

"These things command you, that ye love one another." John 15:17 KJV

Love is not an emotion, it is an action. Love is the action of deep affection. God's Word is not a wish, suggestion, or recommendation. It is commands issued directly from Jesus to all believers. I am commanded to love true believers. James tells us, *"Faith without works is dead."* John wrote, *"Hereby we do know (prove) that we know Him, if we keep (obey) His commandments (God's Word)."* If a person is a true believer their deeds will evidence their faith. Actions do not beget faith any more than the cart pushes the horse. Faith must beget righteous deeds (works). What I do doesn't make me faithful; what I believe makes me faithful. If you are faithful, I am to love you whether I FEEL affectionate towards you or not. When wronged, it's hard to love and harder to forgive, but if you do, you'll experience part of the *"fellowship of [Christ's] suffering"* as He forgave those who drove the nails into His hands and cast lots for His raiment. He *"was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin."* He knew the pain and anguish of a friend's betrayal and the torture of being forsaken in an hour of need by those He spent His life to help. BUT! He still forgave! Have you? Jesus said, *"If ye love me, keep (obey) my commandments."* My obedience is the proof of my faith! Don't say you know or love God, if you do what you want instead of what God's Word commands. His commands ARE His blessings that lead us through faith and obedience to the provisions He has already prepared for our daily needs. *"Seek ye FIRST the kingdom of God and His Righteousness, and ALL THESE THINGS shall be added unto you."* We can say we love God until we're blue in the face, but it is a lie if we don't love the brethren. *"If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?"* Either you love God or you don't. Your actions will tell. Don't shrink from forgiveness, because it might hurt. Jesus didn't. He knew that to redeem men, He would have to suffer untold agony at their hands, but He did it anyway. I'm fairly certain that you won't have to hang on a cross if you forgive. Reconcile with those who have wronged you. They may not even be aware they have. Don't let Satan feed your soul with all the faults of another. None of us are perfect except in love of one another. Pride is the root of all bitterness. If one comes and says you've wronged them, make it right. Heartfelt apology may be all that's needed. Seek God's face for help in resolving conflicts. *"And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him. Herein is our love made perfect."* The more we love God the more we'll love each other. *"Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves."*



Our Lord commands we love each one,
Who was by chains of sin undone,
Who, like ourselves, by grace has come,
And trusted the beloved Son. ~CGP

Satan works feverishly to prevent our love, good deeds, for one another, because love is his undoing more than anything else. When tempted to dwell on the faults of a brother, seek ways to encourage and help them draw closer to God. Lift up Christ and all will draw closer together as we each *"draw nigh to God."*

"But God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by His Blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His Life." Romans 5:8-10 KJV