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Ἀγάπῃ AND Φιλίᾳ IN JOHN

A Research Paper Presented to the Faculty
of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis,
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requirements for elective
EN-200

by

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INTRODUCTION

"Is there a difference between ἀγαπάω and φιλέω?" has sparked the imagination of commentators on the Johannine writings, perhaps as far back as Jerome's Vulgate, where the distinction is maintained in Latin. However, this question wasn't a very great topic of interest until comparatively recent times, starting with perhaps the early nineteenth century onward. Suddenly this question, perhaps sparked by the growing interest in higher criticism, became the middle of a controversy, with some on the one side finding new depth to the use of this word, particularly in the Gospel's twenty-first chapter. Others tend to dismiss the question with merely a sentence or two--if indeed it rated that much. This paper will be one more addition to that controversy.

The point in question is a hard one to settle, because the outcome depends entirely upon where one stands in his approach to the Bible in general and to John in particular. One may see a passage as demonstrating the simplicity of John, while another sees great subtlety and complexity, meanwhile a third sees nothing in the passage at all. Sometimes it's because the person hasn't looked at all the data concerning the passage in question, and therefore needs to widen his outlook. One goal of this paper, then, is to investigate as much data and interpretations as are available so that the reader can see the full scope of what is involved as he considers for himself the distinction between these two words.

It is important to realize that this will not be an unbiased paper, since the writer is of the opinion that a difference does exist between

these two words, and will be defending this position. However, the attempt will be made to present data from both sides, to let the reader know what kind of things must be dealt with and where different opinions might influence the reader's conclusions.

There are five major areas to be pursued as this topic is investigated:

I) Is the possibility of a difference strong enough to warrant investigation? II) According to the Johannine writings, what might some differences be? III) What has been the difference as seen by commentators on John? IV) Conclusions concerning the difference between these words; V) The application of this difference in various passages, so that this distinction doesn't remain merely academic, but also has practical use.

For ease of reference throughout the following paper, what is called "ἀγαπάω" is to include ἀγαπάω (agapáō), ἀγάπη (agapḗ), and ἀγαπητός (agapḗtós). On the other hand, what will be referred to "φιλέω" is to include φιλέω (philéo), φιλία (philia), and φίλος (philos).

Concerning what will be considered as included in the text of the Johannine writings, both chapter 21 and the epistles will be regarded as coming from the same author's hand. It is possible that these were not all written at the same time, but is this writer's opinion that they reflect the continuity of concerns, language and expression found in the rest of the Gospel. As for the Apocalypse, its authorship has been more severely criticized, and since there are very few references to love in this book, it will be omitted from this consideration. The question of authorship can be a large topic of inquiry, and although chapter twenty-one's role in this question will be briefly discussed in section V, if the reader wishes to pursue the question further, it is suggested that he refer to section "E" of the Bibliography.

I. THE POSSIBILITY OF A DIFFERENCE

In the following points, the groundwork is laid for even considering the question, determining whether investigating the possible difference between ἀγαπάω and φιλέω is justifiable.

A. Incidence of Occurance

It is an interesting fact that the Greek Bible used ἀγαπάω at all. This was highly uncharacteristic of written non-Biblical usage, where the highly dominant word was φιλέω. ἀγαπάω was the uncommon, almost rare, word.¹ If there were no real appreciable difference, it would seem logical and natural for the New Testament writers to use the more familiar word, instead of one that might be strange and unnatural to the common people (in whose language the New Testament was written).

This argument becomes even more significant as one looks at the Johannine writings. Of all the writers in the New Testament, John seems to be the most concerned with the topic of love. If one puts together the ἀγαπάω and the φιλέω groups, and includes the pastoral epistles in Paul's writings, Paul uses these words about 140 times, which is the most of any writer in the New Testament. But then consider that in about half as much space (in both Greek and English!), John uses these words about 130 times! Apparently, then, John had a great interest in this subject, and on this basis, would most likely have paid more attention

¹Kenneth S. Wuest, Word Studies in the Greek New Testament (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1969), p. 244.

to how "love" was presented. So, when he used an uncommon word for love (ἀγαπάω), it would seem that there would be purpose behind it, accenting to his readers that the idea inherent in φιλέω was not sufficient for his purposes.

A second consideration under this point is the incidence of occurrence of these two groups of words within the Johannine writings. Many commentators, such as Barrett, Guy, Hoskyns, Moffatt, and Morris,¹ feel that John uses both groups of words merely out of a desire for variation. This seems a very weak conclusion, especially when one looks at usage in chart form. If John was seeking relief from monotonous use of, perhaps the ἀγαπάω group, he is neither consistent nor logical, lacking variation precisely where one would expect it, and when he does have "variation," it is contrary to logical expectations.

In the following chart, circled numbers are the φιλέω words. Penned in numbers above the typed numbers are chapter and verse designations.

THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

3:16	19	29	35	5:25	42	8:42	10:17	11:3	5	11	36	12:25
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39
40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52
53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63		

¹Charles K. Barrett, The Gospel According to Saint John: An Introduction with Commentary and Notes on the Greek Text (London: SPCK, 1965), pp. 216. 486; H. A. Guy, The Fourth Gospel: An Introduction (London: MacMillan Education, LTD, 1972), p. 110; Edwyn Clement Hoskyns, The Fourth Gospel, ed. by Francis Noel Davey (London: Faber and Faber Limited, 1947), p. 558; James Moffatt, Love in the New Testament (London: Hodder and Stroughton Limited, 1929), p. 46; Leon Morris, Studies in the Fourth

You will note that there are twenty-six instance of ἀγαπᾶω⁵ without relief by variation, all within 12:43 to 15:13; there are eight occurances within four verses, with no variation (14:21-24); within another five verses, there is no "relief" until the ninth instance (15:9-13). This certainly does not follow any recognizable logic if John employs φιλέω for variation.¹

Another example that must be investigated is the celebrated 21:15-17 pericope. It is not usual that when variation is employed, that one begins with variation and ends with monotony--unless, of course, a point is to be made through that "variation." Yet that is what happens in this pericope. Verse 15 has both, so also verse 16, but the second instance in verse 16, and all of verse 17 have the same word--in other words, the pericope starts with variation and ends with monotony. Therefore, on this basis, it is unlikely that the φιλέω group is used merely for "variation". There seems to be more purpose behind it than that.

B. The Audience

Who John was writing to also must be taken into account, because John presumably was not writing in a vacuum, for his own gratification, but to tell others the Gospel. However, this is a special Gospel--it seems aimed toward the Christian community in particular, since it omits or skips over facts that have been covered in the synoptics--facts with which a Christian community would be at least somewhat familiar. In this case, the Christian community "Sitz-im-Leben" would have a great

Gospel (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1969), p. 872.

¹Edward A. McDowell, Jr., has an interesting discussion on these and related matters in his article "'Lovest Thou Me?' A Study of John 21:15-17," Review and Expositor, 34 (1935), pp. 428-9.

deal of bearing on the understanding of these two words, and their place in the language of the community should be investigated.

On these lines, Benjamin Warfield asserts:

The simple truth is that the New Testament writers use ἀγαπᾶν, ἀγαπή, to express the idea of love because it was the word for love current in their circle and lying thus directly in their way. . . . They do not push φίλειν into the background; they found it in the background, from which they do not draw it, not because they looked upon it as a base word, but because it had become too inexpressive a word to meet their needs, especially since the Septuagint had communicated to the ordinarily current word for love additional shades of suggestion which enlarged its range of application precisely on the side on which the New Testament writers desired to speak of love.¹

If one adds a little historical reasoning, along with Biblical evidence, this possibility begins to take shape. To begin with, Paul quite probably wrote his letters long before John wrote his Gospel and epistles. As the outstanding missionary and theologian of the Christian world of that time, his concerns and understandings would be widely pread throughout the Christian community. In addition to this, Paul was responsible for bringing into being the church at Ephesus (Acts 18, 19), and he maintained ties with them (Epistle to the Ephesians), and therefore probably this church would have a heavy stress on Pauline methodology. Since John, according to tradition, wrote his Gospel from this city, it would seem very possible that he would work somewhat within Paul's framework, and therefore, when a distinctively Pauline word shows up (of his 140 references to love, only two are of the φίλειν group), it could very well be an intentional "trigger" to remind the reader of the Pauline background. In other words, John did not have his own theology, but one that worked with and ran on the same lines as Paul's, supplementing Paul's theology just as much as it may have been his intention to "supplement" the other

¹Benjamin B. Warfield, "The Terminology of Love in the New Testament," Princeton Theological Review, XVI (1918), p. 184.

gospels of the community (yet without sacrificing the integrity of his own viewpoint).¹

Also, as alluded to in I Corinthians 10:20-22, 31-33, and specifically mentioned in Jude 12, there was the "agape-feast".² This might indicate a trend in the community toward making ἀγάπη a technical term in their theology (perhaps as "agape" is becoming today).³ This would then support Warfield's idea, in that ἀγάπη was used because it was so much a part of the Christian community's current vocabulary of special and specific terms (much the same as "Trinity", "justification", "sanctification" are specialized terms for the Christian community today).

Should all this be true, Warfield's next comment is also worthy of examination:

When φιλῆν served their purpose better than ἀγαπᾶν, they used φιλῆν; but this use could not escape being exceptional just because ἀγαπᾶν had become the general word for love, and the Septuagint had prepared it for New Testament use by filling it with the content which the New Testament writers most needed to express.⁴

There is a problem with Moffatt when he says that although "ἀγαπάω was the ordinary term of the Christian vocabulary, its older synonym φιλῆω could still be employed for the sake of variety."⁵ It must be remembered that the Christian community was still living in the world--

¹Anders Nygren, Agape and Eros, trans. by Maurice A. Canney (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1908), p. 110.

²Joseph N. Sanders, A Commentary on the Gospel According to St. John, ed. and completed by B. A. Martin (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1968), pp. 316-7; David W. Wead, The Literary Devices in John's Gospel (Basil: Friedrich Reinhardt Commissionsverlag, 1970), p. 33.

³Nygren, Agape, pp. 83-4.

⁴Warfield, "Terminology", p. 184.

⁵Moffatt, Love, p.46.

a pagan world at that, which had quite a different idea about love. The pagan concept had no comprehension of self-giving love, especially from God--their gods were always either self-seeking, or loving only of the perfect. They simply did not lower themselves to love anything evil or lesser.¹

To avoid confusion with this pagan theological "baggage", it would seem necessary for the Christian community to use an uncommon word for love. Since φιλέω was so common, how else might one get across to another person the different idea of love when that other person thinks he already understands the word's meaning? Obviously a problem can fast arise when two people use the same words yet mean two completely different ideas. Hence the need of a different word, which would make the other person realize that something new is being discussed.² This is

¹Edwin Kenneth Lee, The Religious Thought of St. John (London: SPCK, 1962), p. 54: "(Aristotle wrote:) Such love cannot be ascribed to God. The object of God's thought must be the best of all possible objects. God cannot, therefore, have an object of thought outside of himself. . . . God cannot possibly return our love because personal intercourse with him is out of the question. It was therefore a characteristic of pagan thought that God cannot love men; for such love would imply a downward movement, from the level of divine perfection to a lower level. John, no doubt, had this in mind when he stated clearly the essence of Christian love (I John 4:10)."

Also, Allen George Turner and Julius R. Mantay, The Gospel According to John, vol. IV in The Evangelical Commentary (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1965), p. 97: "The idea of God loving man and suffering for them is peculiar to the Bible. It is unknown in paganism. Homer has Juno say to Vulcan: Dear Son, refrain; it is not well that thus a god should suffer for the sake of man."

²Wuest, "Four Words," p. 244: "There was no word in classical Greek which the Bible writers could use which would portray the love God is, for the reason that it is a pagan language. Therefore, the writers had to select a word and pour into it the additional meaning. Led by the Holy Spirit they selected ἀγαπᾶν, a word never very common in classical Greek, occurring in Homer only ten times, in Euripedes three, and not at all in Aeschylus or Sophocles."

Cf. Hugh Thomson Kerr, The Challenge of Jesus: Studies in the Gospel of St. John (New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1939), p. 190; Robert Harvey Strachan, The Fourth Gospel: Its Significance and Environment (London: Student Christian Movement Press, LTD., 1955), p. 275.

necessary in every language when Christians talk about God's love--consider German:

In the King James Version agape was translated "charity." Luther translated it "Liebe", but since the German term was always wider than the English word "charity", this "Liebe" of Luther's Bible is usually qualified by preachers and teachers as "christliche Liebe", "Liebe Gottes", "Naechsten liebe", etc.¹

It is reasonable therefore to conjecture that ἀγαπάω could be used by the Christian community to purposely stand out against φιλέω, to indicate a new depth to love--a Christian depth. And, when φιλέω is used, there would be more meaning involved than merely variation, else possible confusion would result--among proselytes, and even among some Christians.

