

THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF LOVE IN THE BIBLE

Early Christians would have been familiar with the different Greek words for love and would have probably had those words in mind when reading the Bible.

The four Greek words for love are:

- **Eros**
- **Storge**
- **Philia**
- **Agape**

EXAMPLES:

“Eros” is the Greek word that is used to describe the romantic love between a man and a woman. Though the word itself is not in the Bible, examples of God-given romantic love are everywhere. (Genesis 2:23, Song of Solomon 1:15-16)

Scripture helps us understand that romantic love is a good thing, but it’s not the only thing. It should be pursued in ways that please and honor the Lord. When “eros” love is pursued above everything else, the result is pain.

“Storge” is the Greek word used to describe the natural, overflowing love that family members have for one another. While the word itself is not found in Scripture, variations of it are. (Romans 12:10, 1 John 3:1)

God has saved us from our sins and brought us into His family. We are all joined together by the blood of Jesus, brothers and sisters in Christ. As members of God’s family, we are called to show “storge” love to one another. We must care for one another, serve one another, and demonstrate affection for one another.

“Philia” is the Greek word used to describe deep, meaningful friendships. This goes much deeper than simply acquaintances. “Philia” love binds two people together and holds them through thick and thin. “Philia” friends are faithful, staying close to you in your best moments and your worst. (1 Samuel 18:1)

Anyone who has experienced this kind of love will tell you that it is a wonderful gift from God. It is rare to have this type of friendship with a person. We should ask God to give us strong, close friends with whom we can share our hearts.

“Agape” is the Greek word for sacrificial, self-giving love that is primarily concerned with the good of someone else. Agape love is much more than a feeling, although feelings are certainly part of it. Agape love is demonstrated through actions. (1 John 4:8, Romans 5:8)

God didn’t just say He loves us. He proved the depth and height and breadth of His love by sending Jesus to die for our sins. It was love that took Jesus to the cross and it was love that held Him there. If He wanted, He could have saved Himself from His enemies. But he didn’t.

In the classic hymn “And Can It Be That I Should Gain”, we read these lyrics:

*"Amazing love! how can it be
That Thou, my God, shouldst die for me?
Amazing love! how can it be
That Thou, my God, shouldst die for me?"*