

**APPRAISAL OF AGAPE JUXTAPOSING AN EXEGESIS OF
I JOHN 4.8'S GOD-IS-LOVE ETHICAL CONTINUUM AND
JOSEPH FLETCHER'S SITUATIONIST VIEW**

A SPECIAL PAPER

Presented to the

Faculty of the School of Graduate Studies

CENTRAL PHILIPPINE UNIVERSITY

Iloilo City

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

MASTER OF DIVINITY

MAJOR IN PASTORAL MINISTRY

By

Modesto B. Molinos, Jr.

May 2006

ABSTRACT

Love is one of the most colorful themes running through the lives of both biblical and non-biblical personalities. God's greatest love commands, the Good Samaritan Story, the Prodigal Son Story, the great act of salvation by Jesus Christ, and the Parable of the Last Judgment to name a few all reflect how preeminent love is to the interest of God, and human beings.

It is for this exceptional interest why this writer's special attachment in choosing the same subject, love, as the locus of this paper.

A lot of human conditions success or failures, have been associated with, love. Somehow, an exegetical study could help clarify important points to give clearer picture against the glaring nuances about love. Human assignment to the character of love needs a continuous examination for its usual inclination towards stereotyping, prejudice, and bias action.

Six chapters comprise the main parts of this paper. Chapter One is assigned as the introductory part defining the circumstances of the study. Chapter Two charts down related literature reviews. Here, biblical semantics of the word *agape* and its psychological constructs of leading psychologists can be found. This section includes the statistical profile, the findings and assessments. Chapter Three deals with the formal exegetical study of I John 4.8. Chapter Four takes a closer look at Joseph Fletcher's views on *agape* as the groundwork of his *Situation Ethics*. His five propositions are discussed. Chapter Five identifies the Johannine

God-is-love ethical continuum, apologetically set out against the polemic approach to Joseph Fletcher's situationist use of *agape*.

Thought provoking thinkers are very rare. If they are around, they suffer the loss of acceptance for their unpopular ideas. The evangelist John was one of them. Situationist Fletcher was another. It is hoped this paper reintroduces these valuable personalities for whatever virtue there is to be found with their thoughts especially in the undying subject *agape*. Along with this hope is to find their continuity and discontinuity with relation to the present impact each could make in the modern times.