

FOUR LOVES

Reflect on these questions by yourself or with your group.

In Greek, the primary language of the New Testament, there are several different words for love—four, to be exact. Two of them appear prominently in the New Testament.

- *Agape* (uh-GAH-pay) is the unconditional love God shows us and the unconditional love we can likewise show to others (see 1 John 4:7).
- *Philia* (fill-EE-ah) is affectionate love for a friend (see Romans 12:10), from which we get the name Philadelphia.
- *Eros* (AIR-oss) is sexual love that desires another person, from which we get the word *erotic*. (The word *eros* doesn't appear in the New Testament, but the idea is all over the Jewish scriptures—especially the Song of Songs.)
- *Storge* (STOR-gay) is the love shared in healthy families. (This word is also absent in the New Testament, but present in spirit.)

Q: Think back a year and compare where you were then with where you are now in each of the four loves.

• Family love

- ☐ Worse then because...
- ☐ About the same because...
- ☐ Better because...

• Friendly love

- ☐ Worse then because...
- ☐ About the same because...
- ☐ Better because...

• Erotic love

- ☐ Worse then because...
- ☐ About the same because...
- ☐ Better because...

• Unconditional love

- ☐ Worse then because...
- ☐ About the same because...
- ☐ Better because...

Q: Given what you've just written, are there things you'd like to do differently to help those areas where you're a little worse than you were last year?



DEAR GOD,

Write a prayer of thanksgiving and hope. Thank God for where you're better (or no worse) off. Ask God to help you make the progress you need to make to be where you'd like to be this time next year.