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## THE TERMINOLOGY OF LOVE IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

### II\*

The story of the Septuagint usage of the terms for love is almost told by the simple statistics. The verb *ἀγαπᾶν* occurs in the Septuagint about two hundred and sixty-six times, *φιλεῖν* about thirty-six times, *ἐρᾶσθαι* only three times, and *στέργειν* just once. Even this does not give the whole state of the case, for in the majority of its occurrences *φιλεῖν* is used in the sense of "to kiss." It occurs only sixteen or seventeen times with the meaning of "love." That is to say, this word, the common word for love in the classics, is used in the Septuagint in only a little more than five per cent of the instances where love falls to be mentioned: in nearly ninety-five per cent *ἀγαπᾶν* is used. Here is a complete reversal of the relative positions of the two words.

In more than a third of the instances in which *φιλεῖν* is used of loving, moreover, it is used of things—food or drink, or the like (Gen. xxvii. 4, 9, 14, Prov. xxi. 17, Hos. iii. 1, Is. lvi. 10), leaving only a half a score of instances in which it is employed of love of persons. In all these instances (except Tob. vi. 14, where it is a demon that is in question) it is a human being to whom the loving is ascribed. The love ascribed to him ranges from mere carnal love (Jer. xxii. 22 [paralleled with *ἐρασταί*], Lam. i. 2, Tob. vi. 14, *cf.* Tob. vi. 17), through the love of a father for his son (Gen. xxxvii. 4), to love for Wisdom (Prov. viii. 17, xxix. 3, Wisd. viii. 2). Cremer drops the remark: "In two passages only does *φιλεῖν* stand as perfectly synonymous with *ἀγαπάω*,

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## LIFE WORTHY OF THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST\*

The late Professor Marcus Dods has left on record a striking testimony to the literary structure and arrangement of the Gospel according to John. "In the whole range of literature," he declares, "there is no composition which is a more perfect work of art, or which more rigidly excludes whatever does not subserve its main end. From the first word to the last there is no paragraph, sentence, or expression which is out of its place, or with which we could dispense. Part hangs together with part in perfect balance. The sequence may at times be obscure, but sequence there always is. The relevancy of this or that remark may not at first sight be apparent, but irrelevancy is impossible to this writer."

No one who has made a careful study of the structure and course of thought in the fourth Gospel will question the truth of this sweeping statement from Dr. Marcus Dods. But some of us who have made a special study of the organic structure of the books of the Bible are prepared to assert that the Gospel according to John is not the only New Testament book in whose behalf such a remarkable claim may be made. Essentially the same claim may be made in regard to many of the books of the New Testament. It is notably true of the immortal epistles of the apostle Paul, that colossal man, who at one time was a narrow-minded, bigoted, self-righteous soul, but whose intellect under the sway of the personality of Jesus grew and expanded, until it "gave birth to thoughts that pierce the night like stars." It is the thought of Paul, clear, well-articulated, embodied in his matchless epistles, that has brought hope and life and glory to our world. For some ten years it has been my privilege to make a special study of the literary arrange-

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ment and organic structure of Paul's writings. This investigation has been a most fascinating study. It has simply revolutionized my former methods of Bible study. It has deepened my conviction of the truth and inspiration of the Holy Scriptures. It has made the Bible nothing less than a new book to me. I have come from that study with the clear conviction that concerning nearly every one of the epistles of Paul it can be said, "from the first word to the last there is no paragraph, sentence, or expression which is out of its place, or with which we could dispense. Part hangs together with part in perfect balance. The sequence may at times be obscure, but sequence there always is."

