

We have completed our first point in the doctrine of the mental attitude in which we noted distinctions between the human spirit and the human soul.

Point 2 in our doctrine is the Delegation of Divine Power as it Relates to the Change in Our Mental Attitude. There is no substitute for perception and metabolization of Bible doctrine. The delegation of divine power to every Church-age believer is manifested and experienced when Bible doctrine is metabolized and deployed on the FLOT line of your soul. As we have seen this is a military acronym for the forward line of troops which protect the soul. These problem-solving devices are important because they give us the power and the ability to handle any problem in life. God has provided for us in grace everything it takes to transfer what is written in the Bible to the human spirit and then to the soul.

All forms of worship are a concentration test and whether you like it or not, all life demands struggle. Those who have everything given to them become lazy, selfish, and insensitive to the real values of life. That which cost little is less valued. We should try to become a person of values rather than a person of success and that begins with mental attitude.

Whether it's concentration on doctrine, the communion service or in prayer, it's all a part of the same thing, thinking. As you develop these spiritual habits of thought and concentration, there is a spiritual life that awaits you that goes beyond your understanding.

God has chosen to reveal his thoughts to us by means of the Spirit of God.

Co 2:12-14 ***“Now we have received, not the spirit of the world [the I.Q. of the world, the cosmic system] but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things [invisible assets] freely given to us by God, which things we also speak, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in those taught by the Spirit, combining spiritual thoughts with spiritual words or interpreting spiritual truths to spiritual persons. But a natural man [the soulish person, unbeliever or believer minus doctrine] does not accept the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised [discerned in a manner caused by the filling of the Spirit.]”***

Now, this cannot just refer to an unbeliever or to a believer who is just minus the filling of the Spirit because you can learn doctrine even if you're not filled with the Spirit. You can understand and comprehend doctrinal thoughts even though it is not converted from gnosis to epignosis or to spiritual phenomenon. The ultimate goal is not learning doctrine, nor is it works or even applying doctrine. The ultimate goal is to have a personal relationship and fellowship with God. The goal of changing our mental attitude is to draw us closer to God. As we are kept dependent upon God, we will grow in His grace and knowledge which will lead us to a submissive, yielded life to him. We will have the attitude that our Lord had in Heb 10:9, ***“I come to do Thy will, O God,”*** not, "What's in this for me?"

How far are we willing to go in submitting our life to God? Far too many so-called normal Christians today are being deceived when it comes to salvation, the filling of the Spirit, living the spiritual life. 1Jo 5:18-19 ***“We know that no one who is born of God sins; but He who was born of God keeps him and the evil one does not touch him. We know that we are of God, and the whole world lies in the power of the evil one.”***

What are our limitations of obedience to God and His plan for our life, what could make us quit and lose our dedication and devotion for Christ?

What are the ends of abandonment that you would be willing to go to, the ultimate willingness of surrendering your plans and goals and dreams, for God's will for your life?

If a person has given his life to his Lord, it would be conflicting for the one who places his whole happiness, his whole being, in the hands of God alone, that they could continue to have a list of desires for their own happiness and wants. If we live for God because of true love for God, just because we love Him, we place all our happiness in God alone. Love alone should cause us to surrender up our will to the Lord. If it is not love that produces submission, eventually that wrong motive will be revealed.

When the believer relinquishes his soul, his will, his all to his Lord, and desires nothing of himself and desires only God for the sake of God, that is the beginning of experiencing the life of God in the soul. Here is a state where there is no satisfaction for self as the final goal, the glory of heaven is not the motive, the blessings and rewards are not the motive.

If I love God alone, I will desire God alone.

We must love Him without any end in view and even without expecting any emotional feeling present to strengthen us. We must love Him with total disregard to dry-spells and to times of abundance.

In Joh 14:15, our Lord said ***“If you love Me, you will keep My commands.”*** This is not the Ten Commandments because there are over 400 in the New Testament. However, we need to focus in on the word ***love*** which in the Greek here is ***agapao*** not ***phileo***, ***agapao*** refers to a mental attitude love. The point is that when it comes to our mental attitude, love for God, this alone should cause us to surrender our will to Him. There is a love for God that is also very personal, it is called ***phileo*** love.

Joh 16:27 ***“for the Father Himself loves you [phileo's you, loves you personally], because you have [phileo'd] loved Me personally, and have believed that I came forth from the Father.”***

The goal of ***agapao*** love, this mental attitude love, is to lead us to a ***phileo*** love or personal love for God and for The Lord Jesus Christ.

This is why 1Co 16:22 says ***“If anyone does not [phileo] love the Lord, let him be accursed. Maranatha.”***

Phileo love is actually a greater love in the sense that when it is directed toward God it is a more personal love developed from the mental attitude of ***agapao*** love. This is why Peter became grieved when our Lord gave him that test in Joh 21. Here we see the contrast between ***agapao*** love or the mental attitude love and ***Phileo*** the personal love. This is very vital if you are going to live the Christian way of life and enjoy the truth that sets you free. The average believer doesn't rightly divide the word of truth, they become confused concerning the way that they should love according to the Bible. The problem is there is no knowledge of the original language and why God the Holy Spirit chose to use two different words for love when He inspired men to write the Bible,

Let's look at this passage in the original language: Joh 21:15-17 ***“So when they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, Simon, {son} of John, do you love [agapao] Me more than these? He [Peter] said to Him, Yes, Lord; You know that I love [phileo] You. He said to him, Tend My lambs. He said to him again a second time, Simon, {son} of John, do you love [agapao] Me? He said to Him, Yes, Lord; You know that I love [phileo] You. He said to him, Shepherd My sheep. He said to him the third time, Simon, {son} of John, do you love [phileo] Me? Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, Do you love [phileo] Me? And he said to Him, Lord, You know all things; You know that I love [phileo] You. Jesus said to him, Tend My sheep.”***

The question is this: If God the Holy Spirit supernaturally directed the human writers of Scripture to put His complete message to mankind recorded with perfect accuracy in the original languages of Scripture, then why use two different words? There are two different meanings that He originally intended, if that's true, then why did the translators translate two totally different words, ***phileo*** and ***agapao***, the same?

