

Lucan: It's time to begin. Bro. David, will you please offer an opening prayer?

Zahakiel: Dear Father in Heaven, We give you thanks for the many blessings you have provided for us this week. By the guidance of your Spirit, and the ministry of your angels, we have been protected from many dangers, and we rejoice in your loving guardianship over us. Bless us in these Sabbath hours as we gather before you to rejoice and to be sanctified, as we receive your blessings in the name of your dear Son Yahshua. Amen.

Pastor Chick: Amen.

Barb: Amen

Lucan: Amen

Peter: Amen

Elyna: Amen.

Naraiel: Amen

Marie: Amen

Nattie: Amen

Kim: Amen

Gloria: Amen

Peter_Jr_18: Amen.

Lucan: "And though I bestow all my goods to feed [the poor], and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing." (1 Cor. 13:3)

1 Corinthians 13 is a chapter that defines "love." More than this, it defines a very particular type of love. While the KJV translates this word as "charity," we know even by a surface reading that there must be more to this type of love than merely charitable feeling and action. Paul says he may "bestow all his goods to feed the poor" – the very definition of modern charity – and yet still "have not charity," and be profited nothing. "Charity" here is translated from "agape," which is one of several words for "love" found in Greek, and thus in the Scriptures. Tonight we will be comparing two of these in particular, and the message is thus called, "Agape or Phileo?"

While we may find value in referencing the dictionary definitions of these words, we will begin by looking at them through example. When sharing the gospel, the example of Peter is frequently raised by those who have not heard or have not believed the testimony of Peter himself:

"Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin; That he no longer should live the rest of [his] time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God." (1 Peter 4:1, 2)

This passage is a somewhat unique one – as, unlike most other plain verses about the gospel, I have yet to see a translation of the Bible that does not render it in precisely this meaning. Some may say "has finished with sin," some "done with sin," and others "ceased from sin," yet even the most liberal and sin-justifying interpretations acknowledge that this

verse means to have made an actual, definite end of sin. Part of this is because the phrase "ceased from sin" is in the "perfect tense," which according to Strong's means as follows:

"The perfect tense in Greek corresponds to the perfect tense in English, and describes an action which is viewed as having been completed in the past, once and for all, not needing to be repeated." Yet despite this clear testimony, the objection is raised: "Peter was with Christ for most of His ministry, and still denied him three times! Well, we know that Peter had a change of heart in which he "ceased from sin," as Yahshua Himself told him would happen:

"And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired [to have] you, that he may sift [you] as wheat: But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren." (Luke 22:31, 32)

And why must he be converted? We read in the next verses:

"And he said unto him, Lord, I am ready to go with thee, both into prison, and to death. And he said, I tell thee, Peter, the cock shall not crow this day, before that thou shalt thrice deny that thou knowest me." (Luke 22:33, 34)

It is undeniable that Peter had a strong affection for Christ. Among other experiences, he was among the first to confess him to be the Messiah, he drew a sword to defend Him in the garden, and he rebuked Yahshua for suggesting that He must suffer and die, which earned him a stern rebuke in turn. We may describe Peter as having been "impulsive," and this would be accurate, not only for his hasty affirmation of his willingness to die.

Of the three examples above, only one of them was in harmony with true "agape." Peter "loved" Yahshua, but until his conversion, it was not a selfless love; it was not a love that would endure threats, opposition, sleepiness, and sacrifice. What type of love was this? Peter himself describes it, as we will see.

After the crucifixion and resurrection, we read:

"There were together Simon Peter, and Thomas called Didymus, and Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, and the [sons] of Zebedee, and two other of his disciples. Simon Peter saith unto them, I go a fishing. They say unto him, We also go with thee. They went forth, and entered into a ship immediately; and that night they caught nothing." (John 21:2, 3)

We then read of Yahshua appearing to the apostles from the shore, and performing a miracle in which their fruitless fishing was, by His word, turned to a harvest they did not have room to receive. And, we may see Peter's characteristic response:

"Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved saith unto Peter, It is the Lord. Now when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he girt [his] fisher's coat [unto him], (for he was naked,) and did cast himself into the sea. And the other disciples came in a little ship; (for

they were not far from land, but as it were two hundred cubits,) dragging the net with fishes." (John 21:7, 8)

We see a love from Peter that vacillated between extremes of zeal and despair; one that wept over denying Yahshua, then flung himself into the water to be near Him though "they were not far from land." In short, this love was highly emotional. In Judas we have an example of love eclipsed by ambition and officiousness; in "doubting" Thomas we have an example of love that is eclipsed by a fear of disappointment in losing its object. Peter provides us an example of love that is very strong in its attachment, but of the wrong type, and thus unstable.

"So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, [son] of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs." (John 21:15)

Now we see something missed in the English. Yahshua asked Peter "Do you love me with agape love?" And Peter replied, "I love you with phileo," or brotherly, familial love.

