

New Morning Magical – for 7-18-20

What is LOVE really?

Let's listen in on Yeshua speaking to His disciples in John 15, verse 9:

9 "According as the Father loves Me, I, also, love you. Remain in My love."

We'll come back to this verse in a moment, but let's go to verse 11 first,

11 "These things have I spoken to you, that My joy should be remaining in you, and your joy may be filled."

The phrase, "My joy," seems so odd here, because Yeshua knows He faces certain death, and a horrible one at that; yet He wants His disciples to be filled with joy by experiencing His joy! The only way I can account for the mention of joy here is to look up at verse 9 again, where He says, *"According as the Father loves Me, I, also, love you. Remain in My love."*

One of the major revelations or realizations to come out of the weekly *"Light Up the Scriptures"* study, was that the word, LOVE, in Yeshua's Hebrew or Aramaic language, and in the New Testament Greek, has a very different meaning from the way we use the word in our language today.

We use love as a term of deep affection and devotion for someone or some-thing. Here's an example: I love my wife and I love playing disc golf. Obviously the two are different kinds of love, but we use one word for both. In Hebrew and Greek, there are three words to describe different forms of love:

1. Eros is physical love, from which we get the word, erotic.
2. Phile-o is brotherly love or fondness. This could apply to a group of people who enjoy one another's company. In John 5:20, virtually every English version reads, *"For the Father **loves** the Son and shows Him everything He does."*

The Concordant Literal version reads, *"For the Father is **fond** of the Son and is showing Him all that He is doing."*

Phile-o, or fondness, has a sweetness about it, especially compared to the third word that we see most often throughout the Scriptures:

Agape: This is the Greek word that we read in John 15:9

"According as the Father loves Me, I, also, love you. Remain in My love."

Then in verse 12, we read,

12 "This is My precept, that you be loving one another, according as I love you.

13 Greater love than this has no one, that anyone may be laying down his soul for his friends."

I once described Agape to a literature professor as, "love for the sake of the truth." He got a funny look on his face, so I added, "*It's love that will stop at nothing short of accomplishing God's purpose.*" The professor began to grasp at what I was saying, and then I added, "*It has a ruthless quality about it.*" Finally, the professor acknowledged my explanation with an enthusiastic, "YES!"

The point is that Agape love held Yeshua up throughout His time on Earth. It holds us up today, even if we don't know it. Agape is ALSO the love that led Yeshua to suffer and die.

Agape is the love Yeshua speaks about in these verses so far in John 15. This is not an ooey-goey, pat-you-on-the-head-and-send-you-to-bed-with-milk-and-cookies kind of love. Agape is the Father's love that will lead you down the path He has chosen for you, and it may not always feel good, but it is always good nevertheless.

Barbara says, "*He'll take you a way you wouldn't have gone to teach you what you needed to learn.*" Agape may not always feel good, but it's the kind of love that always focuses on your best interests. Agape may be so strong in you that you find yourself sacrificing your *self*-interest for that of another or others.

In verse 14, Yeshua says something to the disciples for the first time in the 3½ years they've known Him:

14 "You are My friends, if you should be doing whatever I am directing you.

15 No longer am I terming you slaves, for the slave is not aware what his lord is doing. Yet I have declared you friends, for all that I hear from My Father I make known to you."

This is the first occasion I can find in all the Scriptures where the relationship of servant – or slave here – changes to friend. It's a major development in these final hours of Yeshua's life, to recognize as friends those who are and have been closest to Him throughout His life as a man. The disciples must have thought so too. But notice that this designation of friend is predicated on the condition that Yeshua lays out in verse 14:

"You are My friends, IF you should be doing whatever I am directing you."

This is another If-Then statement that could just as easily read, *"You are NOT my friends if you should NOT be doing whatever I am directing you."* So, we're faced with Barbara's boil-it-down simplicity: *"Why don't we just do what He says?"*

In verse 18, Yeshua gives His disciples an important heads-up that could easily apply to us today:

18 "If the world is hating you, know that it has hated Me first before you.

19 If you were of the world, the world would be fond of its own. Now, seeing that you are not of the world, but I choose you out of the world, therefore the world is hating you."

Not everyone you run into may be thrilled when they learn of your faith – IF they learn of it. Faith in Yeshua really gets under some folks' skin. Just keep going, as graciously as you can. Some people will come around and even want what you have – when that happens, give them your best shot. Don't think it's your job to persuade others, unless that's what you're comfortable doing – I never was. When someone asks, I'm happy to share what I know; otherwise, it's invasive to me, or at least impolite, to confront someone uninvited.

I need to back to John 15:7, where Yeshua says:

7 "But I am telling you the truth. It is expedient for you that I may be coming away, for if I should not be coming away, the consoler will not be coming to you."

In other words, Yeshua is saying, *"The best thing for Me to do for your sakes is to 'come away' (which is a euphemism for 'die'). I have to leave – I have to die, because if I don't, then the consoler won't come."* The consoler, which, you'll remember from John 14, is *"the spirit of truth that will be teaching you all."*

I can't make too big a deal about this: The consoler, the spirit of truth, is what you and I have access to today that could not have been possible apart from Yeshua dying for our sakes.

Yeshua expands on the importance of the consoler – the holy spirit – especially in verses 13-15:

13 "Yet whenever that may be coming -- the spirit of truth -- it will be guiding you into all the truth, for it will not be speaking from itself, but whatsoever it should be hearing will it be speaking, and of what is coming will it be informing you.

14 That will be glorifying Me, seeing that of Mine will it be getting, and informing you.

15 All, whatever the Father has, is Mine. Therefore I said to you that of Mine is it getting, and will be informing you."