



grow. pray. study.

October 12, 2025 Love Boldly

A Vision for Church and the Christian Life

Acts 2:42 (CEB), John 13:34-35 (NRSV) and Ephesians 5:2 (CEB)

Jesus Commanded Bold Love, Not Sentiment

MONDAY 10.13.25 John 13:34-35, 15:9-17

As part of Resurrection's 35th anniversary celebration, the church has created four 30-second TV spots to encourage church attendance (at any church). To see the spot titled "Why Church-Belonging," or share this on social media, use this link: <https://vimeo.com/1125548027?fl=pl&fe=sh>.

The bold love Jesus demonstrated had a quality of gritty determination. It was so bold that in the hours before his arrest and crucifixion, he could say, "No one has greater love than to give up one's life for one's friends." Why was he on a resolute path that ended at the cross? It was to show, as clearly as possible, his bold love for that motley group of followers (and all of us who come after them).

- Jesus surely spoke to his disciples in Aramaic. But he lived, and taught his followers to live, in a way John captured by using the Greek word "*agape*"—tough, tireless love. "God does not merely tolerate sinners: he loves them.... God for all his ability to punish and for all his own spotless purity does not regard sinners with aversion, but... with the costly love we see in the cross where Jesus died to save them." * Why did it take boldness for Jesus to reach a broken world with his love?
- Suppose a non-religious friend hesitated to join you at church, asking, "Would your church want someone like me?" Instead of describing programs or facilities, could you authentically say what one person shared after joining Resurrection: "I cherish my church because I feel love bouncing off the walls"?

Prayer: O Lord, help me not to pretend to love as an outward disguise to hide my anger or pain. Let me love from my heart as your love overflows and bubbles out of me to bless others. Amen.

* Leon Morris, article "Love" in *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1992, p. 494.

The boldness with which Jesus loved

TUESDAY 10.14.25 Philippians 2:5-11

As part of Resurrection's 35th anniversary celebration, the church has created four 30-second TV spots to encourage church attendance (at any church). To see the spot titled "Why Church-Children," or share this on social media, use this link: <https://vimeo.com/1125548066?fl=pl&fe=sh>.

God in Christ boldly ignored human ideas. Jesus was not the type of "king" people expected. He was not the kind of "savior" human wisdom imagined. He was not "God with us" in a way meant to fit many of our visions of what it means to be God. The early Christian hymn quoted in today's reading did not focus first on Jesus' power or majesty. It said he "emptied himself" (the literal Greek verb used in 2:7) for us. Jesus set aside the divine privileges that were his by right and came to serve and even suffer.

- The *New International Reader's Version* * used simple English to show how this hymn pictured Jesus' bold ministry pattern: "He made himself nothing.... He appeared as a man. He was humble and obeyed God completely. He did this even though it led to his death. Even worse, he died on a cross!" Does that kind of "career path" (or "life path") strike you as foolish, or do you sense its bold courage? How does this deepen your understanding of what it means to want to "be like Jesus"?
- How can Jesus' type of true humility open your heart to valuing 'God with us'? Scholar H.C. Hewlett defined humility as "the recognition of our true littleness as those dependent utterly on God"—more than just yielding outwardly while remaining inwardly resistant or resentful. What inner barriers to loving people boldly might this kind of humility help clear away?

Prayer: Lord Jesus, an old hymn says you could have called 10,000 angels to take you off the cross. But you chose to save me rather than cling to your own comfort or dignity. Grow your attitude in my heart. Amen.

* *New International Reader's Version* (NIRV). Copyright © 1995, 1996, 1998, 2014 by Biblica, Inc.®. Used by permission.

** H. C. Hewlett, "Philippians" in F. F. Bruce, general editor, *New International Bible Commentary*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1979, p. 1444.

Bold love in Paul's early letter

WEDNESDAY 10.15.25 1 Thessalonians 5:10-15

As part of Resurrection's 35th anniversary celebration, the church has created four 30-second TV spots to encourage church attendance (at any church). To see the spot titled "Why Church-Older Adults," or share this on social media, use this link: <https://vimeo.com/1125548158?fl=pl&fe=sh>.

