



Croatian  
Evangelistic  
Outreach

Kneza Branimira 11  
10000 Zagreb, Croatia  
ceo@cce.hr

T+385 1 4920 726  
F +385 1 4813 871  
www.cce.hr

# LOVE TO THE END

---

**Mario Dučić,**  
October 2007.

**CEO Pulpit Series** is sent out monthly free of charge. If you would like to be added to our mailing list and receive these messages on a regular basis please send your request to: ceo@cce.hr

---

*"NOW before the Feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that His hour had come that He should depart from this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end." (John 13:1)*

Richard Baxter, a well-known English Puritan pastor known as the "Prince of Pastors", who had a great desire for a unified, reformed church, once said regarding love: *"If they can see you love them, you can say anything to*

*them."* When proclaiming the gospel, people need to know that we love them. It's not necessary for us to know Greek or Latin; people are not interested in the newest revelation, drama production, or miracle. It is

✦ **It is not strange why some churches do not grow – we simply do not have a heart of love for the lost or for one another. We disguise our efforts to fill attendance quotas and financial budgets – our selfish ambitions – with "working for Jesus".**



not strange why some churches do not grow – we simply do not have a heart of love for the lost or for one another. We disguise our efforts to fill attendance quotas and financial budgets – our selfish ambitions – with “working for Jesus”.

Love is the foundational and integral ingredient of Christianity and one of the chief indicators of salvation. We can go to church, read our Bible, and pray but if we don't love God and the lost around us we are destined for destruction!

When talking about love we rarely speak about God's love; rather we speak more often about emotional love. Many do not fully understand what it means to love those around them. Love is the element without which the church cannot be the “salt of the earth” or the “light of the world” and without which we cannot maintain unity and a good testimony. Active and godly love truly shows our spirituality.

★ **If we do not have love for one another God's church will not survive the only way they will know that we are His disciples is: “if you have love for one another.”**

Signs and wonders will cease when Christ returns, tongues will be done away with (this is not to say that tongues are not necessary for the believer). Our love will be transformed into endless holiness and magnificent love. Love is that which will remain, because our entrance into heaven will not be measured according to how many members we have, how many books we've written, how much theological knowledge we possess or how many people have been healed through our ministry, but rather according to our love for Jesus and our fellow man. Not all who talk about Jesus know Him and live for Him. This is why I would like to point out Jesus' example of love and how he showed His disciples that He loved them “to the end”.

Actually, when Jesus showed His own that He loved them “to the end” he used the Greek word *telos* which is translated “end” or “goal”; “the limit to which we can go”, or “to arrive at a place where activity ends, meaning a conclusion”.

Jesus Christ, after teaching about the kingdom, performed many signs and wonders preparing His disciples for the greatest yet hardest lesson when He showed them by example how the greatest thing in God's kingdom is love before God and our fellowman. All that we do for Christ will lose

its value if we do not do it from a heart of love. We can sell all we own, serve others, feed the poor, evangelize, or write books, but if we do not have love for one another God's church will not survive and the lost will not come to Christ; the only way they will know that we are His disciples is: "if you have love (Greek: *agapao* – volitional and joyful love for someone or something) for one another." (**John 13:35**)

► **1. LOVE TO THE END REQUIRES OF US THAT WE LOVE AND SERVE THOSE WHO ARE UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF THE ENEMY.**

*"And supper being ended, the devil having already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray Him, Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come from God and was going to God, rose from supper and laid aside His garments, took a towel and girded Himself. After that, He poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel with which He was girded."* (**John 13:2-5**)

In that time washing of guest's feet was the job of the lowest servant but Jesus showed the highest love to His disciples and taught them a foundational principle – they must serve one another, even those who are under the

influence of the devil. Jesus Christ, although He knew what was to happen, took a towel and washed the feet of His betrayer, Judas Iscariot. It's not difficult to be among those who are kind and loving or who share our faith in Christ, but Jesus requires us to love and serve those who are under the influence of the enemy; be they our employer, friends, teachers, neighbors or even our brothers and sisters whom we know gossip and slander us. Jesus requires us to serve them and love them regardless of the state of their heart. Judas Iscariot, although he walked with Jesus, he possibly had never been truly converted – just like many today who go to church and yet are not fully surrendered. Yet Jesus washed Judas' feet regardless of the fact that he was His betrayer.

God asks us to actively love those who do not even wish to be loved. It is not easy to serve those who we know maybe have wrong motives, bad habits, or who are under the enemy's influence, yet if we are truly Christ's disciples we have no other option.

