

# Love

Welcome to this time of Quiet Reflection. Take your time reading to yourself (or out loud) these passages, and then pausing for a few minutes after any that you wish to reflect on.

The Taize chants between readings can be sung in your head as often as you like, or out loud, or listened to from these links, pausing as you wish:

Ubi caritas - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GX7tAZIAWbE>

Bless the Lord my soul - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t4Svh-9ohg4>

O Lord hear my prayer - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2nCy2j07ECM>

## **Beginning – Ubi caritas (Where there is charity and love, there is God)**

*Ubi caritas et amor.*

*Ubi caritas*

*Deus ibi est.*

## **Deuteronomy 6**

Hear, O Israel: The LORD is our God, the LORD alone. You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might.

## **Leviticus 19.18**

You shall love your neighbour as yourself.

## **Proverbs 10.12**

Hatred stirs up strife,  
but love covers all offences.

## **Song of Solomon 2.4**

He brought me to his banqueting table, and his banner over me was love.



*Ubi caritas et amor.*

*Ubi caritas*

*Deus ibi est.*

### **Jeremiah 31**

Thus says the LORD:

I have loved you with an everlasting love;  
therefore I have continued my faithfulness to you.

### **Psalm 18**

I love you, O LORD, my strength.  
The LORD is my rock, my fortress, and my deliverer,  
my God, my rock in whom I take refuge,  
my shield, and the horn of my salvation,  
my stronghold.

I call upon the LORD, who is worthy to be praised.

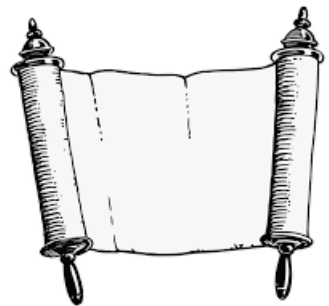


### **Psalm 31**

Love the LORD, all you his saints.  
Be strong, and let your heart take courage,  
all you who wait for the LORD.

### **Isaiah 54:10**

“Though the mountains be shaken, and the hills be removed, yet my unfailing love for you will not be shaken, nor my covenant of peace be removed,” says the Lord, who has compassion on you.



*Ubi caritas et amor.*

*Ubi caritas*

*Deus ibi est.*

## **Micah 6.8**

The Lord has told you, O mortal, what is good;  
and what does the Lord require of you  
but to do justice, and to love kindness,  
and to walk humbly with your God?

## **Matthew 22**

When the Pharisees heard that he had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together, and one of them, a lawyer, asked him a question to test him. 'Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?' He said to him, ' "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind." This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: "You shall love your neighbour as yourself." On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.'

*Bless the Lord, my soul,  
and bless God's holy name.  
Bless, the Lord, my soul,  
who leads me into life.*

## **Matthew 4**

'You have heard that it was said, "You shall love your neighbour and hate your enemy." But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be children of your Father in heaven; for he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the righteous and on the unrighteous. For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax-collectors do the same? And if you greet only your brothers and sisters, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.'

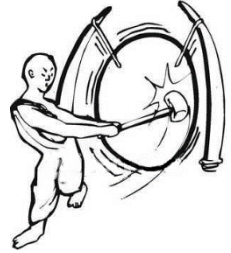


## John 14:15

If you love me, you will keep my commandments.

## I Corinthians 13

If I speak in the tongues of mortals and of angels, but do not have love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. If I give away all my possessions, and if I hand over my body so that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing.



Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

Love never ends. But as for prophecies, they will come to an end; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will come to an end. For we know only in part, and we prophesy only in part; but when the complete comes, the partial will come to an end.

When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child; when I became an adult, I put an end to childish ways. For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then we will see face to face. Now I know only in part; then I will know fully, even as I have been fully known. And now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love.

*Bless the Lord, my soul,  
and bless God's holy name.*

*Bless, the Lord, my soul,  
who leads me into life.*

## **Time for Meditation**

*Here are two passages for meditation. If you like, read one or both of them slowly, and reflect on what resonates for you. Or else just sit quietly.*

### **Henri Nouwen (1932-96)**

What can we say about God's love? We can say that God's love is unconditional.

God does not say, "I love you, if ..." There are no ifs in God's heart.

God's love for us does not depend on what we do or say, on our looks or intelligence, on our success or popularity.

God's love for us existed before we were born and will exist after we have died.

God's love is from eternity to eternity and is not bound to any time-related events or circumstances.

Does that mean that God does not care what we do or say?

No, because God's love wouldn't be real if God didn't care.

To love without condition does not mean to love without concern. God desires to enter into relationship with us and wants us to love Him in return.

Let's dare to enter into an intimate relationship with God without fear, trusting that we will receive love and always more love.

## **George Herbert – Poem “Love” - 1633**

Love bade me welcome. Yet my soul drew back  
    Guilty of dust and sin.  
But quick-eyed Love, observing me grow slack  
    From my first entrance in,  
Drew nearer to me, sweetly questioning,  
    If I lacked any thing.

A guest, I answered, worthy to be here:  
    Love said, You shall be he.  
I the unkind, ungrateful? Ah my dear,  
    I cannot look on thee.  
Love took my hand, and smiling did reply,  
    Who made the eyes but I?

Truth Lord, but I have marred them: let my shame  
    Go where it doth deserve.  
And know you not, says Love, who bore the blame?  
    My dear, then I will serve.  
You must sit down, says Love, and taste my meat:  
    So I did sit and eat.

## **Time for Silent Prayer**

*O Lord hear my prayer.  
O Lord hear my prayer.  
When I call, answer me.  
O Lord hear my prayer.  
O Lord hear my prayer.  
Come and listen to me.*

## **2 Corinthians 13:13**

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all, now and evermore. Amen.