

What Does GOD Say...



Saturday, 2/13 at 4:00 | Sunday, 2/14 at 9:00

The Transfiguration of Our Lord – 2021

Introduction: Dear friends in Christ: Today we are focusing on three topics:

- ✦ The season of Epiphany.
- ✦ The word “love” in the Bible.
- ✦ The upcoming season of Lent.

1. **The Season of Epiphany:** It ☞ began with the baby Jesus receiving special gifts from the wise men – *pointing to His kingship, priesthood, and sacrifice*, ☞ continued with Jesus’ baptism, teaching, and miracles, and ☞ ends with Jesus’ transfiguration. What is the overall message of the season? **JESUS IS GOD** – the **One** ✦ promised to Adam and Eve, ✦ written about by the prophets, and ✦ praised by the angels. *So let us be sure that His sacrifice opened heaven for all **who** – by God’s grace – **keep repenting and believing!***

2. **The Word “Love” in the Bible:** In the NAS version, “love” appears 348 times – 133 in the OT and 215 in the NT. There are four *Greek* words in the love category – *agape*, *philia*, *storge*, and *eros*; sometimes they are translated *love* and they all include some type of *action*. Let’s find out more about each of the four:
- a. **Agape** (ἀγάπη) – It’s the *most common* of the four Greek words found in the Bible. The simplest translation is **love**, and it does include action. The Bible says: “...let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth” (1 Jn. 3:18 ESV). In most cases, we could say that **Agape love is taking sacrificial action to supply someone else’s need!**
 - i. Love toward persons: ^{NAU} **Ephesians 5:25** “Husbands, **love** your wives, just as Christ also **loved** the church and gave Himself up for her...”
 - ii. Love toward God: ^{NAS} **Matthew 22:37** [Jesus] said..., “You shall **love** the LORD your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.”
 - iii. Love from God: ^{NAU} **John 3:16** “For God so **loved** the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.”
 - iv. Love toward things: ^{NAU} **1 John 2:15** Do not **love** the world nor the things in the world. If anyone **loves** the world, the **love** of the Father is not in him.”

- b. **Philia** (φιλία) – Think about Philadelphia, *the city of brotherly love*. The word means **friendship**. The Bible includes a similar Greek word (φίλος), which means *friend* or designates a *close relationship*, but *philia* means the **action** of friendship, which is only used *once in the Bible and* in a *negative* way. ^{NAU} **James 4:4** “You **adulteresses** [*unfaithful people*], **do you not know that friendship** [φιλία; *the action of gladly sinning*] **with the world is hostility toward God?**
- c. **Storge** (στόργη) – The meaning is **affection**. However, *in the Bible*, the word is used *only in a negative sense*, meaning *without affection*.
- i. **Romans 1** has a list of *sad realities* which describe *unbelievers*; the list includes people who are “...**without understanding, untrustworthy, unloving** [ἄστοργος], **unmerciful**” (Rom. 1:31 NAU).
 - ii. **2 Timothy 3** has another list of the *sad realities* which describe *unbelievers*; the list includes people who are “...**unloving** [ἄστοργοι], **irreconcilable, malicious gossips, without self-control, brutal, haters of good** [and so on]” (2 Tim. 3:3 NAU).
- d. **Eros** (ἔρος) – This fourth Greek word can be defined as **passion**, *but it is NOT found in the Greek NT*.

3. **The Upcoming Season of Lent:** See today’s inserts:

- a. Letter – The Season of Lent 2021: Please read it to discover why we should be both SAD and

GLAD during Lent, ✦ why we have good reason to gather twice each week, ✦ something NEW for the 2021 Lenten season, ✦ a list of the sermon dates, titles, and readings, and ✦ our service schedule.

- b. 3 Easy Steps: See the other insert; one side is for this Wednesday – *which **Ash Wednesday***, the other side is for **next Saturday / Sunday**. The Bible says: “...as you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, having been firmly rooted and now being built up in Him and established in your faith, just as you were instructed, and overflowing with gratitude” (Col. 2:6-7 NAU). This insert includes **3 easy steps** that I am asking ALL OF YOU TO TAKE EACH WEEK and through which God the Holy Spirit will work to further ✦ root you, ✦ build you up, ✦ establish you, and ✦ make you thankful!

Conclusion:

- ✓ **Truth**—Jesus is the Son of God, *our all-sufficient Savior!*
- ✓ **Relevance**—Love is not a word, *but an action*; not an action for our benefit, *but to help someone in need!*
- ✓ **Inspiration**—Since the Son of God showed tremendous love for us, let us be inspired to ✦ courageously and ✦ quickly take *loving action to benefit others!*

Let Us Pray: Father in heaven, as we leave the season of Epiphany and step into Lent, *help us unto Your glory!*

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