

“True Love” (John 13:34–35)

What are the best qualities of homemade chicken noodle soup? The soothing broth? The thick noodles? The few, harmless vegetables? The hearty, mouthwatering chicken? Now, contrast this with a can of store-bought canned soup. This variety is little more than thin, salty broth. If there are any noodles, they are skimpy and pathetic. To top it off, there is no chicken! I feel like calling up Campbell’s and saying, “Where’s the beef? I mean chicken!” Similarly, love is to Christianity what the meat is to chicken noodle soup. If you remove it, what you have left is just flavored broth with a few noodles, but no substance. Love is the very heart of Christianity. Christians without love is like watered-down broth without substance.¹

At EBF, our vision is transferring truth to the next generation. We fulfill this vision through a four-step strategy: learn the Word, live the life, love the body, and lead the world. The third step of our vision strategy—love the body—is particularly critical to our church. For Jesus declares that the identifying mark of Christians is our love for one another. In John 13:34–35, He declares, “*Love as you’ve been loved.*” In John 13–17, John, the beloved disciple, records Jesus’ last words to His disciples as He is entering into the last night of His earthly life.² Jesus is preparing to go to the cross. But before doing so, He washes His disciples’ feet (13:1–20). After this dirty work, He then explains that one of His disciples will betray Him (13:21–30). Following this, Jesus announces His departure and insists that His disciples cannot now come with Him (13:33). In 13:34–35, He explains what He expects of His disciples while He is away.³ First, Jesus expects you to...

1. Fulfill your calling by loving the body (13:34). Jesus issues a command for you and me to love one another. He puts it like this: “**A new commandment I give to you,⁴ that you love⁵ one another,⁶ even as I have loved you, that you also love one another.**” One of the primary questions that must be answered in this verse is: Why does Jesus call the command to love one another “a new commandment?”⁷ Love itself is not a new commandment, it is an old commandment found in Lev 19:8 and Deut 6:5.⁸ This means we must first define the word “new.”⁹ The Greek word translated “new” (*kainos*) speaks of what is new in the sense of unused or fresh, rather than something recent or different.¹⁰ It is not so much that the commandment has not been given before as that it has a different quality about it, a quality of freshness that differentiates it from any other. To put it simply, this new commandment has a *new object* and a *new measure*.¹¹ The object is now “one another.” In the Old Testament, the command was “love your neighbor as yourself” (Lev 19:18). Now Jesus says, “Love your fellow believers as I have loved you.” The Jews had watered down the Mosaic teaching so they could love whom they wanted and hate whom they wanted. But Christ changes the object from “neighbor” to “one another.” This leads to the question: Why does Jesus command disciples to love other disciples? Why not exhort disciples to love the world?¹² For Jesus, it is a matter of priorities (see Gal 6:10). Jesus is first concerned about believers that have a unique and special relationship with Him (1 Tim 4:10). God loves His kids more than He loves children of the world.¹³ Jesus also realizes that we can’t properly love the world until we love fellow believers. Finally, as we shall see in John 13:35, Jesus knows that when believers love one another as God intends the world will sit up and take notice. This can result in many being drawn to Christ. *Love as you’ve been loved.*

The commandment is new because of its *object*, but also because of its *measure*. The measure of this love is, “as I have loved you.”¹⁴ Earlier in chapter 13, Jesus gave His disciples a new standard of love. He did this by washing their feet (13:4–17). In doing so, He humbled Himself and served His disciples in an active, tangible, and visible way. Jesus is calling us to love others as He did (1 John 3:16–17; 4:7–11).¹⁵ This sacrificial love also reaches out to Judas as he is about to betray Christ. Finally, He wants you and me to sacrificially love other believers, to death if necessary. It is a vastly greater love that gives up one’s own life for another, that sacrifices self-interest to promote the interests of another (John 15:13). The sacrificial work of Christ on the cross is the “new” standard for the Christian’s love for fellow-believers.

