

Different Kinds of Love



The Love Of God (Day 7)
by Derek Prince

Dear friend,

Christmas is often associated with love and light. The Bible indeed says God is love and light. But the essential nature of God's love differs from other kinds of love.

In New Testament Greek, there are four basic Greek concepts, all of which in one way or another could be translated or represented as love.

The first word, *eros*, which produces the English word 'erotic', is primarily sexual and physical attraction. This kind of love offers no basis for a permanent relationship. Multitudes of marriages have gone to ground in ruin because they've made eros the basis, and it isn't a basis for a permanent relationship between two persons. It lasts only as long as the physical attraction lasts.

The second New Testament word is *storge*, which is found in form as an adjective in the negative form, *astorgos*, which means 'not having storge'. *Storge* could be best described as natural affection. This is the word that describes those natural bonds that hold human society together – primarily, of course, within the family. The natural affection or love of parents for children, of children for parents, of brothers and sisters for one another.

The third word is *philia*. The primary meaning of that is 'friendship'. But friendship is a word that, unfortunately, has been debased in much modern language. It is really a precious and honourable word. To be a friend has meaning. In the Bible, Abraham was described as "the friend of God" and it was a title of great honour.

We come now to the fourth word for love, *agape*. The word *agape* in the Bible usually denotes love that comes direct from God. *Agape* love is self-giving. It gives itself, not things. It goes the second mile. The first mile is duty. The second mile is *agape* love. It has no strings attached – it's unconditional. It doesn't say, "If you do this, then I'll love you."

This kind of divine love is perfectly demonstrated in Jesus. For just one example let us read Romans chapter 5, verses 6-8:

> “You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly. Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous man, though for a good man someone might possibly dare to die. But God demonstrates His own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” (NIV)

The emphasis is on the phrase *"His own love".* That’s agape love, divine love. While we were still powerless, while we were ungodly, while we were sinners, when we had no claim, when there was nothing in us to merit it – God demonstrated, visibly showed forth to the whole universe, the nature of His love in the death of Jesus Christ on our behalf.

For reflection and prayer

God loves you with His divine 'agape' love.

Devotional

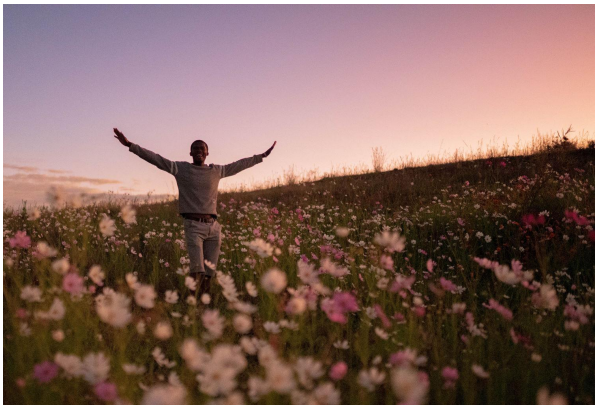
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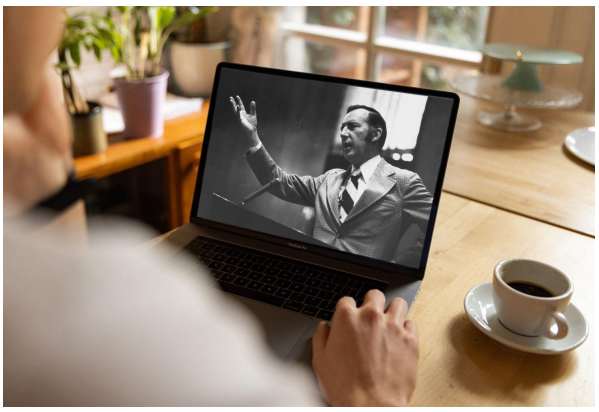
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