Why should it be thought a thing incredible that the literary masterpieces which compose our Bible, like the masterpieces of the world's literature, contain some central and commanding thought, and that this central thought is carried forward step by step to its climax? The fact is that each book of the Bible was written to teach a definite truth, and that truth runs through the book from the beginning to the end, binding it into one whole. Any individual passage or verse can be fully understood only in the light of the theme and structure of the book as a whole. Each book of the Bible is an organic whole, a grand masterpiece. One great purpose dominates the author throughout, which as he proceeds is brought to its destined conclusion. Failure to recognize this unity is bound to produce misunderstanding and misinterpretation of many individual passages. What Professor A. B. Davidson remarked of the Old Testament prophets is equally true of all the books of the Bible: "no particular doctrine of the prophet can be properly understood without some comprehension of his scheme of thought as a whole."

If it be true that the books of the Bible present the unfolding of some definite thought—and we believe it is true—then it follows that every method of Bible study which ignores the organic unity and literary structure of each book is inadequate and defective. A brilliant Bible teacher

has recently remarked that the method of Bible study which prevails today is a "hop-skip-and-jump" method. He declares that no other book except a dictionary, or cook-book or a volume of popular quotations is used in the same way.

"The method of Bible study prevalent today leads the seeker for truth astray, in that it exalts a part above the whole. We should interpret a part in the light of the whole and not the whole in the light of a part. Difficulties of interpretation, if soluble at all, will be found soluble in the waters of the central current rather than in the brackish pools along the shore. Synecdoche, or the use of a part for the whole, is a figure of speech that belongs to rhetoric, not to logic, certainly not to hermeneutics. Photographers tell us," continues Dr. Charles Alphonso Smith, "that the airplane will soon inaugurate a new kind of photography. The bird's-eye view, the view of the lower from the realm of the higher, has hitherto been the privilege of the bird alone. It will soon be man's privilege. We shall see more because we shall see less. No book offers so much to the view from the heights as does the Bible; no writers have suffered more from the partial view than the writers of the books of the Bible, and no time has called more loudly for the release of the larger view than the time in which we live."

An objection, however, has been made to this method of Bible study on the ground that insistence upon analysis and definite theme will lead to an unnatural and artificial and mechanical interpretation of the Bible. The authors of the Bible, it is claimed, had no definite plan or outline or theme before them as they wrote. And when we try to discover the logical unfolding of a particular theme in any book of the sacred Scriptures, we are looking for something that is not there; we are foisting our Western methods of composition upon Eastern writers. In reply to these objections it may be said that the men who wrote the books of the Bible were, with one exception, Jews, and that structural arrangement was the very form and fashion of Jewish thought. The Holy Spirit who inspired these men made use of this pecu-

liar method of composition. Hence it comes about that the very arrangement and structure in a book of Scripture may be a proof of its inspiration and an indispensable help in interpreting its message.<sup>1</sup> However, we must be careful not to put our own fancied arrangement or structure upon any book. We should be on our constant guard not to force a preconceived analysis upon a book. We should allow ourselves to be guided simply and solely by the form and structure of the books themselves. When we have succeeded in finding the real organism of a book of the Bible, with every section, every paragraph, every sentence falling into its rightful place and performing its proper function, we shall discover that the form and the arrangement often-times contain the message, and that our efforts to discover the structure are not only full of fascinating interest, but also, when successful, full of blessing and power. I have the deep and growing conviction that no book of the Bible has been mastered until we can express its central thought in a short, clear-cut sentence, and until we can show the unfolding of that central thought, step by step, on to its climax and conclusion. I have found the securing of that central thought and the tracing of its logical development to be the most difficult and yet the most fruitful method of Bible study.

There are practically no real examples of this method of Bible study in print. For example, when we turn to the great Macmillan series of commentaries, made famous by the illustrious names of Lightfoot and Westcott and Swete and Mayor, we are disappointed to find that what these commentators call an "analysis" is only a table of contents, a list of topics, with no effort to show that there is a central thought binding the various topics into a whole. Lightfoot's usual divisions are headed: Doctrinal, Practical, Hortatory, Personal. He fails to show the logical connection between these divisions. I submit that while these outlines such as given by Lightfoot and others may show the contents of the books, they are far from being an "analysis." I do not

<sup>1</sup> See Milligan on the *Structure of Revelation*.

believe that you can find one real analysis in any volume of the Macmillan series of commentaries. Yet these commentaries stand in the front rank for scholarship and for the exegesis of the individual verses.

