PAVEL HANES

LOVE (AGAPE)
Biblical Words
Banska Bystrica, 26th January 2020

Νυνὶ δὲ μένει πίστις, ἐλπίς, ἀγάπη, τὰ τρία ταῦτα· μείζων δὲ τούτων ἡ ἀγάπη	**1Cor 13:13** So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love.

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0. INTRODUCTION

- past words: “scripture”; “law”; “gospel”; “sin”; “repentance”; [“faith”, “hope” → “love”]

0.1. MEANINGS OF “LOVE”

- romantic; erotic; sexual...
- Platonic: vulgar or divine EROS → attraction to toward body or toward the divine beauty
- Agape: creative, sacrificial, giving → John 3:16; compassion; Divine empathy; self-forgetting…
- **Song 8:6** love is strong as death (כִּי־עַזָּה כַמָּוֶת אַהֲבָה)

0.2. GREEK WORDS FOR “LOVE”

- [Wiki] agape (ἀγάπη), eros (ἔρως), philia (φιλία), philautia (φιλαυτία), storgē (στοργή), xenia (ξενία)
  - **Rom 1:31** …foolish, faithless, heartless (ἀστόργους), ruthless
  - **Rom 12:10** love one another with brotherly affection (φιλόστοργοι). Outdo one another in showing honor

- **2Tim 3:3** heartless (ἄστοργοι), unappeasable, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not loving good
- **2Tim 3:2** For people will be lovers of self (φίλαυτοι), lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy

0.3. LOVE AS A THEOLOGICAL VIRTUE

- [Wiki] four cardinal virtues temperance (σωφροσύνη), justice (δικαιοσύνη), prudence (φρόνησις), fortitude (ἀνδρεία).
- [Wiki] Virtues are traits or qualities which dispose one to conduct oneself in a morally good manner. Traditionally they have been named Faith, Hope, and Charity...

0.4. "ANALYSIS" OF AGAPE-LOVE

- the context: using the spiritual gifts in church meetings
- **1Cor 13:1-13** If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. [2] And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. [3] If I give away all I have, and if I deliver up my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing. [4] Love is (1) patient and (2) kind; love does (3) not envy or (4) boast; it is (5) not arrogant [5] or (6) rude. It does not insist on (7) its own way; it is (8) not irritable or (9) resentful; [6] it does (10) not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. [7] Love (11) bears all things, (12) believes all things, (13) hopes all things, (14) endures all things. [8] Love (15) never ends. As for prophecies, they will pass away; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will pass away. [9] For we know in part and we prophesy in part, [10] but when the perfect comes, the partial will pass away. [11] When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I gave up childish ways. [12] For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I have been fully known. [13] So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love (Ἐὰν ταῖς γλώσσαις τῶν ἀνθρώπων λαλῶ καὶ τῶν ἀγγέλων, ἀγάπην δὲ μὴ ἔχω, γέγονα χαλκὸς ἠχῶν ἢ κύμβαλον ἀλαλάζον. [2] καὶ ἐὰν ἔχω προφητείαν καὶ εἰδῶ τὰ μυστήρια πάντα καὶ πᾶσαν τὴν γνῶσιν καὶ ἐὰν ἔχω πᾶσαν τὴν πίστιν ὥστε ὄρη μεθιστάναι, ἀγάπην δὲ μὴ ἔχω, οὐθέν εἰμι. [3] κἂν ψωμίσω πάντα τὰ ὑπάρχοντά μου καὶ ἐὰν παραδῶ τὸ σῶμά μου ἵνα καυχήσωμαι, ἀγάπην δὲ μὴ ἔχω, οὐδὲν ὠφελοῦμαι. [4] Ἡ ἀγάπη μακροθυμεῖ, χρηστεύεται ἡ ἀγάπη, οὐ ζηλοῖ, [ἡ ἀγάπη] οὐ περπερεύεται, οὐ φυσιοῦται, [5] οὐκ ἀσχημονεῖ, οὐ ζητεῖ τὰ ἑαυτῆς, οὐ παροξύνεται, οὐ λογίζεται τὸ κακόν, [6] οὐ χαίρει ἐπὶ τῇ ἀδικίᾳ, συγχαίρει δὲ τῇ ἀληθείᾳ· [7] πάντα στέγει, πάντα πιστεύει, πάντα ἐλπίζει, πάντα ὑπομένει. [8] Ἡ ἀγάπη οὐδέποτε πίπτει· εἴτε δὲ προφητεῖαι, καταργηθήσονται· εἴτε γλῶσσαι, παύσονται· εἴτε γνῶσις, καταργηθήσεται. [9] ἐκ μέρους γὰρ γινώσκομεν καὶ ἐκ μέρους προφητεύομεν· [10] ὅταν δὲ ἔλθῃ τὸ τέλειον, τὸ ἐκ μέρους καταργηθήσεται. [11] ὅτε ἤμην νήπιος, ἐλάλουν ὡς νήπιος, ἐφρόνουν ὡς νήπιος, ἐλογιζόμην ὡς νήπιος· ὅτε γέγονα ἀνήρ, κατήργηκα τὰ τοῦ νηπίου. [12] βλέπομεν γὰρ ἄρτι δι' ἐσόπτρου ἐν αἰνίγματι, τότε δὲ πρόσωπον πρὸς πρόσωπον· ἄρτι γινώσκω ἐκ μέρους, τότε δὲ ἐπιγνώσομαι καθὼς καὶ ἐπεγνώσθην. [13] Νυνὶ δὲ μένει πίστις, ἐλπίς, ἀγάπη, τὰ τρία ταῦτα· μείζων δὲ τούτων ἡ ἀγάπη)

