

## "On the Way" 365 Bible Reading Plan

## 1 John 4

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John as he unfolds this inspired letter speaks more and more of the Love of God. God is love. God is the source of all true love. Those who are followers of Jesus tap into the heart of God through the Holy Spirit that lives within every child of God. The love that John is talking about here is the word agape. There are four words for love in the Greek language. Two are prominent in the New Testament and three are used several times. In our English language, we have many words that help us describe feelings and commitment in association with Love. Love is only one, like, fondness, friendship, each has its own kind of nuance and shade of relationships.

1. The first word is the **eros**, the verb form **eraō**, it is a love that is based on oneself. It is all about oneself. It is self-consuming and all about fulfilling one's desires. It is the basis of the word **erotic, eroticism**, etc. This does not have anyone at heart and people are a means to an end, self-satisfaction. *This is foreign to the follower of Jesus.*
2. The word that is often used with an alpha privative, or "a" prefix is the word **Storgos**, the verb form **storgēō**. When an "a" in this form is attached to the beginning of a word it "negates" the concept of the word to which it is attached. The word **Storgos** is usually written with the "a" as a prefix, **Astorgos**. The word **storgos** speaks of the feelings and relationships that should be natural, like the love of a mother for her child, and the love of siblings for each other. It is translated many times as "without natural affection" in the KJV Bibles. Because **astorgos** speaks of a person who does not have or exhibit a love that is common and natural to not just man, but animals.
3. The word we are most familiar with in the English language is **philos**, verb form **phileo**. Many times, this word is said to be a "brotherly kind of love" but that is only true if it is connected in compound form with the Greek word for "brother" which is **adelphos**. The two together are **Philos-adelphos** or **Philadelphia**, the City of Brotherly Love. *But philos at its heart and root is a love, feeling, or commitment that is based on pleasure.* That's right. A love that says, *I will treat you well and "love you" as long as you treat me well and I find happiness or pleasure in you. It is a love that says, "You scratch my back and I'll scratch yours."* It is a love that is based on you getting something in return or the involvement stops. *This is what I call transactional love.*
4. Finally, we come to the word that describes the Word that is descriptive of God's love for us and what should be our love for each other. **Agagé**, *is a love that is based on the character and choice of the one doing the loving instead of the attitudes and actions of the one being loved. This is the kind of feeling and commitment that God has toward us. It is not based on us but on Him.* It is not based on our rebellion, defiance, and selfishness, but based on his character choice. Romans 5:8, says, **"But God demonstrated His agapé, towards us in this, in that while we were still in our sinful state, attitude and actions toward Him, He was still committed to pursue us in His agapé, love."**

### Prayer and Action Steps

**Lord Jesus, thank you for your great love toward us.  
May we love each other in the same way you have loved us.  
By this will all people know we belong to you, if we have this kind of love for each other.  
Amen**