



## Doctrine of Love: Category 3: Subjective & Category 4: Familial; Love for God Is Reciprocal & Is Developed from Bible Study, John 14:15

- (3) **Category 3** is Subjective love that relates to friendship. It is non-sexual and non-touching except for certain forms of customary greetings.

Friendship is sustained by unconditional love which places the emphasis on the subject. This enables each person in the friendship to enjoy the privilege of personal love. However, personal love has no virtue if it does not have the backing of unconditional love.

When a friend's weaknesses, sins, or failures become evident then one must be willing to switch to unconditional love in order to endure the season. Friends are friends because they are willing to remain friends even when the other is being unfriendly.

- (4) **Category 4** is Familial love, the relationship between parents and children and children and parents. The classical Greek word for this is *storgē*, **storgē**. It is not used in the New Testament but it provides a name for the kind of love that develops from the mandates directed toward parents and children.

**Colossians 3:20** - Children, keep obeying your parents in all things for this is to your advantage.

**v. 21** - Parents, provoke not your children lest they be discouraged.

**Ephesians 6:1** - Children keep on obeying your parents because of the Lord, because this is always right.

**v. 2** - Respect and honor your father and your mother (which is the first commandment with a promise):

**v. 3** - "So that it may be prosperous with you, and you shall have a long life on the earth."

**v. 4** - Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger and bitterness, but train them in the discipline and instruction from the Lord.

**1 Timothy 5:4** - If any widow has children or grandchildren let them learn to show respect to their own family and to provide monetary support to their parents or grandparents for this is pleasing in the sight of the Lord.

2. Category 1 love is reciprocal toward God but it gets its capacity from spiritual growth and reaches its maximum impact at occupation with Christ.
3. The Lord made clear the obligation of the believer when He told his disciples in John 14:15, "If you love Me, keep My commandments."
4. This maximum capacity for loving God and Christ comes from the completion of an edification complex in the soul with emphasis on its top floor of sharing the happiness of God. This places the believer in spiritual maturity where occupation with Christ becomes the ultimate problem-solving device.
5. From one's capacity to love God comes the capacity for love in categories 2 and 3, and even 4. The more spiritually advanced a person, the more stable he is in his relationships with people.
6. Thus we have the principle of the tandem problem-solving devices in the adult spiritual life. Personal love for God must precede unconditional love for one's fellowman. And the relationship that binds right man and right woman together is the virtue of unconditional love.
7. To acquire personal love for God one must devote himself or herself to learning who and what God is. The only revelation about God and His character is the Bible and therefore, Bible study becomes the primary means of preparing for marriage.



8. And preparation for Bible study begins with rebound and the filling of the Holy Spirit which provides for the believer the spiritual IQ that is required to understand the Bible. These are the two power options available to every believer.
9. Category 1 love is the believer's response to the love of God. In fact the English word "response" perfectly describes reciprocal love toward God. *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary* (11th ed.): **Response.** Something constituting a reply. A reaction to a person that serves as a stimulus.
10. It is obvious that the believer's response to the love of God originates from his free will and is therefore reciprocal. To reciprocate means to return in kind and implies a mutual or equivalent exchange or a paying back of what one has received.
11. Thus God loved us first and because of this we love, this according to 1 John 4:19. Thus we find that our love for God is reciprocal. It is recognition that He is our Creator, our Benefactor, our Provider, our Defender.