LOVE

* **Love is a word often used but rarely understood.**

The way our culture uses the word LOVE…

I love that song, I love Pizza, I love art, I love the Dallas Cowboys, I love my wife, I love my new Tech Gadget, I love my family, I love America, I love 70 degree weather, I love God…

We are in huge trouble if each of these LOVES bares the same weight and importance.

Again I say… Love is a word often used but rarely understood.

* **How important is it that we understand love? The Bible tells us definitively that God is LOVE. (1 John 4:8)**

It does not simply say that God loves… That God is loving… It says He IS LOVE. If you want to understand who God is you must understand Love. Love isn’t something God does… it is who He is!!

### Sometimes words get lost in translation. The bible is made up of the OLD and NEW testaments. The Old Testament is written in Hebrew and the New Testament in Greek. The Hebrew culture was vastly different from the Greek culture. Hebrews had 1 God, Greeks had many gods. Hebrews focused on the nature of God, Greeks focused on the nature of man. The Hebrews mainly use 1 word to describe LOVE… the Greeks had 4 words for different levels of love. There is a large difference between the 2 philosophies and their use of LOVE.

### AHAB – Hebrew for Love

### The Hebrew word for love is *AHAB* and it appears 250 times in the Old Testament. It simply means to have affection for… to love… This is a very simple word. The OT and Hebrew culture doesn’t over complicate the subject of Love.

### Deut 6:5 Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.

### This word is used in a broad number of ways.

### 1. AHAB - 1. Parent to child (Gen. 22:2; 25:28; 37:3; 44:20; Prov. 13:24; 2 Sam. 13:21)

2. **Opposite sex for one another** (Gen. 24:67; 29:18, 30; 29:32; 34:3; Judges 14:16..)

3. **Mother-in-law to daughter-in-law** (Ruth 4:15)

4. **Between neighbors** (Lev. 19:18, 34)

5. **Friends** (1 Sam. 16:21; Job 17:1; 2 Sam. 19:7)

6. **Servant and master** (Ex. 21:5; Deut. 15:16)

7. **People and military leader** (1 Sam. 18:16, 22)

8. **Teacher and student** (Prov. 9:8)

9. **Strangers** (Lev. 19:34; Deut. 10:18, 19)

10. **Yahweh and Israel** (Deut. 10:12; 11:13, 22; 19:9; 30:6; Josh. 22:5; 23:11; Jer. 2:2)

### These are very different relationships and obviously how AHAB, love, is lived out, differs from each relationship. Let’s compare Parent to Child and Servant and Master. God wants both these relationships to show Love. As we live them out, they would naturally look and feel different, but regardless of the differences – We Can Show Love!

**Besides Satan, who doesn’t belong on this Ahab list? …No One.**

I recently asked this same question to some young people and they said… “Haters don’t belong on the list. We shouldn’t show ahab to those that don’t show us ahab.”

I can’t find any scriptures that support their claim…. In fact we find the opposite.

**Matt 5:44-45 love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you 45 that you may be children of your Father in heaven.**

**Matt 5:46-48 If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are not even the tax collectors doing that? 47 And if you greet only your own people, what are you doing more than others? Do not even pagans do that? 48 Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.**

### Not only should you love your enemy and pray for them… but this a part of being a child of God! By BROADENING your love towards those you aren’t naturally inclined to love will bring you into that perfection, that wholeness or completion that we find only in our Father!

**Romans 12:20-21 “If your enemy is hungry, feed him;
   if he is thirsty, give him something to drink.
In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head.”[**[**e**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans%2012&version=NIV#fen-NIV-28266e)**]**

**21 Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.**

You overcome evil with good when you love your enemy!

Coals of Fire - In Paul’s day, when a fire went out in a home, it was difficult to reignite it. Therefore, if someone’s fire went out, a women would carry live coals in clay jars upon their heads to share with the person who had no fire. Thus, the implication here was not of burning one’s enemy, but of warming him in order to ultimately win him to the kingdom.

### Ahab is a broad love. Are we being narrow with our love?

### The western world draws most of its philosophy about love from the Greek culture. So when we talk about the Greek culture it gives insight into our own culture. Let’s talk about our world culture…

How does our world portray love? When I asked you that question, you might have thought of a scene from a movie or a lyric from a song. Our culture is very visual and experiential.

**Remember, while the Hebrews had 1 word for Love, the Greeks on the other hand had 4 separate words for Love. We are going to take a look at 3 of those words.**

### Eros – Emotional and Physical Love

### Eros was a character in Greek mythology. Perhaps you know him better by his Roman mythology - Cupid.

“Eros” love is sometimes translated as “romantic” love. It is meant to imply a strong, sudden, passionate love. The Greek word “Eros” is where we get words like “Erotic.” The Greeks viewed this kind of love almost like a kind of madness. It is where they got the idea for Cupid’s arrow; it strikes suddenly and is overwhelming. It’s almost like a madness that overtakes someone…

If you have ever found yourself doing stupid things for love… It was probably Eros love.