When we examine more recent commentaries, we find the same state of affairs. Here is an illustration. I open a recent volume on James, written by that gifted and genial New Testament scholar, Prof. A. T. Robertson. Dr. Robertson "analyzes" James as follows: Joy in Trial; The Way of Temptation; The Practice of the Word of God; Class Prejudice; The Appeal to Life; The Tongues of Teachers; The True Wise Man; The Outer and the Inner Life; God and Business; and Perseverance and Prayer. At the mere reading of these titles you readily perceive that there is no manifest connection between the successive sections; there is revealed no continuous thread of thought running through and binding the whole together. And yet the epistle of James is one of the most effectively arranged books in the Bible, having for its controlling thought this truth: a faith which does not determine the life cannot save the soul, and the whole epistle is concerned with an orderly unfolding of that idea. Or take Dr. Robertson's latest volume, just off the press, his most charming and stimulating book on Philip-  
pians, entitled "Paul's Joy in Christ." Here are the headings of the various sections: Joy in Prayer; Good out of Ill; Joy in Death as well as in Life; Paul's Full Cup; Realizing God's Plan in Life; Fellowship; The Holy Quest; Following the Road; The Garrison of Peace; The Secret of Happiness. Philip-  
pians is treated as if it were a number of detached fragments strung together with no regard to the order or connection of the parts. As a matter of fact, Philip-  
pians is one of the finest literary organisms in the Scriptures. I know no commentary, ancient or modern, that makes any serious and successful effort to show the all-controlling purpose and the dominant thought in the books of the Bible.

In the brief course of lectures which I have the honor to

deliver in this historic Seminary, my aim will be to illustrate concretely what we may call the "theme and analysis" method of Bible study. I shall take three of Paul's epistles and "try to strike the key-note of each, to find its tap-root, to uncover its pivotal point, and to chart its central current." For this purpose I have chosen Philippians, Colossians and Ephesians. I have selected these three for two reasons. First, our standard commentaries assert that of all the epistles of Paul these three are the most lacking in definite plan and arrangement. Hence, if we succeed in showing that in each of these epistles there is a central thought which is orderly developed, we are confident that our main contention as to the organic structure of the books of the Bible will be established. Philippians, Colossians, and Ephesians will supply an acid test of the truth or falsity of our theory. Secondly, these three books have been chosen, because there is a thought connection binding them together. They give us three sublime Pauline ideals: namely, The Ideal Savior, in Colossians; The Ideal Church, in Ephesians; and in Philippians, The Ideal Christian.

We come in our first lecture to Philippians.

At the outset let me call your attention to the practically unanimous opinion that obtains among Bible students as to the structure of Philippians. Bishop Lightfoot declares: "Of plan and arrangement there is even less than in St. Paul's letters generally. Even the threefold division into the explanatory, doctrinal and hortatory portions, which may generally be discerned in his epistles, is obliterated here." Dean Farrar says: "The letter is the least systematic of all the epistles." G. Campbell Morgan, who can analyze anything, confesses himself beaten in every attempt to analyze Philippians. He declares: "It is largely without system and extremely difficult to analyze. Who can analyze a love-letter? And that is what this letter is, which Paul wrote to his children at Philippi. There is no definite system in the letter." However, Dr. Morgan maintains that the thought of Philippians may be grouped around three words

—experience, exposition and exhortation; but he makes no attempt to show the thought-connection between these expressions. Speaking of Philippians Dr. A. T. Robertson says: "This epistle seems to have no formal or logical order."