In 13:34–35, the word Jesus uses for love is the Greek verb *agapao* and its noun form *agape*.¹⁶ Of the four words for love in the Greek language,¹⁷ this one is the capstone. Essentially, it means to seek the highest good of another. *Agape* love sacrifices for others. It is an act of the will. It is a decision, a commitment. Love is not about your needs or my needs; it's about God's will. This type of love refuses to respond negatively, refuses to reject, refuses to demand conditions, and refuses to nitpick the lint off someone's soul. When Jesus says "as I have loved you," He sets Himself up as the standard by which His disciples are to forever measure their love for one another. He is telling them, "I left the splendors and comforts of heaven because I loved you. I called you to be mine, knowing full well your faults. I taught you, even when you were stubborn and closed-minded. I corrected you when you stepped out of line. I washed your feet on the way to my death. All this was for your highest good. My interest was not in myself, but in you."¹⁸ In light of Jesus' example, *love as you've been loved*.

It is interesting to note the obvious—the command to love other believers is called a "commandment." The point being: Without specifically commanding His disciples to love one another,¹⁹ there existed the very real possibility that this essential activity would be neglected. It seems that we are much better at and much more apt to deal with love as a noun or an abstract concept than as a verb. We prefer talking about love to demonstrating it. When it comes to love "when all is said and done, there is far more said than done." Yet, Jesus wants you to love with this kind of supernatural *agape* love.²⁰ This means you can love your spouse regardless of how he or she treats you. You may say, "I don't like my wife." Well, you don't have to. There is a difference between like and love. You are not commanded to like your spouse; you are commanded to love your spouse. There may be some people in our church you can't stand. That's okay. Jesus commands you to love people you can't stand. As you make this volitional decision, you may find that fellow believer isn't so bad after all. We often think of the home and the church as places to have our needs met—places to be ministered to. That, however, is not love, for love sacrifices to serve others. In every area of your life you are to die to yourself and others. This means in your marriage there is no such thing as seeking a divorce because you don't love your spouse. Today, one of the greatest expressions of love you may be able to exhibit is to commit to remaining with your spouse "till death do you part." Additionally, it is critical to recognize that the greatest thing a father can do for his children is to love their mother. Likewise, the greatest thing a mother can do for her children is to respect their father. When both spouses exude this type of love in the home, the marriage is bound to succeed. In the family, *agape* love shows children unconditional love even in the face of their disobedience. It has been said, "Children need love especially when they don't deserve it." How true! This is the same love God has for you and me even when we rebel against Him. In the church, one of the greatest expressions of love is simply to notice people and to pay attention to them.²¹ *Agape* love seeks to know others. *Agape* love serves others. *Love as you've been loved*.

[Jesus calls you and me to fulfill our calling by loving the body. How can we accomplish this? By looking to Christ as our example. Jesus' second expectation is...]

2. Display your discipleship by loving the body (13:35). Jesus declares that when we love each other we will become a magnet to the world. He says, "By this all men [people]²² will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."²³ Jesus is giving the world the right to examine our credibility. The world can see if we're for real. If you and I love for one another everyone will know that we are Jesus' disciples. The word translated "know" (*ginosko*)²⁴ does not refer to a theoretical knowledge but to a knowledge gained by first-hand, rub-of-the-shoulders observation.²⁵ How can you reveal to the world that you are Jesus' disciple?²⁶ By demonstrating love for fellow believers! When people see this kind of uncommon love exemplified in the Church they are naturally curious. They begin to wonder if the gospel could be true. They begin to believe that Christ DOES bring transformation. On the flip side, when we fail to show love we invalidate the message. People don't believe there is real transformation in Christ. We make the idea of Christian community very unappealing. People ask, "Why would I want more stress and conflict in my life?" I don't need Christ or His church!

It is important to notice that there is an “if” (*ei*) involved in 13:35. Believers can violate the love command. Failure to love does not mean I am not a Christian,²⁷ but it means the world has the right to make the judgment that I am not a Christian.²⁸ Therefore, if we expect unbelievers to know that we are Christ’s disciples, we must show the mark.²⁹ The early church displayed the mark. Tertullian, a church father who wrote a century after the gospel of John was written said that unbelievers saw Christians loving one another and commented, “Behold, how they love one another.”³⁰ Even today, nothing so astonishes a fractured world as a community in which radical, faithful, genuine love is shared among its members. There are many places you can go and find communities of shared interest. There are many places you can go to find people just like yourself, who live for sports or music or gardening or politics.³¹ But true *agape* love is hard to find. Ultimately, it can only be found in the church. So *love as you’ve been loved*.

