

Love: “Without love, there is no reason to know anyone, for love will in the end connect us to our neighbors, our children and our hearts.” – Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

The word “Love” can be rather ambiguous. For example, if I say I love Chick-fil-A and then immediately say I love my wife, most people will understand I do not feel the same way towards my wife as I do towards a restaurant chain. In ancient Greek, one has the option to choose from three different words to more accurately describe what they mean by “love.” Eros, which is where we get erotic from, is a physical attraction sort of love. Phileo is a brotherly love, which is why Philadelphia is referred to as the “City of Brotherly Love.” And most importantly there is Agape, which is a self-sacrificial love.

Application: Often love is described as an emotion; something you can fall in and out of. The problem with this view of love is that it is based upon how you feel at a given moment. If you only “love” people when you feel like it, then relationships will come and go based upon emotion. Dr. King is most certainly not referring to this understanding of love. He is referring to an Agape vision for love. Agape love is action; patience, kindness, forgiveness, self-sacrifice, keeping no records of wrongs. Agape love is commitment to your relationships, even when you do not necessarily feel like it. Heed Dr. King’s guidance and allow Agape love to permeate your being. The result will be stronger relationships in all aspect of life.