

Scripture's description of what agape love does and does not look like in our lives.

*The bold print is my personal paraphrase and application of the verse/verses.

- *For I am afraid that perhaps when I come I may find you to be not what I wish and may be found by you to be not what you wish; that perhaps there will be strife, jealousy, angry tempers, selfishness, slanders, gossip, arrogance, disturbances* 2 Corinthians 12:20
Speaking and behaving in ways that are disruptive and harmful to others.
- *If a brother or sister is without clothing and in need of daily food, and one of you says to them, 'God in peace, be warmed and be filled,' (*or, I will be praying for you) yet you do not give them what is necessary for their body, what use is that?"* James 2:15
Trying to sound or look good but not being willing to actually do good is not love.
- *Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? How can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' when all the time there is a plank in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye.* Matthew 7:3-5
Calling attention to a brother's or sister's sin while ignoring your own sin is blatant hypocrisy.
- *Therefore let's not judge one another anymore, but rather determine this: not to put an obstacle or a stumbling block in a brother or sister's way.* Romans 14:13
Stop trying to make your personal preference the rule for everyone else. Instead focus on making it as easy as possible for your fellow sisters and brother to trust and obey Jesus.
- *...with all humility and gentleness with patience bearing with one another in Love...* Ephesians 4:2
With selfless, patient, gentle love, graciously stand by one another through our mutual faults and failures.
- *Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep.* Romans 12:15
Don't insist people be where you are. Willingly be present and share their moment with them where they are as they are. Don't fix them, love them.
- *Be kind to one another, compassionate, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you.* Ephesians 4:32
Stand ready in kindness and empathy, to readily forgive each other by remembering how readily, kindly and greatly God in Christ has forgiven you.
- *Do nothing from selfish ambition or empty conceit, but with humility consider one another as more important than yourselves* Philippians 2:3
Don't make what you want the most important thing and certainly don't think you are the most important one in the room. Instead, look at others as the image bearers of God they are. Don't worry about you. The way this works is that everyone else is doing the same thing for you.
- *Therefore, encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing.* 1 Thessalonians 5:11
Don't try to get everyone to tell you what a good job or good person you are. Instead be the greatest cheerleader you can for those around you. Point out every possible good thing you can about them with no expectation in return.
- *See that no one repays another with evil for evil, but always seek what is good for one another and for all people.* 1 Thess 5:15
The worst thing you can do when someone hurts you is to hurt them back or try to get even. Instead, even when someone hurts you, insist on seeking and securing their good in return. Do this for fellow Christians as well as everyone else. It's vital.

- *Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult. On the contrary, repay evil with blessing... 1 Peter 3:8-9*
Peter agrees entirely with what Paul wrote to the Thessalonians. Never buy the lie that getting even or hurting someone because they hurt you is the way to go. It's not. It only makes things worse. The only thing that begins the healing, and does so almost immediately, is to respond to being hurt by blessing them in return. Say or do something kind or gracious in return. The importance of living this way can't be overstated.
- *Do not speak against one another, brothers and sisters. James 4:11*
When someone blows it, don't go around telling everyone about it. That adds insult to injury. Shaming someone when they fail is horrible behavior. And even more importantly don't go around telling others bad things about someone that aren't true. That's exactly what Satan does.
- *Do not complain, brothers and sisters, against one another... James 5:9*
When something someone else does or says bothers you, by all means, don't go around grumbling and moaning to other people about it. That's like spreading poison around the church.
- *Be hospitable to one another without complaint I Peter 4:9*
Be willingly generous to others, sharing your home and what you have with them anytime they have a need and you have the means. But when you do, be sure not to secretly mutter complaints about it later to others. That kind of behavior is repulsive for anyone but certainly for one who claims to know and love God.
- *Do all things without complaining or arguments... Philippians 2:14*
In fact, no matter what you do, don't go around grumbling and complaining about it. If you do something good - just be thankful you had the chance to act like Jesus. How in the world could we ever think it's somehow ok to complain and grumble about doing good? If you do that, you can be certain something is broken in your relationship with God. Check that out immediately.
- *But now you must also rid yourselves of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander and filthy language from your lips. Do not lie to one another... Colossians 3:8*
Come to realize it is not ok, much less good, to live lives characterized by anger, fits of rage, ill will toward others, saying things to hurt the reputation of others or use obscene or filthy words. And absolutely never lie to one another. Lying is Satan's language, not the Beloved's.
- *Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. Ephesians 4:29*
The way we talk is so often a problem. Be sure not to let rotten, worthless, corrupt language escape your lips. It's bad enough those words come to mind but that doesn't mean we have to let it be spoken aloud.

Journeying Together: Take time this week with someone in your small group, a trusted friend, family member or spiritual leader in your life to read over this list of scriptures together one at a time. After you read each one pause to and take turns prayerfully reflecting on, as honestly as you know how, and sharing how the scripture brings to your awareness ways you are not reflecting agape love to others. Hold the honesty of the other in sacred confidence.

You may not have time to go over the entire list like this which is fine. You may choose to read through the passages until a particular one seems to catch your attention and then read and reflect on that one. It may also be a good idea to agree beforehand to keep your conversation and what is shared in confidence to build trust and a sense of safety to share as openly as possible how God may be speaking to you.