As a result of poor planning, Dennis, from Katy, Texas, needed some same-day dry cleaning before he left on a trip. He remembered one store with a huge sign, “One-Hour Dry Cleaners,” on the other side of town, so he drove out of his way to drop off a suit. After filling out the tag, he told the clerk, “I need this in an hour.” She said, “I can’t get this back to you until Thursday.” “I thought you did dry cleaning in an hour?” “No,” she replied, “That’s just the name of the store.” Those of us who carry the name Christian, but fail to act like the one whose name we bear, create confusion and disillusionment for those who have yet to believe.³² *Love as you’ve been loved*.

Through the centuries men have used many different symbols to show that they are Christians—the sign of a fish, a cross, a praise the Lord button, a WWJD bracelet, and a Christian T-shirt. But there is one universal mark that is to characterize Christians throughout the history of the Church. The mark of love.³³ Can people tell that you’re a disciple by the love you have for other believers? This kind of love is public. What do you suppose would happen if a local church took this command as their marching orders for evangelism? Is it possible that we would find it much easier to accomplish the “Great Commission” if we gave priority to the “Great Command”—loving God and loving others? Undoubtedly, one of the reasons we are sorely hindered in our outreach to the world is the disobedience of in our inreach to one another.

So how can we grow in our love for one another? Here are some practical suggestions.

- ***Speak well of the church.*** When you are critical about your local church or the church universal, you displease Christ. Remember, the church is called the bride of Christ (Rev 19:7; 21:2, 9; 22:17). Jesus doesn’t want you to be critical of His bride! He takes this very seriously! When you are critical about the church in your workplace or neighborhood, you lose your influence with your coworkers and neighbors. When you are critical about the church in your home, your children will lose their love for the church. Speak well about your local church and other churches. Believe the best. Hold your tongue. Whatever your situation, emphasize the positive. Putting down your own church is just as unbecoming and destructive as publicly criticizing your own wife or husband. Today, commit to only speaking well of the church.
- ***Commit to a local church.*** There is *loyalty* in a family. Brothers and sisters are loyal to each other. Husbands and wives are loyal to each other. It is a family tragedy when this is not the case. So when a sibling or spouse says the wrong thing to you, you might get offended, but you do not walk out on your family. You do not say to your brother, “I am not going to be your brother any more because you offended me. I am going to look for a different set of brothers. I am going to change families.” Sadly, we are living in days when changing church families is far too common. The ease and frequency of switching churches arises from the loss of the concept of the church as a family. Today, will you make a commitment to EBF if you haven’t already? In order to fulfill the new commandment you must be in proximity to other believers so that you can love them.

- ***Serve in your local church.*** Christianity has been called “love in action.”³⁴ How long has it been since you really sacrificed to serve others in your family or in your church? All too often we think of the family and even our church as a place to have our needs met—a place to be ministered to. That, however, is not love, for love sacrifices to serve others. Every church needs workers were willing not only to help but also to make personal sacrifices of time and energy to serve others. When you are asked to serve, give the request your prayerful consideration; count the cost; and then make the sacrifice, for love sacrifices for others.³⁵ Presently, we have a tremendous need to ensure that our seniors are being cared for by the body. Would you be willing to take communion to a shut in? Would you be willing to adopt a widow? If so, please call or email the church office and we have a list of individuals who need your love. What about single moms? There are several single moms who are raising their child or children alone. What can you do to help? What kind of church would my church be if all its members were just like me?
- ***Serve the city church.*** We must do all that we can to build up the church in our county for God’s kingdom is not merely about our tiny local church. Our church is seeking to do this in some tangible ways. David Simonsen, a gifted marriage counselor, offers free marriage counseling to those who need his professional expertise. Although his services are worth bucko bucks, he serves Emmanuel and the church of Thurston County on Sunday mornings and afternoons. Jan Zachary, our women’s ministry directory, is reaching out to other smaller-medium churches that have a women’s ministry leader that might like to connect with other women’s ministry leaders from other churches. Kevin McNeil, one of the worship team members, is seeking to involve other churches in worship by starting a record label called “Rebirth Records.” These are just three examples of how people like you are seeking to bless the city church.
- ***Prepare to show love toward people no matter what.*** In his book *Life Together*, Dietrich Bonhoeffer highlights one of the hindrances to such love.³⁶ We create a romanticized view of what we expect the Christian community to be and then love that false image rather than the real people. Our failure to love like Christ is rooted in a failure to accept people as they are. Expect the worst, and then exhibit Christ’s unconditional love. Human love says, “I will love you *if...*” God says, “I will love you *even...*”³⁷
- ***Learn to express your love to people.*** Speak loving and encouraging words to another believer. Reach out and physically touch someone. If you’re having trouble in this area, study 1 John. If you are still looking for a study in 2009, I would encourage you to read 1 John, which is a divine commentary on the new commandment. This study could change your life and your view of the church. Why not memorize 1 Cor 13:4–8? What does *agape* love look like practically? Paul defines it in 1 Cor 13:4–6. In these three verses, Paul lists nine qualities of love. Study these and ask God to help you apply these on a daily basis.

