

I LOVE ICE CREAM, I LOVE YOU!?

Opening Questions:

- If people did not want to love other people (and yet at some level they know they should), would defining love as something(s) that it is not, help accomplish that?
- Is the highest, purest form of love an emotion towards others?
- If true love needs to be practiced and you are not practicing it, are you a good person?
- If people who know each other and live near each other really understand love, will they be apart or together?
- If a person claims that love is the most critical concept God gave to human beings, and yet that person does not practice love, what does that say about that person?

Ah, now we get to the second most crucial aspect of the solution. It is second because you cannot know what love is unless you use truth to do so and we need the right Leader to define love properly for us.

This matter gets to the crux of the successful failure that is Christianity and the Christians who practice their religion. They are successful from the world's perspective of material abundance and influencing or controlling people, but failures from the perspective of refusing to DO the most critical thing that the one they call "their god" asks—love one another.

Remember how we defined love in this book according to Joshua's definition instead of the world's definition. Love is the manifestation – the practical outworking – of the solution!

Almost everyone if asked the question, "are you a loving person," will answer, "yes." They do this because our Creator gave us a conscience and we "know" that that is how we ought to be.

But the fact that most people believe something about them does not make their claim authentic does it? It is similar to asking people, "are you a good person"? How many will answer, "no, I am not"? Very few due to our self-filters and rose-colored glasses we wear especially when looking into the mirror!

Listen to the average person as they say, "Oh, I love ice cream; I love my dog; I love that TV show; I love pizza; I love that park; I love those shoes; I love that movie." And then they say to someone, "I love you." A little bell should ring or a little red flag ought to go up for that person and they ought to

ask, “so what is the difference between me and the pizza?”! Sadly and frequently, there is very little difference.

There is no better way to destroy the meaning of a word than to broaden or re-define its meaning until it loses all clarity and becomes virtually meaningless. For example, the saying, "everyone is special" nullifies the plain meaning of "special" and does, in fact, result in the belief that therefore "no one person is special" - and so it is with "love." By the way, the "everyone is special" saying is usually misused because of *people not making the distinction between the value of a person versus their ability to do certain things*. So, for example, all the little girls on the soccer/football team are equally valuable as human beings, but not all are good soccer players—a few are exceptional or unique soccer players.

So, what "love" has come to mean in the general culture is “I really like” or “that thing really pleases me.” Love has become for many, merely a strong emotional liking for something and synonymous with "really like."

It is Not “unloving” to Correct Another Person

Before we look at what love is, it is important to address the usually wrong concept of "unloving." Many Christians wrongly believe that to love others includes accepting what is wrong. They are like the wrongly weak mother who “just knows little Jonnie is a good kid,” even while he bullies, threatens and assaults other children on a regular basis. As another example, many Christians say “loves does not cause a person to condemn homosexuals,” but what they really mean by that is that the beliefs behind homosexual marriage or homosexual child raising are good and right. They refuse to distinguish between individuals and principles or between wrong and right, often because they are no longer capable due to their relativism.

As another example, many Christians oppose child discipline on the basis that “it is not loving,” even as their child is practicing wrong behavior or language towards other people on a regular basis because their lack of consequences is encouraging that. The simple truth is that true love does not exist in a vacuum – it exists between people - and it is expressed while observing, acknowledging or promoting what is right. From another perspective, love is not represented by wrong behavior or by endorsing or ignoring wrong beliefs or behavior. *It is imperative to understand that love between two or more people cannot work or flourish if there is something false or wrong in the relationship(s).*

In conclusion, it is NOT “unloving” to correct another person’s false beliefs or wrong behavior, and in fact, and ignoring harmful behavior is truly un-loving. It is unloving to want to harm another person or to harm another person – harm meaning physically or materially. To call the verbal correction of a person “unloving” for telling them that, for example, it is wrong for two men to marry is both false and VERY destructive. As we saw in the relativism chapters, it will be the end to all commonly held ethical standards. And this is in fact what is happening in the U.S. at this time.

What is the Standard to Know What "Love" Means?