Many churches struggle against a "tight-circle syndrome", cliques into which are included

★ **God asks us to actively love those who do not even wish to be loved.**



only those whom we like and who are similar to us. We don't invite the problematic, uninteresting, socially unacceptable, or non-intellectual to associate with us, rather we tend to avoid them. If they happen to appear at one of our functions we ignore them (or even inwardly scorn them) while continuing to call ourselves Christians. We justify our conscience by saying, "God didn't lay them on my heart", "He hasn't called me to that ministry" or "It wasn't the right time". But love is more than a warm feeling. Love, in fact, is an attitude revealed by our works!

If we show favoritism to certain people while failing to love others we commit sin. James said, *"If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself; you do well; but if you show partiality, you commit sin, and are convicted by the law as transgressors.'* **(James 2:8-9)**

We must love and serve even when it is difficult, whether they be poor, rich, possessed by evil spirits; be they those who offend and hurt us or those who are on the brink of betrayal like Judas Iscariot. This kind of love

✦ **This kind of love is God's love and requires the supernatural strength of the Holy Spirit.**

is God's love and requires the supernatural strength of the Holy Spirit. People will only see in us this kind of love when it is not based in emotions, and to show this kind of love we need great strength.

► **2. LOVE TO THE END SIMPLY SERVES.**

*"For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you. Most assuredly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master; nor is he who is sent greater than he who sent him."* **(John 13:15-16)**

When we love with God's kind of love we will always be ready to serve those around us, not only when it is convenient but when people are in need. A problem with today's Christianity is that we have set limits on serving. There are days when we are happy to serve and others when we don't want to serve at all; according to this we set limits on how much we serve and whom we will serve, and are careful not to overexert ourselves. Imagine that when we need Jesus He takes out a list of priorities and either tells us that He cannot at the moment or that need is too much for Him. How many times have we limited ourselves simply out of a lack of love for God and those around us? When we are not filled with love we simply have

no desire to serve, instead we serve those who are useful to us or we wait to be served. Perhaps we even say to ourselves that our service is not needed. The church today is filled with intellectual people whose will is not submitted to Jesus, who feel that they cannot serve, and expect others to serve them. They declare that serving is not their gift (because God has called them for greater things), yet Jesus has established for every Christian leader a very important element, to simply serve. That's why He said, *"You call Me Teacher and Lord, and you say well, for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you."* (John 13:13-15)

The time has come to serve those around us according to the example of the Son of God regardless of our position. Serving means to be willing to submit our titles, intellectual knowledge and pride and serve whenever we see a need for help. Sometimes believers assume that the dirty jobs belong to those who have a lower education, social status, or who are younger in Christ; but Jesus' example to us clearly testifies that we are called to serve others regardless of our status or years of salvation.

▶ **3. LOVE TO THE END IS A SIGN THAT WE RECOGNIZE TRUE DISCIPLESHIP.**

*"A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."* (John 13:34-35)

Believers today want to be recognized by the world; yet how will the world know that we are Jesus' disciples, surely not by our arguments, jealousies, and divisions. Did Jesus want competition with mega churches and their different programs? Will we draw people in with our websites, theological magazines, music, church titles, and programs that no other church has? No, not at all. People will see that we are His disciples by our love for one another!

To love one another is not a new commandment; God already addressed this in **Leviticus 19:18**, but to love one another

★ **The church today is filled with intellectual people whose will is not submitted to Jesus, who feel that they cannot serve, and expect others to serve them.**



as Christ loved means something altogether different because it implies that we must love our fellow man on the foundation of Christ's sacrificial love toward us. Only sacrificial love will draw unbelievers to Christ and maintain believers in power and unity while dwelling in this evil world.

► **4. GOD'S "LOVE TO THE END" IS THE INDICATOR OF OUR RELATIONSHIP AND FAITH IN GOD.**

*"In this the children of God and the children of the devil are manifest: Whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is he who does not love his brother." (1 John 3:10)*

The Apostle John clearly tells us that our love toward our brothers and sisters is the only indicator that we belong to God and believe in Him. If we do not love one another then we deceive ourselves because the Word says

★ **At times we give ourselves the right to hate our brother or sister in Christ, but I want to warn us all that because of this attitude we separate ourselves from God and place ourselves in danger of eternal separation from Him.**

that we are not of God! How many people hold unforgiveness, envy, and hate against other believers? They may read the Bible, pray, sing, and even evangelize (the Pharisees evangelized, but not because they loved God but because they wanted to gather their own disciples), but the Word says that if they do not have God's love living in them they cannot practice righteous, and as John said above, they are children of the devil and dwell in darkness.