Lee Iacocca once asked legendary football coach Vince Lombardi what it took to make a winning team. The book Iacocca records Lombardi’s answer: “There are a lot of coaches with good ball clubs who know the fundamentals and have plenty of discipline but still don’t win the game. Then you come to the third ingredient: If you’re going to play together as a team, you’ve got to care for one another. You’ve got to love each other. Each player has to be thinking about the next guy and saying to himself: ‘If I don’t block that man, Paul is going to get his legs broken. I have to do my job well in order that he can do his.’ Lombardi then went on to say, ‘The difference between mediocrity and greatness is the feeling these guys have for each other.’” In the healthy church, each Christian learns to care for others. As we take seriously Jesus’ command to “love one another,” we contribute to a winning team.³⁸ Do you want to play on a winning team? Of course you do. Do I want to pastor a winning church? Absolutely! This can only happen when you and I *love as we’ve been loved*.

The Importance of Christian Love

John 15:12 “This is My commandment, that you love one another, just as I have loved you.”

John 15:17 “This I command you, that you love one another.”

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

Romans 13:8 “Owe nothing to anyone except to love one another; for he who loves his neighbor has fulfilled the law.”

1 Corinthians 16:14 “Let all that you do be done in love.”

Galatians 5:14 “For the whole Law is fulfilled in one word, in the statement, ‘YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.’”

Ephesians 5:2 “and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma.”

1 Thessalonians 4:9 “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.”

Hebrews 10:24 “and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds.”

Hebrews 13:1 “Let love of the brethren continue.”

James 2:8 “If, however, you are fulfilling the royal law according to the Scripture, ‘YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF,’ you are doing well.”

1 Peter 1:22 “Since you have in obedience to the truth purified your souls for a sincere love of the brethren, fervently love one another from the heart.”

1 Peter 4:8 “Above all, keep fervent in your love for one another, because love covers a multitude of sins.”

1 John 3:11 For this is the message which you have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another;

1 John 3:23 “This is His commandment, that we believe in the name of His Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, just as He commanded us.”

1 John 4:21 “And this commandment we have from Him, that the one who loves God should love his brother also.”

2 John 1:5 “Now I ask you, lady, not as though I were writing to you a new commandment, but the one which we have had from the beginning, that we love one another.”

All Scripture quotations, unless indicated, are taken from the *New American Standard Bible*, © 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1975, 1977, and 1995 by The Lockman Foundation, and are used by permission.

Scripture References

John 13:34–35; 15:12–17

1 John 3:11–18; 4:7–21

Luke 10:23–37

Romans 12:9–13; 13:8–10

1 Corinthians 13:1–13

Galatians 6:7–10

James 2:1–13

Study Questions

1. How did Jesus love believers (13:34)? Read John 15:12–17; 1 John 2:7–8; 3:11–24; 4:7–21; and 2 John 5. How should I display Jesus' love today? How can I bring a sense of freshness to my love for my fellow believers? In what ways do I need to grow in how I express love to the body?
2. C.S. Lewis writes, "It is probably impossible to love any human being 'too much.' We may love him too much *in proportion* to our love for God; but it is the smallness of our love for God, not the greatness of our love for the man, that constitutes the inordinacy." (C.S. Lewis, *The Four Loves* [New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1960], 170.) Do I agree with this quote? Why or why not? In what ways do I love God too little? How can I ensure that God is my first love priority? Read Matthew 10:37–39.
3. How do the people in my family and church receive love? Noted family specialist and author, Gary Chapman, in his book, *The Five Love Languages*, suggests that every person has a preferred language for receiving love from others. He proposes that if we take the time to learn the love languages of our spouse, children, family, and friends, we can communicate love far more effectively. His list of love languages is: words of affirmation, quality time, receiving gifts, acts of service, and physical touch. Do I know the love language of those around me? If so, what am I doing to show those in my family and church my love?
4. Who is God calling me to reach out to today? How can I show my love for this person in a tangible practical way? Read 1 John 3:17–18. How can I involve my family and/or friends in partnering with me to love the body? What will I do in 2009 to show the body my love?
5. In what ways have I seen love serve as a magnet to attract lost people (13:35). Why is love such a powerful tool? When unbelievers ask me about my love for my fellow believers, what will I say? How can I help those who reject Christ to understand why and how I can love my spiritual family members?