1. THE SWEEPING CLAIMS FOR AGAPE-LOVE

1.1. THE CHARACTER OF GOD

- **1J 4:8** Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love (ὁ μὴ ἀγαπῶν οὐκ ἔγνω τὸν θεόν, ὅτι ὁ θεὸς ἀγάπη ἐστίν)
- **1J 4:16** So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him (καὶ ἡμεῖς ἐγνώκαμεν καὶ πεπιστεύκαμεν τὴν ἀγάπην ἣν ἔχει ὁ θεὸς ἐν ἡμῖν. Ὁ θεὸς ἀγάπη ἐστίν, καὶ ὁ μένων ἐν τῇ ἀγάπῃ ἐν τῷ θεῷ μένει καὶ ὁ θεὸς ἐν αὐτῷ μένει).

1.2. THE LAW OF GOD

- **Mk 12:28-31** And one of the scribes came up and heard them disputing with one another, and seeing that he answered them well, asked him, "Which commandment is the most important of all (ἐντολὴ πρώτη πάντων)?" [29] Jesus answered, "The most important is, 'Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. [30] And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' [31] The second is this: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these. (καὶ ἀγαπήσεις κύριον τὸν θεόν σου ἐξ ὅλης τῆς καρδίας σου καὶ ἐξ ὅλης τῆς ψυχῆς σου καὶ ἐξ ὅλης τῆς διανοίας σου καὶ ἐξ ὅλης τῆς ἰσχύος σου. [31] δευτέρα αὕτη· ἀγαπήσεις τὸν πλησίον σου ὡς σεαυτόν. μείζων τούτων ἄλλη ἐντολὴ οὐκ ἔστιν)"
- **Gal 5:14** For the whole law is fulfilled in one word: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself (ὁ γὰρ πᾶς νόμος ἐν ἑνὶ λόγῳ πεπλήρωται, ἐν τῷ· ἀγαπήσεις τὸν πλησίον σου ὡς σεαυτόν).
- **Rom 13:10** Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law (ἡ ἀγάπη τῷ πλησίον κακὸν οὐκ ἐργάζεται· πλήρωμα οὖν νόμου ἡ ἀγάπη)

1.3. JESUS' NEW COMMANDMENT

- **John 13:34** A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another (Ἐντολὴν καινὴν δίδωμι ὑμῖν, ἵνα ἀγαπᾶτε ἀλλήλους, καθὼς ἠγάπησα ὑμᾶς ἵνα καὶ ὑμεῖς ἀγαπᾶτε ἀλλήλους)
- **John 15:13** Greater love has no one than this, that someone lays down his life for his friends (μείζονα ταύτης ἀγάπην οὐδεὶς ἔχει, ἵνα τις τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ θῇ ὑπὲρ τῶν φίλων αὐτοῦ)

1.4. PERFECTION OF HOLINESS

- **Eph 1:4** …he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him → In love … (καθὼς ἐξελέξατο ἡμᾶς ἐν αὐτῷ πρὸ καταβολῆς κόσμου εἶναι ἡμᾶς ἁγίους καὶ ἀμώμους κατενώπιον αὐτοῦ ἐν ἀγάπῃ) → **5** προορίσας ἡμᾶς εἰς υἱοθεσίαν διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ εἰς αὐτόν, κατὰ τὴν εὐδοκίαν τοῦ θελήματος αὐτοῦ

2. THE SOURCE OF AGAPE-LOVE

2.1. EXPERIENCING THE LOVE OF GOD

- **1J 4:19** We love because he first loved us (ἡμεῖς ἀγαπῶμεν, ὅτι αὐτὸς πρῶτος ἠγάπησεν ἡμᾶς)