Now let it be said that we do not claim that Paul deliberately and formally selected his theme and outlined his treatment before he put pen to paper to write to the Philippians, as we do when we prepare sermon-briefs; but we do assert that in pouring forth his love for the Philippian Church, which was the most Christian Church Paul had, the apostle has, unconsciously perhaps, taken his text and has stuck to it. That is to say, he has grouped his expressions of Christian affection around one central thought, which he develops in a straight course to a splendid climax. Let us now examine the epistle to see if this claim can be substantiated.

Turning to Philippians, we discover that the first eleven verses are clearly of an introductory nature and that the whole of chapter four forms the conclusion. Striking off introduction and conclusion, we have left as the body of the letter the section, i.12-iii.21. In passing, let us note that the introduction in i.1-11 contains first, the opening salutation (i.1-2) and then the opening prayer (i.3-11). In all Paul's epistles to churches, with the one exception of that to the Galatians (and there is a reason for the omission in Galatians) the opening salutation is followed by the opening prayer with its uniform divisions of thanksgiving and petition. The presence of opening salutation and prayer in all of Paul's letters, with the one exception just noted, is itself a clear evidence that Paul followed some plan, at least at the beginning of his epistles.

We enter, then, upon the body of the letter at i.12, and here the apostle begins a most interesting sketch of his life at Rome, which he continues through verse 26. The question arises: What function does this account of the apostle's life in Rome perform in the organism of the epistle? What was the author's purpose in thus sketching his life in Rome?

We have searched the commentaries in vain for an answer. Lightfoot simply says, "an account of his circumstances and feelings and of the progress of the Gospel in Rome." Neither he nor any other commentator attempts to show why Paul thus outlined his Christian activity in Rome. Thus in all our commentaries this section of Philippians, i.12-26, is left dangling in mid-air like Mahomet's coffin, or like a spider hanging from an invisible thread. Now, surely Paul had some purpose in giving this bit of his personal history. For in Philippians iv.9 he says: "The things which ye both learned and received and heard and saw in me, these things practise; and the God of peace shall be with you." We maintain that if any man of ordinary intelligence will sit down and read Phil. i.12-26 carefully through to the climax in verse 21, "for to me to live is Christ," he can not help seeing that Paul outlines his life in Rome for the distinct purpose of showing that always and everywhere his supreme aim had been to serve Christ. Life for him had always meant labor for Christ. Even though a prisoner in Rome and chained to a soldier, Paul could and Paul did serve Christ. And the apostle by telling the story of his life in prison is saying to the Philippians in the most effective and appealing way that if they would only make the service of Christ their constant aim, they, too, would always find an opportunity to serve Him, no matter how unlikely the time or place might seem to be. In the closing paragraph of chapter one, verses 27-30, Paul turns from his own life and pleads with the Philippians to make the service of Christ the constant purpose and supreme aim of their lives. "Only let your manner of life be worthy of the Gospel of Christ," he exhorts them, and so on through the first chapter.

Now we are prepared to bring together in a concise statement the central thought of the first chapter. That thought is that the supreme aim of every Christian should be the service of Christ. In the first paragraph, vs. 12-26, Paul shows that this had been the dominant purpose of his life; and in the second and closing paragraph he exhorts the

Philippians to make Christ's service the supreme purpose of their lives. Thus the two paragraphs unite in setting forth the idea that the supreme aim of every Christian should be the service of Christ.

Chapter two opens with a passage of surpassing beauty and power, in which the apostle describes the "mind" that was in our Saviour. By the "mind" of Christ he means the nature, disposition, or spirit which moved Christ to be born, to live and to die for us men and our salvation. Paul's purpose here is to reveal to us what was the motive power, the dynamo that propelled the Lord of Glory to live the life he lived and die the death he died. This motive was a certain mind or disposition in our Saviour, which, says Paul, had four outstanding qualities; it was unselfish, serving, humble and obedient. That was the mind of Christ; and that mind was the dynamo of his entire life.