C. The Author

In the above point, ἀγαπάω as a technical term in the community is discussed, along with the unlikelihood of it being interchanged with φιλέω for the sake of variety. Another point to consider is whether John, as the person who wrote, would have variety for the sake of variety. Morris thinks so in his exhaustive work Studies in the Fourth Gospel.¹

He presents a good argument, which should be dealt with. I do question some of his evidence--"variations" that are even up to ten chapters apart, whether these were thought of as variations in the mind of John or not. But he does confront us with some powerful data, such as John 1:32, 33, 34, where three different words are used of John the Baptist's seeing the Spirit descending on Jesus (τεθεαμοι, ἴδης, and ἑώρακα).

¹"AGAPE, Caritas, Charity," Concordia Theological Monthly, 20 (November, 1949), p. 862.

²Op. cit. (see p. 4, n. 1).

Are instances like this, variety for the sake of interesting reading--or is John pointing out something very important, needing the use of three different words? This is the same problem where three words are used for "seeing" in the resurrection story, involving Peter and the Beloved Disciple, in John 20:1-10.

If the problem were just left here, the matter would be left for merely personal opinion. But there's more to consider, which may mean that John paid closer attention to the words he used than simply for variety's sake.

That John paid attention to his words and details is evident in his emphasis on details concerning Jewish customs (cf., 2:6; 4:27; 7:37; 5:10; et al. concerning religious and national customs), Jewish history (cf., 2:20; 11:49; et al.), and Palestinian geography (cf., 5:3; 19:13), and even just minor details (cf., "loaves of barley" 6:19; "house filled with fragrance" 12:3; "tunic without seam" 19:23).¹ But of even greater interest concerns such words as ἀνωθεν (3:3), ἀνίστημι (11:24), βασιλεύω (12:6) along with other words which have double meanings in John.

We are not dealing with figurative speech but concrete meanings of the word. The double meaning is not a metaphor or a simile. The author's deliberate choice involves the dual aspects of a word and intimates the correctness of both. . . . We may add the few instances in the Gospel where the double meaning does not come from the intrinsic meaning of the words. The interrelation between the double meaning, the literary stand point, and irony becomes very evident at least at one point. . . . [Caiaphas' prediction that one man must die for the people, 11:50. Another instance might be Jesus' "Destroy this temple" in 2:19, where his body and the temple could both be meant.]²

¹Of interest to the point being made here would be: McDowell, "Lovest", pp. 428-9, 433; Herschel H. Hobbs, "Word Studies in the Gospel of John," Southwestern Journal of Theology, VIII (1965), pp.68-74; Merrill C. Tenney, John: The Gospel of Belief (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1953), p. 308.

²Wead, Literary Devices, pp. 32-3.

What is humorous, is to witness the tempest between commentators, stirred up by such passages as John the Baptist's title for Jesus, "The Lamb of God, Who takes away the sin of the world!" (1:29). This singular comment, put together in such a way, can virtually encompass all of Old Testament theology--from the lamb of the sacrifices, to the lamb of the passover, to lambs in other contexts, to the roots in Hebrew and Greek which seem to also point to a suffering servant motif, etc. Were all these ideas included? Were the Greek words for this chosen simply by chance? Or did John the writer, by intention, choose words and put together ideas which would open the door of the Christians understanding to the whole world of Old Testament theology?¹

Based on evidence concerning ἀνὸς θεοῦ and the rest of the above arguments presented above, it is quite possible that John paid close attention to the words he choose. Still, what happened to Caiaphas in 11:50 could conceivably have happened to John, that he spoke words of far reaching import without realizing it. This is always a possibility, and therefore must be confronted in the reader's own mind.

Wead's Literary Devices in John's Gospel² contains a great deal more material in this same vein, dealing with: symbolism; the apparent delight John had in the second person plural verb forms (which could be either indicative or imperative--or both!); other pairings of words (like ἵνα ἴδωσιν and οἶδα)³; along with other such devices found in John's Gospel. That there is much more to John's Gospel than "meets the eye"

¹Wead, Literary Devices, pp. 37-9; Paul Trudinger, "Subtle Word-Plays in the Gospel of John, and the Problem of Chapter 21", Journal of Religious Thought, 28 (January, 1971), pp. 28-9.

²Op. cit. (see p. 7, n. 2).

³Tenny, John, p. 308; John A. Cross, "On St. John XXI: 15-17", The Expositor, Series 4, VII (1893), p. 313.

is quite evident--he has written something for us that is intended to be digested slowly and thoughtfully, always mindful of the necessity of the rest of the Bible to grasp his full significance. John has a "maturity of understanding . . . [which] reflects in depth upon the significance of these same events in a very subtle way."¹

Perhaps a final point is the probability that John wrote this Gospel near the end of his life, near the end of the first century. If this is true, John would have had a much greater background and wisdom to draw from than an earlier writing. Perhaps it took him that many years to shape and hone his account into what he felt must be said. This however is simply conjecture.

Looking over these many points raised about John and his Gospel, often one can get the mental image of a man who has great delight in his subject and in his writing, in his words and in his content. It is not as if he is playing, but that he is obviously enjoying his task, and has so much to say, that he tries to say what he can in the best and shortest way possible. The Christian world has accurately symbolized him and his work as a "soaring Eagle", soaring to the heights of the heavens, yet always coming back down to earth. It is not only possible, but very probable that John would have wanted ἀγαπᾶω to be a technical, Christian term to express a concept of love that φιλέω would miss (or neglect). He certainly is capable of doing such a thing.

D. Language and Languages

This section is a kind of "catch-all" for some thoughts raised by translations and by considerations concerning languages. One place to

¹Trudinger, "Subtle Word-Plays", p. 27.

start is to view the history of the Gospel of John, which Brown points out:

With the partial exception of Origin, the great Greek commentators of old, like Chrysostom and Cyril of Alexandria, and the scholars of the Reformation period, like Erasmus and Grotius, saw no real difference of meaning in this variation of vocabulary; but British scholars of the last century, like Trench, Westcott, and Plummer found therein subtle shades of meaning.¹

It is granted that Brown is antagonistic to the position that there are differences in meaning between ἀπαύω and φιλέω, but even a supporter of this position, Hendriksen, has composed a list of supporters that begins, with the exception of Jerome, in the early 1900's.² The earliest supporter in the Bibliography at the end of this paper goes back only until the mid-1800's.

Now this by no means automatically settles the question. Although I have not been able to research much farther back than the above mentioned supporter, due to limitations of translation ability, time, and resources, it seems quite probable that there must have been some who noted the difference down through the ages, just as Jerome and Origin had done. Yet this is still something to wrestle with, when the majority of the well-known fathers do not point up this distinction. It may be very true that this accent was not recognized--but then, was interest in words, and in word studies, as strong back then as now? Did they have the resources --and the desire--as we do now, to recognize such differences, with their respective histories, especially as compared to non-Biblical Greek texts? There are many unanswered questions here that must be settled in the

¹Raymond E. Brown, The Gospel According to Saint John, vol. 29 of The Anchor Bible (Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1970), p. 1102; cf., Morris, Studies, p. 873; William Hendriksen, New Testament Commentary: An Exposition of the Gospel According to John (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1954), p. 405.

²Hendriksen, Commentary, p. 406.

reader's own mind, since I have little information concerning this aspect.

However there are answers to the critics who cite the problem concerning the "original" language of the Gospel--Aramaic.¹ This does not necessarily mean that the Gospel was written in Aramaic, but at least that that was the language which Jesus and His disciples spoke. The argument is as follows: There are no fine shades of meaning for love in this palestinian dialect, there is only one word to encompass the whole concept. Therefore there would have been no distinction made in the original discourses by Jesus (and others). So, when John used two words for this one concept, it was merely for variety's sake.

McDowell in his article, "Lovest Thou Me?", questions whether we have adequate proof that Aramaic had only one word for love.² He points out that our sources for this dialect are very meager, and we should guard ourselves from overstating the case. In addition, even though there may be no words in Aramaic directly indicating other types of love, still sometimes by idiom or context there can be words which indirectly are "synonyms" for love, without being "love's" equivalent. This is the thought of Lenski: "Though Aramaic may or may not have two verbs the exact counterpart of these in Greek, every language has means at hand, besides bare verbs, for indicating desired differences of thought, such as are most decidedly indicated [here]."³ And Wead adds this: "In addition to our inability to obtain surety as to the Aramaic original (if there was one), the self-evident truth that the talk . . . was not recorded on the spot

¹Morris, Studies, p. 872; James Alexander Findlay, The Fourth Gospel: An Expository Commentary (London: The Epworth Press, 1970), p. 152.

²Op. cit. (see p. 5, n. 1).

³Richard Charles Henry Lenski, The Interpretation of St. John's Gospel (Columbus, Ohio: Lutheran Book Concern, 1931), p. 1392; cf., George B. Stevens, Johannine Theology (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1895), p. 271.

but rather recorded as remembered at a later date make such arguments [concerning the Aramaic] tentative."¹

On this basis, the argument based on Aramaic has a weak foundation. What might make it even weaker is the point brought up by Snaith concerning the Hebrew language, in his Distinctive Ideas of the Old Testament.² He finds a difference concerning love between God's אהבה (election love) and His אהבה (covenant love). Now, even though the distinction may not be the same as between ἀγαπάω and φιλέω, it would still indicate an awareness in the Hebrew mind that there is more to love than one word could encompass. This is by far not the last word on the subject, and it deserves more investigation.

McDowell, as he quotes Lightfoot, brings up another point to think about in one's decision concerning words used for the sake of variety:

The two parts of a language in which a person writing in a foreign tongue is apt to be at fault are the vocabulary and the syntax. As regards vocabulary, we should not expect great luxuriance of words, a copious command of synonyms for instance. In the matter of syntax, we should not look for a mastery of complex and involved syntax, or of sustained and elaborate periods.³

It must be remembered that if John finished his Gospel near the end of his life, near the end of the first century, possibly in Ephesus, then he would have had a good long contact with Greek-speaking people, especially in the Christian community. It would not be as if John was a novice in regard to Greek, but would have a good grasp of it. Yet McDowell does

¹Wead, Literary Devices, p. 31; cf., John Peter Lange, The Gospel According to John, vol. 13 in A Commentary on the Holy Scriptures, ed. by Philip Schaff (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1884), p. 638.

²Norman H. Snaith, Distinctive Ideas of the Old Testament (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1946); cf., Daniel Day Williams, The Spirit and Forms of Love (New York: Harper & Row, 1968), p. 19.

³Mc Dowell, "Lovest Thou Me?", p. 431.

give a point to consider. Greek was not John's native tongue; so was he necessarily that much accomplished in this language to have a vocabulary that would vary for the sake of variety? Or was it just what he needed, vocabulary-wise, to express himself adequately? The fact that his syntax still reflected Aramaic syntax, to the degree that there was some argument whether the Gospel had an Aramaic original¹: does this indicate the awkwardness of John in the Greek language, so that therefore he might not have a plethora of synonyms either? This is the reader's choice.

E. Inspiration

There is a final argument that Wuest brings up, that in the opinion of some might be the "clincher"--that of the place of inspiration in this text. We have talked so much about John, his language, the Christian community--but the real crux of the matter concerns what the Lord wanted said, and how active was He in the choice of words. Was God's inspiration general--topical--or was it more specific, causing the Biblical writers to say exactly what was to be said, influencing even their choice of words? It is true that John, as a man, might well have used variation for the sake of variety--but now, did this fit into a greater, over-arching purpose, decided upon by God (remember Caiaphas!)?

