

“This Thing Called Love”

by Candace Dannaker

1 Chronicles 16:34,41 John 13: 34-35

You might remember the song, “What the World Needs Now.” The lyrics go like this:

*“What the world needs now Is love, sweet love.
It's the only thing, that there's just too little of.
What the world needs now Is love, sweet love.
No not just for some, but for everyone.
Lord, we don't need Another mountain.
There are mountains and hillsides enough to climb.
There are oceans and rivers enough to cross.
Enough to last 'til the end of time.
What the world needs now is love sweet love.”*

Remember that lovely song? It was released in 1965.

Hal David wrote the lyrics and Burt Bacharach the music.

Now not only do we sing of love, this subject of love is so important, that it is considered the Greatest Commandment in Jewish law and so important that it is the Commandment from Christ to His disciples. “Love as I have loved you.”

God knows that love, especially that unconditional love, that Christ came to live and die for, is something that many humans just don't have enough of.

So many don't know how to give it to Him or to others, those others who are their neighbors.

Love your neighbor as yourself. So important, it was established as a commandment after the commandment on loving God.

In James 2: Verse 8 is that Levitical Law, “Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself with all thy heart: is called the Royal Law.

If we consider all the issues in the world, that lack of love for our neighbor, that is basic to so many horrors committed by other human beings.

A few years ago, perhaps you recall the murders of those innocent men and women in their church, after the racist murderer attended their Bible study. His rage, his lack of love.

This lack of love continues because here and in many parts of the world, we hear or read of some horror enacted on others because of some rage that has been stirred in another person. Rage inside a soul who perhaps wasn't taught or shown unconditional love or perhaps never received that love that we all seek.

You may recall the horrible massacre of innocent people worshipping in their synagogue in Pittsburg.

What is interesting to consider, is that those Jewish worshippers who were attacked are from the ancestors of our own Jesus Christ. They worship the one God and established that truth for all to follow.

The summary of the Torah found in Deuteronomy that is recited morning and evening by every pious Jew.

Is the Shema. It is their most important prayer.

From Deuteronomy 6: 4-5

⁴ Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. ⁵ Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.

We are to show our love for God with *agape* love. *Agape* love is more a “doing” than a “feeling” word, although it involves both. *Agape* requires action— requires us to demonstrate our love in some practical fashion.

The Mr. Rodgers television show was an avenue for the Rev. Fred Rodgers to show and demonstrate his *agape* love for children. Giving them practical and loving life lessons to use in their lives.

His dialogue of love showing how to make love an action.
The greatest Commandment is love. That is what we are called to do.

Look for those opportunities. You can show a child love in so many ways.

If we reach out in love, we can plant that seed of love.

The child who is neglected, lonely, hungry can become filled with hate or become filled with love.

Actions, words, involvement in the lives of a child or any person who is hurting in some way can be the avenue that opens them to returning that love to another.

Love isn't easy, it never was. We aren't asked to do the easy things. We can't do just a little bit and feel good about it. We are to go the distance.

Frances Chan writing in his book “Crazy Love” wrote of those he called Lukewarm Christians, in his long list of describing their habits, he wrote:

Lukewarm Christians give God their leftovers—not their first and best.

Stop calling your complacency and apathy “a busy schedule” or “bills” or “forgetfulness.”

Call it what it is, Evil in action. He was harsh in his descriptions, but if we really notice, throughout the Scriptures, Christ talks and lives love in His every action. It was so important, he died for it.

Peter lived and died for it,

Paul lived and died for it

Let us live and die in it.

Our legacy of love will live beyond us. Our lives, our money, our time, our very self, belongs to our Lord God.

The Scriptures Old and New tell us,

Psalm 119: 1-8

*Blessed are those whose ways are blameless,
who walk according to the law of the Lord.*

John 13:34-35

³⁴ “A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. ³⁵ By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”

Mark 12:

Answered Jesus, “is this: ‘Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one.’³⁰ Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’

³¹ The second is this: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no commandment greater than these.”

The commandment of love... the Royal Law....

Sacrifice of time, money, self,

given to another is Agape....

love in action.

May we be one in Christ with “This Thing called Love,” in His precious name, Amen