In the second paragraph of chapter two, vss. 12-18, Paul urges the Philippians to strive to develop in them the same mind. "So then, my beloved, even as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence"—there is the obedient mind. "Do all things without murmurings and questionings"—there is the unselfish and humble mind. "Ye are seen as lights in the world, holding forth the word of life"—there is the serving mind. "Yea, and if I am offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy and rejoice with you all"—there is the mind obedient even unto death. In other words, in the second paragraph of chapter two, Paul pleads that the Philippians develop in them the mind that was in Christ.

When we come to the third paragraph of the second chapter, vss. 19-30, the logical development of Paul's thought seems at first sight to be broken. The apostle apparently leaves altogether the idea of the mind of Christ and speaks of the contemplated visit to Philippi of Timothy and Epaphroditus. But a close study of this paragraph will reveal the striking fact that as Paul describes the character of Timothy and Epaphroditus, he portrays the same four qualities

which we found in the mind of Christ; namely, unselfishness, service, humility, and obedience. Of Timothy he testifies: "For I have no man like-minded, who will care truly for your state. For they all seek their own, not the things of Jesus Christ. But we know the proof of him, that, as a child serveth his father, so he served with me in furtherance of the Gospel"—there is unselfish service. And of Epaphroditus he declares: "For the work of Christ he came nigh unto death, hazarding his life to supply that which was lacking in your service towards me"—there is the obedient service even unto death. Timothy and Epaphroditus had the mind of Christ; and that mind was the motive power of their lives.

This rapid survey brings us to a position where we can see clearly that chapter two with its three main paragraphs forms a real literary unit. In vs. 1-11, we have the mind of Christ as seen in Him personally; in vs. 12-18, the mind of Christ as it should be reproduced in the Philippians; and in vs. 19-30, the mind of Christ as exemplified in Timothy and Epaphroditus. Manifestly the unifying thought of chapter two is that the supreme motive power, or inspiration, of every Christian should be the mind of Christ.

The mind of Christ in us is the supreme inspiration to service. It was the mind of Christ in David Livingstone that made him say: "I place no value on anything I have or may possess except in relation to the Kingdom of Christ"; that sent him into the jungles of Africa to die there alone upon his knees with the prayer, "May God's richest blessings come down on every one who will help to heal this open sore of the world." It was the mind of Christ in David Brainerd that thrust him out into the depths of the American forest and made him spend whole nights in the deep snow, praying so earnestly for the conversion of the Indians, that when morning came his body was bathed in perspiration. It was the mind of Christ in Paul that made him say: "I take pleasure in weaknesses, in injuries, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake."

We now pass on to the third chapter. Bishop Lightfoot believes that the third chapter of Philippians is a digression. At the end of the chapter he remarks in his commentary on Philippians: "Here the digression ends and the main thread of the letter is recovered." It may be a bold thing to take issue with the great Bishop whose commentaries are still the last word in the exegesis of the Pauline epistles; but we are convinced that the Bishop is clearly in error when he asserts that this third chapter is a digression. The fact is that it is the pinnacle of Paul's noble presentation of the ideal Christian life. There is something higher than the service of Christ; there is something loftier than the mind of Christ. There is a towering peak to which both the service of Christ and the mind of Christ are lifting us, and what that is Paul portrays for us in his glorious third chapter of Philippians.

The chapter opens in the first six verses with a picture of the man who aspires after the flesh. This man is of the earth, earthy, and glories in fleshly attainments, such as circumcision, Israelitish descent, tribal standing, pure Hebrew origin, Phariseism, zeal and legal righteousness. These are wonderful advantages in themselves, but one may have them without any real conformity to Christ. "The highest attainments of a life estranged from Christ belong to the realm of the flesh, to human nature as it exists and acts apart from the influence of the Spirit."

