

I'm thankful for our Patreon supporters who help us share the message of God's unconditional love. As the world awakens to love, grace, joy, peace, and the truth of God's nature, I will be sharing my journey of rediscovering my identity as God's child and breaking free from self-imposed limitations. It is time to discover who we truly are and embrace the depth of unconditional love to find genuine connection with God. Are you defined by others or by your past? In the ocean of unconditional love, we discover our true identity and realise that as His beloved children, God is drawing us back into intimate communion with Him.

First love, whether with God or another person, is a captivating experience that consumes our thoughts, leaving us eagerly anticipating the next encounter. First love signifies a prioritisation, placing it above all else in our lives – before family, work, or possessions. If our relationship with God is our top priority, everything else falls into place. First love is our eternal identity, originating in *Perichoresis*.

God's pursuit of intimacy with us is likened to a marriage, symbolising the deep union He desires. This journey is personal, inspiring each of us to embark on our own. Our union with God is not just spiritual; it involves a profound connection of spirit, soul, and body, becoming one flesh. Jesus' promise of preparing a place for us speaks of dwelling with Him presently, not just in the future. This intimacy transcends physical union and gender, restoring our true identity as beloved sons and daughters of God. The process leading to this consummation is like a betrothal.

As individuals and humanity, we've strayed from God's path, seeking independence, yet He relentlessly pursues us like a good shepherd. His love remains constant and unwavering, demonstrated in Christ. Through the Spirit, we're adopted as God's children, heirs with Christ, experiencing profound intimacy with the Father. First love isn't merely an emotional state; it's our eternal identity, essential for our destiny. Like the Ephesians, we may have prioritised duty over intimacy, but God invites us back into that deep, intimate relationship with Him.

In Greek, *eros* represents erotic love, absent in the New Testament; *phileo* denotes deep liking or friendship, affection and camaraderie; *storge* reflects natural affection within families and spouses in a healthy marriage; *agape*, God's love, is characterised by deliberate action, choosing to love even enemies, mirroring God's selflessness. This sacrificial love, evident throughout Scripture, calls us to restore first love for God, ourselves, and others.

My friend Lindy shared this week that God had been asking her how much she loved herself. That is an important question for us all to ponder.

Love is more than a fleeting emotion; it embodies the essence of God and is the most potent force in existence. As Jesus instructed us to love one another as he loved us, we see that true love originates from God and manifests in our actions. This *agape* love cannot be manufactured independently but springs from our connection to God. It is practical, selfless, and unwavering, seeking others' highest good without expecting anything in return. Love confronts challenges with truth and humility, inspiring kindness and reconciliation, even amidst opposition.

Ultimately, God's love encompasses every aspect of our being, forming the bedrock of His kingdom and leading us to experience His presence and purpose fully. Love is described in the Song of Songs as unquenchable flames of fire, stronger than death. It is the ultimate force for good, offering acceptance, affirmation, and worth. God has sung an eternal song of love to us since the dawn of time. To embrace this love, we must surrender completely, casting aside our fears and insecurities to trust in God's unconditional love. Resting in His love is key.

Summary by Jeremy Westcott.