Notes

¹ The seed for this illustration came from Tony Evans, *What Matters Most* (Chicago: Moody, 1997), 156.

² In the Upper Room, on the night before the Crucifixion, as Jesus served his disciples the Last Supper “there was also a strife among them, which of them should be accounted the greatest” (Luke 22:24). This strife was probably a major factor in moving the Lord in that Upper Room to define the local church as family. He did so by uttering one of the most famous statements in the NT—John 13:34–35.

³ D.A. Carson, *The Gospel According to John* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991), 181.

⁴ There is a *hina* (“in order that”) clause in John 13:34 that is clarified by the dash in the NET rendering: “I give you a new commandment— to love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another.”

⁵ See John’s uses of *agapao* (“love”) in John 13–17 (13:1 [2x], 23, 34 [3x]; 14:15, 21 [4x], 23, 24, 28, 31; 15:9 [2x], 12 [2x], 17; 17:23 [2x], 24, 26

⁶ See John’s uses of *allelon* (“one another”) pertaining to love in John 13–17 (13:14, 34 [2x], 35; 15:12, 17).

⁷ The phrase *entolen kainen* (“new commandment”) is in the emphatic position. This “new commandment” is also explained in John 15:12–17.

⁸ The idea that love is a “commandment” is interesting. In the OT, the Ten Commandments have a setting in the covenant between God and Israel at Sinai; they were the stipulations that Israel had to observe if the nation were to be God’s chosen people. In speaking of love as the *new commandment* for those whom Jesus had chosen as his own (John 13:1, 15:16) and as a mark by which they could be distinguished from others (13:35), John shows that he is thinking of this scene in covenant terminology. See NET study notes. It is also worth noting that the new commandment is part of a new covenant that Jesus would ratify with His blood (Luke 22:20; 1 Cor 11:25). In that covenant God promised to enable His people to love by transforming their hearts and minds (Jer 31:29–34; Ezek 36:24–26). It is only by God’s transforming grace that believers can love one another as Jesus has loved us.

⁹ This is one of two places in John’s gospel where the word for “new” (*kainos*) is used. It is also used in 19:41 of the “new” tomb in which he was laid.

¹⁰ Gk. *kainos* often denotes what is qualitatively new as compared to what has existed until now, what is better than the old versus what is young or recent. There is another Greek word for “new” that means “recent,” whereas this word has about it the notion of “fresh.”

¹¹ R. Kent Hughes, *John: That You May Believe*. Preaching the Word (Wheaton, Crossway, 1999), Electronic ed.

¹² Carson puts it well: “At the risk of confounding logic, it is not so much that Christians are to love the world less, as that they are to love one another more. Better put, their love for each other ought to be a reflection of their new status and experience as the children of God.” Carson, *The Gospel According to John*, 485.

¹³ Of course, the Godhead does love the world as well (see John 3:16).

¹⁴ Comfort and Hawley write, “The newness of Jesus’ commandment rests upon the reality that because our hearts have been changed by experiencing the love of Jesus, we should reach out in reciprocal fashion by all those touched by the same love.” See Philip W. Comfort and Wendell C. Hawley, *Opening the Gospel of John* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale, 1994), 227.

¹⁵ Burge writes, “That the disciples are to love one another is nothing new (Lev. 19:18). That they are to love each other with the sort of love modeled by Jesus is something dramatic. Love characterizes Jesus’ relationship with God (14:31), and love characterizes God’s relationship with Jesus (3:35; 15:9 – 10). Jesus’ love is manifested in his obedience to the Father’s will (“the world must learn that I love the Father and that I do exactly what my Father has commanded me,” 14:31). Therefore disciples are to reflect the sort of love known to Jesus — a love expressed through committed obedience.” Gary M. Burge, *John. NIV Application Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000), 376.