In most cases the exegete can readily understand the distinctive significance of the use of *philein* and *agapan* in their contexts. In some instances the reason for their use may not be clear, which fact has led some expositors to conclude that in those places they are used interchangeably. But not so. The doctrine of verbal inspiration stands squarely against such teaching. The Bible asserts that in the case of the original manuscripts each word was selected out of the vocabulary of the writer by the Holy Spirit for its particular context of meaning which would convey to the reader conversant with the original language the exact truth God wishes man to have. That process of selection extends to the choice of synonyms. In the case of instances where the use of one synonym rather than the other is

¹Ibid.

not understood, it is better to hold rigidly to the Bible claim of verbal inspiration and wait for further light or be content with no light on the problem this side of heaven.¹

To assert that because this conversation was held in Aramaic rather than Greek, therefore these synonyms are used interchangeably and thus cannot be held to their distinction in each instance of their use, is beside the point when the doctrine of verbal inspiration is taken into account, for while the writers thought in their mother tongue, yet inspiration guarantees the infallible translation of their Aramaic into the particular Greek words that would adequately convey their thought.²

To conclude part one of this paper, the reader is reminded that the intent is to introduce him to the various arguments concerning the possibility of a difference, which the reader must take into account for himself. There are some very strong arguments in favor of the distinction between ἀγαπάω and φιλέω, particularly the last point made by Wuest. But on the other hand there are points that don't go away by ignoring them, such as the fact that very few ancient, medieval, and reformation commentators noted the difference. However, there is enough argument, in the opinion of this writer, to warrant investigation into the distinction of these two words.

¹Wuest, "Four Words", p. 241.

²Ibid., pp. 245-6.

II. OBSERVATIONS ON JOHN'S WRITINGS

We will proceed on the assumption that there is a difference between ἀγαπάω and φιλέω. But what exactly is that difference? As we will see in the third section, some try to raise the first above the second, others tend to the opposite, and still others call them different but equal. It is true that any conclusions concerning the difference must, in the end, be based on conjecture, since the first century Church did not see fit to write dictionaries of Christian terminology. And it is difficult, this side of heaven, to talk with the original author (besides, who'd believe us anyway?). Still, there is factual evidence within John's writings that we can work with, to come as close as possible to John's meanings.

In the following, to conserve space, just references are given for some passages, while others are summarized for the reader. Should one want to check these passages, they will be given in full in Appendix I.

A. Some Points in Common

1. The Father is capable of both

φιλέω --5:20 the Father loves the Son; 16:27 The Father loves you
ἀγαπάω --3:35 the Father loves the Son; 17:23 that You love them as
you love me; also 10:17; 14:21,23; 15:9,10; 17:24,26

2. The Son is capable of both

φιλέω --11:3 the one you love is sick; 11:36 how he loved him;
20:2 the disciple whom Jesus loved; also 11:11; 15:14,15
ἀγαπάω --11:5 Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus; 13:1
having loved his own, . . . he loved them to the end;
13:23 (19:26; 21:7,20) the disciple whom Jesus loved;
14:31 I love the Father; also 14:21; 15:9,10,12

3. Man is capable of both

φιλέω --12:25 he who loves his life shall lose it; 15:19 the world would love its own; 3:29 friend of the bridegroom; 19:12 friend of Caesar

ἀγαπάω --3:19 man loved darkness more than light; 12:43 they loved the glory of man more than the glory of God; II,1:1 whom I love in truth; I,4:19 We love because he first loved us; also I,2:15; I,3:14

It is interesting to note that in the Gospel of John, both "kinds" of love in man are not usually depicted in a very positive light. Instead they are quite negative, and usually the loving of things, not people. Perhaps this is significant, the intention being to accent man's perversion of love because of sin. The commands to love (ἀγαπάω) in the Gospel, and the positive references to a Christian's love (ἀγαπάω) for another in the epistles, might then suggest the post-redemption (baptized) life of the believer, who now through the grace of Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit can now begin to love properly.

B. Some Differences

1. The nature and results of ἀγαπάω

- a. God is ἀγαπάω (I,4:8,16)
- b. ἀγαπάω is of God (I,4:7) comes from God (I,4:10); because He first loved us (I,4:19); he who loves is born of God (I,4:7); love is perfected in us, for as He is, so are we in this world (I,4:17); If God was your father, you would love Me (8:42)
- c. Where ἀγαπάω is, so also is God (I,2:10; I,4:12,16) he who does not love, does not know God (I,4:18)
- d. ἀγαπάω has no fear (terror?) mixed in it (I,4:18)
- e. ἀγαπάω can be either proper, misused, or lacking
 - proper is in harmony with God's will (obedience--see points "f" and "g" below)
 - misused--do not ἀγαπάω the world and the things of the world, love of the world mean no love the Father in him (I,2:15) (see also point "A3" above)
 - lack--(I,3:14; I,4:8); the rejection of God indicates a lack of the love of God (5:42,43)

- f. ἀγαπᾶω is activity (or, activity demonstrates love)
It Gives--The Father loves the Son and gives (3:35), just as He loves the world (us) and gives (3:16; I,4:9,10); what love He gives us that we are His children (I,3:1)
 --The Son shows His love for the Father by giving (14:31); we know love because He laid down His life for us (I,3:16)
 --A friend shows his love by giving (15:13); gives to his brother in need (I,3:17)
It Obeys--(especially with man)
 Keeps word (commandments) (14:15; 14:23; 13:35; 14:21; 15:10); Whoever keeps His word, in him truly love of God is perfected (I,2:5)
It Follows the Lead of the One Loved--(especially for man)
 If God so loved, we ought also (I,4:11); we love because He first loved us (I,4:9); abide in love, abide in God, God in you--in this is love perfected in us--as He is, so are we (I,4:16,17); as the Father loves me, I love you, dwell in this love (15:9)
- g. Therefore ἀγαπᾶω is commanded
 This command^o I give you, that you love one another as I have loved you (13:34; 15:12,17; I,3:11; II,1:5)
- h. Results of ἀγαπᾶω
 Everyone who loves the parent loves the child (I,5:1); love God, love brother also (I,4:21); abides in light (I,2:10); love God and hate brother is impossible (I,4:20); abides in God (I,4:12,16)
- i. ἀγαπᾶω endures, even to the end (13:1)
2. The nature and results of φιλῶ
- a. God is ἀγαπή and He ἀγαπά the world (3:16), but He φιλῶ believers (16:27). This does not mean that when a person becomes a believer that God's ἀγαπᾶω ceases--on the contrary (16:27)! Apparently then, this indicates something more--a special relationship, now that we are His friends (possibly reminiscent of the theology in Romans 5:6-11 and other such passages?). "You are my friends if you do what I command you. No longer do I call you my servants . . ." (15:14,15).
- b. Whereas ἀγαπᾶω is characterized by giving, obedience, and following the lead of the one loved, φιλῶ is characterized by revealing and "feeling" (perhaps "personal empathy" might be more descriptive?). "The Father φιλῶ the Son and shows (reveals) Himself (His works) to Him" (5:20). Jesus, weeping at the tomb of Lazarus, evokes the response: "How He loved him!" (11:36).
- c. Both loves seem to respond to the actions of the beloved, but perhaps for different reasons. God φιλῶ us because we have (φιλῶμεν) Jesus--in other words, this is love responding to love, as in mutual friendship (16:27). The implication would be that, for the believer, God can now begin to go into depths in sharing and revelation, such as exists already between Him and the Son (5:20).

On the other hand, God's ἀγαπᾶω is already present in and for the world (3:16), yet it also responds because Christ's commands and words are followed. Possibly this means that obedience brings upon oneself the full benefits of God's (and Christ's) ἀγαπᾶω: ". . . and We will come and make Our home with him" (14:23); ". . . you will abide in my love" (15:10). Likewise the Father ἀγαπᾶ the Son from eternity (17:24), but still there is a response because the Son gives His life (10:17).

That ἀγαπᾶω can "grow" or "respond" may at first sound strange, since one thinks of God's love as constant, not dependent on man. However this is what the Biblical record seems to indicate. It is a question on similar lines as: How does the Spirit Who is already present in the believer, become more "present" when that believer is "filled with the Holy Spirit" (Acts 13:9)? We can guess, but there are areas about God we cannot fathom.

What should be mentioned is one weak link, which is 14:21, where "manifesting" (revealing), which is normally linked to φιλέω, is instead linked to ἀγαπᾶω. This might, though, be accenting the receiving of love, rather than the mutual sharing of friendship.

C. Some Observations and Conclusions

Evidently, one cannot assert that only one kind of love is God's love, while the other is only man's, since both are applied to both. But looking farther, it is apparent that ἀγαπᾶω is much more widely developed than φιλέω--in fact, there is the audacious claim that God is ἀγαπή, while this startling claim is not repeated for φιλία. And since God is ἀγαπή, anyone who has ἀγαπή is born of God and has God dwelling in him. The fact that he has ἀγαπή is demonstrated in his obedience (not from compulsion, i.e., fear, but out of love), and his tendency is to follow in the footsteps of The Ἀγαπή (i.e., God), Who gives to the uttermost, even to giving His life.

On the other hand, φιλέω would be a sharing, an empathy, and therefore a mutual revealing of oneself to the loved one. Jesus' display of emotion is linked to φιλέω, along with the mutual concern for one another, as among friends (11:3).

A serious problem arises in point B1c (and A3), where John (1,2:15)

talks about ἀγαπᾶω the world in the negative sense, that this is a wrong love. But then no matter how you interpret the word for love, it seems to conflict directly with points B1b and B1c, where if ἀγαπή is of God, and anyone who has ἀγαπή has God (because this is of God), then how can you misuse ἀγαπᾶω when God is so intimately bound up with it?

Nygren's answer is that this is where John strangely narrows ἀγαπᾶω down, becoming "particularistic; it loses something of the original all-embracing scope, and is limited to those who bear the Christian name. The Agape by which all men shall know Jesus' disciples, is the love that they have one to another as Christians (John 13:35), not a love directed to those outside."¹

If Nygren meant to say that the Christian community is only to love itself, and not turn God's redeeming love outward into the world, then this would be a hard statement for a Christian to swallow, especially one who takes seriously Jesus' statement, "As the Father has sent me, even so I send you." It would seem to negate the Christian mission of revealing God's love to the world, through the expression of that love. This interpretation would clearly not fit into the rest of the message and intent of Scripture, much less of John. Candlish points out:

The point is not that God can love the world while man, due to his blindness and limitations may not. The Christian, also, when under the control of the love of God, may look through the surface of things and see the worth of the being whom God has created. Yet in the sense in which God loved the world the Christian can and ought to love the world. . . . All the benevolent, evangelistic, and missionary activities of Christianity are an expression of this love of the Christian for the world. And this love of the Christian for the world is only a faint expression of the love of God for the world.²

¹Anders Nygren, Agape and Eros, trans. by A. G. Herbert (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge), p. 114.

²Walter Thomas Conner, The Epistles of John (Nashville, Tennessee: Broadman Press, 1957), p. 53; cf., Robert Law, The Tests of Life: A Study of the First Epistle of St. John (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1914), pp. 71,

As an alternative to what is apparently Nygren's idea, possibly John is aiming at the tendency of some to wrench ἀγαπάω out of the context of relationship to God. Outside of God, there really is no ἀγαπάω--it turns into desire, lust, and pride (I,2:15,16). It is like a Christian who begins to think he must save the world, and soon starts to actually get in the way of his own intention. Soon he finds himself caught in a web of desire, lust, or self-righteous pride.

Only God's ἀγαπή--the true ἀγαπή--is redeeming. Man's ἀγαπάω, born of and dependent on God's, must be obedient (therefore humble), taking its cue from God, and letting His ἀγαπάω come through. Man can ἀγαπάω the world only in so far as God is doing it through him. It is not on man's own, nor on his own authority, nor on his own motivation. I love the world, only in so far as God does the loving through me. Otherwise I have no business being even connected with the world. I am God's representative and ambassador. You might even go so far as to say that the love toward the brethren--even love toward God--fits here also. If it is to be true ἀγαπάω, there must be a constant dependence on the love from God in order to love.

III. THE OBSERVATIONS OF THE COMMENTATORS

Of the commentators on John that are in the Bibliography, twenty-four (section "A" of the Bibliography) feel that there is no difference between ἀγαπᾶω and φιλῶ. The reasons range from the view that these words are simply synonyms and are interchangeable for variety's sake, to the arguments concerning Aramaic, and to the argument that ancient translators and commentators did not note this difference. These positions have been covered in the first section of this paper, and need not be covered again.

Instead, the object of this section is to proceed on the assumption that there is a difference between the two words, and to describe what commentators have enunciated as that difference. There will be three parts, two dealing with definitions of φιλῶ and ἀγαπᾶω respectively, and the third dealing with other considerations about love, particularly ἀγαπᾶω.

Within these introductory remarks a word should be said about the term "synonyms". Some commentators, particularly those mentioned in the first paragraph above, mean by this term that ἀγαπᾶω and φιλῶ say the same thing. Others, though, such as Warfield, mean that these words talk about the same thing, i.e. love, but from different emphases.

