

The Four Loves

UNIT 5, LESSON 7

Learning Goals

- › The humans of Greek myth were cursed when Zeus split men and women into separate bodies.
- › This contrasts with Catholic teaching that love between man and woman was part of the original blessing of Creation.
- › The Greeks identified four types of love.
- › *Storge* refers to the love for familiar things that are close to you.
- › *Eros* is passionate love
- › *Phileo* is love of friends.
- › *Agape* is self-giving love.
- › The nature of God is *agape*.
- › We are called to share in that divine nature of love (*agape*).



Connection to the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*

- › CCC 214
- › CCC 221

BIBLICAL TOUCHSTONES

The LORD God said: It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suited to him.

GENESIS 2:18

God is love, and whoever remains in love remains in God and God in him.

1 JOHN 4:16B

Lesson Plan

Materials

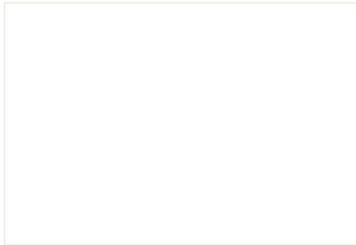
- Creation in Greek Mythology
- Genesis 2 Reading Guide
- T-Chart
- The Four Loves

Creation in Greek Mythology

Directions: Read the selection and then answer the questions that follow.

According to Ancient Greek mythology, the first humans were made very differently from humans today. According to Greek myth, the first people were both male and female. These mythical beings were two persons in one body: complete with two heads, four arms and four legs! When they rebelled against the king of the gods, Zeus, he punished them by splitting them apart down the middle. The result was that man and woman were now separated. From then on, each member of the human race was destined to wander the earth, searching for his or her "other half!"

1. According to Greek myth, what did the first humans look like?
2. According to Greek myth, why do people no longer look that way?
3. What is the most interesting part of this story to you?
4. Draw a picture in the space below about what these first mythical people might have looked like.



183

184

DAY ONE

Warm-Up

Ask students to turn to **Creation in Greek Mythology (page 183)**. Give them time to review the summary of the creation story at the top and skim over the questions individually.

Activity

Have students do a think, pair, share with questions 1-3. Give them time to finish their drawings.

Formative Assessment

Have students respond to the reflection question on **Creation in Greek Mythology**.

DAY TWO

Warm-Up

Ask a student to retell the Greek creation myth. Read aloud a few of the best answers to the reflection question. Help students understand that the Greek myth is based on the idea that humans were cursed with the need to wander the earth searching for their lost half.

Activity

- A. Ask students to follow along in their Bibles as you read aloud Genesis 2:18-25.
- B. Have them complete **Genesis 2 Reading Guide (page 185)** with a partner.

Genesis 2 Reading Guide

Directions: Answer the questions based on your reading of Genesis 2:18-25.

1. Read verse 18. In all of His creation, what was the only thing God saw that was not good?

.....

2. Why were the animals "not suited" to be helpers for Adam?

.....

3. Read verse 21. How did God form Eve?

.....

4. How does Adam feel when he sees Eve? How do you know?

.....

5. Is the communion between man and woman a curse in this story, or is it a blessing of creation?

.....

6. What does this story tell us about who God is?

.....

185

- C. Go over the responses as a large group, helping students recognize the truth that the love between man and woman is not a curse, as the ancient Greeks thought, but rather a gift from God. God created us in His image, with intellect, free will, and the ability to love.
- D. Have a student read aloud verse 24:
 “That is why a man leaves his father and mother and clings to his wife, and the two of them become one body.”
- E. Here the sacred author teaches about marriage, which Jesus elevated to a Sacrament during His ministry. Man and woman were created for each other, to love each other. Marriage is an icon of the Trinity’s self-giving love: the husband gives himself fully to his wife; the wife gives herself fully to her husband; the communion between them creates life. Love is a blessing and a share in the Lord’s divine life, and not a curse.
- F. Ask students to compare and contrast the Greek myth of half-humans searching for their “other half” with the reuniting of man and woman into one body in marriage as revealed in Genesis.

Formative Assessment

Have students analyze the differences between Greek Myth and Catholic teaching by completing **T-Chart (page 186)**.

DAY THREE

Warm-Up

- A. Begin by challenging students with a question: If love is a feeling, how is it ever possible to love our enemies? Follow up with such questions as:
- ▶ If love is a feeling, why would a mother or father stay up all night with a sick baby even if feeling exhausted?
 - ▶ If love is a feeling, why would a mother or father work two jobs to support the family when relaxing in the evenings and on weekends would feel so much better?
 - ▶ If love is a feeling, why would Jesus endure the suffering of the Cross?

T-Chart

Directions: Complete the T-chart by sorting the phrases from the bank below into two columns.

