

## I Always Love You

Recently, I enjoyed watching “Dolly Parton’s Heart Strings” on Netflix. It gives new background to one of Dolly’s signature songs told from the perspective of Porter Wagoner, her business partner, and mentor. After some successes, Dolly’s music was not selling anymore, and Wagoner challenged her, saying, “Listen, Dolly. Why don’t you write a song about love? Love is a universal language, and it is what people need.” When she came to him with a new song called “I Will Always Love you” and played it to him with her guitar, both knew that would be the next huge hit, bigger than all her previous successes combined.

This story reminds us of the fact that love is a universal language and a common ground of people in all races, cultures, religions, and ages for all times. But the question is, “What is love?” Most of you are familiar with the four types of love in Greek: *Eros* - sexual love. *Philia*- love of friends and equals. *Storge* - love of parents for children. *Agape* – an unconditional love that God has for us. It seems that many people recognize *Philia*, *Storge* and *Eros* but think of *Agape* as an option.

However, from a Biblical point of view, the unconditional love of God (agape) is the source of all loves because God is love: “This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son – Jesus Christ as an atoning sacrifice for our sins” (I John 4: 10). Apostle Paul shows us some details of how God loves us with Agape: Love is patient, is kind, is not self-seeking, is not easily angered, keeps no record of wrongs, does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth, always protects, always trusts, perseveres, and always hopes. Therefore, God’s love for you and I never fail (1 Corinthians 13).

My friend. Do you sometimes feel empty, hungry, and thirsty in your love though you try hard to hold on to it? I think we all hit that zone at times. Don’t we? Jesus Christ, who is God’s love incarnate, invites you to come to experience his Agape love saying, “Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest” (John 11: 28). Also, he asks you and me to love one another with the same love that he has shown us. Imagine what would it be like as we walk on the path of Agape during this dark and depressing time? It will be like filling our hearts with the sweetest aroma and shining of the brightest light from heaven over the darkness in our lives and community.

In this confusing and crazy time with all the Covid restrictions and vaccine mandates from the government on one hand and all the fights against the government’s direction, such as the “Freedom-Convoy” and all other demonstrations, on the other hand many of us feel devastated and love seems to be bankrupted in many levels in our lives and communities. How do you express your emotional frustrations without ruining your dignity and hurting others around you? Here is good news for you that the Lord your God, who is the Mighty Warrior who saves, is with you, and he takes great delight in you and sings a divine love song over you, saying, “I Always Love You!”  
May God bless you.