What we mean to say is that, as synonyms, these terms do not so much cover a common ground over the edge of which each extends at a particular place to occupy an additional field all its own; as that they are so used that, within the common ground which they all alike cover, each has a particular quality or aspect which it alone emphasizes, and which it alone is fitted to bring into sight. . . . It is probable that no one of the terms is ever used wholly without some sense in the speaker's mind of its specific implication.¹

¹Benjamin B. Warfield, "The Terminology of Love in the New Testament", Princeton Theological Review, XVI (1918), p. 3.

A word should also be said about Morris' point, in his commentary, on a conflict concerning the understanding of these words:

Some maintain that the word Jesus uses in the first two questions [of 21:15-17] denotes a higher type of love, while Peter's word points to a lower form of love, perhaps no more than a liking. . . . Other commentators, however, reverse the meanings of the two words. They see Jesus as inquiring whether Peter has a rather cool type of affection for Him and Peter as replying that he has more than that, he has a warm love. . . . The unfortunate thing about these two interpretations, of course, is that they cancel one another out.¹

This is questionable logic. Just because two people disagree with each other does not mean that both are wrong, even if they be scholars well versed in their subjects (as Morris proceeds to point out). And apparently, what he describes as two opposing interpretations really do not disagree as to the respective definitions of the words, but only in the relative positions that they hold, i.e., which would be the "higher" or "lower", the "warmer" or "cooler". This should be kept in mind as this part of the paper is read.

A. φιλίω

The concensus of the commentators (agreeing with the difference) is that φιλίω is the love of affection--the love between friends. Wuest points out:

It comes into the New Testament with its classical meaning unchanged by any additional meanings placed upon it by the contexts in which it is used, which is not true of agapan. The one word which describes it is pleasure. It is a love called out of one's heart by the pleasure one takes in the object loved. The best English words which will give the meaning are an affection, a fondness, a liking. It is a non-ethical thing. That is, it imposes no obligations upon the one who shows this affection. It is however not unethical, being perfectly proper in its place. It could become most selfish. It is a fondness which responds to something in the object loved which is like something in the one who loves. . . . We like what we are like. Philiē

¹Leon Morris, Studies in the Fourth Gospel (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1969), pp. 871-3; cf. Eric Lane Titus, The Message of the Fourth Gospel (New York: Abingdon Press, 1957), p. 252.

is an unimpassioned friendly affection, a fondness aroused in the heart by the apprehension of pleasureable qualities in the object loved.¹

"Spontaneous" and "instinctive" are two words that are very often used, along with "affection". φιλείω is the spontaneous arousal of affection (love) which arises from the pleasure or delight one has in the object of love.² It has the idea of warmth and close interpersonal communion, with its sharing of oneself, and fondness for the other.³ Emotion seems to play an important role in this kind of love--at least where man is concerned.⁴ But it also seems to even indicate a potential that God has.⁵ It may be true that we may not assign to God "emotions", yet we can use this word to show how personally and close He connects Himself to His Son, and through His Son to Christian believers. It is the brand of love such as between father and son, or friend to friend.

By φιλεῖν is understood the love of mere personal affection or liking, including even the passions where the context requires, and no intelligence or high purpose is involved; this content places the verb on its low level. It could never be said of God that he φίλει the sinful

¹Kenneth S. Wuest, "Four Greek Words for Love", Bibliotheca Sacra, 16/463 (1959), pp. 241-8.

²As representatives of this position: Warfield, "Terminology", pp. 3, 30; Herman Cremer, Biblico-Theological Lexicon of the New Testament Greek, trans. by William Urwick (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1954), p. 11.

³As representatives of this position: Warfield, "Terminology", p. 196; W. E. Vine, Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words (London: Oliphants LTD., 1944), p. 21; Henry Alford, The Greek Testament, revised by Everett F. Harrison (Chicago: Moody Press, 1958), p. 917; A. T. Robertson, The Divinity of Christ in the Gospel of John (New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1916), pp. 84-5.

⁴As representatives of this position: A. Plummer, The Gospel According to St. John, in The Cambridge Greek Testament for Schools and Colleges (Cambridge: University Press, 1938), p. 234; Philip Schaff, A Companion to the Greek Testament and the English Version (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1883), p. 62; Marvin R. Vincent, Word Studies in the New Testament (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons), p. 135.

⁵Plummer, Greek Testament, p. 234; cf. Warfield, "Terminology", p. 30; George B. Stevens, Johannine Theology (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1895), p. 269.

world; as far as φιλέω is concerned he could only abominate the foul world. Jesus never asked us to love our enemies in the sense of φιλέω; he never loved his enemies himself in this way.¹

It would be pointless to command anyone to have a feeling of friendship, and so φιλέω is never used in a command. . . .²

B. ἀγαπάω

φιλέω, you might say, is the response in the subject caused by the object. I φιλέω you, because I find you loveable; or I φιλέω you because you are my child. Ἀγαπάω, on the other hand, depends only upon the subject--it is something determined only by himself, not due to anything in the object. It is simply a characteristic of the subject. God loves, because He has decided to, because it is His nature to do so. It is His free, purposeful act, not based on any lovableness in us, His object.

The word translated "love" is the noblest and strongest in Greek. It connotes an act of the will rather than an emotion, whim, or infatuation, and its measure is defined in terms of the result "He gave his only begotten Son".³

Nygren's description is that:

- i) Agape is spontaneous and 'uncaused' Hence when it is said that God loves man, this is not a judgment on what man is like, but on what God is like. . . .
- ii) Agape is indifferent to human merit
- iii) Agape is creative That which in itself is without value, by the fact that it is the object of God's love now becomes valuable. . . .
- iv) Agape opens the way of fellowship with God.⁴

¹Richard Charles Henry Lenski, The Interpretation of St. John's Gospel (Columbus, Ohio: Lutheran Book Concern, 1931), p. 1392.

²Joseph N. Sanders, A Commentary on the Gospel According to St. John, ed. and completed by B. A. Martin (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1968), p. 29; cf. Stevens, Theology, p. 268; Gremer, Lexicon, p. 11.

³Merrill C. Tenney, John: The Gospel of Belief (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1953), p. 89; cf. Edwin Kenneth Lee, The Religious Thought of St. John (London: SPCK, 1962), p. 55.

⁴Anders Nygren, Agape and Eros, trans. by A. G. Herbert (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge), pp. 52-4; cf. Morris, Studies, p. 332.

Here ἀγαπᾶω has the idea of definite, purposeful choice, based on intelligence, reason, and comprehension.¹ The word prize often shows up to indicate the high value placed upon the object of love, a value not intrinsically its own, but one that is strictly received. This is God's love which we also can share in as His children:

But though we cannot love God in the same way in which He has loved us, yet if we are "begotten of God", we have in us the same nature of Love that He has manifested toward us in Christ. . . . Children partake of the nature of the father. God's children partake of His agape nature. God's children will love not merely the lovable, but will actively seek to help men irrespective of their merit or demerit, their attractiveness or their ugliness, will seek to lead them to the God of love, will bear the other's burden, dry the other's tears, forgive injuries, overcome evil with good, help those in need of help and hope for nothing in return; will if need be, like Christ, lay down life itself for the brethren.²

There is, however, the problem with some commentators in that they do not seem to consider the full scope of ἀγαπάω. For some they define this word in terms of God, neglecting the fact that this same word is used for man, and therefore the definition is quite unfitting. Others seem to define this word in terms of man, which would not fit properly as God's love.

Under the first category would be Evans' comment: "The original sense of ἀγαπᾶν is hardly 'love' at all in any usual sense, but the general satisfaction of a superior with an inferior."³ Consider also Lee's comment

¹As representatives of this position: Lyman Abbott, An Illustrated Commentary on the Gospel According to St. John (New York: A. S. Barnes & Company, 1879), p. 238; F. C. Cook, The Holy Bible with Explanatory and Critical Commentary, vol. 10: St. John and the Acts of the Apostles (London: John Murray, 1880), p. 85; Vine, Dictionary, p. 20; Schaff, Companion, p. 62.

²Victor Bartling, "We Love Because He First Loved Us", Concordia Theological Monthly, 23 (December, 1952), p. 879.

³Earnest Evans, "The Verb ἀγαπαίν in the Fourth Gospel", Studies in the Fourth Gospel, ed. by Frank L. Cross (London: A. R. Mowbray & Co., Limited, 1957), p. 67.

that this is the love of the higher which lifts up the lower, and exalts it above others.¹ Is this part of the definition or part of the application of the definition to God?

It can only be part of the application, since if this defines ἀγαπάω, then one runs into trouble when he is to ἀγαπάω God, Jesus, or his brother.

The other problem is that of making ἀγαπάω sound very close to φιλέω, in the sense that this kind of love is sparked by the object. Consider Wuest's: "Agapan is a love called out of one's heart by the preciousness of the object loved."² And Warfield's:

If, of an awakened sense of value in the object which causes us to prize it, [then] ἀγαπᾶν. . . . What is contended for is that the particular manner of love which the word is adopted to express, is the love which is the product of the apprehension of value in its object, and which is therefore informed by a feeling of its preciousness, so that it moves in a region closely akin to that of esteeming, valuing, prizing.³

If it is true, as it seems from these quotes, that even this type of love must depend on something in the object sparking ἀγαπάω to life (within the subject), then any command to love would be valueless. We would simply have to wait until something from the object would spark our love into being. Furthermore, as Lutherans holding to Paul's theology (also), there is the conflict between this idea and the strong Pauline emphasis on the total depravity of man. If Scripture interprets Scripture (which it does), then one cannot ever say that there is something desirable in man which just made God love us. Instead, it is that God simply loves, and this love in turn has made us tremendously valuable--not vice versa.

¹Lee, Religious Thought, p. 55; cf. Morris, Studies, p. 332; Nygren, Agape, pp. 52-4.

²Wuest, "Greek Words", p. 242.

³Warfield, "Terminology", pp. 3, 39; cf. Plummer, Greek Testament, p. 234; George P. Eckman, Studies in the Gospel of John (Cincinnati: Jennings and Graham, 1908), pp. 12-3.

This then is why ἀγαπάω can be commanded, since it involves our new nature (which we lay claim to through Jesus Christ because of our baptism, Romans 6:3-4, Ephesians 6:15), which does not seek out what is lovable or delightful in its object, but instead creates value, i.e., makes valuable the object precisely because of that love. Naturally this cannot be of our own doing, but must be totally dependent upon God's ἀγάπη. And, as Vine points out, this kind of love may run contrary to one's natural inclinations, reaching out even to the abhorant and unlovable--in fact, even to enemies. It is not that emotion and affection do not have any part in ἀγαπέω, rather it is just that these take second place to its primary function. ἀγαπάω is commanded, not because φιλέω is worthless, but that, since we are born of God, ἀγαπάω (i.e., true ἀγαπάω which is never separated from God and His ἀγαπάω) and its results are the more specially sought--and the more uncommon in a sinful world.

C. Other Considerations Concerning Love

ἡ ἀγάπη τοῦ Θεοῦ--this is a very fascinating formation of words. Bartling points out that it can be subjective genitive (love of God, where God is doing the loving), or objective genitive (love for God, where God is the object of the loving), of ablative (love from God, where God's love is in us, flowing through us), or even all three:

One may also argue that no distinction is to be made, that all three are meant. As Paul says (Romans 5:5), "God's love to us is shed abroad in our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us," so the Agape-God Himself through the Spirit dwells in our hearts, working through us and at the same time inspiring true human agape acts in us.²

These three directions of love are summed up in different words by Dodd:

¹Vine, Dictionary, p. 20.

²Bartling, "We Love Because", p. 879.

They are His 'friends' by virtue of His choice, sealed by His supreme act of ἀγαπή in laying down His life for His friends; He has given them knowledge of God, and appointed them to 'bear fruit'. . . , and consequently to have access to all the resources of God's grace.¹

And another insight into love is provided by Naumann:

In his gospel, John discloses a very close tie between love and both doing and knowing; doing and knowing invariably occur in the vicinity wherever John mentions love. Paging through the gospel taking careful note of what the Father does and what Jesus does (the actions John connects so intimately with love), you will discover that the doing is primarily a giving ("God so loved the world that he gave"). . . . God shows his love for us by making himself known to us and by doing for us; Christ reveals and he saves. Moreover, he saves by revealing and reveals by saving. How did Christ reveal and how does he continue to reveal? By his presence in his saving work, by doing, that is, by spending his life teaching and performing signs, by laying down his life, and by giving life. And Christ also reveals by his presence remaining and abiding, his being with us and in us.²

As mentioned in the introduction to this section, Morris has problems with those who assign one word as higher than the other, or warmer than the other, and so forth. Warfield and McDowell point out (respectively):

It is besides the mark to speak of it as a "weaker", or as a "colder" word than φιλείν; the distinction between the two lies in a different plane from these things. A love rooted in the perception in its object of something pleasing (that is, of the order of φιλείν), or of something valuable (that is, of the order of ἀγαπᾶω), may alike be very weak or very strong, very cold or very warm; these things are quite indifferent to the distinction and will be determined by other circumstances³

The difference in these verbs is not that between "high" and "low", but in the ideas they inherently convey. In itself neither word is inherently good, nor inherently bad. The function of neither is to express either elevation or declension in the moral scale, but simply to tell something men think or feel, and that may be good or bad.⁴

Although these are important thoughts to have in the background, still,

¹C. H. Dodd, The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel (Cambridge: University Press, 1953), p. 418.

