

God is Love

Everyone has some idea of love... teenage infatuation, romantic “love at first sight,” someone who does a lot for you, or grandmothers with cookies and hot chocolate. God’s descriptions of love go a lot deeper.

In the New Testament we see three main words used for love.

-*Storge*: family type love for immediate and extended family.

(This love is most “automatic” for most people in good families.)

-*Philia*: brotherly love for one’s close friends.

(This love develops between like-minded people who spend time together, have mutual interests and get along well.)

-*Agape*: the love which seeks the highest good for another person.

(This love not only seeks mutual interests, also seeks closeness, mutual maturity and deep honesty with one another, even when it is not easy or pleasant.)

It is *agape* love that we find most often in scripture. *Agape* is not just love of someone that is worthy, deserving and friendly, but rather a love born of the will that seeks the highest good of anyone and everyone, based on God’s call to reach the world with His love. We *agape* love when we return kindness for unkindness.

We also *agape* love when we share God’s word with those who don’t know Him or even don’t want to hear the truth. The man most responsible for my conversion to Jesus was a work partner at an electronics company who kept gently and respectfully inviting me, even when I had no interest.

God is like that. He lovingly calls when, even when, we don’t want to hear. He carefully arranges circumstances to encourage us to think about eternity, even when we are over-focused on selfish things. He courageously calls us even when we cover our ears in fear or rebellion. He loves us more than the human mind can even comprehend!

No wonder the inspired scripture tells us in I John 4:16, “God is love....” And no wonder John tells us that God loves us so much that He let his only begotten Son take our place on the cross - just so we could live with Him forever! Wow!

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