

# A New Commandment

By Permission

April, 2007

***A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another. — John 13:34-35***

## **I. Christ commanded his children to love one another.**

A. A *commandment* is “an authoritative injunction that must be obeyed at all costs and that cannot be disobeyed with impunity.”

B. To *love* means “to commit oneself unselfishly to the highest good or ultimate well-being of others.”

## **II. Christ commanded his children to love one another as Christ has loved them.**

A. Christ has loved Christians *secondarily*, meaning that He has loved God the Father first and foremost.

B. Christ has loved Christians *singularly*, meaning that He has loved each individual Christian.

C. Christ has loved Christians *sympathetically*, meaning that He has loved them even though they are not deserving of His love.

D. Christ has loved Christians *steadily*, meaning that He has loved them without fail.

E. Christ has loved Christians *submissively*, meaning that He has humbled Himself before them in order to serve them.

F. Christ has loved Christians *sacrificially*, meaning that He has been willing to lay down His life on their behalf.

**III. Christ commanded his children to love one another as Christ has loved them so as to make their Christian discipleship known to all men.**

A. *Sound doctrine* is not the badge of Christian discipleship.

B. *Soul-winning* is not the badge of Christian discipleship.

C. *Scholarship* is not the badge of Christian discipleship.

D. *Success* is not the badge of Christian discipleship.

E. *Sentimentalism* is not the badge of Christian discipleship.

F. *Christ-like love* is the badge of Christian discipleship.

So many professing believers in our day have said that stress on the love of God is a weakness. We know we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren. (1 John 3:14).

God's children can never hope to understand the love of God toward us until we love one another as Christ loved the church and gave himself for it. Some say John 3:16 is the center of the gospel. 1 John 3:16 tells us how to perceive the love of God. When we lay down our lives for others—and they appear unthankful—what comes to mind?

***Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. — 1 John 3:16 (KJV).***

Laying down our lives for the brethren probably doesn't entail being put to death for them as much as it means to live our lives sacrificially for them. To love as Jesus did, we must put aside our own selfish things in order to give to our brethren—especially those things they need.

[Adapted from an Article of the same subject by John Kohler]