

Human love is directed to the other person for his own sake, spiritual love loves him for Christ's sake. Therefore, human love seeks direct contact with the other person; it loves him not as a free person but as one whom it binds to itself. It wants to gain, to capture by every means; it uses force. It desires to be irresistible, to rule. Spiritual love asks nothing in return, but seeks those who need it. And who needs our love more than those who are consumed with hatred and are utterly devoid of love.

God is in the manger, wealth in poverty, light in darkness, succor in abandonment. No evil can befall us; whatever men may do to us, they cannot but serve the God who is secretly revealed as love and rules the world and our lives.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1906-45)  
German Lutheran pastor, theologian and anti-Nazi dissident  
who was a key founding member of the Confessing Church

I LOVE YOU  
JUST THE  
WAY I AM



## Monday Morning

After saying this, Jesus was troubled in spirit. He explained why. “I’m telling you the solemn truth,” he said. “One of you will betray me.”

The disciples looked at each other in shock, wondering who he could be talking about. One of the disciples, the one Jesus specially loved, was reclining at table close beside him. Simon Peter motioned to him to ask who it was he was talking about. So, leaning back against Jesus’ chest, he asked him, “Who is it, Master?”



“It’s the one I’m going to give this piece of bread to,” said Jesus, “when I’ve dipped it in the dish.”

So he dipped the piece of bread, and gave it to Judas, son of Simon Iscariot. After the bread, the satan entered into him.

“Do it quickly, won’t you?” said Jesus to him.

None of the others at the table knew what he meant. Because Judas kept the common purse, some were thinking that he meant, “Buy what we need for the festival,” or that he was to give something to the poor. So when Judas had taken the bread, he went out at once. It was night. When Judas had gone out, Jesus began to speak.

“Now the son of man is glorified!” he said. “Now God is glorified in him! And if God is glorified in him, God will glorify him in himself, and glorify him at once. Children, I’m only with you a little longer. You will look for me, and, as I said to the Judaeans that where I was going they couldn’t come, so I’m saying the same to you now.

**“I’m giving you a new commandment, and it’s this: love one another! Just as I have loved you, so you must love one another. This is how everybody will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for each other.”**

ἐντολὴν καινὴν δίδωμι ὑμῖν, ἵνα ἀγαπᾶτε ἀλλήλους· καθὼς ἠγάπησα ὑμᾶς, ἵνα καὶ ὑμεῖς ἀγαπᾶτε ἀλλήλους. ἐν τούτῳ γνώσονται πάντες ὅτι ἐμοὶ μαθηταὶ ἐστε, ἐὰν ἀγάπην ἔχητε ἐν ἀλλήλοις.

John 13:34-35

Now I am giving you a new command—love one another. Just as I have loved you, so you must love one another. This is how all men will know that you are my disciples, because you have such love for one another.”

J. B. Phillips translation

So I give you a new command: Love each other deeply and fully. Remember the ways that I have loved you, and demonstrate your love for others in those same ways. Everyone will know you as My followers if you demonstrate your love to others.

The Voice paraphrase

Let me give you a new command: Love one another. In the same way I loved you, you love one another. This is how everyone will recognize that you are my disciples—when they see the love you have for each other.

The Message paraphrase

What is new, therefore, is not the commandment to love, because that commandment lies at the heart of the Torah (Lev 19:18; Deut 6:4). Rather, what is new is that the commandment to love derives from the incarnation. The “new” turn in the commandment of 13:34 is that Jesus’ “own” are asked to enter into the love that marks the relationship [Vol. 9, p. 733] of God and Jesus. Their participation in this relationship will be evidenced the same way that Jesus’ is: by acts of love that join the believer to God. Keeping this commandment is the identifying mark of discipleship, because it is the tangible sign of the disciples’ abiding in Jesus.

New Interpreter’s Bible commentary

*Agape* love is what emerges from the refiner’s fire when that surging desire to cling, possess, consume the object of one’s adoring is subjected to the discipline of kenosis, self-giving love.

Cynthia Bourgeault

One who loves a fellow human being is loving God the best one can.

Alice Cary

Every rational creature, every person, and every angel has two main strengths: the power to know and the power to love. God made both of these, but God is not knowable through the first one. To the power of love, however, God is entirely known, because a loving soul is open to receive God’s abundance. God’s very nature makes love endless and miraculous. God will never stop loving us. Consider this truth, and, if by grace you can make love your own, do. For the experience is eternal joy; its absence is unending suffering.

*The Cloud of Unknowing*

an anonymous work of Christian mysticism  
written in Middle English in the latter half of the 14th century

Love seeketh not itself to please,  
Nor for itself hath any care,  
But for another gives its ease,  
And builds a Heaven in Hell’s despair.

William Blake

Faith like light, should always be simple, and unbending; while love, like warmth, should beam forth on every side, and bend to every necessity of our brethren.

Martin Luther