Writing to one of the earliest Christian communities he had raised up, the apostle Paul thanked God for the Thessalonians' effort that came from love (cf. [1 Thessalonians 1:3](#)). In today's reading, near the end of the letter, he expanded on the practical, everyday ways that love takes shape in community life. He mentioned loving not only leaders, but also all those who especially needed love because they weren't likely to find it in society.

- Scholar William Barclay said, "Verse 14 picks out those who need special care and attention." * The apostle listed "those who are disorderly," "the discouraged," and "the weak," knowing that at times they would need to "be patient with everyone." How must that principle shape the ways you (and your congregation) minister to people in 2025? To what current issues do you and your congregation boldly apply Paul's wisdom about loving "each other and everyone else"?
- Paul urged the Thessalonians to respect those who are "working...leading...instructing." "Paul tells church members to love their leaders not in order to set them on a pedestal but for the sake of their service (1 Corinthians 16:16)." ** In his day, there weren't yet formal "appointment" or training processes for leaders, but there were already people who used their gifts in faithful service to others. How does Paul's guidance speak to you in our more formally organized times?

Prayer: Lord Jesus, shape me into a person who can warn, comfort, help and be patient with others. Guide me to always pursue the good for others and for your kingdom. Amen.

* William Barclay, *The Letters to the Philippians, Colossians and Thessalonians (Revised Edition)*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1975, p. 207.

** Love L. Sechrest, study note on 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13 in *The CEB Study Bible*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2013, p. 395 NT.

Bold love in a confused church

THURSDAY 10.16.25 Galatians 5:13-14, 22 to 6:2

As part of Resurrection's 35th anniversary celebration, the church has created four 30-second TV spots to encourage church attendance (at any church). To see the spot titled "Why Church-Increased Lifespan," or share this on social media, use this link: <https://vimeo.com/1125548109?fl=pl&fe=sh>.

The apostle Paul's call remains bold for our time, just as it was in the Roman Empire: "don't let this freedom be an opportunity to indulge your selfish impulses, but serve each other through love." Paul urged his readers to claim their spiritual freedom in Christ. But that freedom is not a license for selfishness, but an invitation to boldly extend love to everyone we meet. It is defined by what Jesus identified as one of the "great commandments": "love your neighbor as yourself."

- Paul echoed Jesus' teaching ([Matthew 22:35-40](#)). He added a broad claim: "All the Law has been fulfilled in a single statement." Many Christians wrestle with whether love alone can truly fulfill all the law, wondering if more specific practices or doctrines are required. In God's world of grace, can you trust that 'love your neighbor as yourself' is indeed enough—both for yourself and for others?
- Scholar N. T. Wright said Paul's counsel "says the public image of the Christian church should be of a gentle, gracious community." It should not be a place "which squashes sensitive souls and offends those who are by nature quiet and reserved." * Does it take more boldness to be gentle or to lash out and hurt those who frustrate you, disagree with you, or do things you believe are wrong? When have you seen this kind of gentleness uplift you or someone else?

Prayer: Lord Jesus, thank you for the privilege and the challenge of being a member of your family. Teach me how to keep valuing and serving my brothers and sisters in this spiritual family. Amen.

* Wright, N.T., *Paul for Everyone, The Prison Letters: Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon*, p. 130-131 (The New Testament for Everyone). Westminster John Knox Press. Kindle Edition.

Love Binds All Other Virtues Together

FRIDAY 10.17.25 Colossians 3:12-16

The letter writer, Paul, and his protégé Timothy composed this letter to the Colossians, probably from a prison cell in Rome. * Paul had not been to Colossae himself (cf. [Colossians 2:1](#)), but knew about the issues the church there faced. He wrote to encourage embracing the new life and identity that Christians were to put on as they followed Jesus's example. He urged them to embody forgiveness, peacefulness, and thankfulness, even in tough situations.