The Greek word “eros” is never used for “love” in the Bible. The Hebrew word Ahab is very broad in use and can be shown to anyone, but Eros love is narrow and situational. HOWEVER – there are examples of Eros love within your bible and they aren’t all negative. The Songs of Solomon displays a very physical & emotional love.

The church shouldn’t be afraid of eros love… Nor should we demonize it. While the Bible never defines love using the word Eros – it doesn’t attack the idea of eros love either… When it is in the proper context of marriage!

 The Bible repeatedly warns us not to fall into sin by making decisions based on eros love. King David’s affair with Bathsheba is a prime example of what can happen if we give-in to our passions. Eros love can be a strong force; sudden and hard to resist. King David was “a man after God’s own heart” and even he fell under its madness. Some people don’t even try to resist. They think all love is good, and most often, love feels good. Our culture tends to present love as some external force that cannot be stopped. The Bible says “God is love.” But C. S. Lewis wisely points out that this does not mean all “Love is God.”

While in the right context, Eros love can be a good thing… But let’s talk about that right context…

Eros is a very situational love….

A lot of bad choices made… 1 night stands… a lot of regrets – because of the situational love of Eros.

### A guy approaches a girl and says “I love you. I want us to be together.” That’s some Eros love going on. The girl responds “I love you too. I want us to be friends.” That is Philia love.

* Philia – Friendship Love

### We recognize the word Philia and its meaning from the name of a famous American city… Philadelphia – The city of brotherly love. It is the love of friendship.

### Philia love can be great. We’ve all had wonderful friendships in our life that have brought us joy and happiness. Friendship is important! You should have friends and you should be someone’s friend.

### John 15:14-15 (NIV) 14 You are my friends if you do what I command. 15 I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master’s business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you.

### Jesus calls us friend and has Philia towards us in John 15. He no longer calls us servants but friends.

### Philia however has a down fall. Philia is captive to the sifting sands of situation as well as perception and expectation. Friendship love breaks down when someone stops acting like a friend. It is a natural human response that if someone does something nasty to you, that you, in turn want to do something nasty to them. This is where Philia mindset can end up.

### 1 John 4:20-21 (Message) If anyone boasts, "I love God," and goes right on hating his brother or sister, thinking nothing of it, he is a liar. If he won't love the person he can see, how can he love the God he can't see? The command we have from Christ is blunt: Loving God includes loving people. You've got to love both.

### Strong words.

### Remember that God’s Love is broad. If your love for someone goes away when they do something you don’t like… That’s philia love. Loving God includes loving people. It’s very important we understand this. Now we know, not all people are easy to love all the time. Situations, expectations, and perceptions can change. But still the scripture is plain – if we are to love God we are to love people… even hard to love people. In order to do this we will have to broaden our love.

### Agape – Unconditional Love

### The greek word for love the most in the New Testament is Agape. It appears 250 times in your new Testament. The Greeks used Agape to mean True Love, a self-sacrificing and un-conditional Love.

### When 1 John 4:8 says God is Love – It says God is Agape.

### Unconditional means it can’t be earned, it can’t be lost, it can’t be strengthened or weakened, it doesn’t matter if you impress or disappoint, succeed or fail, dwell in the palace or the dungeon, live or die, are in good health or bad.

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### It’s like what Paul says… What can separate me from the Agape of God?

### Romans 8:35&37-39 35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword?

### 37 No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. 38 For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons,[[k](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans%208&version=NIV" \l "fen-NIV-28155k" \o "See footnote k)] neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, 39 neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

### How can you perceive such a powerful and perfect love?

**1 John 3:16 This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters.**

### His love is more than words… His love is action.

### Aren’t you glad His love isn’t Eros? Or Philia… but Agape

### WARNING!! We let this worlds philosophy on love creep into our Theology.

### If you are worshipping God in hope that you can FEEL his presence so that you will then know He loves you or perhaps make Him love you - You are operating under Eros Love Theology

### If you are living a life of Religion, following laws of man-made legalism or senseless tradition so that you will then know He loves you or perhaps make Him love you – you are operating under Philia Love Theology

### Because we don’t have to earn His love by worshipping… We get to FREELY GIVE worship because we Love Him

### Because we aren’t required to earn His love by living up to some standard of morality… We FREELY PRESENT our bodies as living sacrifices Holy and Acceptable

### 1 John 4:19 19 We love because he first loved us.

### Not only did He love us first… He hasn’t conditioned us to love him in return.

### He Chose to love us and gives us a choice to Love Him in return.

### The Power to Choose…

### Choose 1 time and then manage that choice

### His love is unconditional

### Let’s get real – Only God can give unconditional love in this life!

**1 Cor 13:4-8 Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. 5 It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. 6 Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. 7 It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.**

**8 Love never fails.**

We don’t have this Love fully… His Love is broad and ours is Narrow.

Romans 5:5 God’s love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit

**1 John 3:2 we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is**

He is Love and we will be Like Him

Heaven will be filled with so much love…

**BROADEN YOUR LOVE**

Love everyone equally? NO – Deut 6:5

Jesus and Fam scripture