To know if something is true or false, you need a standard against which to judge, evaluate or measure. For example, if I say, "I am over 6 feet tall", and you say, "no you are not," we need to agree on the length of a "foot" and then measure it correctly to determine who is right. So, before we can determine my actual height, we need to first agree on the unit of measure, in this case, a "foot" of the English system.

As another example, you can say, "Suzy is a giving person," but what is the standard to determine that? Well, one would need to start by agreeing that "giving" means to give good things to other people, whether material or relational. Then, we could talk to all the people Suzy interacts with on a regular basis, and ask them if Suzy "gives good things to them" on a regular basis. If the majority said, "yes," then your statement is validated as true. If the majority says, "no," then your claim - on an objective basis - is wrong, even if a few individuals that Suzy favors disagree.

As you can see, while non-physical things like human motivations, thoughts, words and subsequent behavior are more difficult to measure if no standard is known or agreed upon (in the example above "giving" has no precise standard), it is still possible if people can agree to a standard.

The excellent news is that the Creator of humankind gave the universal standard for human behavior! The Creator sent His Messenger and Representative to show us and tell us the rules for human motivation and behavior—for what is right versus what is wrong human behavior. The Messenger's name is Joshua or Jesus of Nazareth.

The people of the earth, in general, have not done very well over the millennia—conflict, abuse of power, neglecting one another, harming one another and the pain and suffering have been the usual order for thousands of years. Oh, yes, every once in a while there is an exception with people participating in the exception and doing much better than the norm. Those exceptions have sadly been few and far in-between and relatively small in scale.

As was stated previously and validated by the One who defeated death, the Creator of the human race sent a Messenger to mankind about two millennia ago, and he made it *very clear* what the Creator wants of His created race of humanity—he wants this all-important concept called "love" to be known and practiced by the human race. Sadly and tragically, the human race has, for the most part, ignored the Messenger and has gone on its usual way of being bound by self-pride and fear and selfishness, thus continuing the established order of conflict, abuse of power, neglecting one another, harming one another and the pain and suffering it brings.

There has always been some - very few in proportion to the general population of the earth - who have listened to the Creator's Messenger (or the conscience given to them by the Creator) and thus have endeavored to live by this all-important concept of "love."

What Love Is and Is Not

Let us first clarify what love is *not*, for many are self-deceived thinking they are "loving" people because they have the wrong definition or understanding of what real love is.

- *Love is not an emotion or feeling.*
 - While emotions and feeling can result from the expression of love, those emotions or feelings is not how Joshua defines love. This error is one of the most significant mistakes that is currently believed by people;
- *Love is not a feeling of (or emotion based) attraction to another person.*
 - The attraction to the other person is usually a strong self-desire to, in some way, "have" that other person - often for sexual reasons, frequently to try and fill insecurity we have, sometimes for control reasons;
 - The strong emotional desire for a person of the opposite gender is widespread in the teenage years and is often called, "first love," while an accurate description would be, "first emotional infatuation." This infatuation often has the boy's or girl's insecurity as a substantial factor in the "crush."
- Love is not merely friendship, although the best friendships will practice love. Two people who are companions and thus good friends usually practice love in that relationship;
- Love is not "liking" another person because they affirm you or because you have similar interests and thus enjoy spending some time together—that is friendship;
- Love is not civility, politeness, being considerate of others, graciousness, being merciful, patient or maintaining self-control - *although all of those things are good.*
 - So, if you practice those things, then you are a better person than most, but practicing those things still does not make you a person exercising "love" according to the Light.

Here is the Christian's leader Paul's take on love: "Love is patient, love is kind and is not jealous; love does not brag and is not arrogant, does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong suffered, does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails."

Paul says many good things about how we ought to be - he lists many good character traits or human virtues - but he also makes the terrible mistake of re-defining love. Paul re-defines love so broadly to mean several things (or nothing, just like the term "special" example given previously in this chapter!), and thus, the pure definition of love is lost or hidden in his confusion. In other words, a person reading Paul's understanding of love could be very patient and

kind but refuse not to seek their own and deceive themselves into thinking because they have two characteristics of love, they are a person of love. As another example, I can be a non-jealous person or humble person or a calm person or a forgiving person, but still be unwilling to share my life with other disciples which is what love does.

