



This Gospel passage takes us back in time to the Last Supper in the Upper Room where Jesus demonstrates his love for the same disciples who will fail him miserably. Jesus washes and feeds Judas who will betray him, Peter who will deny him, and all the rest who will fail to stand by him in his hour of greatest distress. The love that Jesus demonstrates is certainly not based on the merit of the recipients, and Jesus commands his disciples to love others in the same way.

Our love for one another, Jesus says, is to be like His love for us. That is, we must love as He does, without condition, ready to forgive, honest and candid, open and accepting toward each other.

It is said that the apostle John, in his old age, would remind those around him to love one another. When questioned why he told them this so very often, his reply would be, "Because it is what our Lord commanded. If it is all you do, then it is enough."

In this text Jesus is reminding the disciples that they will be known to others by their acts of loving. We would do well to listen to this commandment. We also are called to love others as a mark of our own discipleship.

If all the laws that were ever written in every country of the world were suddenly erased and everyone decided to live only by the law of love just as Jesus preached it, the world would be turned upside down—or rather, from God's perspective, right side up.

Jesus tells us in the Gospel today, "I give you a new commandment. Love one another as I have loved you." The authentic Christian is the one who loves the most. Our love has to be like the love of Jesus, freely given, generous, universal, and unconditional.

*"They will know we are Christians by our love by our love....."*

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