Actually, in the Greek language there are four basic words for love.

The most popular one is the word ***agape or agapao*** which refers to an impersonal love or a love from the mental attitude.

Then there is ***phileo*** love or a personal love which connoted personal attraction. This love can be good or bad depending upon where it is directed.

Then there is ***stergo*** love which means to feel affection for someone, especially parents or children and even for animals, it means to be lovingly devoted. Rom 12:10 ***“Be devoted [philostorgos] to one another in brotherly love; give preference to one another in honor;”*** This too can be good or bad depending upon where it is directed.

The final type of love is ***eros*** love, that state which we call "being in love" or "the kind of love that lovers are in".

We need to see the importance of understanding the mental attitude that we are commanded to have toward God which is the mental attitude of ***agapao*** love.

Agapao love is not a feeling or an emotion, it is a system of thinking that produces the greatest virtue of all, 1Co 13:13, proceeding from the mind, Phi 2:2. When it is directed toward God, ***agapao*** love serves as motivation, 2Co 5:14. This is the love commanded of husbands in Eph 5:25 ***“Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her;”***

A mental attitude of respect not personal love. This is why as a part of the first commandment we are commanded not to love God personally but to have a fear or respect or love for Him. In fact, even when the Ten Commandments were given in Exo 20:3-17, there's no command to love God in there.

To have given a commandment to love God personally would have been a violation of both the unbeliever's and believer's free will.

Agapao love is a mental attitude love of appreciation that may result in **phileo** love, personal love for God.

Agapao love is the ability to love and respect someone you do not see, 1Pe 1:8 ***“and though you have not seen Him, you love Him, and though you do not see Him now, but believe in Him, you greatly rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory,”***

When you start to love someone you have not seen, it is because you have lined up with their thinking.

In Gal 5:22, **agape** love or this mental attitude love is the production fruit of the Spirit,

In Rom 5:5 **agape** love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us.

So in the passage we have been noting Joh 21:15-17 The Lord was asking Peter if he had that impersonal unconditional virtuous love, which emphasizes the virtue of the subject and not the object. And Peter knew and understood what the Lord was saying. The Lord was saying you cannot serve Me without this virtue or this impersonal unconditional virtuous ***“agape love.”*** However, when virtue love is directed toward God ultimately it should lead to **phileo**, a deep personal love for God. This is why Peter became upset when the Lord kept asking this question. In verse 15, the Lord used **agapao**, He didn't use **phileo**. The Lord said ***“do you agape-love Me more than these”?*** He [Peter] said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love [phileo] You." Peter is a little disturbed. Peter used **phileo** which means I keep on loving you personally because of who You are. Our Lord said do you have impersonal unconditional love for Me, and Peter said, ***“Lord you know I love you personally.”***

As a result of his answer Peter receives a command! He [the Lord] said to him, ***“Tend My lambs.”*** This is a command for all pastors to produce the action of the verb which is to feed new believers. "lambs" refers to baby sheep, analogous to the new believers. The Lord is saying to Peter, ***“if you really love me personally you're qualified to feed new believers”*** Peter is commanded to feed the Lord's lambs if he really loves the Lord. When the Lord asked Peter if he loved Him more than these, there is a very important principle here. No man can function as a pastor-teacher with his eyes on people. The motivational virtue for the gift of pastor teacher must come from personal love for The Lord Jesus Christ. He said to him again a second time, ***“Simon, {son} of John, do you love [agapao] Me?”*** He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love [phileo] You." He said to him, ***“Shepherd My sheep.”*** In verse 16, the Lord gives him a second command. ***“Shepherd My sheep.”*** The word "shepherd" means to rule or clobber which is how the pastor-shepherd must function with some. He word sheep means the sophomores in the Christian life. These are the ones that have a little knowledge of doctrine and think that they have a lot. Here authority of the pastor now becomes a major issue in the believer's life.

In verse 17, we have a final question and command. He said to him the third time, ***“Simon, {son} of John, do you love [phileo] Me?”*** This time our Lord switched from agape to phileo. Peter was distressed because He said to him the third time, "Do you love Me?" And he said to Him, "Lord, You know all things; You know that I love [phileo] You." Jesus said to him, ***“Tend My sheep.”***

The Lord was making a point not only for Peter but also for the benefit of all future pastors in the Church-age. The word for "tend" is bosko which is the command to moderately and prudently feed His humble sheep which is a reference to the seniors or the mature believers. All you have to do for mature believers is teach them doctrine. In the sophomore stage as in verse 16, you have to use that stick a shepherd carries to guide them. The shepherd has to whack the sheep at times to keep them from running off the cliffs. The pastor doesn't do that literally, he does that with his communication of doctrine. Once a person becomes a senior, he has developed enough humility to be teachable.

Jesus said to him, Feed My sheep.\