An excellent way to test the meaning of love is to plug the supposed "things" that someone says love is into John 3:16, perhaps the best definitional statement of what love is from Joshua. For example, that saying of Joshua is, "For God so loved the world that he sent His only beloved Son...." So, to test Paul's definition of love, let's plug in a few of the many characteristics he claimed were part of "love" into the saying of Joshua. "For God so not-jealous-ed the world that he sent..."; or, "For God so displayed patience that he sent..."; or, "For God so not provoked the world that he sent..." As you can see, many of the good things that Paul lists do not fit in with what is perhaps the best definitional statement of "love" given by Joshua.

Just like the Bible hides the Light by burying his Voice amidst many other voices, so Paul surrounds the core of love - "does not seek its own" - with many things love is not. Thus, he provides the example - and for many, the authority - to redefine the most critical concept given by the Creator, and which concept was *clearly* defined by the Creator's Messenger.

So, let us take a brief look at this all-important concept to gain clarity on it.

We must first find the authority or standard to know what "love" is. Since the dictionaries didn't exist at the time and since the Model for humanity defined love, we would do well to listen to him. In short, Joshua defines love as, "To value someone and have compassion for them and to behave selflessly towards them (help them) and to want to be with them." Please read that again and think about it for that is the core or "heart" of the "love" that the Light of the world teaches.

Now, ask yourself in a real, honest way, towards whom in your life are you practicing love?

Here are a few relevant facts to consider about "love":

Fact 1: The Light speaks to the concept of "love" about sixty times in the four gospel books, so it is *the* primary topic and concern of his.

Fact 2: The Light says the three greatest commandments are about "love."

One of them, a lawyer, asked Him a question, testing Him, "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?" And he said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind." This is the great and foremost commandment. The second is like it, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." On these two commandments depend the whole Law and the Prophets. (Matt. 22:37-40)

A new commandment I give to you (my disciples), that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this,

all men will know that you are my disciples if you have love for one another. (John 13:34-35)

Fact 3: The Light affirms and clarifies the two greatest commandments and says we are to love everyone we encounter or know in as much as they will let us, even those who make themselves "our enemies."

(In contrast, Moses and thus the Hebrew scripture taught/teaches, hate and kill your enemies: "You shall not hate your fellow countryman in your heart..." (Lev. 19:17) & "Take full vengeance for the sons of Israel on the Midianites (not your fellow countryman)...Now therefore, kill every boy and male child, and kill every woman who is not a virgin..." (Num. 31:1-18). Therefore, you make a great error if you try to understand God through the Hebrew scripture.)

Fact 4: The "new command" is not negotiable, nor would someone want it to be if they have the heart to receive it. For the disciples love for one another will be the *only* way for "all men" to know that we are followers of the Life. And yes, love will be "seen" by other people as we live together in unity and peace and care for each other and do the Master's work together.

Fact 5: The Light says that if those who say they follow him do not live "love" out, then they do not, in reality, represent him. So, if you claim to be a "follower of Jesus Christ", and you are not sharing your life (really his Life) with them - that is living with other followers as actual "brothers" and "sisters" and truly good friends - then you are deceived and living a religious lie that will only serve as self-condemnation.

Fact 6: The Light says that no greater love can be demonstrated than to lay our lives down for our friends. So, if we are unwilling to live for and with our friends, what would make us think we would be willing to die for them other than the delusion self-pride would generate?

If you can accede to the above truths about "love," *and* you want to live by "love," *and* you can see that you have *not* been living by love, then you are on the brink of a very different life than the one you have been living.

The simple truth is that the manifestations of love cannot exist by one person willing to live by love. It takes at least two people who are ready to love each other for the manifestations of the love that Joshua talks about to exist. Furthermore, if you claim to be a disciple of Joshua, the new command cannot be lived out among mere blood or legal relatives. Nor can it be lived out amongst a religious group of people who do not love each other as Joshua defines it.

