

Name _____

Sacrifice, Atonement, and the Virtue of Love

Answer Key

Watch the 6-minute video and answer the questions. Use your notes on the virtuous love of *agape*, the cheap imitations of *agape*, and the violations of *agape* to help you respond to the following statements and questions.

1. Explain what is meant by “relational vandalism.”
 - Relational vandalism is the indirect effect of evil that ruins our relationship with God and one another and creates a lack of trust and emotional damage.
2. How is relational vandalism an example of a cheap imitation or outright violation of virtuous love?
 - Relational vandalism is a violation of virtuous love because it distorts the unconditional and sacrificial dimensions of virtuous love, as it is manipulative and abusive. It not only “pollutes” the person who commits the sin but also effects everyone else in the community.
3. What did animal sacrifice symbolize for the ancient Israelites? What is the biblical word for this ritual?
 - The ancient Israelites believed that an animal’s life was a substitute for a person’s sins. When the animal died, it took away the person’s sins. The biblical word is *atonement*.
4. What did the rituals of atonement and purification accomplish?
 - Together, these sacrificial rituals made things right between the people and God. The people experienced God’s love and grace, which would ideally compel them to become people of love and grace.
5. From the perspective of the ancient Israelites, how is animal sacrifice an example of virtuous love?
 - Through animal sacrifice, the Israelites believed that God was offering a path to forgiveness and love. This reflected his unconditional care and concern for the well-being of his people.
6. In the Old Testament, the prophet Isaiah said that the ritual sacrifices of the people had become “meaningless.” How are these meaningless ritual sacrifices cheap imitations of virtuous love?
 - Even though the people—even the kings—were performing the rituals to purify themselves of sin, they were not helping the poor and oppressed.
7. How is Jesus becoming a servant an example of virtuous love?
 - Jesus is a king who becomes a servant and suffers and dies for the sins of the world. This is a selfless act, done out of concern for the well-being of all people.