Greek Myth	Catholic Teaching

Phrase Bank

- ▶ The ability to love is a gift.
- ▶ The feeling of love is a curse.
- ▶ There is a single person each human must search for and be reunited with.
- ▶ We choose whom we love.
- ▶ Love is an act of free will.
- ▶ Humans are not whole unless they are with their “other half”
- ▶ Each person has equal dignity.
- ▶ Love between man and woman is a blessing of creation.
- ▶ “Love” between man and woman was the result of a punishment.

186

The Four Loves

Directions: Read about the four loves and then decide which type of love is described by each quote. Finally, answer the reflection question at the end.

<p>Storge The love for family and familiar people who are close to you. It happens naturally.</p>	<p>Phileo The natural love among friends. It happens naturally.</p>
<p>Eros Passionate love between man and woman. It happens naturally.</p>	<p>Agape Self-giving love.</p>

- Jane's love for her young cousins got their family through difficult times.
Type of love: _____
- The bride and groom embraced lovingly when the priest pronounced them husband and wife.
Type of love: _____
- Love one another with mutual affection; anticipate one another in showing honor (Romans 12:10).
Type of love: _____

188

187

B. Help students understand that all these things are possible because love is not a feeling but a choice, an action. We live in a culture that tells us to put feelings above all else, that we can “fall out of love,” and so forth, but the truth is that we do not have to live as slaves to our feelings. When we chose self-giving love even when it doesn’t feel good to do so, just as spouses, parents, family, and friends do, we share in the Lord’s self-giving love. “God himself is an eternal exchange of love, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and he has destined us to share in that exchange” (CCC 221). This highest form of love is called *agape*. When the Bible talks of how God loved the world, the verb used is *agape*.

Activity and Assessment

- A. Challenge students again: Is all love *agape*? No.
- B. Ask students to turn to **The Four Loves (page 187)**, and spend some time going over the definitions at the top before giving students time to complete it independently.

Answer Key

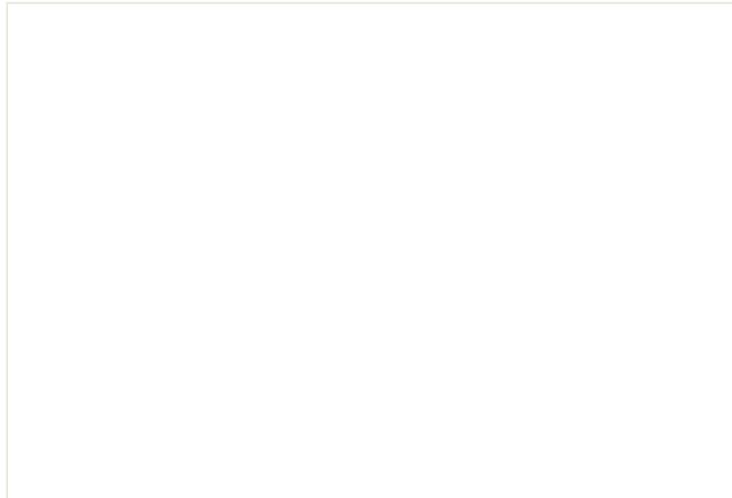
1. Two persons in one body
2. Zeus split them in two.
3. Accept reasoned answers.

Creation in Greek Mythology

Directions: Read the selection and then answer the questions that follow.

According to Ancient Greek mythology, the first humans were made very differently from humans today. According to Greek myth, the first people were both male and female. These mythical beings were two persons in one body: complete with two heads, four arms and four legs! When they rebelled against the king of the gods, Zeus, he punished them by splitting them apart down the middle. The result was that man and woman were now separated. From then on, each member of the human race was destined to wander the earth, searching for his or her “other half.”

1. According to Greek myth, what did the first humans look like?
2. According to Greek myth, why do people no longer look that way?
3. What is the most interesting part of this story to you?
4. Draw a picture in the space below about what these first mythical people might have looked like.



Answer Key

Reflection Question:

It was a curse. The separation of men and women was punishment for rebellion.

Reflection Question

According to Greek myth, was the search for communion between a man and a woman a gift or a curse? Explain.

Answer Key

1. That man was alone
2. They were not like Adam. Adam, created in the image and likeness of God, was fundamentally different from the animals.
3. He put Adam into a deep sleep and took a rib from Adam to form Eve: “the LORD God cast a deep sleep on the man, and while he was asleep, he took out one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. The LORD God then built the rib that he had taken from the man into a woman” (Genesis 2:21-22).

4. Students may say Adam feels happy, relieved, satisfied, and so forth. His words “This one, at last, is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh” show us how he feels.
5. A blessing of creation
6. God is love. He created man and woman for each other, to love each other.