It is important to note before we take a closer look at love, that love does not exist in isolation of other important aspects of human life, or stated another way, love exists within - or is "subservient to" - only one constraint—truth. We could not even know what love is without truth because using reason and logic

to know truth is how we understand what metaphysical things are. In short, we cannot be practicing something wrong against another person and love them.

Joshua teaches those wrongs and rights clearly, but IF we are living by love, we really won't need to "refrain from the wrongs" since we will naturally be doing what is right. Said another way, love causes us to do what is right without having to concern ourselves with abstaining from what is wrong. Love is active and reaching out, or "other's" focused (what can I do to help that person), whereas "rule" or "law" is passive and preventative and self-focused (what will happen to me if I do that wrong thing).

The Creator has given human beings the spiritual aspect of our nature called a conscience. The conscience is the "rule" or "law" of knowing wrong human behavior programmed into our nature—it "informs us" when we are thinking about doing something wrong, or doing something wrong; or after we do something wrong. But our conscience does NOT motivate us to love—something more is required for that. The conscience is largely reactive, not proactive. For people of faith, we must first experience our Father's love for us as expressed through His Son.

Manifestations of Those Living by Love

Here are some characteristics or "manifestations" of people who are living by the "love" that Joshua of Nazareth teaches—manifestations of those living out the "new command":

- *We are together, not apart.* Love brings people together; it does not separate them or drive them apart. To follow the Light and live by his love will lead to being in one of his Families. Thus, if we are alone or only living with our natural family members (the easiest way for Christians to deceive themselves and avoid trying to live out the new command), then we are not loving well or perhaps not at all, and we are certainly *not* living out Joshua's new command;
- *We are not afraid to discuss important things with others due to the love we receive from our Father*—we are secure in Him (therefore not ruled by fear) and in what we believe because we have placed our faith in His Son as our Teacher, and he says he is all the truth that really matters!;
- *We point others to the One's (our Father and Master) who gave us this love, showed us this love and empower us with love,* because we want them to experience them too, and we want them to experience life everlasting instead of destroying themselves for the worthless things of the world;
- *We reach out to others to try and get them to see how special this faith-given love is and to participate in it* for we know that it is *the solution* to all of humanity's problems;

Most Christians, when they hear these simple truths, respond with self-pride or fear and say something like this, "Oh, what are you saying, that we need to be part of a commune; that we need to be part of a cult; that we need

to live like socialists, groupies or hippies.” or a myriad of other *fear-based defensive responses*. My response is, “no, I am just repeating what Joshua of Nazareth teaches.”

Or they will say, "show me a verse in the Bible that supports your view of love", and I quote Acts 2:44-45, "And all those who had believed were together and had all things in common; and they began selling their property and possessions and were sharing them with all, as anyone might have need."; but those who don't have ears to hear and who do not want to live by love will not listen even to their beloved Bible if it says something they don't want to hear, and will find every excuse or “theological” trick to make the words of no effect.

Those who fight against his simple truths and his definition of love are those where the seed falls on the bad soil—where holding onto this world and their lives in this world have domination over listening to the Light and his Way of love despite the Life saying:

For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it; but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. (Matt. 16:25)

Dear reader, if you are looking to save or preserve your life in this world, then you will lose eternal life, which is real Life.

A Word to non-Theists and Agnostics about Love

This author believes that the Creator gave love and thus He knows what it means and how important it is. The Creator's Messenger affirmed just that. We who listen to The Light have the privilege of knowing what love is and have a real opportunity to live love out among others who are not in a destructive mode due to being trapped in their cage of self-pride and fear and selfishness.

If you cannot correctly define love, you cannot understand it. And if you cannot understand love, you have very little chance of living it out or practicing it. Most people don't know what love is. Many can recognize it when they see it in action, but it is like a mysterious firework that burns in front of them for a brief moment and then is gone. The conscience God gave all people enables the recognition of true love, but not the understanding. If we are in a cage of self-pride and fear and selfishness, we cannot know, understand nor practice true love well if at all.

