

WRITE ABOUT IT

- Q: Who are your closest friends?
- What makes them so close?

Look at 1 Corinthians 13:4-7.

- Q: Compare 1 Samuel 20 with these verses in 1 Corinthians 13. How do you think Jonathan and David stack up in the comparison?
- Compare your closest friendships with 1 Corinthians 13:4-7. How do you think you stack up?

~~four~~ loves

Greek, the language in which The New Testament was written, has several different words for love. Two of them appear prominently in the New Testament.

- *Agape* (uh-GAW-pay) is the unconditional love God shows us and the unconditional love we can likewise show others (see Mark 12:31).
- *Philia* (fill-EE-uh) is affectionate love for a friend (see Romans 12:10), from which we get the name *Philadelphia*.
- *Eros* (AIR-oss) is sexual love, from which we get the word *erotic*. The word *eros* doesn't appear in the New Testament, but the idea is all over the Song of Songs.
- *Storge* (STORE-gay) is the love shared in healthy families. This word is also absent in the New Testament but present in spirit.

WRITE ABOUT IT

- Q: How would you describe the love you show your family right now?
- Q: How would you describe the love you show your friends right now?
- Q: How would you describe the unconditional love you show others right now?
- Q: How would you describe your erotic love right now?
- Q: Which of the four loves is closest to where you think it should be right now?
- Q: Which kind of love needs the most work in your life?

[Love] is called Agape in the New Testament to distinguish it from Eros (sexual love), Storge (family affection), and Philia (friendship). So there are four kinds of love, all good in their proper place, but Agape is the best because it is the kind God has for us and is good in all circumstances.

—C. S. Lewis, *Letters of C.S. Lewis*
(Harcourt Brace Jovanovich)

GOD'S-EYE VIEW

Okay, maybe you're thinking unconditional love is hard to show. You're right. Only God can show it all the time. However, as we experience his unconditional love more and more, it becomes easier to show it to others.