Agape

Colin Barnes

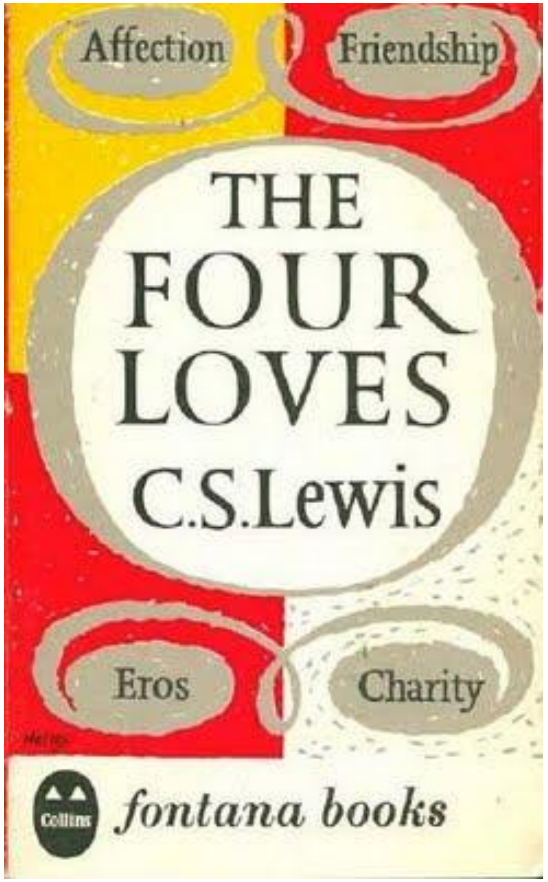
What is Love?

- One word – many meanings
- Love between husband & wife
- Love of parents for children
- Love between friends
- Love of pastimes
- Love of things
- Love of food

What do we mean when we say “God is love”?

Lewis' Four Loves

- Storge – Family/Community
- Philio – Friendship
- Eros – Romance
- Agape – Selfless & Unconditional



Storge – Family/Community

- Chance proximity
- Natural love or affection
- Good – Families are God's idea
- Not always emotional
- Often dutiful
- Can hinder us
  - Luke 14:26

Philio – Friendship/Brotherly

- Chosen
- Based on shared values, interests & activities; people like us
- Highest form of love for ancients
- Often emotional
- Good – Proverbs 8:31, John 16:27
- But "Even pagans do that" Matthew 5:46-47

Eros - Romantic

- Chosen
- Being ‘in love’
- Exemplified in marriage
- Good – God’s idea, Genesis 2:18-25, Song of Songs
- Corrupted by selfish lust in Jesus’ day; not mentioned in the Bible

Agape – Selfless & Unconditional

- Hardly used before Jesus' day
- The defining word for Christianity
- Love that serves
  - Selfless, putting others first
- Everyone, even our enemies
  - Unconditional, but not treating everyone the same
- Laid down love – John 15:13
  - Epitomised by the cross

Agape Love Languages

- Touch – identify with/accept
  - Embrace the unclean
- Words – praise/esteem
  - Look for the gold
- Time – honour
  - Grace with our presence

Agape Love Languages

- Service – serve
  - But care for ourselves
- Gifts – give
  - But beware motive

So beloved…

- God is agape – 1 John 4:8, 16
- God agape'd the world – John 3:16
- Husbands agape your wives – Eph 5:25
- Our best evangelism is to agape one another – John 13:35
- Without agape we are nothing – 1 Corinthians 13:2
- Let's spur each other to agape – Heb 10:24

The Last Shall be First

- Let's give our time
  - A personal challenge
- The best agape'rs might surprise us
- Matthew 20:16, Mark 9:35
- Life teaches us agape
- Those who agape will be greatest!