We need The Light to give us understanding about true love. In fact, the apex of The Light's story was the most potent manifestation of true love the people of the earth have had an opportunity to witness. Friends forsook him, mocked, beaten, tortured, and then publically nailed to a cross – all wrongfully. He did not deserve that treatment – it was entirely and thoroughly unjust. And yet at the end of all that wrongful treatment, he said to the men doing that to him, "Father, forgive them because they don't know what they are doing."

That dear reader is true love.

That is the expression of compassion without bounds; it is arguably the most exceptional example of selflessness ever expressed. He did not care about what was happening to him. Instead, he cared about the fate of those men who

were – at that time – his enemies and thus were set on a course of self-destruction. As the expression of the Creator, The Light did not want them to destroy themselves. At that moment, Joshua of Nazareth consummated all his teachings on what real love was all about. He demonstrated *the* concept that could change human kind's course:

“Love your enemies” or “love those who choose to make themselves your enemies”

This author argues that until a person can contemplate what The Light did, and the love the Father/Creator demonstrated to all people through His Son, we cannot know true love at its deepest level. Furthermore, unless we experience the Father's love – receiving his merciful forgiveness for all our wrongdoings - we don't have much of a chance of living true love out.

Atheists and agnostics will typically vehemently disagree with those statements. I ask in return, what is your standard to know what true love is? In other words, if I poll one-thousand agnostics, for example, and ask, "What is love," I think it is fair to say that you will get many different answers and the most popular will be some version of, “it is how I feel for certain people.” In fact, most of the seven billion human beings currently on the earth would not get that right no matter what labels they take for themselves. Genuinely loving other people is not easy (that is part of the reason why it is so valuable) and thus it is not consistently practiced.

Furthermore, I ask in return to non-theists and agnostics, what is your motivation for living true love out? True love gives, it does not take. True love suffers without complaining and looks to help those who cause the suffering. A more anti-evolutionary view you will not find—a stronger antonym to the “survival of the fittest” doctrine is hard to imagine. Animals don't help their competitors; animals don't sacrifice themselves to protect the weak. And no, dear reader, finding a few exceptions to the general truths I just stated does not nullify the realities I just said! Remember your logical fallacies!

Finally, and as stated earlier in the book, when a person truly loves other people, that spiritual connection for those who return true love is powerful. True love expressed and understood between two people is arguably the most valuable experience this life can provide. The Creator did not set things up so that the most valuable thing human beings can experience in this life is destroyed upon death. In fact, that is one of the aspects of Hope that The Light provides us. If we are willing to love other people truly, that love and relationship will be preserved and made more beautiful and real post-physical death.

What about those people who don't believe in life after death? If you are a parent who loves your child, the last thing you want is to lose that child. If you lose them, it will cause a whole lot of suffering. The pain of “heartbreak” is real and is worse than physical pain. (Yet another proof of the metaphysical or spiritual reality we exist in.)

For the few left who truly love their spouses, the thought of being without them is harrowing. The fact is that many older people, who lose spouses they love through physical death, give up on life and die shortly after that. Many people labor under the falsehood that physicalists put forth that when we die, we cease to exist. That is one way to view reality, and I would say a horribly inferior or deficient way and denying some essential facts. Those who truly love another person will *not* want to leave them...will not want to see them destroyed, annihilated. And yet, this is the belief that non-theists labor under and surely only selfishness enable them to "move on."

The excellent news is that followers of The Light have a Person who defeated death who says, "*He who lives in and believes in (places their faith in) me will never (spiritually) die.*" How much is that worth? You don't have to labor under the falsehood and hopelessness that you are nothing more than molecules and that you are annihilated when you physically die!

Of course, physicalists will say that view is delusional. They say this despite the clear evidence and proof of a designer and a spiritual/metaphysical component to human nature and reality. I would counter that physicalism is delusional...just as delusional as a person insisting that computers and their functioning are merely a function of hardware.

