THIS THING CALLED LOVE 2

There so many people saying, “I love you” under so many circumstances to so many people that it is difficult to know what they mean. We use to say to people we admired “I admire you,” or “I like you,” or some other phrase but we reserved “I love you,” for those very close and very special. I’m sorry, but I still do. I say “I love you,” very seldom and when I do I really mean it.

I suppose it is possible, since we have gotten so smart about this subject of “love,” for folks to understand more about this subject than I do. Instead of using the term for people in our family and people that are close, we seem to use it in a much larger sense. I have studied the Bible diligently for almost 70 years, and evidently I still do not see the “larger sense.”

I know the Bible tells us we are to “Love your enemies, and pray for them that persecute you;” (Matt. 5:44) and I think I understand what is being said. I doubt that most people do. Luke explains the idea a bit better, “But love your enemies, and do them good, and lend, never despairing; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be sons of the Most High: for he is kind toward the unthankful and evil.” (Luke 6:35)

Some so-called scholars would tell us that this is “Agape.” This is the kind that does not retaliate, “evil for evil,” (1 Peter 3:9) Paul explains further, “See that none render unto any one evil for evil; but always follow after that which is good, one toward another, and toward all.” (1Thess 5:15) That is “Agape,” and we should understand that. Most people don’t, however, so we should be careful how we use the phrase.

Love does not mean the approval of conduct, though many seem to think so.

www.oldpathspulpit.org
ed@oldpathspulpit.org
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