"Agape" is the type of love that is described in 1 Corinthians 13. When it is written, "God is love," the Scripture literally reads, "God is agape." (1 John 4:8)

The command to "love thy neighbor" is to "agape thy neighbor;" it is the whole, selfless, righteous sort of love that is based in principle, and the exercise of the will through choice and commitment.

"Phileo" is the type of love that exists between family or intimate companions; it is a fondness, a deep affection, a brotherly bond. Rather than rooted in commitment and choice, it is based in experience and feelings. When it is written that someone "loves" something more than the truth, or in an unrighteous way, the word is generally "Phileo."

We may see examples in those who love father or mother more than Yahshua (Matthew 10:37), those who love praise and popularity (Luke 20:46), and those who "love and make a lie" (Revelation 22:15).

In English, we would largely call these applications of this type of love "sentimental," and a search through Mrs. White's writings for "sentimentalism" will reveal ample insight into that subject. It is important to note, however, that the word is not necessarily negative; we read, for example, "the Father loveth (phileo) the Son, and sheweth him all things that himself doeth: and he will shew him greater works than these, that ye may marvel." (John 5:20)

Nonetheless, when contrasted with agape, "phileo" is a distinctly lower class of love. It is the love of a friend as opposed to the love of Yahweh. We may begin to see some of the flaws in Peter's old character in a new light based on this exchange; Yahshua asked him for agape, but Peter had only phileo.

We read again: "He saith to him again the second time, Simon, [son] of Jonas, lovest (agape) thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love (phileo) thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep." (John 21:16)

Twice Yahshua asks Peter of agape, and twice He is met with phileo. With this in mind, let us consider the next verse, and the final question that grieved Peter:

"He saith unto him the third time, Simon, [son] of Jonas, lovest (PHILEO) thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest (phileo) thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love (phileo) thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep." (John 21:17)

While English would lead to the conclusion that Peter was grieved by the repetition of the question, Greek reveals here a much deeper matter. Twice Yahshua asked for agape, and was met with phileo. Now, Yahshua no longer asks him if he has agape; He instead asks him, to his grief, "Is it Phileo you have for me?" By the time Peter was born again, we see an understanding of the right application of both of these concepts:

"Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren (philadelphia), [see that ye] love (agape) one another with a pure heart fervently." (1 Peter 1:22)

Here we read of "love of the brethren" – "Philadelphia," as it is in Greek. As we are all brethren, a love based on brotherhood, common ground, experiences, and familiarity is indeed appropriate. This is the result of "purifying your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit." Just as one may love (phileo) their countrymen or earthly brethren, we love our fellow-citizens of Yahshua's kingdom and brethren in Christ. Those who are obeying the truth and purifying their souls have "unfeigned" love of the brethren; that is, it is not acted or forced, but common between them. It is so much the case that the last generation is called by the prophetic name of "Philadelphia" in Revelation; yet this is not all. Seeing you have done this," that is, purified your souls, "unto unfeigned Philadelphia," or unto this result, "see that ye love (agape) one another."

Phileo – even "Philadelphia" – is not enough, you see. We may love Yahshua or our brother as our friend, but we are also given to love in principle and righteousness – with self-sacrifice, as He loved us. We may love our brethren as brethren, but "seeing as we have done this," we must see that we "agape one another."

And how? "With a pure heart fervently."

Peter, we see, came to have both "phileo" and "agape." This is necessary for us as well; while the last generation of saints is described as "Philadelphia," it is also written that "By this shall all [men] know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love (agape) one to another." (John 13:35)

How can we tell whether the love we manifest is rooted in "phileo" or "agape?"

We will look at a few examples and questions for self-examination tonight, to aid in answering this. Our words and actions will reveal the type of love that we possess and are motivated by.

Does our love lead us to seek the eternal good, or the emotional comfort of those with whom we interact? If the love is "agape," based on eternal principle, we will have an eye on the eternal good of our brethren. As it is written, "For whom the Lord loveth (agape) he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." (Hebrews 12:6)

If it is merely "phileo" without agape, rebuke will rather be avoided. This is a love that may encourage self-indulgence or complacency, rather than risk offending or hurting the feelings. One may indeed rebuke with phileo, but it will frequently place the affections above cutting truth; the short term interests above the principle of joy in obedience. We read of such an example, mentioned earlier:

"From that time forth began Jesus to shew unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day. Then Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee." (Matthew 16:21, 22)

Yahshua's rebuke to Peter in response is perhaps the sharpest given to any of His disciples. More than this, we "love our neighbor as ourselves." In order to love others as Yahweh loves them, we must first love ourselves as Yahweh loves us.

Agape will not suffer sin to murder another, even as it will not allow sin to remain in, and thus murder, us. The chastening of Yahweh is desirable, not because it is pleasant, but because it is necessary for life, and life - particularly eternal life - is worth more than pleasure. Agape is the abiding principle, the outworking of this belief.

"Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby." (Hebrews 12:11)

If we believe the "peaceable fruit of righteousness" is worth more than the suffering of "chastening," we will neither spare ourselves nor others whom we love from the truth.

"Charity suffereth long, [and] is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up." (1 Cor. 13:4)

Does your love lead you to kindness and patience, even (and particularly) to those who you reprove, or who reprove you?

There are many with a "Jehu religion," who make rebuke of sin the only qualification of love. Yet a "bad church message" or "bad actions message" is no better than "phileo" if they are not paired with, and rooted in, agape. Yahweh chastens, but out of love; it is not

out of frustration (agape suffers long), or to "show someone how it feels" with sharp words or a harsh rebuttal (agape is kind).

What is the focus when you lead a conversation?

If you find that you refer to yourself in conversation often, or care to compare yourself, your gifts, your abilities, or your experiences with others, the focus is likely on self. This is true whether it is a positive comparison (I am better), or a negative one (others are better).

Agape is selfless; it is a self-divested interest. It is the spirit of love that gives life to those who have died to self. Yahshua often testified of His experience, and we are called to do the same; yet our testimony is of Christ's power, as Christ's testimony was of His Father's. When we speak of ourselves, it is for the blessing of others, that they may see Yahshua in us, and freely come up to the same standard. The goal is for all to be lifted up into "heavenly places," rather than any one to have attention, exaltation, or preeminence. There is no "putting another down," or "lifting one's self up." There is no "looking down on" another, or "looking up to" another. Thus, we have the testimony of Yahshua, paired with agape, which "envieth not" another's role, gifts, or reputation. We have the very life of Christ, rooted in agape, which "vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up."

With a clear understanding this principle, questions of proper submission and authority are addressed from the root.

"(Agape) Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil;" (1 Cor. 13:5)

Phileo may act inappropriately; when one prioritizes the creature over the Creator, we see the results of wickedness in the world around us daily. What the world calls "love" is manifest in the expression of positive emotions, "good feelings," leading to everything from fornication and homosexual behavior to shunning and coldness when the emotions turn less positive.

Yet agape behaves appropriately, as Yahshua Himself behaved, in any given circumstance – and this because Yahshua Himself acted and spoke based on agape. As it is written, "Greater love (agape) hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." (John 15:13)

Is your first priority your own well-being, or that of others?

If the attention is primarily on your own finances, your own food, your own health or living situation, then this is not agape, for it "seeketh not her own." Agape does not need to seek its own, because Yahweh has sworn to tend to each of these things, freeing us to "agape your neighbor as yourself."

Is your first attachment to the family on earth or the family in heaven?

If the former, this is not agape, for this is the very definition of "phileo" – a love based in a familiar, familial connection. This, also, is to "seek your own," as the only significance of one family beyond any other is that they belong to you in particular – they are "your own."

Agape does not do this to the exclusion of others, as we are our brother's keeper both in spirit and in flesh. As it is written, "ye are all brethren" (Matthew 23:8).

Even between the family in heaven, our brethren in the Spirit and the Church, questions often will arise; a word or action that seems strange, or out of step with right principles.

When this happens, do you conclude it is from a wrong motive rather than a different perspective?

Agape thinks the best of one's brethren and their motives, and seeks reconciliation and understanding. Agape thinks the best of our own motives, accepting that we have "the mind of Christ." It is therefore also "not easily provoked," as agape accepts the promise of unity in faith, and works towards the realization of that truth patiently, as it is inevitable.

"Charity never faileth: but whether [there be] prophecies, they shall fail; whether [there be] tongues, they shall cease; whether [there be] knowledge, it shall vanish away. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away." (1 Corinthians 13:8-10)

We stand now on the verge of the return of Yahshua, when "that which is perfect shall come." Character is all that we take with us, be it through the grave or translation. The character of Yahshua is rooted and established in agape love, for "God is agape," and not in the sandy soil of phileo alone.

Let us learn from the example of Peter, that when Yahshua asks us, "Agape thou me?" we may answer with confidence "Yea, Lord; thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I agape thee."

Are there any comments on the study tonight?

Adriel777: Amen

Lucan: If not, I'll ask Pastor to offer the closing prayer.

Pastor Chick: Dear Father in Heaven, we are thankful that you have shed abroad the AGAPE of Yah in our hearts... blending appropriately, the Philadelphian affection of the brethren. May others see the maturity of our Love through the fruits of our lives. in Yahshua's holy name, Amen.

Zahakiel: Amen.

Barb: Amen

7-13-2018 Agape or Phileo

Adriel777: Amen

Lucan: Amen

Peter: Amen

Kim: Amen

daphna dee: Amen

Elyna: Amen.

Elyna: Amen.

Nattie: Amen.

Elyna: Gloria: Amen