They say the disciple's view is delusional despite four corroborating books which books document the life of an extraordinary Person – a materially poor, politically unconnected, religiously offensive, misunderstood Man - who changed the lives of countless individuals for better by his words and deeds.

I digress a bit. Many non-theists and agnostics will say because we are annihilated when we physically die, we are more motivated to love in this life. I don't think there is any evidence of that. What I know and experience is that people are somewhat delusional about death—they are basically in denial about death for their entire life. I understand this because most people believe that their existence will end upon physical death, so they push it off and understandably refuse to contemplate it honestly. Therefore, to think that the average person lives their life consciously aware of their death is unreasonable and not supported by evidence.

What I have experienced and what I have observed is that human nature is fundamentally selfish, and therefore, if the average person believes their life is going to end in say the next week, it will not necessarily motivate them to all of a sudden live selflessly. Instead, it is likely to bring additional fear and anxiety and the desire to experience the few things they value highest in this life.

Ultimately I posit that those who believe that we are annihilated upon physical death, will not likely love as frequently and cannot love as deeply as those who know we will not lose the love we expressed in this life. The simple truth is that those who know we are heading Home to a Father who loves us and that we will continue to experience the love we encountered while on the earth, are empowered to love...to give...to be selfless and live for what is truly valuable. Those who believe their physical life on this earth is all they will experience are not likely to give their lives away in love for others.

Back to the Christians

If you continue in all the self-delusion about how you are a person of God's love when you are not, you are destroying yourself and forfeiting Life.

If you think you can live the selfish, independent, proud American way—the way of "this is mine, and that is yours, and you stay over there except when it is convenient for us to get together for a few meetings"—then you are on the broad way of destruction.

If you think attending a religious service is somehow fulfilling a life of love, you are badly deceived and are both working against the Light and are very much part of the problem.

If you are a Christian or Biblian who thinks having some ideology that is different than “the mainstream,” or that not being part of the dead Christian system is noble - yet you are not living out the new command - you too are badly deceived and falling short.

There is no greater love than this, that we lay down our lives for our friends. (John 15:13)

Lay down our life means to die for our friend. I say again if we are not willing to *live with* our friends and help them and care for them each day, then what makes us think we will die for them other than the delusion produced by self-pride???

Here come the lame excuses:

“Oh, I would *but* my religious leader says; *but* my wife; *but* my parents; *but* my husband; *but* my job; *but* my children; *but* my situation; *but* I have this problem; *but* my career; *but* my work...” and on and on the loveless-ness goes, growing colder and colder as each year passes. For the record, none of those excuses will bring Life nor will they prevent you from sending yourself to destruction—but then, that is the nature of delusion and deception isn't it?

The love of most will grow cold, but he who endures (continues by faith to love) *to the end* (even when love has been redefined, and the people grow content in their selfish, materialistic lifestyle) *will be saved* (from the emptiness and self-condemnation and destruction that faithlessness and loveless-ness brings). (Matt. 24:12-13)

Following The Leader and his teachings on love in a context of truth and rightness is the “meat” of the solution, dear reader. So, what do we do about the truth and rightness framework of understanding? Or stated another way, what are the fundamental realities we must agree on to be the city on a hill of which The Light speaks—to be a unified people?

We will look for answers to that question in the next chapter.

Chapter Summary:

- The most important concept of “love” has been redefined into many things, thus destroying any objective understanding of the concept. Without the right understanding of the concept, who can practice it or encourage others to practice it?
- The world does not practice love and has redefined/reduced love to emotions associated with particular circumstances or feelings for others, usually romantic or wanting another person often for selfish reasons;
- The Creator's Messenger defines the core of love as selfless behavior motivated by compassion and valuing others at least as much as we value ourselves. When we practice love (or see it practiced), we usually are blessed by our emotions validating that practice;
- Those who understand love and who want to practice love will live with others of the same understanding—love will bring people together and have them share life together;
- Disciples of The Light must live out the new command if there is any chance of having an impact on the increasingly cold and dark world in which we live—in this age of darkness.