

Romans 13:8-14

May 11, 2022

The Bible has four Greek words for “love”:

Storge (stor-JAY) is family love, as in parents toward their children. Scripture uses it only in the negative in Rom 1:31 and 2 Tim. 3:3, describing people who are lacking in natural love.

Eros is romantic love.

Philia is a brotherly or friendly regard between equals.

The love commanded in verses 8-10 in this passage is *agape*, an unselfish love we are to show to our neighbors, that expects nothing in return.

But why love them as myself?

There's a recognition that all love has something of self in it. For the first three types, my interest is obvious. A loving family is a strong family, and all members

benefit. Romantic love gratifies my natural desires.

Friendships let us trade affection with those we enjoy and cooperate for everyone's good. These three types of love directly benefit us can cynically be explained by evolution or hormones.

But where's the “me” in *agape* love?

The answer is in 1 John 4: “We love because He first loved us.” We are able to spread love to others because God replenishes it from His infinite supply. It is still unselfish because God's love to us is unconditional and ours toward our neighbor should be too. But it is a love that rewards us as we give it. And we can find its source only in the everlasting Father.

Questions:

1. What kind of debt is prohibited in verse 8?
2. How does “Love your neighbor as yourself” sum up the other commandments? Can you think of other commandments or laws that fall under it?
3. How is our salvation nearer now than when we believed?

4. Can you think of other verses telling us to behave as if the “day” is upon us?

5. What is the armor of light?

6. Verse 14 says we are to put on the Lord Jesus Christ (like an item of clothing). What does this mean? According to other Scriptures, what else should we “put on”?

7. How do we sometimes make provision for the flesh?