

Outside the Insert

Alexander Maclaren, a great preacher from another era, writes movingly of the impact of the command of Christ upon His people to 'love one another.' He writes:

When the words were spoken, the then-known civilized Western world was cleft by great, deep gulfs of separation, like the crevasses in a glacier.... Language, religion, national animosities, differences of condition, and saddest of all, differences of sex, split the world up into alien fragments. A 'stranger' and an 'enemy' were expressed in one language by the same word. The learned and the unlearned, the slave and his master, the barbarian and the Greek, the man and the woman, stood on opposite sides of the gulfs, flinging hostility across. A Jewish peasant wandered up and down for three years in His own little country, which was the very focus of narrowness and separation and hostility, as the Roman historian felt when He called the Jews the 'haters of the human race'; He gathered a few disciples, and He was crucified by a contemptuous Roman governor, who thought that the life of one fanatical Jew was a small price to pay for popularity with his troublesome subjects, and in a generation after, the clefts were being bridged and all over the Empire a strange new sense of unity was being breathed, and 'Barbarian, Scythian, bond and free,' male and female, Jew and Greek, learned and ignorant, clasped hands and sat down at one table, and felt themselves 'all one in Christ Jesus.'

John 13:34-35

<p>³⁴ A new commandment</p>	<p>There are two Greek words that are commonly translated as “new.” The Greek word <i>neos</i> signifies what was not there beforehand, while the word <i>kainos</i> refers to what is new and distinctive. <i>Kainos</i>, furthermore, usually carries with it the implication that the new is better than the old, and is superior in value or attraction. The word used in this verse is <i>kainos</i>. The usage of this word contains many implications for us as we meditate on what Christ commands us in this section.</p>
<p>I give to you,</p>	<p>Loved one, isn't it wonderful that Christ would give us such a command, knowing that the power to fulfill this command would later be given in the Person of the Holy Spirit?</p>
<p>that you love one another;</p>	<p>Burge writes about the fact that some scholars see the command in this verse as being less stringent than the command of ‘love your enemies.’ Burge writes about this criticism, “But this is a misdirected criticism. John’s Gospel speaks generously of God’s love for the world (John 3:16). Jesus’ mission is to save the world (4:42), to give it life (6:33) and light (12:46). The disciples are commanded to go into the world to continue Jesus’ work (17:18; 20:21).”</p>
<p>as I have loved you,</p>	<p>This is the refreshingly new aspect of this new command. We have the attractive power of the example of Christ as a basis for the motivation to love.</p>
<p>that you also love one another.</p>	
<p>³⁵ By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.”</p>	<p>Francis Schaeffer writes about this verse, “Upon His authority He (Christ) gives the world the right to judge whether you and I are born-again Christians on the basis of our observable love toward all Christians. That’s pretty frightening.”</p>

Motivations to Love:

A. There is the connection of destiny.

Please see John 13:3-4:

Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come from God and was going to God, ⁴ rose from supper and laid aside His garments, took a towel and girded Himself.

B. There is the connection of context.

C. There is the conjoining of the Comforter.

D.

E. There is the couching of a command.

F. There is the connection of the cross.