In the next paragraph (iii.7-16) Paul sketches for us another picture, that of the man who aspires after Christ and His likeness. This man glories in Christ Jesus and has no confidence in the flesh. What things had been gains to him, those he now counts but loss for Christ. The man who aspires after the flesh counts up his fleshly attainments one by one, even as a miser counts over his gold and silver coins, and proudly sets them down to his credit. On the other hand, the man who aspires after Christ lumps all these fleshly attainments together in one mass, under the general head of "loss," and then throws the whole mass away, even

as one would throw slop to the dogs. The man who aspires after the flesh glories in seven fleshly attainments. The man who aspires after Christ gladly suffers the loss of these attainments and all things like them, and in return receives from Christ seven marvelous blessings, seven new things that were never his before: a new righteousness—"that I may be found in Christ, not having a righteousness of my own, even that which is of the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith"; a new power—"that I may know the power of his resurrection"; a new fellowship—"that I may know the fellowship of his sufferings"; a new death—"becoming conformed unto his death"; a new resurrection—"that I may attain unto the resurrection of the dead"; a new lifework—"that I may grasp that for which I was grasped by Christ Jesus"; and a new destiny—"I press on toward the goal unto the prize of the upward calling of God in Christ Jesus." Behold! Christ makes all things new.

Paul brings this third chapter to a close in vss. 17-21, where he turns to the Philippians and urges them to aspire after him, even as he aspired after Christ. "Brethren, be ye imitators together of me, and mark them that so walk even as ye have us for an ensample."

We have now reached the place where we can unify this third chapter, with its three parts all converging to one point. The man who aspires after the seven fleshly attainments is contrasted with the Christian who aspires after the seven supreme blessings which Christ alone can give; all of which blessings are summed up in the likeness of Christ—the perfection of the Lord Jesus. Then Paul urges the Philippians to aspire after him, even as he aspired after Christ. It is now perfectly obvious that Paul's purpose in the third chapter is to show that the supreme aspiration of every Christian should be the likeness of Christ.

Paul closes his beautiful letter with chapter four, where we find various farewell exhortations. We can discover no one thought running through this chapter and tying it

together. However, there are many verses of striking beauty. But Paul not only wrote beautiful words to the Philippians, he lived the beautiful life before them, even the ideal Christian life. So in closing he could say to them: "The things which ye both learned and received and heard and saw in me, practise." Paul lived what he preached to others. The secret of such a life is revealed in the great declaration: "I can do all things in him that strengtheneth me." Only in Christ can we live the ideal Christian life.

We have now completed our brief survey of the body of the epistle. We have reached the point where we should be able to state in a single sentence the theme of Philippians and in three brief sentences its main divisions. In Philippians what we really have is a magnificent presentation of that manner of life which is worthy of Christ. In i.27 Paul urges his readers: "Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ." And the whole epistle is the expansion of that urgent appeal. A life worthy of Christ and His Gospel! What a splendid theme and what a glorious Christian to handle it!

Now every life must have three things: aim, motive and final issue. And in Philippians we find that Paul has set forth these three facts about the ideal Christian life: the supreme aim of the ideal Christian is the service of Christ—"To me to live is Christ" (i.21); the supreme inspiration of the ideal Christian is the mind of Christ—"Have this mind in you which was also in Christ Jesus" (ii.5); and the supreme aspiration of the ideal Christian is the likeness of Christ—"I press on toward the goal unto the prize of the upward calling of God in Christ Jesus" (iii.14).

Can we not claim that Philippians is a perfect literary unit, with one main thread which runs through and binds all the parts together? Can we not say that the book is an organism, one body, in which each paragraph, each expression, each sentence occupies its rightful place and discharges its proper function? We trust we have not put into this epistle anything that is not there; that we have

uncovered its true organic structure. We trust that this exhibit of the theme and analysis of Philippians is so obviously true, so natural and unforced, that the mere statement of it carries the conviction of its truth. We would fain hope that this imperfect study of one of the most precious of Paul's immortal letters may cast a lane of new light upon the whole book and bring new blessings to the seeker after the wondrous things of God's Word.

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