²Paul S. Naumann, "The Presence of Love in John's Gospel", Worship, 39 (1965), p. 369.

³Warfield, "Terminology", p. 30.

⁴Edward A. McDowell, Jr., "'Lovest Thou Me?' A Study of John 21:15-17", Review and Expositor, 34 (1935), p. 424.

Although these are important thoughts to have in the background, still, it is difficult to not assign one word group as having a more important value, simply because of its impact (God is ἀγαπᾷ) and its predominant usage throughout John, the New Testament, and even the Septuagint. Yet we cannot afford to shortchange the other group either, since these words express valid and valuable points about love. As a way out of this apparent dilemma, perhaps Schaff has given us a more useable distinction when he says:

The one term is not necessarily stronger than the other. The latter [ἀγαπᾷ] may be more exalted, as implying the result of intelligence and knowledge; the former [φιλέω] may be more expressive, as implying a closer bond and a warmer feeling.¹

There is a final thought to add to this section: Barrett's commentary on John 3:16-18, where judgment is the other side of the coin for love:

This corresponds to the fact that while God loves the world (as is stated in this verse) his love only becomes effective among those who believe in Christ. For the rest love turns, as it were, to judgment. Love seems to be, for John, a reciprocal relation. . . .²

¹Schaff, Companion, p. 62.

²Charles K. Barrett, The Gospel According to Saint John: An Introduction with Commentary and Notes on the Greek Text (London: SPCK, 1965), p. 180.

IV. SOME CONCLUSIONS CONCERNING THE DIFFERENCE

This section seeks to draw conclusions concerning the Biblical evidence dealt with in section II, in light of the observations of the commentators in section III.

In order to accomplish this objective, permit for the moment what might appear to be an aside. On pages eight and nine of this paper, there was a discussion of how the pagans' common word for "love", φιλέω, probably was just not adequate for the needs of the Christian community. The Christians had a totally new aspect concerning love: God's love in Jesus Christ. They needed, therefore, a word that could be redefined and filled with this new Christian meaning, so they chose ἀγαπάω.

Originally, it seems that for the pagans, φιλέω was both a "generic" and a "specific" term: "generic" in that it included many different concepts; "specific" in that when contrasted with another concept, its own particular meaning would stand out.¹ But now the Christians had something

¹To explain further this difference between "generic" and "specific": "generic" means the whole group or field in general, "specific" means narrowed down to a specific or individual meaning. If the pagans wanted to just talk about love in general (or to use it with the general idea of love as its background), φιλέω would serve this purpose. But, now, suppose that they wanted to accent the idea of friendship as opposed to sexual intercourse--then φιλέω would be used in contradistinction to ἐράω (passion, sexual desire), to bring out this side of φιλέω.

An English example would be that someone were to say, "Love, don't fight." "Love" here could mean several different things: 1) as some women might use it, it could mean "buddy" or "friend"; 2) it might mean to have affection, as between friends; 3) or to have tenderness and devotion, as between husband and wife; 4) or to have sexual intercourse. And what about "I love ice cream cones!"? All these different ideas fit under the "generic" meaning of "love".

But, now, suppose a marriage counselor says to his clients, "I want you to love, not just have sex". The meaning now becomes a little more

new, God's love, which was completely foreign to what the pagan mind included under φιλέω. So when the Christians chose ἀγαπάω, immediately, for them at least, it also probably took the place of φιλέω as even the generic term for love.¹

Therefore, in the normal conversations of Christians between themselves, when one wanted to just talk about "love" in general, instead of using the pagans' common word, he might instead use the "new" word. This would be because he understood that there was more to love than the pagans knew, and that now, as a Christian, any of one's conversation must be mindful of this "new" dimension to love (which really is as old as God is). It is possible that in this way, at least within Christian circles, φιλέω began to drop out of useage, except when used for bringing out the specific meaning of ἀγαπάω.

This relationship between ἀγαπάω and φιλέω, for the Christian

specific as to what you are talking about, when you say "love". It could get even more specific if one were to say "Love me, don't just like me!" In diagram form this would look like: (please note, Greek and English do not correspond!)

<u>LOVE</u> affection liking (ice cream) love (one's parents) (specific terms) sexual intercourse etc.	(generic term)	<u>ΦΙΛΙΑ</u> <u>στέρη</u> <u>ερος</u> <u>φιλια</u> <u>(αγαπη)</u> etc.
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In the first column, notice that love is used twice, once as generic, the other as specific in meaning. The same would also be said of φιλια in column two.

¹Now for the Christian, the diagram in the above note might look like this instead:

<u>ΦΙΛΙΑ</u> <u>στέρη</u> <u>ερος</u> <u>φιλια</u> etc.	<u>ἈΓΑΠΗ</u> <u>ἀγαπη</u>	OR	<u>ἈΓΑΠΗ</u> <u>ἀγαπη</u> <u>φιλια</u> <u>ερος</u> <u>στέρη</u> etc.
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community, might be analogous to our words "man" and "woman". There are two meanings (which have bearing on this parallel) to the word "man": 1) mankind in general, e.g. "the problem with man is sin"; 2) man as the male of the species, e.g. "now that is a real man!". Under the first of the definitions, "man" includes "woman", whereas in the second definition "man" is distinct from "woman". This then comes close to what may have been the relationship between ἀγαπάω and φιλέω for the early Christians.

This would be a picture then of the times when ἀγαπάω might justifiably include φιλέω, being "generic" (i.e. as "man" meaning mankind) in usage at this place, though still retaining its awareness that in speaking of love, God's love remains an added dimension to all love. In this way ἀγαπάω would not be losing its distinctive coloration--instead it is simply including even more to its message.

If and when ἀγαπάω does act in this generic way, it would be misleading to say that it is a synonym for φιλέω, as misleading as it would be to say that "man" is a synonym for "woman".

And, when φιλέω is used in the context of ἀγαπάω, it would be like "woman" being used in the context of "man"--the very usage indicates a distinction is to be made, making "man" in the one case, and ἀγαπάω in the other, become "specific" in meaning. The simple appearance of "woman", and φιλέω, would accent their own distinctive meanings, no matter what the context.

So, possibly, ἀγαπάω has two meanings: the one being "generic", including all love, and adding the special "extra" of God's love; or, on the other hand, it might mean its "specific" application, as when it is used in opposition to φιλέω. In this sense, it would have the following ideas attached to it: ἀγαπάω is definitely special to the Christian community, being as much a description of God and His activity as is "God is Light"

or "God is Almighty". It is the kind of love which can be toward anything, even something as revolting to God as the sinful world, because it does not depend on the object of love, instead this love depends on the nature of the one loving. It is simply his own active decision which can make something valuable that had no value before, to make attractive that which had no attractiveness of its own--it is truly a love that can love even in spite of what the object is.

This then means commitment and decision which is of necessity (because this is the nature of this love) borne into action, action marked by the giving of oneself, or (depending on the case) by obedience (perhaps a different way of expressing the same thing?). It can therefore be commanded. It is not necessarily devoid of the "feeling" side, the emotional part of love, however, neither is it governed by this. This love can therefore endure to the end (which is something emotional love may not always do). This, then, is no love one "stumbles" into, but is as Fromm puts it, an art which must be learned, developed, and practiced.¹

ἀγάπη is in us only in that God has shared His nature with us in our second birth, namely baptism. Now that God has seen fit to do this, we also can love as He does (Howbeit imperfectly while we are still on this earth. Hence the need for the command which reorients, reminding us of the business we are to be about.). We are to follow in His footsteps, to love even the unloveable (though not restricted to just this group, but to indicate the degree it reaches), since it rises purely out of the nature we received from God.

By far, it is no love which cannot interact with the beloved, but does indeed respond. Especially with God's, reception releases its blessing

¹Erich Fromm, The Art of Loving (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, Inc., 1963), pp. 1-5.

and benefits, as in the believer, but rejection can turn it into judgment, never receiving the benefits and blessings.

φίλος seems to have nothing, especially in John, that would conflict with the classical Greek meaning. It is the delight, the pleasure, the communion one has with one that is appealing in some way to the subject. This is the love "caused" by the object, by its worth, its beauty, its likeness with the subject. Typically, then, the stress would be on the sharing of friendship, the instinctive mutual revealing of one's self (give-and-take, as opposed to the giving of ἀγαπάω)--the personal intimate encounter of oneself with the beloved, with its awareness of self (as opposed to ἀγαπᾶω's centering on the object) and mutual joy through mutual participation. Perhaps "oneness" is the best word here, whereas "giving" is the best word for ἀγαπάω.

Just as in the distinction between "man" and "woman", where the both are necessary to fully describe humanity, neither ἀγαπάω nor φιλέω can be neglected as if unessential. God has both, and we are born of Him; we also have both. Therefore one must be very guarded when comparing the two, whether one be "higher" than the other, or "warmer", or whatever. Both words are to be centered in God--both have their greatest development in Him. To emphasize one to the exclusion of the other, then, is to open the door to crippling love. It is true that John does stress ἀγαπάω--but he also is not afraid to use φιλέω when it is appropriate. The minor use of φιλέω comes from the fact that it only has a minor role to play in John's message, precisely because the world is very familiar with φιλέω, and needs to be introduced to the Christian concept of ἀγαπάω (along with its applications and ramifications).

Yet the overaccenting of ἀγαπάω to the exclusion of φιλέω could very easily lead to a love that is cold, dry, impersonal--very unloving

in a real sense. Without the purposefulness, commitment, "giving"-ness of ἀγαπάω, φιλέω could very easily lead to a love that is passion oriented, selfish, purely instinctive, and transient--becoming something that really is no longer love, either. For man, at least, both aspects of love are necessary to balance each other, even though there may be times when one or the other is the center of focus. Such times might be when there is no love, e.g. as toward an enemy. At that time, ἀγαπάω is to have the upper hand over the feelings (or lack of feelings) in φιλέω. It is commanded in this instance because at least this part of love is controllable, whereas φιλέω is not as easily controllable. And it is not far-fetched to believe that obedience to the command to ἀγαπάω would in time, be blessed by God, so that to some degree φιλέω will begin to grow.

Overaccenting one type of love would have its ramifications in regard to how we view God. Without φιλέω, He would seem too transcendent, always at a distance from us, always giving, yet not really being involved intimately, with personal delight in the objects of His love. But then, without ἀγαπάω, God would become just like the pagan gods, preoccupied with His own pleasure, and tolerating only those things He would find agreeable to Himself (certainly not a rebellious, evil world).

How sin perverts love is perhaps best seen in ἀγαπάω. When a Christian (and only a Christian can have it) attempts to take ἀγαπάω out of the context of his relationship with God, this ceases to be ἀγαπάω--it turns into lust and/or pride. On the other hand φιλέω can and does exist outside of one's relationship with God, but it knows nothing of the blessings and depth that God can bring to this kind of love. And it knows nothing of the balancing effect of the purposeful commitment of ἀγαπάω. It may be true that those outside of a relationship with God might have

some inkling of committed love, but, according to God's Word, they just don't have the grasp that comes with the experience of αγαπᾶω, and therefore their love will be overrun by selfishness, greed, possessiveness, and the like.

With this understanding for the two words in question, the task that remains is to apply these definitions to the words in the contexts of the passages.

V. APPLICATION OF THESE DISTINCTIONS
TO VARIOUS PASSAGES

This section seeks to go back and look at contexts and passages in the Gospel of John where these two words occur, in order to see what kind of information they and the commentaries can supply to the interpretation of those texts. For some, it may not be necessary to give more than some observations by the commentators, as the use of these words may be obvious in that text.

A. Chapter 21; Verses 15-17

Since so much of the controversy over these two words is centered on the interpretation of these verses, it is fitting that they should be dealt with first. To set the scene for this incident and to give the story a context, Trudinger makes a very thought-provoking point it is the last verses of the previous chapter that indicate to us the reason for this chapter:

John is making a subtle play on the anagram based on the Greek word for "fish" (ichthus), namely, "I(esus) CH(ristos) TH(eou) U(ious) S(oter)", Jesus Christ, Son of God, Savior. No one knows just how old the fish, as an early Christian symbol, is. Clearly, fish and fishing play a prominent symbolic role in John's Gospel. . . .

