

I. **Central Definitions of Racism**

- A. Racism can be defined as the belief that one people group is more valuable than another and the practice of distinguishing one people group as more important than another.¹
- B. “Fundamentally, racism has to do not merely with real or perceived differences between people groups but with the value and significance of these differences. It has to do with the presumption of superiority over other people groups and the conduct of personal and social life that manifest this presumption in personal, communal, and sociocultural ways. Racism has to do with beliefs, actions, and structures that centralize some by marginalizing others on the basis of supposed differences.”²
- C. Whereas the word racism is not in the Bible, the concept can be understood as a practice of unbiblical partiality (i.e. ungodly bias towards people groups that results in elevating one people group and demeaning another people group; **a respect of persons not sanctioned by God.**)

Key Point of Sermon:

The evidence that one has a genuine relationship with God will be revealed in in his or her love for others, which is not possible without first walking in love for God by obedience to His Word. One cannot to claim to have love for God and not love their brother or sister in Christ. Since God has saved people from all ethnicities, anyone who claims to love God but does not love their brother or sister in Christ who is Black, Asian, Indian, White, Latino, etc. is a liar and the truth is not in him (1 John 4:20). Let us make sure we know what love is according to God’s definition and function in that love accordingly.

¹ John Piper, *Bloodlines* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway), 239. Kindle Edition.

² Douglas R. Sharp, *No Partiality: The Idolatry of Race and the New Humanity* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2002), 52.

II. The Characteristic of Agape Love (1 Corinthians 13:4-8)

- A. Agape Love is *patient* – it suffers long or is able to put up with people, their issues and the issues they bring into our lives for a long period of time and in the proper way without responding in a hastily sinful way internally or externally.
- B. Agape Love is *kind* – to be genuine, sincere and willing in attitude, as well as genuine and sincere in the actions of ministering good and showing compassion towards others unconditionally for the glory of God and the blessing of others without looking for anything in return from others.
- C. Agape Love is *not jealous* – there is not a demeanor of dissatisfaction, rivalry or dislike towards others due to the fact or thought that they are or seem to be ahead of you, above you, superior to you, or have something you treasure at a level above you. This love is happy for others in their advancements ahead of you, achievements superior to you, accomplishments above you or acquisitions of things you treasure but do not have or do not have at the level of that person.
- D. Agape Love *does not brag* – it does not promote itself. It seeks to promote and praise God and others above self.
- E. Agape Love is *not arrogant* – it does not think of self as more important than others, better than others, or the creator and sustainer of all his or her own abilities, accomplishments, knowledge, blessings, liberties, benefits or experiences. Love has a right view of self, according to his position before God and his position before man with a submissive and servant heart towards God and man as empowered and commanded by God to do so.
- F. Agape Love *does not act unbecomingly* – it is not rude, rash, impolite, indecent, insensitive, inconsiderate, disrespectful or dishonorable in words, behavior, or actions towards others. Love is considerate, courteous, respectable, right, decent, delicate, sensitive or sympathetic in words, behavior, or actions towards others for the glory of God and the benefit of others.
- G. Agape Love *does not seek its own* – it does not live to please self. Love lives to please God, thereby seeking the greatest good of others for God's glory and for other people's utmost welfare.
- H. Agape Love is *not provoked* – it is not irritated, not easily annoyed, not easily upset, or quick to have a fit in difficult situations with people or in difficult situations in life overall. Love is peaceful in disposition, calm or gentle in difficult situations with people or in difficult situations in life overall.

- I. Agape Love *does not take into account a wrong suffered* – it does not keep a list in one’s mind with the intent to get back at the person for the sinful, troublesome, painful, or disappointing activities a person has done against them. Love has a mindset of compassion in relation to the one who has wronged them intentionally, unintentionally, actually or imagined.³ Love is willing and ready to forgive and forgiving according to God’s design.
- J. Agape Love *does not rejoice in unrighteousness but rejoices with the truth* – it does not take joy in, take pleasure in, or find satisfaction in evil or unrighteousness of any kind but it takes joy in, takes pleasure in, or finds satisfaction in right living practiced by others and the triumphs of others in right living practiced.⁴
- K. Agape Love *bears all things* – it does not give way to the temptation to respond in sin to the pressure put on them by others via their sinful attitudes, strange or unusual ways, or personal preferences, but seeks to do what is right by them or toward them according to the need of the moment on a consistent basis.
- L. Agape Love *believes all things* – it seeks to understand people in the best possible light without ignoring or disregarding their proven character flaws and sin issues. Love stays away from developing a suspicious, cynical, doubtful, skeptical, fault-finding, judgmental, or hypercritical pattern of thinking about a person as result of their proven character flaws and sin issues.
- M. Agape Love *hopes all things* – no matter what the situation, it considers the bright side of things for the person by looking to the grace of God in relation to the person.
- N. Agape Love *endures all things* – it continues to do what is right with people and in circumstances even when facing difficulty or hardships.

³ Rich Thomson, *The Heart of Man and the Mental Disorders: How the Word of God Is Sufficient, a Distinctly Christian Approach* (Alief, TX: Biblical Counseling Ministries, 2004), 241.

⁴ Wayne A. Mack, *Maximum Impact: Living and Loving for God's Glory* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Pub., 2010), 205.