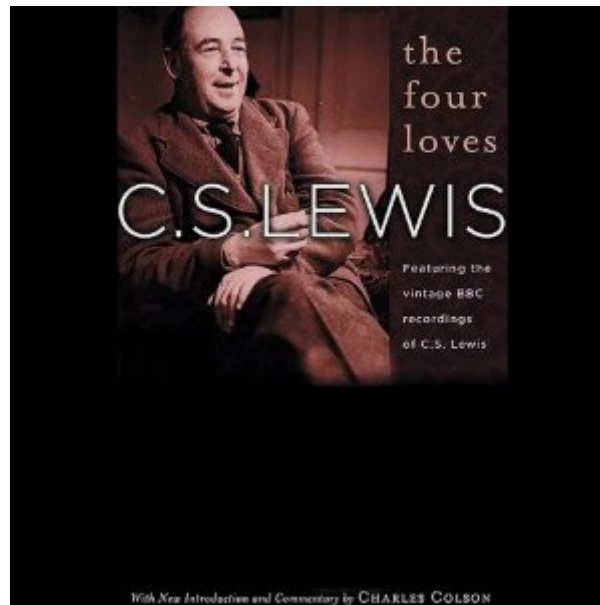


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# The Four Loves



## Synopsis

In this remarkable recording, C.S. Lewis shows why millions of readers have acclaimed him the greatest spokesman for Christianity in the twentieth century. In a resonant, baritone voice, Lewis explores the nature of the four Greek words that are translated love in English: "storge" (affection), "philia" (friendship), "eros" (sexual or romantic love) and "agape" (selfless love). But instead of giving us a dry, theological treatise, Lewis makes the subject extremely personal and practical by showing us how easily natural loves can go wrong and pollute our relationships. He shows that what we often tend to excuse as natural behavior is really selfish and destructive. Lewis exposes these pitfalls in our loves in order to lead us to the solution, Godlike agape love that God has for men and women and the kind we must develop and nurture in our relationships. As in his writing, Lewis doesn't merely tell, he shows these loves in action with vivid and often humorous illustrations. The images are so realistically drawn and so alive you are sure to recognize someone you know or live with, or maybe even yourself.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

C.S. Lewis' *The Four Loves* was not a book that I expected to reshape my thinking. I first picked it up while following the reading guide at the end of Lindskoog's *Mere Christian*. I thought it would be a fun read during valentine's season. One often is most vulnerable to the trap when one is not alert...And so, once more, C.S. Lewis has changed my thought on a broad portion of life. He's done it to me before--the *Narnian Books*, *Mere Christianity*, *An Experiment In Criticism*--have all been books that have greatly shaped me. Now I can add the *Four Loves* to the list. One does not often sit

down and ponder the different kinds of love. One may have generalized "loved ones" such as family and friends, we may "love" certain activities or places, we may even say we are "in love" ... but do we stop to consider our words? Lewis spends time surveying the lay of love's different lands. Building on blocks of seemingly deepening emotion, he moves from looking at affection to friendship to erotic love (Eros) to the love of God (Agape). Each is looked at in detail, their meaning and impact on life is explored. The most helpful thing about this book is that Lewis allows the reader to think about how they deal with their own loves in life. Does one stress a certain kind of love in an unhealthy way? Do we ignore the possibilities of one love because another kind holds too much sway in our lives? I believe Lewis makes the case that God's love should be primary in the lives of humans. The other loves, though they can be wonderful in their place, can be used unnaturally and ineffectively to try and fill in for Agape if it is not felt. A healthy life will involve all four loves. Yet they must be rooted and grounded in Agape. My own favorite passage in this book is in the friendship section.

I was not especially expecting to be engrossed by a book about four greek words, but I was wrong. This was one of the better books that I have ever read. Lewis overviews each of the four types of love: storge (affection), phileo (friendship), eros (romantic love), and agape (charity or God-love). Each discussion was extremely insightful, especially the friendship one. He described storge as the kind of love we have for people whom we spend a lot of time with, but whom with we do not necessarily have a lot in common with. For example, if you have a sibling whom you do not share many interests with but whom you love nonetheless, it is probably storge. These are people whom you probably would not be friends with if you were not related to or neighbors to these people. Lewis notes that these are people we often do not really realize how much we loved until they are gone (or until we realize that they are those kind of people to us). He had an amazing chapter on phileo and the gift of friendship as well. I won't go into much detail so that you can enjoy it more when you actually get around to reading it. Let me just say that it made me appreciate my friends much more, and changed my views on what a friend is. He had the amazing insight that each friend brings out a different part of you. He noted that his friendship with J. R. Tolkien was not quite the same after Charles Williams died, because Williams brought out parts of Tolkien that Lewis did not. Very insightful. Lewis' discussion of eros was very insightful as well. He discussed the nature of romantic love, and what romantic love looks like in a marriage. His main point seemed to be that eros loves the other person, and does not try to make the other person become more like himself.

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