I submit that John was well aware of the currency of this anagram as he wrote, "these things are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God," and that he knew his perceptive readers would know that there was something missing yet. "I've not yet spelled out ichthus in full," he is saying. The Soter, that is, the saving part of the message, which is needed to complete the story, involves more than the acknowledgement of Jesus as Messiah and Son of God. It requires our identifying with Jesus in his saving work, in the giving and risking of our lives in the mission of fishing for men. Thus John brings his Gospel to its conclusion with a section that begins with Peter's assertion, "I'm going fishing." At the start this

is not undertaken as missional work but merely as a return to "business as usual." It is unsuccessful! But then the disciples hear the command of the Lord that they do indeed have to go fishing, and in obedience they give themselves again to the task and get a great catch--a universal catch! This missional work is again focused in a eucharistic celebration, after which Peter is restored to, confirmed in his work of leadership, and the intimation is given that he will indeed have to follow his Lord to the death. Thus John fills in the needed "S" and completes his symbolic word picture and his Gospel.¹

This is indeed a fascinating thought and perhaps shouldn't be taken too lightly, for the pieces do fit together, interestingly enough. Although McDowell did not recognize the anagram, he also feels that this fishing expedition of Peter and company precipitated a crisis:

Ἀλιεύειν is in the present tense, and therefore expresses linear or continuous action. The English, "I go a fishing," or as some commentators have it, "I am off to fish" (Bernard and Dods), does not correctly render the force of the present tense. Peter meant that he was going back to his old business and that he was to continue at it. The fact that Peter carried with him four, and perhaps six, of the Apostles, all evidently bent upon resuming their old occupation, precipitated what was a crisis indeed.²

Naturally, by no means are these interpretations conclusive, yet they do give one something to think about while addressing himself to verses 15-17 of Chapter 21. Perhaps the intent is that Jesus is to be portrayed as Savior in these verses, and that the greater accent of these disciples' lives are not to be business as usual, but the mission of bringing this Savior to all men, and of strengthening those who already believe.

What, then, would the "more than these" of Jesus' first question mean? Trudinger and McDowell feel that this talks about fishing with its equipment. Turner and Mantey point out that there are three possible interpretations of this: Do you love me 1) more than these other disciples love

¹Paul Trudinger, "Subtle Word-Plays in the Gospel of John, and the Problem of Chapter 21," Journal of Religious Thought, 28 (January, 1971), p. 30.

²Edward A. McDowell, Jr., "'Lovest Thou Me?' A Study of John 21:15-17," Review and Expositor, 34 (1935), p. 434.

me; 2) more than you love these other disciples; 3) more than these items of fishing (symbolizing your love for fishing)?¹ There have been some great struggles between commentators as to which one was THE interpretation. Perhaps all three, or some combination, were meant--it certainly would not be beyond John's capacity. It would be like the ἀρωθεν of chapter three, or the "Lamb of God, which takes away the sin of the world" of chapter one, among the many such examples of "loaded" phrasing.

But the second problem is the ναί in Peter's answer. Usually this is the emphatic, "Yes!" Now, if Peter's answer is one of humility (not the same old Peter who opens his mouth faster than he thinks), there is conflict with alternative number one in the above paragraph. And more directly, this answer of Peter's poses a problem concerning the change of words for love: if Peter meant to tell the Lord that his love had not the level of the word which Jesus used, why did he say "Yes!" when he meant "No!"² But Hendriksen answers it this way:

In two respects Simon's answer differs from the Lord's question: 1. He no longer compares himself with his fellow-disciples, to their disadvantage. His "Indeed" (ναί, not "Yes", in the sense of, "Yes, I love these more than the others do") has reference to the fact that he feels sure that he has in his heart something similar to that about which Jesus is inquiring; something similar, but not the same, hence, 2. He uses another verb, a verb with a slightly different meaning.³

Martindale, who sees no difference between the two words for love, still

¹George Allen Turner and Julius R. Mantay, The Gospel According to John, vol. IV in The Evangelical Commentary (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1965), p. 409.

²J. H. Bernard, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to Saint John, vol. 29 of The International Critical Commentary, edited by A. H. McNeile (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1925), p. 704; Raymond E. Brown, The Gospel According to Saint John, vol. 29 of The Anchor Bible (Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1970), p. 1103.

³William Hendriksen, New Testament Commentary: An Exposition of the Gospel According to John (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1954), p. 487.

also weakens the force of the "Yes!"

St. Peter's yaí, 'yea', is not precisely an affirmation--Yes! It is almost a depreciation--'Surely, Lord'--but a humble one, almost as though he said: 'Dear Lord--you know I love you!'¹

Jesus the Savior, seeking to reorient Peter to the mission he has, has asked Peter, "Do you ἀγαπᾶς me more than these?" Peter in that question is confronted with a number of things: 1) his return to his old way of life; 2) his boisterous claim that "though the rest fall away, I will not. . . . If I must die with you I will not deny you" (Mark 14:29, 31)²; 3) his brotherly and friendly ties with the other disciples.

It is quite likely that through the heart-rending experience of the night of Jesus' trial, Peter's running away with the disciples and the later denials had left their mark on him. Among all the disciples, he would be the one with the greatest guilty conscience, in most need of a "re-instating". Therefore when this question from Jesus hit him, with all of its implications, it would be the "preaching of the law", which confronts the sinner with himself. Peter might very well have been shattered by this question.³ One would not expect Peter to then vigorously affirm with any loud voice a great love for Jesus. More likely he would have been cowed by his experience, no longer trusting himself as much, though perhaps quietly and fervently affirming what little he could be

¹C. C. Martindale, The Gospel According to St. John (Westminster, Maryland: The Newman Press, 1957), p. 165.

²Hendriksen, Commentary, p. 487; Henry Cowles, The Gospel and Epistles of John (New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1876), p. 307.

³Herschel H. Hobbs, An Exposition of the Gospel of John (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1968), p. 293; John Peter Lange, The Gospel According to John, vol. 13 in A Commentary on the Holy Scriptures, ed. by Philip Schaff (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1884), pp. 638-9; Theodore D. Woolsey, "'The Disciple Whom Jesus Loved', With Some Remarks on the Passages Where These Words are Used", Andover Review, IV (August, 1885), pp. 182-3.

sure of. Hence he would not use the "nobler", unselfish, self-giving term for love, which would denote ultimate surrender (perhaps even more so, if the term was used in its "generic" sense, such as when "man" means mankind). But at the same time he could not, and would not deny that he loved his Lord. So he says "Yes" or perhaps "Surely", but only goes as far as to claim φιλέω as his love. Because he switches here from ἀγαπᾶω, he is indicating that he has something less--it is less, but it is all he has, and he gives it to his Lord. And, perhaps surprising to some¹, Jesus accepts this--the Savior, who died because of man's weakness and inability (created by sin's rebellion), forgives Peter, then goes a step further: He commands Peter to lead. Jesus is not disillusioned with Peter (even though Peter is with himself)--Peter is exactly what Christ wants: a humble forgiven sinner, who now can lead others to forgiveness also.

But this didn't stop with only one question. Apparently Jesus saw the need to get deeply into the soul of this man to effectively impress upon him his forgiveness.

In spite of all that has been written about John's stylistic use of synonyms, I am sure that we must allow Peter's change of the word for 'love' used by Jesus to explain a series of questions which otherwise remains in the dark fairyland of, 'You denied me three times, and so you must say three times that you love me.' At first Jesus accepted it, and told him that if he would make good his protestation, he must show it in his work of being a shepherd to the lambs of God. But perhaps there was something in Peter's demeanor that showed that what he had added to his answer revealed the tangle of his mind, and Jesus repeated the question, simplifying it by omitting the qualification, but keeping to the normal word of 'love', in the attempt to bring him to look away from himself to the realities

¹Earnest Evans, "The Verb ἈΓΑΠΑΙΝ in the Fourth Gospel", Studies in the Fourth Gospel, ed. by Frank L. Cross (London: A. R. Mowbray & Co., Limited, 1957), p. 66: "Here Westcott says: 'Just as the idea of comparison was given up before [i.e., by our Lord's omission of "more than these" in the second question], so now the idea of the loftiest love is given up' --which leaves us with the strange and unacceptable thought that our Lord is satisfied to receive from a disciple anything short of the very best." But consider that the "Widow's mite" was not the "very best", yet it was all she had.

of the situation. . . . Friendship was not to be proved in eager demonstration and excitement, but in the firm acceptance of the responsibilities of a mission.¹

Altering the question progressively, He [Jesus] drives the probe into Peter's conscience deeper and deeper. . . . Then, the third time, Jesus pushes the probe to the bottom and demands of Peter with sharp directness and brevity whether he has any real affection for him.²

The wound had been probed to the very bottom, though not a word of blame or reproach had come from the lips of the Lord. Peter had revealed in his three answers that his old self had been judged and broken.³

In accenting the distinction between the words, Peter is grieved because Jesus "asked the third time, 'Do you φιλᾶς me?'"⁴ If the text had said that Peter was upset because Jesus had asked three times, "Do you love me?", then there might very well be no difference. But the way the words are formed, they seem to be pointing in the direction of the change of words, that suddenly it seems to Peter as if Jesus is challenging the very love Peter thought he was at least capable of.⁵

This is a great story of forgiveness and understanding on the part of the Lord--but it doesn't end here. Some commentators have noticed an interesting twist. Peter once had claimed for himself ἀγαπᾶω love (love in its "generic" sense?), in which he would even die with Jesus (Mark 14:29, 31; see also Jesus' statement in John 15:13: No greater love

¹R. A. Edwards, The Gospel According to St. John (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1954), pp. 182-3.

²Benjamin B. Warfield, "The Terminology of Love in the New Testament", Princeton Theological Review, XVI (1918), pp. 195-6.

³Arno Clemens Gaebelin, Gospel of John (New York: Publication Office for Our Hope, 1925), p. 409.

⁴McDowell, "Lovest Me?", p. 440; Merrill C. Tenney, John: The Gospel of Belief (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1953), pp. 290-1.

⁵Turner, The Gospel, p. 409; Herschel H. Hobbs, "Word Studies in the Gospel of John", Southwestern Journal of Theology, VIII (1965), pp. 68-9.

[ἀγάπην] has a man than this, that he would give his life for his friend [φίλων]). Jesus at that time had to reveal to Peter that his love was of a lesser nature, which the denials subsequently proved. Now in this episode, when he is confronted by Jesus, he finds that he can claim only φιλῶ love. But here Jesus reveals to him that in time he will indeed have ἀγαπᾶν love after all, for he will be martyred for his Lord's sake.

Wordsworth: "Formerly Peter had professed ἀγαπᾶν, but it proved only a short-lived φιλῶ. Now he only professes φιλῶ, but Christ knows that it will be a long-lived ἀγαπᾶν, an ἀγάπη in old age (ver. 18), an ἀγάπη stronger than death."¹

And with this story of Christ's understanding, forgiveness, and raising of the guilt-ridden sinner (Peter), John's story of Jesus Christ, God's Son, Savior has been completed.

B. The Disciple Whom Jesus Loved

This is where the distinction between the two words has the hardest going. In 13:23; 19:26; 21:7, 20 a disciple is described as the one whom Jesus ἠγάπησεν. But then in 20:2, the resurrection story, there is Peter and the disciple whom Jesus ἐφίλει. Is this the same disciple? Why the change in words? If John is consistent in his emphasis that ἀγαπᾶν is the special word of the Christian community as distinct from the more common φιλῶ--why the switch? This is the one place in John where the answer does not come easily.

Findlay dismisses the idea of a distinction with: "It does not seem likely that Jesus loved the same man in different ways at different times."²

¹Lange, The Gospel, p. 639; cf. McDowell, "Lovest Me?", p. 437.

²James Alexander Findlay, The Fourth Gospel: An Expository Commentary (London: The Epworth Press, 1956), p. 52.

But Findlay doesn't then continue with his reasons why Jesus, or any man, for that matter, can't love a person in different ways at different times. It does not seem likely that John would be saying that Jesus only loved in one way to the total exclusion of any other. Might not there be times when the accent of the relationship is upon the aspect of love we have defined under ἀγαπάω, while at another time might be the closeness of communion defined under φιλέω?