At times we give ourselves the right to hate our brother or sister in Christ, but I want to warn us all that because of this attitude we separate ourselves from God and place ourselves in danger of eternal separation from Him. Jesus tells us that without love for one another we dwell in darkness: *"He who says he is in the light, and hates his brother, is in darkness until now." (1 John 2:9)*

If we do not love one another we are in darkness and we don't know where we are headed. To love does not mean that we like a person more or less (because there will be those whose company we enjoy more than others), rather it will reveal if our love is based on emotion, resulting in favoritism, ignoring those whose company we do not prefer, and finally looking on our brothers and sisters as the enemy. Christian love is not based on

emotion rather a choice of the will! Therefore we need to actively love and respect people regardless of our emotions.

These days, among Christians, we see so much hatred and rejection that it is a wonder we continue to function at all. We are filled with conceit, we don't want to recognize the efforts of other churches and we actively fight one another to destroy each other's reputation in order to seem as though we are the best (and sometimes even include the world in our arguments). We behave like Cain who killed his own brother because "his deeds were evil"; and because of this the Apostle John emphasizes love!

Without love we dwell in darkness and our efforts are fruitless. Our churches will not grow because of programs or remodeled buildings. If someone happens to wander in, they don't stay long. They quickly sense our fighting and complaining, which is why the unsaved remain unsaved. If, because of the coldness and hatred in our hearts, they leave our churches and if we never advance in love then nothing else is left for us but eternity without God: "*We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love his brother abides in death. Whoever hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.*" (1 John 3:14-15)

We cannot say we love God if that love does not cost us something. The only price many want to pay is occasional church attendance in order to fulfill their religious duty.

How do we relate to our parents and unsaved loved ones? We cannot scorn them and offend them and then hope they come to Christ. We cannot say that we love God while at the same time neglecting those who are made in His image: "*If someone says, 'I love God,' and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen? And this commandment we have from Him: that he who loves God must love his brother also.*" (1 John 4:20-21)

### ► 5. LOVE TO THE END IS SELFLESS, ACTIVE, AND SENSIBLE

*"By this we know love, because He laid down His life for us. And we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But whoever has this world's goods, and sees his brother in need, and shuts up his heart from him, how does the love of God abide in him?" (1 John 3:16-17)*

God's love is sensible and does not depend on emotions. It will always produce selflessness and sacrificial giving of our life to those who are in need. How



clearly do our deeds declare our love for others? How will love remain in us when we fail to meet the needs of our brothers and sisters?

Modern believers tend to love intellectually “in faith”; they don’t want to sacrifice anything because, truthfully, they love themselves and their material goods too much. Today’s Christians do not appear at all to be preparing themselves for heaven, they are so possessed by materialism and accumulating greater wealth that they don’t have time to serve others or the kingdom. Their perspective is not centered on love or eternity rather on material goods, accumulating earthly wealth, and selfish pleasures! I struggle to believe that they are truly saved; they attend church to ease their conscience, to find a spouse, or to resolve their momentary crisis. For many

church is a “quick fix” program and once they are “fixed” they continue on with the norm.

Jesus Christ asks of us to reexamine the motive of our service for Him and to begin again as believers who know how to actively love God and our fellow man. This is the commandment that Jesus left us as the core of our service: “Love one another”. If we do this it will change our life and our service for God will be easier because our motivation will be fueled out of love for God.

★ **God’s love is sensible and does not depend on emotions. It will always produce selflessness and sacrificial giving of our life to those who are in need.**



All material in this issue is subject to International copyright laws and may not be reproduced without prior written approval. Permission to reproduce may be obtained by writing to Croatian Evangelistic Outreach.

**Copyright © 2007 CEO. All Rights reserved. Private duplication of this message for friends and neighbors is authorized.**



Gifts within the United States of America designated for this ministry are received by Spirit Life Ministries International, 37 Red Clover Drive, Sandpoint, ID 83864-8805. For tax-deductible receipts, please make checks payable to Spirit Life Ministries International and write **Croatian Evangelistic Outreach** in the memo of your check. Online payments

can be made by Paypal to: slmi@nctv.com Gifts outside of the United States of America can be sent to: Crkva cjelovitog evanđelja, Kneza Branimira 11, 10000 Zagreb, Croatia. Bank Name: Raiffeisen Bank Austria D.D. Zagreb. Swift Number: RZBHR2XXXX. Account Number 2484008-2100013054. IBAN Number HRO224840081102460506. Thank you.