



NEW HEART BEAT DEVOTIONS

What is Love?

The word "love" is difficult to define. It can have a variety of related but distinct meanings in different contexts. One can say they love pizza. Here they mean, they like or enjoy pizza, but they would never have a relationship with pizza. One can say I love my cat or dog. Here, they enjoy their pet and can have a caring relationship with their animal. But all that is not the same as human love.

"Love is a set of emotions and behaviors characterized by intimacy, passion, and commitment. It involves care, closeness, protectiveness, attraction, affection, and trust. Love can vary in intensity and can change over time. It is associated with a range of positive emotions, including happiness, excitement, life satisfaction, and euphoria, but it can also result in negative emotions such as jealousy and stress. When it comes to love, some people would say it is one of the most important human emotions. Yet despite being one of the most studied behaviors, it is still the least understood."¹ C.S. Lewis's 1960 book "[The Four Loves](#)" explores the nature of love from a Christian and philosophical perspective using four Greek concepts for love: *storge*, *philia*, *eros*, and *agape*.

[Storge](#) (empathy bond) is liking someone through the fondness of familiarity, family members or people who relate in familiar ways. Lewis considered it responsible for 9/10 of all solid and lasting human happiness.² "A person will love their family regardless of whether they are people the person would be drawn to otherwise; family members often have nothing in common except familiarity and blood. This is a comfortable affection that can be taken for granted."³

[Philia](#) (friend bond) is the love between friends as close as siblings in strength and duration. The friendship is the strong bond existing between people who share common values, interests, or activities. ⁴ Friends, of course, care about one another, but it is not because of biological, feelings nor romance.

[Eros](#) (romantic love) is the sense or feeling of "being in love" or "falling in love". "It begins with Infatuation. (Intense feelings of attraction without a sense of commitment.) [It is possible to be infatuated with several persons at the same.] It then involves to an idealization of the other person and a need to maintain physical closeness."⁵ This love provides the highest form of physical and enjoyment. God made it that humans are the only species where "love making" is face to face. It can be so beautiful, but mankind was corrupted it. Sadly, Eros often involves selfishness without truly caring for the other. Without the other types of love, when Eros no longer satisfies, a person will often seek or be drawn away by another. People will often seek this love, thinking it will fill the void caused the lack fulfillment from the other love types. This word does not appear in the New Testament though it plays a major role in a lot of Old Testament problems.

[Agape](#)- (unconditional love or charity)" love embraces a deep and profound sacrificial love that transcends and persists regardless of events, circumstance, time, and space. It is not born out of emotions, feelings, familiarity, or attraction but from the will, desire, choice, and action. It includes faithfulness, commitment, and sacrifice without expecting anything in return. The New Testament references agape love over [200 times](#).⁶

Is this unconditional love possible? How can we get it? First, we must understand that God is love 1 John 4:8. God so loved the world (that includes you) that He gave His Son to die on the cross so that we could believe and be reunited with Him John 3:16. "We must regularly, consistently think about, rejoice in, and thank God for His love toward us. If we're not convinced that God loves us with an overflowing, unmatched love, we will never be able to love others as God does. If we doubt that God loves us, we won't overflow with love toward others."⁷

"Marriage involves falling in love many times. but always with the same person."

Charles Stambaugh.....

"But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Rom 5:8

^{1 5} verywellmind.com/what-is-love-2795343 ^{2 4} en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Four_Loves

³ christianity.com/wiki/christian-terms/what-does-agape-love-really-mean-in-the-bible.html

^{6 7} wf.org/keys-to-healthy-relationships/agape-love-christian-relationships

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