On the other hand, Sanders believes this "other disciple whom Jesus ἐφίλει" to be Lazarus, connecting this disciple with the one other person described by John as being ἐφίλει by the Lord (Chapter 11).¹ This makes for interesting conjectures, seeing an obvious connection between the resurrection stories. This is possible and should be considered. But, for the argument of it, assume that this connection is not intended. What then might be intended?

Both Cook and Plummer take their cue from the "other" in the words "and the other disciple whom Jesus loved", meaning to them that Jesus loved both Peter and this disciple.² This then would leave the door open to conjectures concerning the relationship of these disciples with Jesus. Perhaps one might point out that both do have a special bond with Jesus, after all, Peter is a favored disciple, part of the inner circle of three.³

¹Joseph N. Sanders, A Commentary on the Gospel According to St. John, ed. and completed by B. A. Martin (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1968), p. 29.

²F. G. Cook, The Holy Bible with Explanatory and Critical Commentary, vol. 10: St. John and the Acts of the Apostles (London: John Murray, 1880), p. 389; A. Plummer, The Gospel According to St. John, in The Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges, gen. ed. is J. J. S. Perowne (Cambridge: University Press, 1892), p 355.

³I.e., Peter, James and John, who were present at the raising of Jairus' daughter (Mark 5:37), at the Transfiguration (Luke 9:28), and were nearest Jesus in Gethemane (Matthew 26:37).

And with the other disciple who share that resurrection experience, his peculiar nickname would also demonstrate this idea. Therefore this could illustrate, perhaps as John was writing and looking back, how he saw this experience as Christ's sharing with them, as a close friend would, the joy and victory of resurrection, by causing them to come, and see, and believe. The point then of John's varying the word here would be to effectively stress closeness, perhaps which he recognized in retrospection: "with ἐφίλει the recollection speaks with more feeling."¹ Perhaps also, John is tying in here Jesus words "No greater love has a man than this, that he would give his life for his friends (φίλων)."

Warfield agree that this might mean both Peter and John, but then he conjectures that the change in verb here could indicate that they "fell" from ἀγαπάω to φιλέω.² This does not seem in keeping with the victory and proclamation of forgiveness that the resurrection means to the Christian community. While it is true that the distinction in 21:15-17 seems to indicate a step down, because of that particular context, this is not by any means the only reason for using φιλέω as distinct from ἀγαπάω.

But Warfield has more to say:

Perhaps the difficulty we feel in accounting for ἐφίλει at John xx.2 arises in large part from approaching the question from only one side. We begin with the ἠγάπα of xiii.23, xix.26, xx.7, 20 and ask why the alternation to ἐφίλει in xx.2. Let us reverse the question, and ask why ἠγάπα is used in xiii.23 and its companions. In itself considered, ἐφίλει is altogether in place in xx.2; this is the proper word to express the love of friendship, however warm. What really needs accounting for is why in the parallel passages ἠγάπα is used instead.³

It may well be that we have done the wrong thing--instead of emphasizing why the use of ἐφίλει at this one place, maybe it should be turned

¹Marvin R. Vincent, Word Studies in the New Testament (New York: Charles Scribners Sons), p. 524.

²Warfield, "Terminology", pp. 191-2.

³Ibid., p. 194.

around: Why did John use ἡ ἀγάπη at those other places? And why did he use this method to describe himself? Cross thinks that it is

. . . not at all that John was claiming to be the favorite, or that he was the disciple whom Jesus loved more than the others, but "that disciple who is more conscious than the others need to be of the great condescension of Jesus in taking any notice of him at all." And we must add that this turn of phrase, taken in this sense, is more natural, indeed only natural, if the disciple referred to is himself the writer of the words. Moreover, Peter, or any other of the disciples, could equally well have referred to himself in the same terms of personal acknowledgement.¹

But Hendriksen sees it this way:

Now it is clear that Jesus loved all his true disciples (13:1; 14:21; 15:9; 17:9,12). Nevertheless, the name "The disciple whom Jesus loved" had been given to this one disciple, to him alone. Is it not possible that the others had bestowed this honorable title upon him when they noticed the intimate character of the fellowship between him and the Master? If this be correct, John is simply making use of the name which others had given him. And is it not possible that this unique relationship between Jesus and John was rooted in the fact that, due to God's sovereign distribution of endowments and talents, John understood Jesus better than did any of the rest? Moreover, when the evangelist styles himself "The disciple whom Jesus loved," he is not boasting of his own love for the Master; on the contrary, he is glorying in the Master's love for him. Such glorying is not sinful.²

Hendriksen's ideas are quite possible, especially when taking in account that John, like Paul, gets to heart matters of faith and spirituality a lot more clearly and deeply than the other evangelists. Also, tradition has it that John was the only disciple to live to old age, perhaps indicated in the final chapter of the Gospel. Plus he was in that inner circle of disciples. Quite possibly, this nickname was given not by the other disciples as much as the Christian community. Therefore, in writing his account, he applies to himself this nickname, readily recognizable to his readers, but out of humility, that Jesus would so ἀγαπᾷ him--to be singled out as it were simply by God's free decision, to be so honored.

¹Evans, "The Verb ἀγαπᾷν", p. 69.

²Hendriksen, Commentary, pp. 245-6.

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This then would explain the use of not so much why ἐφίλεε in one place, but why ἠγάπα is used everywhere else.

To add fuel to this fire is Woolsey's comment: "It is remarkable that John received more reproof from Jesus than any other of the twelve, except Peter. (Mark 9:38; Luke 9:19; 9:54; Matthew 20:20-23; Mark 10:35-40)"¹ John apparently did occupy a special place to the other evangelists, and probably also then, to the Christian community.

Then, as mentioned above, the incident in 20:2, would be a break from this emphasis, to impress upon his readers another point, either because Peter is included, or because circumstances (possibly either seen in retrospect or even felt on that occasion) displayed the closeness of Jesus to these men at that time.

C. Chapter 11

Another interesting chapter to look at is chapter 11. Many commentators not recognizing the distinction between ἀγαπάω and φιλέω point to this chapter as an instance of variation for the sake of variety. But does a closer look warrant such an interpretation?

Words from the φιλέω group occur in verses 3, 11, 36, having no outstanding position in their respective sentences, and they fit well within the flow of the story. But verse 5, which has ἠγάπα in it, seems to break the narrative, as if to emphasize the point. And furthermore, ἠγάπα is accented by its position at the head of the sentence. John was here indicating that a greater purpose was involved than φιλέω would understand:

Anything less than an infinite love must have rushed instantly to the relief of those loved and troubled hearts, to stay their grief, and

¹Woolsey, "The Disciple", p. 164.

to have the luxury (which only love can appreciate) of wiping and staunching their tears and causing their sorrow and sighing to flee away.¹

And Jesus, through John, may be making still another point:

Yet, here is what troubled the hearts of these sisters, even as it troubles many a Christian still--to be a friend of Jesus, embraced in his true and tender affection, and yet to lie sick, to grow helplessly worse, to die at last--just as if Jesus, our Friend, had forgotten! Our answer to this is that above the φιλῆν stands the unfathomable and blessed ἀγαπᾶν.²

The Lord loved Lazarus, yet He who is omnipotent permitted him to be sick. . . . They say that a believer who is sick must have done something which is wrong and that bodily sickness is the result of it. All these strange theories are disproved by Scripture. The Lord loved Lazarus and with all His love He did not prevent his illness.³

Pain often reveals some unrealized side of our Savior's character. The sisters had never known Him as the Resurrection and the Life if Lazarus had not died.⁴

The argument therefore that ἡγάπα was used to stress a greater purpose which φιλῆν would not have caught seems to be the most plausible. As less likely argument is that it is fine to use φιλῆν when talking about Jesus' close love for His male friends, but that John felt it too "indiscreet" if used of lady friends, therefore he uses ἀγαπᾶν when mentioning Mary and Martha. It does not seem likely John would be concerned about this, since φιλῆν was understood to have much more than sexual and husband-wife connotations.⁵ Still, it is a possibility.

¹Fredrick Brotherton Meyer, Gospel of John (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1958), p. 166.

²Richard Charles Henry Lenski, The Interpretation of St. John's Gospel (Columbus, Ohio: Lutheran Book Concern, 1931), p. 760.

³Gaeblein, Gospel of John, p. 194.

⁴Meyer, Gospel of John, p. 166.

⁵This is the position of A. Plummer, as he mentions it in passing, in his work, The Gospel According to St. John, in The Cambridge Greek Testament for Schools and Colleges (Cambridge: University Press, 1938), p. 234; So also Lange, The Gospel, p. 342.

D. 3:35 Versus 5:20; 14:21 Versus 16:27

These passages are another favorite for some commentators to prove that there is no distinction between the two groups of words. 3:35, using ἀγαπάω reads, "The Father loves the Son, and has given all things (stressed in the Greek) into His hand." 5:20, using φιλῶ says, "For the Father loves the Son, and shows Him all which He does." This, commentators say, shows that since the Father is described as having both ἀγαπάω and φιλῶ toward His Son, these words therefore ^{are} synonymous. Of course, this is not necessarily true.

The thought of iii. 35 is fixed on the greatness of the Son whom the Father honors by His love; in v. 20 it is fixed on the fatherly tenderness with which the Father loves the Son. Zahn very properly comments, therefore: "φιλῶ was more suitable here than the ἀγαπᾶν of the otherwise parallel sentence in iii. 35, because φιλῶ recalls the natural affection of the human father to his son, or of a friend to a friend, in contrast, say, with the relation of the master to the servant (xv. 13:15)."¹

This same point is brought up when considering 14:21 and 16:27. 14:21 uses ἀγαπάω throughout, and reads, "He who has my commandments and keeps them, the same is he who loves me; he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and will reveal myself to him." 16:27 uses φιλῶ throughout, and says, "For the Father Himself loves you, because you have loved me and have believed that I have come from God."

Spicq points out that in 3:35 you have what you might call "the business portion" of the Father-Son relationship--Jesus needed this in order to accomplish His mission.² So also in 14:21 is what one might call

¹Warfield, "Terminology", p. 198.

²Ceslaus Spicq, Agape in the New Testament, trans. by Sisters Marie Aquinas McNamara and Mary Honoria Richter (St. Louis: B Herder Book Co., 1966), pp. 86-7.

"the business portion" of salvation. However, the emphasis changes in the other passages to the more personal, more intimate relationship. Therefore 5:20's accent is on the mutual sharing between Father and Son, that the Father reveals Himself as in a father-son relationship. And in 16:27 we are informed on how close God comes to us, because of Jesus Christ and our connection to Him.

(xvi. 27) The Father's love is founded, in this verse, on what He finds lovable in them. Similarly, in v. 20 . . . philein is used to express the intimate fellowship of the Father and the Son in which there are no secrets.¹

(xvi. 27) This is the only place in the New Testament where God is said to φιλεῖν man--though it would be better to say, His children, for that enters into the case (but see Revelation iii. 19). And this is also the only place where φιλεῖν is used "of the affection of the disciples for their Lord" (yet consult xxi. 17 and I Corinthians xvi. 22). Horn comments: . . . xvi. 27 has a different meaning from iii. 16 . . . the latter is pitying love to the as yet unredeemed world, alien to God; the former is the natural pleasure of the Father in His believers, approved as faithful.²

E. 3:16

The final text to consider is one of the best statement in the Bible concerning the Gospel of Jesus Christ. "Explain it one may, but enlarge upon it one cannot. It is the Gospel in superlatives."³ No other religion

¹John Stephen Hart, A Companion to St. John's Gospel (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1952), p. 213.

²Warfield, "Terminology", p. 199.

³Hobbs, Exposition, p. 85. He continues with: "It tells of the greatest reason for divine love (for), the original source of love (God), the greatest degree of love (so), the greatest emotion of love (loved), the greatest object of love (the world), the greatest relation of love (that), the greatest expression of love (he gave), the greatest gift of love (his only begotten Son), the greatest demand of love (that), the greatest recipients of love (whosever), the greatest response of love (believeth in him), the greatest deliverance of love (should not perish), the greatest alternative of love (but), the greatest possession of love (have), the greatest quality and extent of love (everlasting), and the greatest fruit of love (life).

has even the concept of the Most High God coming to earth and dying for man, especially for evil and rebellious man.¹ What a statement this little verse is! this nutshell statement of God's ἀγάπη!