2.2. THE HOLY SPIRIT

- **Rom 5:5** …God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us (ἡ ἀγάπη τοῦ θεοῦ ἐκκέχυται ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις ἡμῶν διὰ πνεύματος ἁγίου τοῦ δοθέντος ἡμῖν)
- **Gal 5:22-23** But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, [23] gentleness, self-control (ὁ δὲ καρπὸς τοῦ πνεύματός ἐστιν ἀγάπη χαρὰ εἰρήνη, μακροθυμία χρηστότης ἀγαθωσύνη, πίστις [23] πραΰτης ἐγκράτεια·)

3. AGAPE-LOVE IN PRACTICE

- "love languages"?
- **1John 3:18** Little children, <u>let us not love in word or talk</u> but in deed and in truth (Τεκνία, μὴ ἀγαπῶμεν λόγῳ μηδὲ τῇ γλώσσῃ ἀλλὰ ἐν ἔργῳ καὶ ἀληθείᾳ)

3.1. TOWARDS GOD

- **Dt 6:5** ou shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. (וְאָהַבְתָּ אֵת יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ בְּכָל־לְבָבְךָ וּבְכָל־נַפְשְׁךָ וּבְכָל־מְאֹדֶךָ)
  - **Mk 12:30** …you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' (ἀγαπήσεις κύριον τὸν θεόν σου ἐξ ὅλης τῆς καρδίας σου καὶ ἐξ ὅλης τῆς ψυχῆς σου καὶ ἐξ ὅλης τῆς διανοίας σου καὶ ἐξ ὅλης τῆς ἰσχύος σου)

- **1J 4:18** There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear. For fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not been perfected in love (φόβος οὐκ ἔστιν ἐν τῇ ἀγάπῃ ἀλλ’ ἡ τελεία ἀγάπη ἔξω βάλλει τὸν φόβον, ὅτι ὁ φόβος κόλασιν ἔχει, ὁ δὲ φοβούμενος οὐ τετελείωται ἐν τῇ ἀγάπῃ)

3.2.TOWARDS GOD’S CHILDREN

- **Eph 4:15** Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ (ἀληθεύοντες δὲ ἐν ἀγάπῃ αὐξήσωμεν εἰς αὐτὸν τὰ πάντα, ὅς ἐστιν ἡ κεφαλή, Χριστός)
- **1J 4:10-11** In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. [11] Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another (ἐν τούτῳ ἐστὶν ἡ ἀγάπη, οὐχ ὅτι ἡμεῖς ἠγαπήκαμεν τὸν θεὸν ἀλλ’ ὅτι αὐτὸς ἠγάπησεν ἡμᾶς καὶ ἀπέστειλεν τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ ἱλασμὸν περὶ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν. [11] ’Αγαπητοί, εἰ οὕτως ὁ θεὸς ἠγάπησεν ἡμᾶς, καὶ ἡμεῖς ὀφείλομεν ἀλλήλους ἀγαπᾶν).
- **1J 3:16** By this we know love, that he laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers (ἐν τούτῳ ἐγνώκαμεν τὴν ἀγάπην, ὅτι ἐκεῖνος ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ ἔθηκεν· καὶ ἡμεῖς ὀφείλομεν ὑπὲρ τῶν ἀδελφῶν τὰς ψυχὰς θεῖναι)

3.3.TOWARDS NEIGHBOURS

- **Mk 12:31**'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' (ἀγαπήσεις τὸν πλησίον σου ὡς σεαυτόν)

3.4.TOWARDS ENEMIES

- **Mt 5:44-48** But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, [45] so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven. For he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. [46] For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? [47] And if you greet only your brothers, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? [48] You therefore must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect (ἐγὼ δὲ λέγω ὑμῖν· ἀγαπᾶτε τοὺς ἐχθροὺς ὑμῶν καὶ προσεύχεσθε ὑπὲρ τῶν διωκόντων ὑμᾶς, [45] ὅπως γένησθε υἱοὶ τοῦ πατρὸς ὑμῶν τοῦ ἐν οὐρανοῖς, ὅτι τὸν ἥλιον αὐτοῦ ἀνατέλλει ἐπὶ πονηροὺς καὶ ἀγαθοὺς καὶ βρέχει ἐπὶ δικαίους καὶ ἀδίκους. [46] ἐὰν γὰρ ἀγαπήσητε τοὺς ἀγαπῶντας ὑμᾶς, τίνα μισθὸν ἔχετε; οὐχὶ καὶ οἱ τελῶναι τὸ αὐτὸ ποιοῦσιν; [47] καὶ ἐὰν ἀσπάσησθε τοὺς ἀδελφοὺς ὑμῶν μόνον, τί περισσὸν ποιεῖτε; οὐχὶ καὶ οἱ ἐθνικοὶ τὸ αὐτὸ ποιοῦσιν; [48] ἔσεσθε οὖν ὑμεῖς τέλειοι ὡς ὁ πατὴρ ὑμῶν ὁ οὐράνιος τέλειός ἐστιν.)

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

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