

## “Ephesians: God’s Glorious Design”

### The Conduct of the Church: Our Spirit-Filled Walk in Marriage – Part 2!

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- I. The Calling of the church, Eph 1.1—3.21
- II. The Conduct of the Body of Jesus, Eph 4.1—6.24
  - A. Our walk in unity, Eph 4.1-16
  - B. Our walk in holiness, Eph 4.17-32
  - C. Our walk in love, Eph 5.1-6
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    1. Our personal walk in wisdom, Eph 5.15-21
    2. Our relational walk in wisdom, Eph 5.22—6.9
      - a. Our relational walk in wisdom with our wives and husbands, Eph 5.22-33  
Other passages discussing relationships: Ephesians, Colossians, Peter, Timothy, Titus (Eph 5.22—6.9; Col 3.18—4.1; 1Pet 2.18—3.7; 1Tim 2.8-15; 6.1-10; Titus 2.1-10).

#### A Brief Survey of “Love”

**epithumia** { ἐπιθυμία } The Bible never translates this word as “love.” It communicates a strong desire of any kind, a direct impulse toward, good or bad. The picture is a heart set on, longing for. It can even mean to covet. When used in the Bible it often carries the negative aspect and is often translated “lust” (cf. Jam 1.15). The positive side of the word would be “desire,” or “passion.” cf Philippians 1:23. *Epithumia* is a desire, often as an impulse, deeply felt, distinctly personal, it bursts forth, and it is often self-willed. We could even render this word as being “excited about something”!

**eros** { ἔρως } The Bible does not use this Greek word. This word carries with it the idea of romance. While our English word “erotic” comes from this word it does not always carry the concept of sensual. It is more a yearning to unite with and the desire to possess the beloved. It’s passionate, romantic, intoxicating, and sentimental. It’s probably the typical starting point of most marriages! This is the kind of “love” you can fall into and out of. Herein lies one of its weaknesses, it’s changeable. When in the context of healthy “love,” *eros* is a wonderful, personal, passionate, and emotional aspect of relationship.

**storgeo or stergo** { στοργέω — στέργω } This is a comfortable “old-shoe” relationship of natural affection and a sense of belonging, often between parents and children, brothers and sisters. This is what is typically shared by family, that “at home” type of feeling of not only deep affection (non-sexual typically) but deep connection. This aspect of love is instrumental in building a sense of belonging to each other, that “they take me in just as I am” relationship. It’s often close-knit and caring with strong loyalty. Such “love” is an emotional refuge for all. *Stergo* provides a sense of security necessary for any healthy relationship.

**phileo** { φιλέω } The word appears often in the New Testament. This “love” cherishes and has tender affection for the beloved, but, it always expects a response. It’s a “reciprocal” kind of love. This is a “love” of relationship, comradeship, sharing, communication, friendship. Where *eros* makes lovers,

*phileo* makes dear friends who enjoy closeness and companionship. A relationship with *phileo* shares thoughts, feelings, attitudes, plans, and dreams — the most intimate things one would share with no one except a *phileo* love. It takes two for *phileo* to be in full enjoyment. [It's worth noting that in a key passage, John 21, this word and *agape* are used almost as synonyms. The caution being context is always crucial in rendering any term.]

***agape*** { ἀγαπάω } *agape* is “love” which values and serves, keeps on giving without expecting anything in return. This is “love” which chooses for the highest good of another, even at cost to self. It is a choice of the will without dependence on feelings. You'll find in the New Testament it can be commanded because it is a choice, something you can determine to do. As such, it's “one-way” love. Do not misunderstand that there cannot be reciprocation but that's not the objective or criteria for *agape*.

It is practically impossible to command other forms of “love.” A relationship grounded on *agape* can survive anything, even the rejection and failure of the other! It never runs its course and comes to an end, thus it is endless love, very akin to the Old Testament concept of “loyal love.”

*agape* love is unconditional, self-giving, and is sourced in the lover, not the loved. *agape* for God is to exist as His slave, listen faithfully to His orders, obey consistently His design, leave all care with Him as the sovereign, hate all He hates, break all ties which do not come from Him.

- b. Our relational walk in wisdom with our children and parents, Eph 6.1-4
- c. Our relational walk in wisdom with our servants and masters, Eph 6.5-9