A great number of important affirmations are contained explicitly or implicitly in this verse, the "golden text" of the Bible. (i) God's attitude, even toward those under the sentence of death, is one of benevolence, or redemptive love. (ii) The measure of God's love is so exhaustless that he gave his only Son; God did not lend his Son, he gave him. (iii) The object of God's love is a sinful world; God loves the unlovely and unloving. (iv) All men are included in the scope of God's redemptive plan--a universal atonement. (v) The only beneficiaries of this love are those who choose to accept it. (vi) The alternative to acceptance is perpetual exclusion from God's presence and hence from life.²

This sentence sums up especially the teaching on life in this part of the Gospel. In John's confirmed opinion, God's essential note is a boundless love, the unparalleled power and sovereign liberty of which are joined in a total and gratuitous gift: that of the only begotten Son. The aim of the gift is that men may have "Life." Hitherto, Life has been placed within men's reach by Christ's death and glorification, and then bestowed on each in baptism. Now we learn how man can effectively enjoy the Son's gift: it is by faith: "that those who believe in him may not perish."³

¹Turner, The Gospel, p. 97.

²Ibid.

³Louis Bouyer, The Fourth Gospel, trans. by Rev. Patrick Byrne (Westminster, Maryland: The Newman Press, 1964), p. 82.

SUMMATION

Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the expiation for our sins (I John 4:10). This is a subject which, as the last quote pointed out, has so much in it, that it encompasses all of our religion to overflowing, that there are probably parts which we will never know until finally we stand in the eternal presence and glory of God. The two groups of words ἀγαπάω and φιλέω have opened the door a little wider, so that even more of the impact of this love is brought home to us with greater force. These show both sides of God's love: not just some transcendent, far-off God, but one who is intimately involved with us, just as intimately involved as with His Son; yet neither is He the capricious, self-seeking, too-personal gods of the pagans--He is rather a purposeful, giving God. And the joy that John brings to us, when he reveals by God's inspiration that this very love which is the nature of our God, through the second birth of Baptism is now ours also. The message that John brings to us in His writings is truly a wonderful one. Davey does a good job of closing this study:

In John Christ reveals the nature of God, which is Love, though not so called except in the First Epistle. . . . ἀγαπή and ἀγαπάω as words owe much to their development to John. . . . It is John who has given the full and final answer which is the bedrock of Christianity: God is Love (I John 4:8, 16; John 3:16; 15:9-15, etc.). Love is the key to all our doctrines, all our problems; it is the complex activity, relationship and value which we believe to be fundamental as source and way and end of life. It is not sentimentality; it is creative, it is passionate, it is benevolent, it is inexorable, it is holy, it is socially integrating. . . .

And this answer of John is the key also to the divinity of Christ. Christ on earth was not pure spirit, nor absolute, nor infinite, nor omnipresent, nor omnipotent, nor omniscient. If then His divinity

was a full and perfect divinity, as the Church has held, in what could it have consisted b t in that which is the essence of God's being?--Love--i.e., love incarnated among and on behalf of men, love limited in time and place, love discriminated by judgment, divine and human, and applied to create a society of love, the kingdom of God.¹

¹James Ernest Davey, The Jesus of St. John (London: Lutterworth Press, 1958), pp. 107, 167.

APPENDIX I

- 3:16 For God so loved (ἠγάπησεν) the world, that He sent the Son, the Only-begotten.
- 3:19 And men loved (ἠγάπησεν) the darkness more than the light.
- 3:29 the friend (φίλος) of the bridegroom
- 3:35 The Father loves (ἀγαπᾷ) the Son, and has given all things into His hand.
- 5:20 For the Father loves (φιλεῖ) the Son and reveals to Him all things which He does.
- 5:42 But I have known you, that you do not have the love of God (τὴν ἀγάπην τοῦ Θεοῦ) in you.
- 8:42 If God were your Father, then you would love (ἠγαπάτε) me, for I have come from God.
- 10:17 Through this (for this reason) the Father loves (ἀγαπᾷ) me, that I lay down my life (soul), in order that I take it again.
- 11: 3 Lord, Behold, the one whom you love (φιλεῖς) is sick.
- 11: 5 And Jesus loved (ἠγάπα) Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus.
- 11:11 Lazarus, our friend (φίλος), has gone asleep, but I go in order to awaken him.
- 11:36 Behold how He was loving (ἐφίλει) him.
- 12:25 He who loves (φιλῶν) his life loses it.
- 12:43 For they loved (ἠγάπησαν) the glory of men more than the glory of God.
- 13: 1 Having loved (ἀγαπήσας) His own (who were in the world), to the end He loved them.
- 13:23 the one (or, one) whom Jesus loved (ἠγάπα)
- 13:34 A new commandment I give you, in order that you love (ἀγαπάτε) on another, just as I loved (ἠγάπησα) you, in order that you also love (ἀγαπάτε) one another.

- 13:35 In this all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love (ἀγάπην) for (in) one another.
- 14:21 He who has my commandments and keeps them, the same is he who loves (ἀγαπῶν) me; and he who loves (ἀγαπῶν) me will be loved (ἀγαπηθήσεται) by my Father, and I will love (ἀγαπήσω) him and reveal myself to him.
- 14:23 If a man would love (ἀγαπᾷ) me, he will keep my word, and my Father (ἀγαπήσει) him, and we will come to him and make (our) dwelling with him.
- 14:24 He who does not love (ἀγαπᾶν) me does not keep my words.
- 14:28 If you loved (ἠγάπατέ) me, you would have rejoiced, that I go to the Father, because the Father is greater than I.
- 14:31 But in order that the world ^{may} know that I love (ἀγαπῶ) the Father, and that just as the Father has commanded me, this I do. . . .
- 15:9 Just as the Father loved (ἠγάπησέν) me, and I loved (ἠγάπησα), dwell in (this) love (ἀγάπῃ) of mine.
- 15:10 If you will keep my commandments, remain in my love (ἀγάπη), just as I have kept the commands of my Father and I remain in His love (ἀγάπη).
- 15:12 This is my commandment, (in order) that you love (ἀγαπάτε) one another, just as I loved (ἠγάπησα) you.
- 15:13 No one has greater love (ἀγάπην) than this: that he gives his life for his friends (φίλων).
- 15:14 You are my friends (φίλοι) if you do what I command you.
- 15:15 But I have called you friends (φίλους), because all which I heard from my Father I have made known to you.
- 15:17 This is command you, (in order) that you love (ἀγαπάτε) one another.
- 15:19 If you were of the world, the world would be loving (ἐφίλει) its own.
- 16:27 For the Father Himself loves (φίλει) you, because you have loved (πεφίληκατε) me and believed that I came from God.
- 17:23 In order that the world may know that you sent me and loved (ἠγάπησας) them just as you loved (ἠγάπησας) me.
- 17:24 In order to see the my glory which you had given me, that you loved (ἠγάπησας) me before the founding of the world.
- 17:26 And I made knowing to them your name and will make it known, in order that the love (ἀγάπη) which you loved (ἠγάπησας) me may be in them and I in them.

- 19:12 If you release this one, you are not a friend (φίλος) of Caesar's.
- 19:26 the disciple whom He loved (one He loved) (ἡγάπα) standing there.
- 20: 2 with the other disciple whom Jesus loved (one whom Jesus loved) (ἐδίλει)
- 21: 7 therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved (ἡγάπα) said to Peter, "It is the Lord!"
- 21:15-17 Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, (son of) John, do you love (ἀγαπᾶς) me more than these things?" He said to him, "Surely, Lord, you know that I love (φιλῶ) you." . . . "Simon, (son of) John, do you love (ἀγαπᾶς) me?" He said to him, Surely, Lord you know that I love (φιλῶ) you!" . . . "Simon, (son of) John, do you love (φιλεῖς) me?" Peter was distressed that he said to him the third time, "Do you love (φιλεῖς) me?" and he said to him, "Lord, you know everything, you know that I love (φιλω) you!"
- 21:20 Peter saw the disciple whom Jesus loved (one whom Jesus loved) (ἡγάπα).
- I,2: 5 Truly in him the love of God (ἡ ἀγάπη τοῦ Θεοῦ) is perfected.
- I,2: 7 Beloved (Ἀγαπητοί)
- I,2:10 He who loves (ἀγαπῶν) his brother remains in the light.
- I,2:15 Do not love (ἀγαπᾶτε) the world nor the things in the world. If (one has) the love (ἀγαπᾶ) of the world, (then) he does not have the love of God (ἡ ἀγάπη τοῦ πατρὸς) in him.
- I,3: 1 See what love (ἀγάπην) the Father has given us, that we are called the children of God!
- I,3: 2 Beloved (Ἀγαπητοί)
- I,3:10 In this it will be shown who are the children of God and the children of the devil: all who do not do righteous works are not from God, and those who do not love (ἀγαπῶν) their brother.
- I,3:11 This is the message which you heard from the beginning, that we love (ἀγαπῶμεν) one another.
- I,3:14 We know that we have passed from death into life, because we love (ἀγαπῶμεν) the brothers; he who does not love (ἀγαπῶν) remains in death.
- I,3:16 In this we have known love (ἀγάπην), that He gave His life for us.
- I,3:17 But if one has the livelihood of the world and sees his brother in need (having need), and closes his heart to him, how does the love of God (ἡ ἀγάπη τοῦ Θεοῦ) dwell in him?
- I,3:18 We do not love (ἀγαπῶμεν) in word and speech, but in deed and truth!

- I,3:21 Beloved (Ἀγαπητοί)
- I,3:23 And this is His command, that we believe in the name of His Son, Jesus Christ, and we love (ἀγαπῶμεν) one another.
- I,4: 1 Beloved (Ἀγαπητοί)
- I,4: 7 Beloved (Ἀγαπητοί), (let us) we love (ἀγαπῶμεν) one another, because love (ἀγάπη) is from God, and all who love (ἀγαπῶν) are born of God and know God.
- I,4: 8 He who does not love (ἀγαπῶν) does not know God, because God is love (ἀγάπη).
- I,4: 9 In this the love of God (ἡ ἀγάπη τοῦ Θεοῦ) was made manifest in us (among us), that God sent
- I,4:10 In this is love (ἀγάπη), not that we ^{had} loved (ἠγάπηκαμεν) God, but that He loved (ἠγάπησεν) us
- I,4:11 Beloved (Ἀγαπητοί), if God so loved (ἠγάπησεν) us, we ought also to love (ἀγαπᾶν) one another.
- I,4:12 If we love (ἀγαπῶμεν) one another, God dwells in us and His love (ἀγάπη) is perfected in us.
- I,4:16 And we know and believe the love (ἀγάπην) God has for us (in us). God is love (ἀγάπη), and he who dwells in love (ἀγάπη), dwells in God and God in him.
- I,4:17 In this is love (ἀγάπη) perfected in us
- I,4:18 There is no fear in love (ἀγάπη), but the perfect love (ἀγάπη) casts out the fear, because fear has torment, and he who fears is not perfected in love (ἀγάπη).
- I,4:19 We love (ἀγαπῶμεν) because He first loved (ἠγάπησεν) us.
- I,4:20 If one says "I love (ἀγαπῶ) God" but hates his brother, he is a liar. For if one does not love (ἀγαπῶν) his brother whom he has seen, he is not able to love (ἀγαπᾶν) God whom he has not seen.
- I,4:21 This is the command we have from Him, that he who loves (ἀγαπῶν) God, loves (ἀγαπᾶ) also his brother.
- I,5: 1 All who love (ἀγαπῶν) the Parent, loves (ἀγαπᾶ) His child.
- I,5: 2 In this we know that we love (ἀγαπῶμεν) the children of God, when we love (ἀγαπῶμεν) God and do his commands.
- I,5: 3 For this is the love of God (ἡ ἀγάπη τοῦ Θεοῦ), that we keep his commandments.
- II,1: 1 whom I love (ἀγαπῶ) in truth

II,1: 3 Grace, mercy, and peace will be with us from God the Father and from Jesus Christ, the Father's Son, in truth and love (ἀγάπη).

II,1: 5 that we love (ἀγαπῶμεν) one another.

II,1: 6 And this is love (ἀγάπη), that we follow His commandments; this is the commandment, just as you heard from the beginning, that you walk in it.

III,1: 1 Beloved (ἀγαπητῶ) Gaius, whom I love (ἀγαπῶ) in truth.

III,1: 2,5 Beloved (Ἀγαπητέ)

III,1: 6 who have testified to your love (ἀγάπη) before the church.

III,1:11 Beloved (Ἀγαπητέ)

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C. Related Subject Matter.---Although some of these do not deal with the subject matter directly, all did have material worthy of considering.

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E. The question of authorship.--For those who wish to pursue the matter of authorship of these writings (and of the Apocalypse), these books provide a good starting point. In addition to the books given below, one might also check the arguments in Barrett, Morris, Schmiedel, and Vedder in the books listed above.

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