

# The New Commandment

## Love One Another – John 13:34

“A new commandment I give to you, that you **love one another**, even as I have loved you, that you also **love one another.**”

John 13:34

Love is an overused, over-abused and greatly misunderstood word.

The phrase, “I love you” has been said to spouses, children, pets, sports heroes, possessions, God, and just about anything else that exists.

It is often said that love is an action, but even that can be easily confused. I can think of actions that mean “I love you” like giving flowers, a card, a gift, physical touch, physical intimacy, kind words, or self-sacrifice, but every one of these could be simple gestures of kindness or forms of self gratification.

There are an unfortunate number of marriages that started with the words, “I love you”, but ended in conflict and pain.

How would you define love?

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How has love been shown to you?

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I have no doubt that most people have good intentions when they use the word love. They have good intentions when they act out love, but we, in our sinfulness, cannot fully comprehend love.

There are no less than fifteen verses that specifically tell us to love one another. It is the only “one another” that has been spoken from the lips of Jesus. He told His disciples that he had a new commandment for them. “Love one another!”

In fact, Jesus summed the entire Law up into two commandments for the religious leaders (Matthew 22:37-40). He said the first is to love God and the second is to love others. The whole Law and the prophets hang on those two commandments. Love God. Love others. Two things, and we can't even obey those two.

Paul explains in Romans that the only thing we owe each other is love (Romans 13:8). In the letter to the Thessalonians, he explains that we do not need to be taught how to love one another because it is something that God has placed in us (1 Thessalonians 4:9). To those who know Christ as our Savior, God is teaching us to love one another.

Paul explains what love is in 1 Corinthians 13. Most of us are familiar with this passage, as it is often read at weddings and seen on apparel. It is a list that is hard to live up to. Think about the person you like the least. Now think about what love really is. Not the movie kind of love, but real love.

“And He said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.” This is the great and foremost commandment. The second is like it, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” On these two commandments depend the whole Law and the Prophets.”

Matthew 22:37-40

"Owe nothing to anyone except to **love one another**, for he who loves his neighbor has fulfilled the law."  
Romans 13:8

Loves is patient, kind, not jealous, not boastful, not arrogant, self-controlled, not self-seeking, not provoked, does not hold a grudge, does not praise unrighteousness, praises the truth, positive, long-suffering, and never-ending.

Maybe you are better than me, but I have a hard time with loving my wife like this. In fact, none of us are capable of this kind of love. If all believers showed this kind of love, what would your home look like? Your city? Our world?

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Jesus said that the world will know that we are believers, not by our doctrine or denomination, but by our love (John 13:35). I have to be honest with myself and say that I have not always been a shining example. If I thought back on just the events of today, I would find times that I have not shown love.

What is one way that you could have shown more love today?

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Like I said, we are not capable of that kind of love. Is it a lost cause? Certainly not! Let me share with you the story of a man that taught me love.

This gentleman was an outspoken man of God. He was a solid preacher of the Word and would not step down from his convictions. Because of this, he had a critic that was equally outspoken and caused him much grief. He would verbally abuse and degrade him. The gentlemen began to despise and hate his critic. He finally got to the point of wishing ill and even death on this man. It was then that he realized he needed to love this man. He wrestled with God about this. Over time his conviction to love this man and his desire to hate him brought him great suffering and drove him to resolve the two feelings. He locked himself in his bathroom and vowed that he would not come out until he could say that he loved his enemy. He spent hours in agonizing prayer crying out to God. After many hours, a truth was revealed to him. He cannot love his enemy. He was not capable of that kind of love, a love that would suffer long and endure his enemy's attacks, a love that would desire this man to be saved. He wasn't capable of it. It was then that God brought him to see that God desires to love this man through him. God was capable of that kind of love, and it was God who would love his enemy through him.

This call to love one another cannot be accomplished apart from God. I cannot love others as God has loved me unless God is in me, for God is love. John says in his letter, "For love is from God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God" (1 John 4:7).

I love my wife and my family. I love my friends. But the kind of love we are called to is far greater than the love I have. It is a love from God that flows through us into the world with no other motive than to glorify God. It is a love that will:

"Now as to the love of the brethren, you have no need for anyone to write to you, for you yourselves are taught by God to **love one another**."  
1 Thessalonians 4:9

“Be devoted to one another in brotherly love; give preference to one another in honor.”  
Romans 12:10

- Serve one another
- Honor one another
- Live in harmony with one another
- Instruct one another
- Encourage one another
- Be kind to one another
- Forgive one another
- Submit to one another
- Be hospitable to one another
- Confess to one another
- Pray for one another
- Help one another
- Accept one another

Is there someone in your life that God wants to love through you? Who?

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Paul says that if I have not love, I am nothing.

Start today to let God love through you.

Love one another:

John 13:34

John 13:35

John 15:12

John 15:17

Romans 12:10

Romans 13:8

1 Thessalonians 3:12

1 Thessalonians 4:9

1 Peter 1:22

1 Peter 4:8

1 John 3:11

1 John 3:23

1 John 4:7

1 John 4:11

2 John 1:5

What do you need to do in response to this lesson?

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