world where giving without hope of getting back is prominent, because that's what Jesus did.

**Christian love says: Love your enemies! (It's hard enough to love the people we like!)**

Matthew 5:43-46: (KJV) <sup>43</sup>Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt **love <25>** thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. <sup>44</sup>But I say unto you, **Love <25>** 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; <sup>45</sup>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. <sup>46</sup>For if ye **love <25>** them which **love <25>** you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same?

Clearly we need this command because this is not natural to our nature. This really puts it in perspective. Anybody can love those who love us.

Christian love looks at love from a whole different standpoint...to be Christ-like. We want to be able to love without worrying about getting anything back. We want to apply this right now to the rest of our lives!



*How is Christian love different?  
For Jonathan and Rick and Christian Questions...  
Think about it...!*

*And now even more to think about...  
only in the **Full Edition** of CQ Rewind!*



*"Loneliness and the feeling of being unwanted is the most terrible poverty." Mother Teresa*

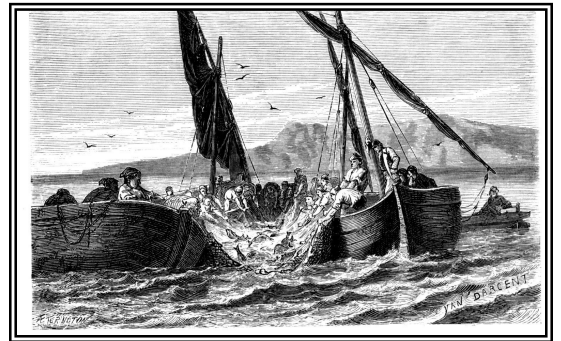


## How is Christian Love Different? Ten Ways to Love: (*Love God and Your Neighbor, youtube.com*)

1. Listen without interrupting Proverbs 18
2. Speak without accusing James 1:19
3. Give without sparing Proverbs 21:26
4. Pray without ceasing Colossians 1:9
5. Answer without arguing Proverbs 17:1
6. Share without pretending Ephesians 4:15
7. Enjoy without complaint Philippians 2:14
8. Trust without wavering 1 Corinthians 13:7
9. Forgive without punishing Colossians 3:13
10. Promise without forgetting Proverbs 13:12

The Apostle Peter would have known all about the sincerity and passion required to go from one level of love to the next. We drop in on Peter early in his life, after Jesus' resurrection:

John 21:4,6,7: (NRSV) <sup>4</sup>Just after day-break, Jesus stood on the beach; but the disciples did not know that it was Jesus. <sup>5</sup>Jesus said to them, "Children, you have no fish, have you?" They answered him, "No." <sup>6</sup>He said to them, "Cast the net to the right side of the boat, and you will find some." So they cast it, and now they were not able to haul it in because there were so many fish. <sup>7</sup>That disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, "It is the Lord!" When Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put on some clothes, for he was naked, and jumped into the sea.



Upon realizing that Jesus is there, Simon is unable to contain himself and wait.

John 21:15: (NRSV) When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon son of John, do you **love** <agape> me more than these?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I **love** <phileo> you." Jesus said to him, "Feed my lambs."



**The Question:** Do you "agape" love me?  
**The Answer:** You know that I "phileo" love you...  
**The Mission:** "Feed my lambs" (the young, the beginners in the way needing the "milk of the word")



Peter thus states his personal attachment and devotion to the Lord, but refrains from claiming the highest love for which our Lord inquired. This humility was an excellent sign, showing Peter had learned a needed lesson and had ceased to boast and feared his own weakness.

This mission would only be given to one who is trusted, one who has been given a new name (from Simon to Peter).

John 21:16: (NRSV) A second time he said to him, "Simon son of John, do you **love** <agape> me?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I **love** <phileo> you." Jesus said to him, "Tend my sheep."



**The Question:** Do you "agape" love me?  
**The Answer:** You know that I "phileo" love you...  
**The Mission:** "Tend my sheep" (the more mature followers who need guidance and direction)



This mission would only to be given to one who is trusted, one who has taken on a new vocation and direction.



**John 21:17-19: (NRSV)**<sup>17</sup>*He said to him the third time, "Simon son of John, do you **love** <agape> me?" Peter felt hurt because he said to him the third time, "Do you **love** <agape> me?" And he said to him, "Lord, you know everything; you know that I **love** <phileo> you." Jesus said to him, "Feed my sheep. <sup>18</sup>Very truly, I tell you, when you were younger, you used to fasten your own belt and to go wherever you wished. But when you grow old, you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will fasten a belt around you and take you where you do not wish to go." <sup>19</sup>(He said this to indicate the kind of death by which he would glorify God.) After this he said to him, "Follow me."*



**The Question:** Do you "agape" love me?

**The Answer:** You know everything, you know that I "phileo" love you...(Peter knows he can't go beyond where he is.)

**The Mission:** "Feed my sheep" (the weak sheep, weak in faith who are to be fed and cared for.)



This mission would only be given to one who could understand weakness and give what is necessary to overcome it. Peter would not make a confession he was not yet capable of, but Jesus was willing to work with him. (Note that Jesus asked him three times - just as Peter had denied him three times. Peter was also drawn to the Lord at three different times.)