Genesis 2 Reading Guide

Directions: Answer the questions based on your reading of Genesis 2:18-25.

1. Read verse 18. In all of His creation, what was the only thing God saw that was not good?

2. Why were the animals “not suited” to be helpers for Adam?

3. Read verse 21. How did God form Eve?

4. How does Adam feel when he sees Eve? How do you know?

5. Is the communion between man and woman a curse in this story, or is it a blessing of creation?

6. What does this story tell us about who God is?

Answer Key

Greek Myth

- › The feeling of love is a curse.
- › There is a single person each human must search for and be united with.
- › Humans are not “whole” unless they are with their “other half.”
- › “Love” between man and woman was the result of punishment.

Catholic Teaching

- › The ability to love is a gift.
- › We choose whom we love.
- › Love is an act of free will.
- › Each person has equal dignity.
- › Love between man and woman is a blessing of creation.

T-Chart

Directions: Complete the T-chart by sorting the phrases from the bank below into two columns.

Greek Myth

Catholic Teaching

Phrase Bank

- › The ability to love is a gift.
- › The feeling of love is a curse.
- › There is a single person each human must search for and be reunited with.
- › We choose whom we love.
- › Love is an act of free will.
- › Humans are not whole unless they are with their “other half.”
- › Each person has equal dignity.
- › Love between man and woman is a blessing of creation.
- › “Love” between man and woman was the result of a punishment.

186

Answer Key

1. *Storge*
2. *Eros*
3. *Phileo*

The Four Loves

Directions: Read about the four loves and then decide which type of love is described by each quote. Finally, answer the reflection question at the end.

<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Storge</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">The love for family and familiar people who are close to you. It happens naturally.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Phileo</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">The natural love among friends. It happens naturally.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Eros</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Passionate love between man and woman. It happens naturally.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Agape</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Self-giving love.</p>

1. Jane's love for her young cousins got their family through difficult times.

Type of love: _____

2. The bride and groom embraced lovingly when the priest pronounced them husband and wife.

Type of love: _____

3. Love one another with mutual affection; anticipate one another in showing honor (Romans 12:10).

Type of love: _____

4. *Agape*
5. *Agape*
6. *Agape*
7. *Agape*

Reflection question:

Students should recognize that *agape* is an act of will, whereas *phileo* and *storge* happen naturally. It would not make sense to command us to have a natural, unforced love. In fact, it would be impossible. But the command to love (*agape*) makes sense because we can freely choose to love.

4. But to you who hear I say, love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you (Luke 6:27-28).

Type of love: _____

5. For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life (John 3:16).

Type of love: _____

6. God is love, and whoever remains in love remains in God and God in him (1 John 4:16b).

Type of love: _____

7. Whoever has my commandments and observes them is the one who loves me (John 14:21).

Type of love: _____

Reflection Question

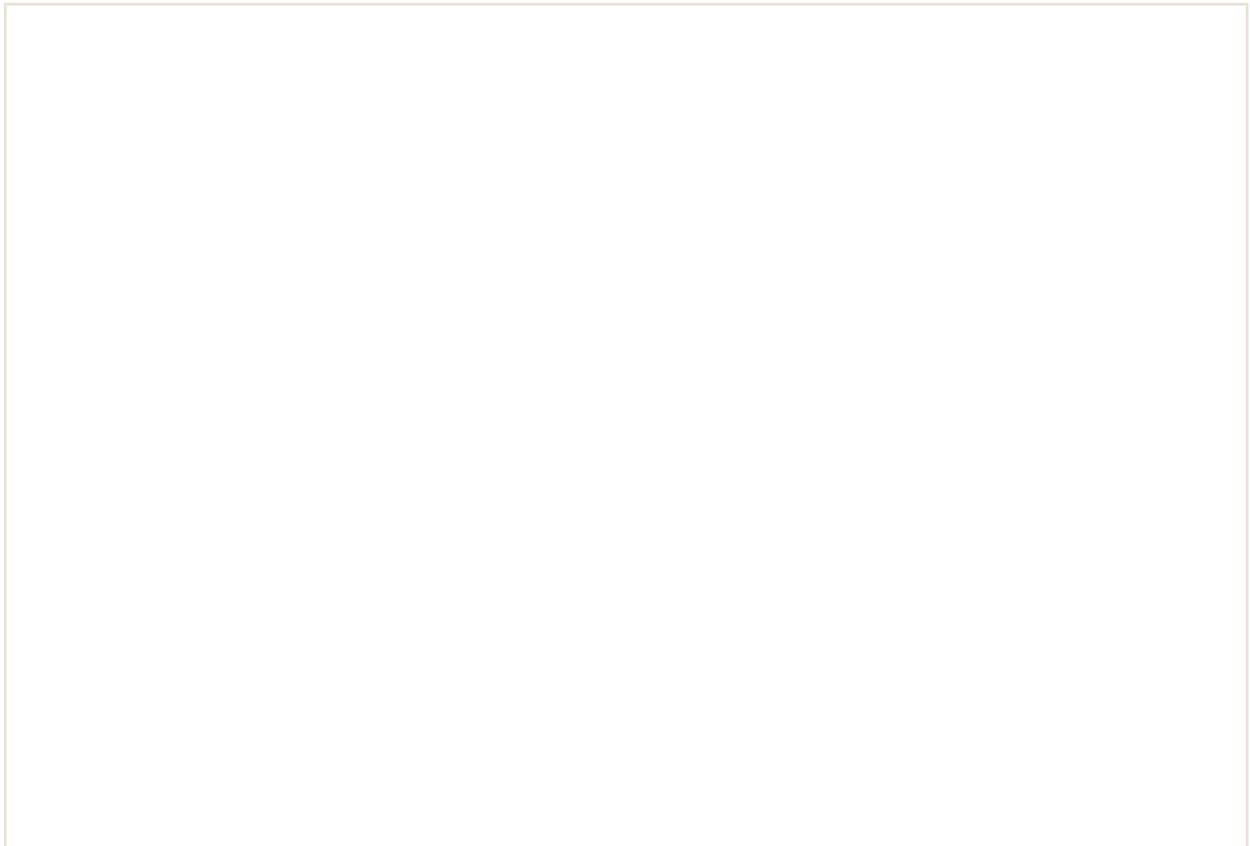
Why does God require *agape* of us but not *phileo*?

