

What Can a Teen do to Help Break the Generation Gap?

Walter Lecko

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The first thing that one must do is re-evaluate your interpretation of what it means to love. Does your definition of love include patience, understanding, respect, compassion, and dignity for yourself and others? Does it seem to you as if this generation is more concerned about man's inhumanity to man in the ghetto, Biafra and Vietnam; than we are with man's inhumanity to one's neighbor? If you can't love your neighbor next door, or even someone in your own family, how can you talk about Vietnam?

(If someone says, "I Love God," yet hates his brother, he is a liar. For he cannot love God, whom he has not seen, if he does not love his brother, whom he has seen.) 1 John 4:20.

The principles of love must be applied to all generations of mankind.

We have a perfect example of love applied to all generations in the form of the Father's love for humanity in the giving of His Son. Our Lord Jesus Christ reflected this love and His entire life was an example of love. Love was Christ's medium of communication with everyone. Christ was willing to listen to everyone's problems and had compassion for all generations – the little children, the widow's son, the rich man, the harlot, the Cananite woman, the tax-collector.

Love is the main theme of Orthodox theology. Just as the Son reflects the love of the Father, we who are created in Their image have the potential to reflect Their love in our lives. One of the clearest definitions of love is found in *1 Corinthians 13:4-8*.

Love is patient and kind; love is not jealous, or conceited, or proud; love is not ill-mannered, or selfish, or irritable; love does not keep a record of wrongs; love is not happy with evil, but is happy with the truth. Love never gives up; its faith, hope, and patience never fail. Love is eternal.

When we are able to actualize this kind of love, we will find that all these characteristics will become a basic part of our personality. We will then, by example, not only open up the channels of communication but also avoid situations which lead to the breakdown of communications.