

Day 1

NOTE:

The ancient Greek language had nine different words for “love”. Six definitions appear below. When we mention the word “love”, our English language does not define the type of “love” to which we refer except through the context of surrounding words – and even then, it can be a guessing game. Our English word “love” can mean the love God has for mankind, the love a person has for a best friend, the love a parent has for a child, or the physical act as in “to make love”. [The following definitions were found at <https://www.greecehighdefinition.com/blog/9-different-types-of-love-according-to-the-ancient-greeks>]

AGAPÉ: UNCONDITIONAL LOVE

Agapé (ἀγάπη) is an unconditional love that is not dependent on any external factors. Acts of charity and altruism are often born out of Agapé love... Agapé is the least selfish form of love and does not require anything in return. [The highest form of Agapé love was demonstrated by Christ Jesus as He surrendered His life on the cross to redeem us.]

PHILIA: SOUL CONNECTION

Philia (φιλία) is a platonic feeling. This Greek word for love implies spiritual connection, trust, and sharing of the same values. Philia usually grows between friends or family members. [The platonic love a friend has for a best friend; BFF(best friends forever)]

STORGE: DEVOTED LOVE

Storge (στοργή) ... usually relates to love within a family. While the care and devotion of Storge is an integral part of Philia’s connection, it may also be one-sided. An excellent example of Storge is when a parent cares for a child, makes them feel secure, comfortable, and safe, and [does not] expect anything in return.

PRAGMA: MATURE LOVE

Pragma (πράγμα) is an essential component of making relationships work in the long term. Pragma is love based on duty, reason, and shared goals. Like Philia, Pragma is not limited to romantic partnerships, although it is a vital part of romantic love. It is essential within families and even close friendships. Examples of Pragma manifestation are personal sacrifices for your partner’s benefit, making life and career choices that are best for your relationship rather than just yourself, and carrying out the daily chores and tasks needed to maintain a happy home. Pragma love is perhaps the most difficult to develop and maintain, as it requires continual effort, dedication, and often selflessness. However, the results are often extremely worthwhile in the long-term. Even arranged marriages have been sustained and made satisfying through Pragma, and many failing relationships have been saved.

EROS: SEXUAL DESIRE

In Ancient Greek mythology, Eros (Ἔρως) was a mischievous god of passion and fertility, who was shooting arrows into the hearts of people and immortals and making them feel a sudden overwhelming desire for each other. Although this desire can be interpreted as love, it is primarily physical attraction. That’s where the terms “erotic” and “erotica” came from that nowadays describe human sexuality. It is

common to mistake lust – or sexual desire – for romantic love. Sexual attraction can be a potent and overwhelming sensation, and even fool the brain into questionable decision-making.

PHILAUTIA: SELF-LOVE

Philautia (φιλαυτία) is a prerequisite to loving others [as the Greek philosopher Aristotle believed]. Healthy self-love is beneficial to every aspect of life, including relationships, and individuals who love themselves are usually more capable of both giving and receiving all kinds of love. Many destructive behaviors in a relationship can often be rooted in a lack of self-love... self-love can quickly turn into an unhealthy form when a person loves themselves more than anyone else. Unhealthy self-love can be expressed through an inflated ego and usually dependent on social status, abilities, or accomplishments rather than genuine virtues.

Q1. In lesson 2, question 4, we pledged to another person that we would pray, “God... give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know Him better”. Did anyone notice anything out of the ordinary?

Day 2

Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today’s study.

Made Alive in Christ

¹As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, ²in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient.

Q2. We’re living! How can we be “dead” as Paul writes in verse 1?

Q3. Who is the “ruler of the kingdom of the air”?

Q4. Does the “ruler of the kingdom of the air” affect Believers in Christ Jesus?

Q5. What are some examples that describe “ways of this world”?

Q6. I know that my children are disobedient at times. To whom is Paul referring when he says, “those who are disobedient”?


Day 3

Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today's study.

³All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our sinful nature and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature objects of wrath.

Q7. I believe in Christ Jesus. What does "All of us also lived among them at one time" mean?

Q8. If I still sin; if I have bad cravings; if I have covetous thoughts; does that mean that I am not really a Believer?

 As Paul admits in his letter to the Romans, he, too, struggled with sin.

Romans 7:18 I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. (19) For what I do is not the good I want to do; no, the evil I do not want to do -- this I keep on doing.

Q9. God is love. Everyone knows that. Right? I know He loves me. How can we be "by nature objects of wrath"?

Day 4

Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today's study.

⁴But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, ⁵made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions--it is by grace you have been saved.

Q10. How can we be made "alive with Christ"?

Q11. This is the second time in four verses that Paul writes, "we were dead in transgressions". Why do you think he is repeating himself?

Q12. Even though we discussed this in past lessons ... how do you define "grace"?

Q13. "...you have been saved". What does that mean to you?

Day 5

Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today's study.

⁶ And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, ⁷ in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus.

Q14. Would you consider verse 6 a promise from God to Believers?

Q15. Could the metaphor of "heavenly realms in Christ Jesus" refer to the sure truth of eternal life with Jesus? How would you explain it?

Day 6

Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today's study.

⁸For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith – and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God – ⁹not by works, so that no one can boast. ¹⁰For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

Q16. There seems to be a contradiction between verse 9 (“not by works”) and verse 10 (“do good works”). How would you explain the “contradiction”?

Q17. My neighbor is a good, kind, and friendly person and helps all of our neighbors with various thoughtful actions throughout the year from blowing snow from our driveways to sharing his garden produce, yet I do not think that he has a personal relationship with Jesus. Does verse 10 mean that he will be in Heaven, too?

Q18. Verse 8 states that grace is a gift from God. It is through that grace that we have been “saved”. “Saved” from what?

Q19. If we have been “saved” through grace, is “through faith” important?

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