¹⁶ Words for “love” occur twelve times in John 1–12 and forty-five times in John 13–17 (Köstenberger 1999a: 149). The theme of commandment recurs frequently in Jesus’ final discourse and in the Johannine Epistles.

¹⁷ The NT only uses three of the four words for love (*eros*, *phile*, and *agape*).

¹⁸ Charles R. Swindoll, *Following Christ... The Man of God: A Study of John 6–14* (Fullerton, CA: Insight for Living, 1987), 79–80.

¹⁹ There is no imperative in the Greek text; rather John uses indicatives and subjunctives. However, Jesus assumes that His disciples will take up this “new commandment” and love one another.

²⁰ Wilkins writes, “Love is an unconditional commitment to an imperfect person, a commitment I give myself to in order to bring the relationship to God intended purpose. Michael J. Wilkins, *In His Image: Reflecting Christ in Everyday Life* (Colorado Springs: NavPress, 1997), 170. Love has lost its significance because we have emptied it of its biblical definition, which is not primarily an emotion but an act of the will by which we seek the highest good for others.”

²¹ Preaching Today Citation: Richard Foster, *Leadership*, Vol. 3, no. 1.

²² The phrase “all men” (NASB, NIV) is more accurately rendered “all people” (ESV, HSB) or “everyone” (NET, NRSV). Although the gender of the pronoun (*touto*) is masculine, it is collective and includes people of both genders.

²³ See 1 John 3:23; 4:7–8, 11–12; 19ff.

²⁴ Gk. *ginosko*, cf. John 13:7, 12, 28, 35; 14:7 [3x], 9, 17 [2x], 20, 31; 15:18; 16:3, 19; 17:3, 7, 8, 23, 25 [3x]; 1 John 2:3 [2x], 4, 5, 13, 14 [2x], 18, 29; 3:1 [2x], 6, 16, 19, 20, 24; 4:2, 6 [2x], 7, 13, 16; 5:2, 20; 2 John 1:1; Rev 2:23, 24; 3:3, 9.

²⁵ See Chuck R. Swindoll, *Following Christ...The Man of God* (Anaheim, CA; Insight for Living, 1987), 80.

²⁶ In John’s gospel, a disciple is identified in three ways: A disciple continues in Christ’s words (8:31); expresses love toward other believers (13:34–35); and produces spiritual fruit (15:7–8).

²⁷ It is also important to know what Jesus does not say by this. He does not say that failure to love means we are not His disciples. He also does not say that mutual love convinces Him and the Father of our status as disciples. Finally He does not say that mutual love makes us disciples. See Garry Derickson & Earl Radmacher, *The Disciplemaker: What Matters Most to Jesus* (Salem, OR: Charis, 2001), 83.

²⁸ Ron Kincaid, *A Celebration of Disciple-Making* (USA: Victor, 1990), 88.

²⁹ Schaeffer writes, “The point is that it is possible to be a Christian without showing the mark, but if we expect non-Christians to know that we are Christians, we must show the mark.” Francis Schaeffer, *The Mark of the Christian* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1970), 8.

³⁰ Leon Morris, *The Gospel According to John*. New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1971), 485.

³¹ See Gary M. Burge, *John*. The NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000), 387.

³² Preaching Today Citation: Ed Rowell, pastor and writer, Franklin, TN.

³³ Revised from J. Carl Laney, *Marching Orders* (Wheaton: Victor, 1983), 47.

³⁴ Elsewhere John writes, “But whoever has the world’s goods, and sees his brother in need and closes his heart against him, how does the love of God abide in him? Little children, let us not love with word or with tongue, but in deed and truth” (1 John 3:17–18).

³⁵ Laney, *Marching Orders*, 48.

³⁶ Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Life Together: The Classic Exploration of Faith in Community* (San Francisco: HarperOne, 1978).

³⁷ Quote attributed to Stuart Briscoe in Jay Dennis, *The Jesus Habits* (Nashville: Broadman, 2005), 70.

³⁸ Preaching Today Citation: Christopher Stinnett, Waile Lake, Michigan. *Leadership*, Vol. 15, no. 3.