

Group Questions

1. People use the word *love* in many different ways. Discuss as a group what the word means to each of you.
 - a. Talk about God's love. What is *agape* love?
 - b. What is the difference between God's *agape* love and our world's definition of love?
2. Biblical love is not just a feeling; it's an action. Read 1 Corinthians 13:1–13 and discuss what true love looks like in everyday life.
3. Love is a command, not a suggestion or an option. Find three verses that command us to love and read them aloud.
 - a. Discuss why Jesus can command us to love one another.
 - b. Share some ideas of how your group can showcase God's love to each other and to those in your community.
4. In this lesson, we've discovered five ways to become a more loving person. List them and consider how you can encourage each other to practice them on a day-to-day basis.
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
 - d.

e.

f.

5. The apostle Paul prayed that our love would “abound still more and more” (Philippians 1:9). Take a few moments to pray for each other, asking God to make us people who know God's love more deeply and love others more fully.

DID YOU KNOW?

Agape was not the only first-century Greek word for love. *Agape* existed before the New Testament but was used very rarely. It was the New Testament writers who provided its unique status as the defining word for God's active love for man. Another Greek word, *eros*, is not found in the New Testament. It referred to a sensual, erotic kind of attraction and activity. Another Greek word, *phिलανθρωπία* (and the verb *phileo*), is used extensively in the New Testament. It is the word for “tender affection” (see Acts 28:2—“unusual kindness”). (Note that Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, is called “the city of brotherly love” based on the Greek *phileo* and *adelphos*—“love” and “brother.”)

Notes

1. Philip D. Kenneson, *Life on the Vine: Cultivating the Fruit of the Spirit* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1999), 42.
2. Ray Ortlund, “One Another's I Can't Find in the New Testament,” The Gospel Coalition, March 30, 2017, <https://blogs.thegospelcoalition.org/rayortlund/2017/03/30/one-anothers-i-cant-find-in-the-new-testament-2/>.
3. C. S. Lewis, *The Four Loves* (New York: Harcourt Brace & Company, 1988), 121.
4. Craig Brian Larson, *750 Engaging Illustrations for Preachers, Teachers, and Writers* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2007), 472.