A.W. Milne put all earthly belongings in a coffin and sailed for New Hebrides Islands. The New Hebrides headhunter tribe had martyred every missionary before him. He labored and brought the Gospel to this tribe for 35 years. When he died, these headhunters buried him in the middle of the village and inscribed on his tombstone, "When he came there was no light. When he left there was no darkness."

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Prayer Study #336

AGAPE

Agape is one of three words used in the New Testament Greek for love. The other two are *stergo*, which means devotion, such as family members have one to another and such as a dog would have for its master or a nation would have for its ruler, and *phileo,* which describes affection or friendship.

Stergo is found in 2nd Timothy 3:3, where it is translated as natural affection, and this particular passage talks of a time coming which will be *without stergo* or *without natural affection,* suggesting that the last days will be marked by a time when strong family ties and devotion to others will deteriorate.

Phileo usually is used in the New Testament to speak of brotherly love. This kind of love is very important to the Lord. In fact 1st Corinthians 16:22 reads: *If anyone does not love the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be accursed. O Lord, come!* The word used for love in this verse is *Phileo.* Paul is saying that having brotherly love for the Lord is so important that people who do not have this type love for Jesus should be cursed.

There is a fourth Greek word often translated as *love.* This is *eros. Eros* is sexual love and has to do with gratifying the sexual desires of the flesh and is a carnal love that seeks the fulfillment of its own desires. This word is not found even once in the New Testament, even when the discussion is about sex in marriage.

Agape is the opposite of eros. It is totally seeking to give oneself to another. It has so much emotion in the Greek language that it is extremely difficult to fully translate it into English. *Agape* is the highest form of love and depicts the love of God. The Greek scholar Rick Renner says this about *agape: "Agape occurs when an individual sees, recognizes, understands, or appreciates the value of an object or a person, causing the viewer to behold*

this object or person in great esteem, awe, admiration, wonder and sincere appreciation. Such great respect is awakened in the heart of the observer for the object or person he is beholding that he is compelled to love it. In fact, his love for that person or object is so strong it is irresistible."

Perhaps the best know verse in all the Bible is John 3:16 where the Word says that *God so loved* (*agaped) the world that He gave His only begotten Son.* According to Renner, *"This means when God looked upon the human race, He stood in awe of mankind, even though man was lost in sin. God admired man; He wondered at man; He held mankind in the highest appreciation. Even though mankind was held captive by Satan at that moment, God looked upon the world and saw His own image in man. The human race was so precious to God and He loved man so deeply that His heart was stirred to reach out and do something to save him. In other words, God's love drove Him to action. You see, agape is a love that loves so profoundly that it knows no limits or boundaries in how far, wide, high, and deep it will go to show that love to its recipient. If necessary, agape love will even sacrifice itself for the sake of the object or person it so deeply cherished. Agape is a love that has no strings attached. It isn't looking for what it can get, but for what it can give. Its awe of the one who is loved is so deep that it is compelled to shower love upon that object or person regardless of the response. This is the profound love God has for the human race, for He loved man when he was still lost in sin with no ability to love Him back. God simply loved mankind without any thought or expectation of receiving love in return."*

In summary, *eros* is a self-seeking love. *Stergo* is limited only to one's family. *Phileo* is based on mutual satisfaction and can feel disappointed. *Agape*, however, is the highest form of love and is a self-sacrificial love that moves the lover to action. This is the love that the early Church was called to walk in, and it, perhaps more than anything beside the *dunamis* power of the Holy Spirit, was what caused the Church to rapidly grow in those early days and on down through the ages. We also are suppose to walk in this *agape* love. Unfortunately, the Church has often walked in murderous acts,, such as in the Crusades, and high pride instead of the *agape* we are told to walk in. Scripture is full of calls for us to walk in *agape*. *Agape* your neighbor (Matthew 19:19). *Agape* your enemies (Matthew 5:44). A*gape* the Lord God 9LUKE 10:27). *Agape* is what causes faith to work (Galatians 5:6). *Agape* is one of the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22). *Agape* is what husbands are called to do to their wives (Ephesians 5:25). The Church is suppose to be knitted together in *agape* (Colossians 2:2). There is no fear in

agape and perfect *agape* cast out fear (1st John 4:18) There are over 150 references to this kind of love in the New Testament. The other two words translated for love are used only a little over 20 times.

EXAMPLES OF DIFFERENT KINDS OF LOVE IN THE WORD

MATTHEW 5:43-48: ***"You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love* (AGAPE) *your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I say to you, love* (AGAPE) *your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. For if you love* (AGAPE) *those who love* (AGAPE) *you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? And if you greet your brethren only, what do you do more than others? Do not even the tax collectors do so? Therefore you shall be perfect just as your Father in heaven is perfect."***

MATTHEW 6:5-6: ***"And when you pray, you shall not be like the hypocrites. For they love* (PHILEO-in the sense of being fond of-) *to pray standing in the synagogues and on the corners of the streets, that they may be seen by men. Assuredly, I say to you they have their reward. But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly."***

JOHN 13:34-35: ***"A new commandment I give to you, that you love* (AGAPE) *one another; as I have loved* (AGAPE) *you, that you also love* (AGAPE) *one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love* (AGAPE) *for one another."***

ROMANS 1:28-32: *And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting: being filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness, full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, evil-mindedness; they are whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, violent, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedience to parents, undiscerning, untrustworthy, unloving* (without STERGO), *unforgiving, unmerciful; who knowing the righteous judgment of God, that those who*

practice such things are deserving of death, not only do the same but also approve of those who practice them.