Creation in Greek Mythology

Directions: Read the selection and then answer the questions that follow.

According to Ancient Greek mythology, the first humans were made very differently from humans today. According to Greek myth, the first people were both male and female. These mythical beings were two persons in one body: complete with two heads, four arms and four legs! When they rebelled against the king of the gods, Zeus, he punished them by splitting them apart down the middle. The result was that man and woman were now separated. From then on, each member of the human race was destined to wander the earth, searching for his or her “other half.”

1. According to Greek myth, what did the first humans look like?
2. According to Greek myth, why do people no longer look that way?
3. What is the most interesting part of this story to you?
4. Draw a picture in the space below about what these first mythical people might have looked like.

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for a student to draw a picture of the first mythical people described in the text.

Reflection Question

According to Greek myth, was the search for communion between a man and a woman a gift or a curse? Explain.

Genesis 2 Reading Guide

Directions: Answer the questions based on your reading of Genesis 2:18-25.

1. Read verse 18. In all of His creation, what was the only thing God saw that was not good?

2. Why were the animals “not suited” to be helpers for Adam?

3. Read verse 21. How did God form Eve?

4. How does Adam feel when he sees Eve? How do you know?

5. Is the communion between man and woman a curse in this story, or is it a blessing of creation?

6. What does this story tell us about who God is?

T-Chart

Directions: Complete the T-chart by sorting the phrases from the bank below into two columns.

Greek Myth	Catholic Teaching

Phrase Bank

- ▶ The ability to love is a gift.
- ▶ The feeling of love is a curse.
- ▶ There is a single person each human must search for and be reunited with.
- ▶ We choose whom we love.
- ▶ Love is an act of free will.
- ▶ Humans are not whole unless they are with their “other half.”
- ▶ Each person has equal dignity.
- ▶ Love between man and woman is a blessing of creation.
- ▶ “Love” between man and woman was the result of a punishment.

The Four Loves

Directions: Read about the four loves and then decide which type of love is described by each quote. Finally, answer the reflection question at the end.

<p style="text-align: center;">Storge</p> <p style="text-align: center;">The love for family and familiar people who are close to you. It happens naturally.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Phileo</p> <p style="text-align: center;">The natural love among friends. It happens naturally.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Eros</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Passionate love between man and woman. It happens naturally.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Agape</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Self-giving love.</p>

1. Jane's love for her young cousins got their family through difficult times.

Type of love: _____

2. The bride and groom embraced lovingly when the priest pronounced them husband and wife.

Type of love: _____

3. Love one another with mutual affection; anticipate one another in showing honor (Romans 12:10).

Type of love: _____

4. But to you who hear I say, love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you (Luke 6:27-28).

Type of love: _____

5. For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life (John 3:16).

Type of love: _____

6. God is love, and whoever remains in love remains in God and God in him (1 John 4:16b).

Type of love: _____

7. Whoever has my commandments and observes them is the one who loves me (John 14:21).

Type of love: _____

Reflection Question

Why does God require *agape* of us but not *phileo*?
