

Review:

Relational desire: an intimate, life-giving, character-shaping relationship that has a rugged commitment to one another.

Relational Intelligence/Wisdom: The skill of navigating relationships well.

The modern love promise:

When you fall in _____ then everything will fall into _____.

- Find the right person → fall in love → live happily ever after

Reverse engineering the love promise:

If everything doesn't fall into place then you fall out of love.

- If everything is not working out right then you must have married the wrong person.

Questions: If love is all you need, then why isn't love more resilient?
Why is love so fickle?

The definition of love in our culture:

Love [noun] – a feeling of strong or constant affection for a person; an attraction that includes sexual desire; the strong affection felt by people who have a romantic relationship; a person you love in a romantic way. - Webster

Questions: How do you have a love that is resilient? How do you experience a love that can withstand the storms of life?

The four loves:

- _____ – Familial love, a natural or instinctual affection
- _____ – Physical or sexual love, a deep feeling of attraction or sexual desire
- _____ – Friendship or companionship love, a close association or affection
- _____ – Unconditional sacrificial love, a love marked by giving not getting

⁴ Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. ⁵ It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. ⁶ Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. ⁷ It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.

1 Corinthians 13:4-7 (NIV)

- Love is a _____.
- Love is a _____.
- Love is NOT being a _____ or a _____.

Relational intelligence:

It's less about _____ in love and more about _____ in love.

Question:

How do you grow in love?

Increasing your love quotient:

¹Be imitators of God, therefore, as dearly loved children ²and walk in the way of love, just as Christ loved us and gave Himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

Ephesians 5:1-2 (NIV)

1. **Embrace that you are** _____ .

Agapētos – the object of one's affection, having a very special relationship; beloved.

2. **Commit to living a** _____ **of** _____ .

Agape – the self-giving, sacrificial love that gives the other what they need the most, when they deserve it the least.

3. **Rely on Christ's love to** _____ **you.**

Agapaō – “the unconditional love of Jesus in us, that is flowing through us to be a force of transformation around us.” – Efrim Smith

Application:

Love asks: What is the _____ and _____ for the other person?

Discussion Questions:

1. Describe the faults of the modern love promise.
2. Why is it important to recognize and distinguish the different types of love? What steps do you need to take to establish agape love as the foundation of your relationships?
3. How do you increase your love quotient? Which of the three forms of agape are you struggling with the most?
4. Agape love gives the other person what they need the most, when they deserve it the least. What are some practical ways you can choose to love in this way?