

## **A New Command I Give to You**

By Scott Moller

*“A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are My disciples, if you love one another.”*  
(John 13:34-35 NIV)

In the verses above, Jesus is instructing His disciples about their witness in a manner that should cause us to pay special attention. In the first place, Jesus states that He is giving them a new command. This is not merely a suggestion but a direct order from the commander in chief. This new command carries weight. So much so that not following it is disobedience. In addition, it has a direct impact on our witness.

This new command is to “love one another.” If Jesus had stopped there, this command would not be that hard to keep. As we all know, there are many accepted definitions of love. If we could just define “love” as we see fit, obedience would be simple. But Jesus does not allow us that option, because He provides us His definition of “love.” He states: *“As I have loved you, so you must love one another.”* Note that Jesus sets Himself up as the standard, not man. This makes this command so much greater. We have to ask ourselves, “How did Jesus love?” So many books and hymns have been written over the centuries trying to describe the love of Jesus, and yet man has only scratched the surface of the topic. The hymn “The Love of God” describes this dilemma in its final verse – “Could we with ink the ocean fill, / And were the skies of parchment made; / Were every stalk on earth a quill, / And every man a scribe by trade; / To write the love of God above / Would drain the ocean dry; / Nor could the scroll contain the whole, / Though stretched from sky to sky.” In short, the love of Jesus is without measure. It is a love that would cause one to lay down his life for another. This type of love is rarely seen even among the followers of Christ.

Jesus goes on to state: *“By this [love] everyone will know that you are My disciples.”* It is by our very Christ-like love for one another that we are giving witness to the world that we are disciples of Jesus. This matter is so often overlooked by Christians when they consider Jesus’ command to be His witnesses. Most Christians are more concerned about “what to say” than how they are loving other Believers. Sadly, they do not understand that their lack of love towards other Believers so often negates the very witness they want to be. We must understand that our witness starts in the Body of Christ.