

daughter or a grandchild. Could you do what God did? Could you give your child or grandchild over to a violent death in order to save undeserving people? Yet this is how agape love works. Love is selfless because it places the needs of others before our own. For most of us this is a work in progress. We are aspiring to emulate God's selflessness toward us. We may not ever be required to make a sacrifice like that but there are plenty of things we can do daily to "love your neighbor as yourself" (Matt. 22:39).

Perhaps we should reinforce the fact that selfless love does not mean pandering to ungodliness. As much as we can, we must be like Paul in matters of opinion when he became all things to all men (1 Cor. 9:19-23). We can have strong opinions and still yield to one another in love. We can never compromise truth, however, and call that love. Yet there seems to be a trend in our culture of siding with evil in the name of love. People that do so may not like the charge of "siding with evil" but that is exactly what happens when evil is condoned (Rom. 1:32). We can never be exactly sure in each case the reason it is happening. Maybe some of it is cowardice. Some might be too afraid to offend others. Maybe some are mistaking definitions and think that love requires the church to be tolerant of all choices. Whatever the reason, no one is showing love toward another by endorsing his/her sin. Consider the following:

- God loved the world so much that He gave His Son to die on the cross for it (John 3:16). He then sent the Spirit to convict that same world of sin (John 16:8).
- The writer of Hebrews says, "For whom the Lord loves He chastens" (Heb. 12:6). God's love is demonstrated in His discipline.
- Paul challenged the church in Corinth for its tolerance of a brother's transgression (1 Cor. 5). They were reminded that tolerating sin does not honor the example of Christ.

We learn from such examples that love is selfless toward others but never tolerant of sin. Go the extra mile. Give the shirt off your back. Give the benefit of doubt. Yield in matters of opinion. But never act like someone's rejection of God's will is a good thing. No matter what we've heard about love from the world, it is not an act of love to let others think we are okay with their sin. It isn't even kind. Let's be selfless in our love and remember that love always does what is **best** for others.

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July 26, 2020

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“What Is Love?” (Part 4)

David B. Smith

2. Agape love is selfless. We mean by this that true love always works what is in the best interest of others. Remember that Paul said love “does not seek its own” (1 Cor. 13:5). When it is applied agape love will always require some sort of sacrifice in order to benefit another. We might be required to give up time or money or more. God certainly did. “But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us” (Rom. 5:8).

For us, it is good to be reminded often that Jesus was the Son of God. That father/son relationship helps us in some way to understand how real loves works. God arranged a plan to save the world of people and the success of that plan depended on the bloody death of His Son! Let that sink in for a moment. Imagine that the object of the sacrifice was your own son or

- **Colleen Dennis** received a good report from last week's endoscopy. Biopsy results show no evidence of any thing that could lead to ulcers or stomach cancer. Colleen thanks all for the prayers
- **Genni Actkinson**, James and Becky's daughter, is recovering very well following hernia repair surgery this week.

| <u>Prayer List</u> | | |
|--------------------|-------------------|----------------|
| James Anderson | Judy Lusk | Tim Randolph |
| Patricia Anthony | Tommie Grandfield | Tony Miller |
| Jim Bethune | Bill Greer | Lexi Owens |
| Nancy Birch | Fred Hafley | Carlos Shannon |
| Mike Bouldin | Kathy Hamilton | Janice Smith |
| Susie Hargis | Bessie Smithson | Ellen Miller |
| Grayson Ledbetter | Diane Stacy | Loretta Leffew |
| John Webster | Juanita Johnson | Dot Bryant |
| Steve Gaines | | |

Additions to Prayer List: The following names are being added to our prayer list. For complete information, see list on either bulletin board.

- Juanita Johnson is the mother of Diane Walker. She is suffering from Alzheimer's in Maryland. David and Diane usually go there in July to assist but are unable to this year. Keep this family in your prayers.
- Dot Bryant is the sister-in-law to Sue Swafford and the aunt to J.B. Swafford. She is now in a Dunlap nursing home under Hospice care with terminal malignant brain tumors.
- Tim Randolph, Chris Randolph's uncle, is now on the recipient list for a heart transplant as doctors feel there are no additional options.
- Friend of George and Patricia Farmer, Steve Gaines, is suffering with some serious health problems and they have asked that we add him to our prayers.

Family News

- Florida seems to be the destination of choice for several of our members recently: Donny & Cindy Davidson and the Herron family. The most recent visitors this past week were David, Ashley, and the girls, Beverly and her girls, Joan and Granny (They did discover the Donut Hole while in Destin). Reportedly, an enjoyable time was had while on vacation.
- Freeman and Debbie Cooper recently visited Myrtle Beach.
- Joel & Brenda Laney were in Louisville last Saturday for the one-year birthday party for their first great-grandchild.

Announcements

- **Directory Update:** David Walker's new cell phone number is (423) 260-8717.
- **David's Lesson for Sunday:** This Sunday, David's lesson is entitled "We Are Going to Win." If you want to be a bit prepared ahead of time, read and be familiar with the twelfth chapter of Revelation.
- **Card Shower:** As was recently announced, Cindy Haynes' mother is now suffering from terminal cancer and is under the care of Hospice. Cindy suggested that "Thinking of You" cards would be helpful in providing cheer to her mother. Send cards to the following address: Ellen Miller, 1225 Coke Bowman Road, Soddy-Daisy, TN 37379
- **Wednesday Evenings:** This is just a reminder that David is on YouTube and Facebook each Wednesday evening at six.
- **Reminders:** Our online worship service is still being posted to Facebook and YouTube each Sunday morning and, for anyone who wishes to do so, contributions can still be made using Venmo: NorthHamilton-ChurchOfChrist or can be mailed to P O Box 517, Soddy-Daisy, TN 37384

Upcoming Birthdays and Anniversaries

Birthdays

July

28 – Debbie Cooper

30 – David Walker

31 – Marilyn Everett

August

1 – Lily Anderson, Graceley Smith, Hadley Stewart

2 – Jayden Dupree, Autumn Laster, Austin Laster

3 – Erica Anderson, Boston Courtney

4 – Alice Richardson

5 – George Farmer, Madeline Lowman

6 – Hank Stewart

Anniversaries

July

26 – Doug & Sue Wright, Joe & Erica Anderson

28 – Kenny & Cindy Rose

August

3 – Tim & Teresa Smith

8 – Donny & Cindy Davidson