

GREATER *Love*

Overview:

Love is talked about a lot in the Bible—which makes sense, since Christianity is a faith of love and God is a God of love! There are a few significant types of love that appear in the Bible: Philia (deep friendship), Eros (romantic), and Agape (self sacrificial love).kills.

Lessons:

1. What is Agape Love?
2. What is Eros Love?
3. What is Philia Love?



WHAT IS AGAPE LOVE?

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TALKING POINTS

Agape love is not merely something God does, it is the heart behind everything he does. As we abide in Christ, this becomes true of us.

- Agape love is _____, _____- _____ love. It's the highest form of love, originating from _____ himself. **John 21:15-17, 1 John 4:8, 1 Corinthians 13:4-7**
- Agape love is always displayed in _____. God's agape love is displayed most clearly on the _____. **1 John 4:9-10**
- Agape love calls us to love others like _____ loved us. When we love one another, the _____ God reveals Himself to the world. **John 1:18, 1 John 4:19, John 15:12-13**

DISCUSSION

1. *Share about a person who loves well in your life. What are the qualities they embody that make their love special?*
2. *Read John 21:15-17. What has your understanding been of why Jesus repeats his question to Peter three times?*
3. *Read 1 Corinthians 13:4-7. Review the list. Which ones are toughest for you? How do you see love described as action from Paul's description of love?*
4. *Read 1 John 4:9-10. How do the ideas of incarnation and atonement differ from any other religion? Reflect on the statement, "Agape is rooted in the goodness of the giver, not in the worthiness of the receiver." Why is this idea so significant? Who in your life needs to hear this?*
5. *Read 1 John 4:19 and John 15:12-13. How do you think Christians are doing at demonstrating agape love today? What are some things Christians should be doing to show this self-sacrificial love to others?*
6. *How can you empty yourself for the good of someone else?*

WHAT IS EROS LOVE?

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TALKING POINTS

Eros was a form of love so distorted by Greek culture that the New Testament authors refused to use the word. But the concept is still God's, and there's an entire book in the Bible to prove it.

- Eros love is _____ between a husband and wife in marriage. It's a _____ from God. **Genesis 2:18,24; Proverbs 5:18-19; Song of Songs 4:9-10**
- Eros intensifies with _____ (agape love) and is diminished by _____. Good Eros takes _____. **Song of Songs 7:10**
- Today's _____ has a distorted view of Eros. God's message is to "not _____ love until the time is right". **Song of Songs 2:7, 1 Corinthians 6:18**

DISCUSSION

1. *(Watch this video for a quick overview of the book.) What's your familiarity with the Song of Songs? Why do you think it's worthy of being included in the Bible? How has our culture diminished eros love?*
2. *Read Proverbs 5:18-19. How does this passage reveal how God wants the sexual relationship to look between a husband and wife?*
3. *Read Song of Songs 6:4,8-9 and Song of Songs 7:1-6,10. How does eros love tend to get lost in marriage? How can this type of love become selfish? Why does it take work for eros to function well in marriage?*
4. *Read Song of Songs 2:7, Song of Songs 3:5 and Song of Songs 8:4. Why is it harmful to awaken eros love before marriage? What are some of the consequences that come with sharing eros love outside of the context God intended? What's your advice to young people who are being influenced by our over-sexualized culture?*

WHAT IS PHILIA LOVE?

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TALKING POINTS

Our culture is losing the art of friendship, and people are more isolated than ever before. Today we talk about “Philia” - a love that fills the gap between agape and eros.

- Philia is an affection toward others that grows beyond a _____ to become a _____.

John 11:1-3, 35-36

- Christians are marked by a love for each other rooted in our shared _____ and _____ in Christ. This love _____ anything we have in common with anyone else. **1 Thessalonians 4:9-10, Romans 12:10**

- Philia is the basis for a deep, lasting _____ that we share with our closest friends. These are the friends we need to help us grow in _____ and _____.

1 Samuel 18:1-3, Proverbs 17:17; 27:6; 27:17

DISCUSSION

1. *Who is someone you have to love (agape)? Who is someone you want to love (philia)?*
2. *Read John 11:1-3 and 35-36. How did Jesus demonstrate philia love in this story?*
3. *Read 1 Thessalonians 4:9-10. Why was it easier for the early church to be a “band of brothers”? What would it take for us to get back to that today?*
4. *Read 1 Samuel 18:1-3. Who are two or three of your “soul” friends? How have they helped you to grow closer to Jesus?*

