

INTRODUCTION.

- A. Scripture text: **1Corinthians 1:26-31**.
- B. Agape... a free and decisive act of the mind to show selflessness.
- C. No matter how others treat us or act in relationship to God, agape means we will show love and do the right thing in return.
- D. Today, two things that agape love is not... it is not arrogant or rude (Prv. 16:18).
Pride goes before destruction, And a haughty spirit before stumbling.

I. THE ARROGANCE EFFECT.*

- A. Paul says that love is not arrogant.
- B. Simply defined arrogance means proud (NIV), puffed up (KJV), or conceited.
- C. The Scriptures speak of different kinds of arrogance:
 - 1. Competition in religious areas (1Cor. 1:11-12; 4:6, 18-19).
(1Cor 1:11-12) For I have been informed concerning you, my brethren, by Chloe's people, that there are quarrels among you. **12** Now I mean this, that each one of you is saying, "I am of Paul," and "I of Apollos," and "I of Cephas," and "I of Christ."
(1Cor 4:6) Now these things, brethren, I have figuratively applied to myself and Apollos for your sakes, that in us you might learn not to exceed what is written, in order that no one of you might become arrogant in behalf of one against the other.
(1Cor 4:18-19) Now some have become arrogant, as though I were not coming to you. **19** But I will come to you soon, if the Lord wills, and I shall find out, not the words of those who are arrogant, but their power.
 - 2. Intellectual pride (1Cor. 1:26-29).
For consider your calling, brethren, that there were not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble; **27** but God has chosen the foolish things of the world to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to shame the things which are strong, **28** and the base things of the world and the despised, God has chosen, the things that are not, that He might nullify the things that are, **29** that no man should boast before God.
 - 3. Living above the rules (1Cor. 5:2).
And you have become arrogant, and have not mourned instead, in order that the one who had done this deed might be removed from your midst.
 - 4. Having knowledge and knowing it (1Cor. 8:1).
Now concerning things sacrificed to idols, we know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge makes arrogant, but love edifies.
 - 5. Being a "super Xian" (Col. 2:18).
Let no one keep defrauding you of your prize by delighting in self-abasement and the worship of the angels, taking his stand on visions he has seen, inflated without cause by his fleshly mind,...
 - 6. Racial barriers (Gal. 3:28).
There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.
 - 7. Cultural arrogance (Jn. 1:46).
And Nathanael said^ to him, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" Philip said^ to him, "Come and see."
- D. But arrogance can be overcome. Five suggestions:
 - 1. Don't lust after the world, love the eternal things (1Jn. 2:15-17; 2Cor. 4:18).
(1Jn 2:15-17) 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. **16** For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world. **17** And the world is passing away, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God abides forever.
(2Cor 4:18) while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.

2. Realize that godliness is, great gain (1Tim. 6:3, 6).
If anyone advocates a different doctrine, and does not agree with sound words, those of our Lord Jesus Christ, and with the doctrine conforming to godliness,... **6** But godliness actually is a means of great gain, when accompanied by contentment.
3. Humbleness (not arrogance) results in exaltation (Jas. 4:10; 1Cor. 10:12).
(**1Cor 10:12**) Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall.
(**Jas 4:10**) Humble yourselves in the presence of the Lord, and He will exalt you.
4. Have the attitude of X (Phil. 2:5-7).
Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, **6** who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, **7** but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men.
5. The meek (gentle) will inherit the earth (Mt. 5:5).
"Blessed are the gentle, for they shall inherit the earth."

II. THE RUDENESS BARRIER.*

- A. Rudeness is not easily defined in the Scriptures. In 1Cor. 13:5; the NAS says "unbecomingly," the KJV says "behave unseemly," and the NIV says "rude."
- B. Simply defined rudeness means to behave disgracefully or indecently as to be ashamed.
- C. There are different kinds of rudeness:
 1. Language and attitude of he/she has "a chip on their shoulder" (see Mt. 7:1-5).
 2. Dress styles and attire (1Tim. 2:9-10).
Likewise, I want women to adorn themselves with proper clothing, modestly and discreetly, not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly garments; **10** but rather by means of good works, as befits women making a claim to godliness.
 3. Nakedness (Deut. 23:14; Ex. 20:26; Rev. 16:15).
(**Deut 23:14**) "Since the LORD your God walks in the midst of your camp to deliver you and to defeat your enemies before you, therefore your camp must be holy; and He must not see anything indecent among you lest He turn away from you.
(**Ex 20:26**) And you shall not go up by steps to My altar, that your nakedness may not be exposed on it.
(**Rev 16:15**) ("Behold, I am coming like a thief. Blessed is the one who stays awake and keeps his garments, lest he walk about naked and men see his shame.")
 4. All kinds of sexual sins:
 - a. Fornication (1Cor. 6:18-19).
Flee immorality. Every other sin that a man commits is outside the body, but the immoral man sins against his own body. **19** Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own?
 - b. Lesbianism (Rom. 1:26).
For this reason God gave them over to degrading passions; for their women exchanged the natural function for that which is unnatural,
 - c. Homosexuality (Rom. 1:27).
and in the same way also the men abandoned the natural function of the woman and burned in their desire toward one another, men with men committing indecent acts and receiving in their own persons the due penalty of their error.
 - d. Adultery (Heb. 13:4).
Let marriage be held in honor among all, and let the marriage bed be undefiled; for fornicators and adulterers God will judge.
 - e. Lustful minds (Mt. 5:27-28; 1Cor. 7:36-38).
(**Mt 5:27,28**) "You have heard that it was said, 'YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT ADULTERY'; **28** but I say to you, that everyone who looks on a woman to lust for her has committed adultery with her already in his heart.
(**1Cor 7:36-38**) But if any man thinks that he is acting unbecomingly toward his virgin daughter, if she should be of full age, and if it must be so, let him do what he wishes, he does not sin; let her marry. **37** But he who stands firm in his heart, being under no constraint, but has authority over his own will, and has decided this in his own heart, to keep his own virgin daughter, he will do well. **38** So then both he who gives his own virgin daughter in marriage does well, and he who does not give her in marriage will do better.

D. Overcoming the rudeness barrier:

1. Seek things that make peace and build up (Rom. 14:19).
So then let us pursue the things which make for peace and the building up of one another.
2. Seek to do the loving thing (1Pet. 4:8; Rom. 12:21).
(Rom 12:21) Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.
(1Pet 4:8) Above all, keep fervent in your love for one another, because love covers a multitude of sins.
3. Look out for the well-being of the weak (Rom. 14:15).
For if because of food your brother is hurt, you are no longer walking according to love. Do not destroy with your food him for whom Christ died.
4. The way we treat others is how we treat X (Mt. 25:40).
"And the King will answer and say to them, 'Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, even the least of them, you did it to Me.'"
5. Learn to control your body not to obey its lusts (1Th. 4:3-5).
For this is the will of God, your sanctification; that is, that you abstain from sexual immorality; 4 that each of you know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor, 5 not in lustful passion, like the Gentiles who do not know God;

CONCLUSION AND INVITATION.

- A. When we make the decision to love (agape) we will not be arrogant or rude. We have made the decision to do right.
- B. Our next lesson will cover the topics that say love is not irritable or resentful. It is the "Irritation Explosion" and the "Resentful Memory."
- C. Plan of salvation for non-Xians, erring Xians.

* Thanks be to Anthony Ash, *Decide to Love*.