JOHN 15:18-19: ***"If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love* (PHILEO) *its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you.***

A LOOK AT JOHN 21:15-17

JOHN 21:15-17: *So when they had eaten breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter,* ***"Simon, son of Jonah, do you love* (AGAPE) *Me more than these?"*** *He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love* (PHILEO) *You." He said to him,* ***"Feed My lambs."*** *He said to him again a second time,* ***"Simon, son of Jonah, do you love* (AGAPE) *Me?"*** *He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love* (PHILEO) *You." He said to him,* ***"Tend My sheep."*** *He said to him the third time,* ***"Simon, son of Jonah, do you love* (PHILEO) *Me?"*** *Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time,* ***"Do you love* (PHILEO) *Me?"*** *And he said to Him, "Lord, You know all things; You know that I love* (PHILEO) *You." Jesus said to him,* ***"Feed My sheep."***

(NEW KING JAMES NOTE: As Jesus inquired whether Peter genuinely loved Him, Peter in each case answered, "I have brotherly affection for You" or "I care for You." The apostle may have hesitated to affirm self-giving, agape love for Jesus because of his recent denials of Him.)

(SCOFIELD explains these verses this way: *"With his confidence in himself greatly shaken through having so recently denied his Lord, Peter feels unworthy to express his love to Christ by the strong word AGAPE, and therefore uses the weaker word PHILEO. Jesus now condescends to Peter's self-evaluation, saying in effect, 'Even if you do not trust your own emotions far enough to apply the word AGAPE to them, you still should feed my sheep.' Our duty to Christ should depend, not upon the strength of our subjective feelings, but upon our realization of what He has done for us.")*

(Dake's Notes: This was the 7th appearance of Jesus since the resurrection. Peter is always addressed as "Simon" except in Luke 22:34. The question is "Do you love Me more than the rest of the disciples, as you boasted (Matthew

26:33-35)? He had boasted of greater love than the rest and no one (Judas excepted) had treated Him so basely. Peter in his reconverted state gave a most modest reply. Jesus used the Greek agape in the first two questions, which means ardently, supremely, perfectly, while Peter answered with the verb phileo, to like, be fond of, feel friendship for another. The third time the Lord used phileo which deeply humbled Peter. Peter had denied the Lord 3 times before the cock crew; now Christ caused him to make a triple confession. Could Peter think that Christ knew something about him that he, himself did not know, which might lead to another fall and was He about to tell him of it? This might have been the confession and humility Christ was looking for. A few days before he knew more about himself than Christ did and was frank enough to say so, but his fall and repentance had greatly humbled him. Now he was not so sure of himself, but he was sure that he loved Jesus.)

(AMPLIFIED'S render of John 21:15-17: When they had eaten, Jesus said to Simon Peter, Simon, son of John, do you love Me more than these [others do-with reasoning, intentional, spiritual devotion, as one loves the Father]? He said to Him, Yes, Lord, You know that I love You [that I have deep, instinctive, personal affection for You as for a close friend]. He said to him, Feed My lambs. Again He said to him the second time, Simon, son of John, do you love Me [with reasoning, intentional, spiritual devotion, as one loves the Father]? He said to Him, Yes, Lord, You know that I love You [that I have deep, instinctive, personal affection for You, as for a close friend]. He said to him, Shepherd (tend) my sheep. He said to him the third time, Simon, son of John, do you love Me [with a deep, instinctive, personal affection for Me, as for a close friend]? Peter was grieved (was saddened and hurt) that He should ask him the third time, Do you love Me? And he said to Him, Lord, You know everything; You know that I love You [that I have a deep, instinctive, personal affection for You , as for a close friend]. Jesus said to him, Feed My sheep.]

NEITHER DO I CONDEMN THEE

Carol and Jimmy Snow
1962

By the crowd of worshipers, sorry for their sins,
Was a poor wanderer, rudely brought in;
Scribes came and Pharisees, anxious to see
What the meek Nazarene's verdict would be.

They told of her wanderings, making each flaw,
Spoke of her punishment, quoting the law;
Writing upon the ground, sadly and slow,
But said He unheedingly, head bending low.

Still cried the Pharisees, "Pray, Master, pray,
What shall we do with her? What doth Thou say?"
Then said He rebukingly, "Let the first stone
Come from the sinless hands, hence and alone."

Cheeks flushing with the shame, turning about,
And from His presence, walking slowly out.
Then saw we standing there, head bending low,
He who the world despised bade her sin no more.

Spoke He most tenderly, "Pray, woman, pray,
Hast thou no accusers?" "Nay, Master, Nay."
"Neither do I condemn thee, soul, sick and sore;
Go forth, I pardon thee, Go and sin no more."

CHORUS
"Neither do I condemn thee," precious words divine,
From the lips of mercy like the sweetest chimes.
Wonderful words of Jesus, sing them o'er and o'er;
"Neither do I condemn thee; go and sin no more."