- Verse 14 noted that "love" is over all the other virtues and binds them as the common thread. Like Jesus, Paul set love as the standard with which all followers of Jesus should treat people. "There is an expected way to live that bears witness to the truth of the gospel within a person." ** How can "over all these things put on love" make your daily decisions more straightforward (though not always easier to live out)?
- Verses 15 and 16 identify gratitude as essential to this life of love. Pastor Hamilton wrote that worship and prayer center on recognizing "God's love for us, God's gifts to us" and responding with thanks. *** When have you noticed how gratitude helped you love more boldly or see a difficult situation through new eyes?"

Prayer: Lord Jesus, thank you for loving me. Help me love myself and others as boldly as you do. Amen.

* “Paul would have written these letters during his imprisonment in Rome (Acts 28:16), or possibly during an earlier imprisonment in Ephesus or Caesarea (Acts 24-26).” J. R. Daniel Kirk, introduction to Colossians in *The CEB Study Bible*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2013, p. 381 NT.

** Andrew Purves, study note on Colossians 3:1-17 in *The Renovare Spiritual Formation Bible*. HarperSanFrancisco, 2005, p. 2143.

*** Hamilton, Adam, *The Walk: Five Essential Practices of the Christian Life* (p. 40). Abingdon Press. Kindle Edition.

Love: the connecting thread in holy living

SATURDAY 10.18.25 Romans 12:9-18, 13:8, 14:7-9, 15:7-9

The apostle Paul’s letters usually included what many scholars call a “therefore” section, laying out how to apply the grand truths he’d shared in the letter’s first part. Today’s readings from the extensive four-chapter “therefore” section of Romans show how the apostle wove the key idea of loving boldly through all of his practical commands. Romans 12:10 stood Roman and Greek culture on its head. As philosopher Alasdair MacIntyre noted, humility wasn’t considered a virtue in that world—Cicero wrote “Rank must be preserved,” and Aristotle’s ideal man was “extremely proud.” * Paul’s call to show honor to one another was radically counter-cultural. Paul ended the section by stressing that we don’t accept others because we are “nice”—we accept others **because** God in Christ has accepted us (Romans 15:7).

- Read what various churches put in their “What We Believe” statements (it’s easy on the Internet). You’ll generally find lists of at least 8 to 15 items. Yet in Romans 14:17, to smaller “house churches” in Rome (cf. [Romans 16:5, 10, 15](#)), Paul conveyed the central truth of life in God’s kingdom in just 3 elements: “God’s kingdom is... about righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit.” In Romans 13:8, he said the only binding Christian obligation is “the obligation to love each other.” He repeated his expansive principle from [Galatians 5:14](#), saying, “Whoever loves another person has fulfilled the Law.” How did Paul’s searching discussion of how divine love can shape your life make “Love Boldly” not a hollow sentiment but a challenge to join in Jesus’ world-changing way of loving?

Prayer: God who **is** love, guide and shape me by infusing my mind and heart with your bold love. Teach me how to reach beyond distrust and division to make this a more loving world. Amen.

* Drawn from Ortberg, John, *Who Is This Man?: The Unpredictable Impact of the Inescapable Jesus* (p. 74). Zondervan. Kindle Edition.

Prayer Requests – [cor.org/prayer](https://www.cor.org/prayer) Prayers of peace and comfort for:

To **Kim Olson** following the death of **Joan Etta Olson** (Mother), who died 8/28/2025.

To **Dave Fletchall** following the death of **Judy Fletchall** (Mother), who died 9/13/2025.

To **Mary Young** following the death of **Rebecca Kenyon-van Lier** (Sister), who died 9/13/2025.

To **the family** following the death of **Edson Parker**, who died 9/23/2025.

To **Logan Shaver (Staff)** following the death of **Ruby Mae Shaver** (Grandmother), who died 10/3/2025.

To **Laura McDonald** following the death of **Karen Currie** (Mother), who died 10/5/2025.

