

# Chapter 13: The "Gospel" (Good News) is God's Perfect Love

---

"God is love, and whoever remains in love remains in God and God in him."

— 1 John 4:16

"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."

— John 3:16

"The whole concern of doctrine and its teaching must be directed to the love that never ends. Whether something is proposed for belief, for hope, or for action, the love of our Lord must always be made accessible, so that anyone can see that all the works of perfect Christian virtue spring from love and have no other objective than to arrive at love."

— Catechism of the Catholic Church 25

---

## The Greatest Story Ever Told

---

If you could know only one thing about the universe, about yourself, about the meaning of existence itself, it would be this: **God is perfect love, and He created you to share in that love forever.**

This is the Good News—not just a nice religious idea, but the fundamental reality that explains everything: why you exist, why you long for love, why evil hurts so deeply, why nothing in this world fully satisfies, and why your heart was made for something infinite and eternal. As the psalmist cries, "As the deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for you, my God" (Psalm 42:1).

The story begins before time itself, in the eternal communion of the Trinity—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—living in perfect love. This love is not a feeling or emotion, but the very essence of God's being. It is **perfect love**: the sacred, sacrificial gift of covenant which binds true justice and true mercy into life-giving communion. The Father eternally gives Himself completely to the Son, the Son eternally gives Himself completely to the Father, and their mutual love is so real, so personal, that He is the Holy Spirit—the Third Person of the Trinity. This is the perfect unity Jesus prayed for: "that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you" (John 17:21).<sup>1</sup>

This divine love is not contained or selfish. Perfect love overflows, creates, gives life. And so God, in His infinite goodness, chose to create the universe as an act of pure love—not because He needed anything, but because love desires to share itself. He created you, specifically you, in His own image and likeness, with the capacity to know Him, love Him, and share in His eternal happiness.

## The Image of God: Your True Identity

---

You are not an accident of evolution or a random collection of atoms. You are made in the image of God (Genesis 1:27), which means you carry within your very being a reflection of divine love. This is why you hunger for truth—because God is Truth. This is why you cry out for justice—because God is Justice. This is why you long for mercy—because God is Mercy. This is why you need authentic relationships—because God is perfect Communion.

Your body, mind, and soul were created to work in harmony, each aspect reflecting God's love in its own way. As the psalmist declares, "I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made" (Psalm 139:14).

Your body was made for sacred relationship, not mere pleasure. Your mind was made to know truth, not just accumulate information. Your soul was made for eternal communion with God, not temporary satisfaction with created things.

This is your true dignity: you are a beloved child of God, created for eternal happiness, called to participate in divine love itself. No earthly success or failure, no human praise or criticism, no circumstance of life can change this fundamental truth about who you are.

## The Problem: Sin and the Slavery of Lesser Loves

---

But something went wrong. The first humans, Adam and Eve, faced a choice: trust God's word that eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil would bring death, or believe the serpent's lie that they would "be like God, knowing good and evil" (Genesis 3:5). They chose to grasp at divine knowledge and power for themselves rather than receive wisdom as a gift from God. They chose immediate gratification over patient trust, autonomous self-determination over loving dependence, the promise of becoming "like God" over the reality of being beloved children of God. In choosing the fruit, they chose themselves as the ultimate authority over good and evil rather than submitting to God as the source of all truth and goodness. This original sin damaged human nature, not by destroying the image of God within us, but by disordering our loves.<sup>2</sup>

Now, instead of looking at all of God's creation and the moral law written in our hearts with gratitude, we experience what St. Paul describes: "I do not do the good I want to do, but the evil I do not want to do—this I keep on doing" (Romans 7:19). We tend to make created things into gods. We worship career over family, pleasure over purity, convenience over life, self over service. We seek our ultimate happiness in things that cannot provide it—what Scripture calls "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life" (1 John 2:16)—money, power, sexual pleasure, human approval, entertainment, comfort.

This is the slavery of sin: being controlled by disordered loves, seeking our ultimate good in things that are only secondary goods. And because we were created for relationship with God Himself, nothing less than God can truly satisfy the deepest longings of our hearts. We become addicted to more—more pleasure, more success, more control, more stuff—but we're never fulfilled because we're seeking in creation what can only be found in the Creator.

This is precisely what the Ten Commandments address, beginning with the first and most fundamental: "You shall have no other gods before me" (Exodus 20:3). Every violation of God's commandments flows from making something other than God into our ultimate good—whether it's money, power, pleasure, or even our own will. This is why both the Old and New Covenants teach the same essential truth: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind" (Matthew 22:37; Deuteronomy 6:5). This complete love of God with our whole being—heart, mind, and soul—is the antidote to the slavery of disordered loves.

Worse, when we make lesser things into ultimate things, we inevitably hurt others. The man who makes career his "god" neglects his family. The woman who makes pleasure her "god" uses others for gratification. The society that makes comfort its "god" kills inconvenient children and elderly. The culture that makes individual autonomy its "god" destroys the bonds of marriage, family, and community.

This is why evil exists in the world: not because God created it, but because rational creatures with free will choose lesser goods over the Supreme Good, and these disordered choices create suffering for themselves and others.

But here's the crucial insight: if the problem is disordered loves—hearts that seek ultimate satisfaction in things that cannot provide it—then the solution must be the reordering of our loves toward their proper end. Since we were created for relationship with God Himself, only God can satisfy the deepest longings of

our hearts. Only Perfect Love can heal hearts enslaved to imperfect loves. Only the Supreme Good can free us from the tyranny of lesser goods that promise everything but deliver emptiness.

This is precisely why human solutions to evil always fall short. Political systems cannot change hearts. Education cannot reorder loves. Therapy cannot heal the fundamental disorder of seeking our ultimate good in created things rather than the Creator. Even religion, if it becomes merely human effort to reach God, becomes another lesser good that enslaves rather than liberates.

The solution had to come from God Himself, for as Isaiah reminds us, "my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways," declares the Lord (Isaiah 55:8). Only divine wisdom could devise a plan to heal hearts enslaved to lesser loves—not as external force or mere teaching, but as the personal presence of Perfect Love entering our disordered world to heal us from within. And this is exactly what He did: He became incarnate, lived among us, fulfilled the Old Covenant on the Cross as the new Passover Lamb, rose from the dead, established His priesthood, gave us the Sacrament of Holy Communion in the Mass, founded His Church to guide us, gave us the sacraments to heal and strengthen us, left us His Word in Scripture, and provided the saints to show us what transformed love looks like in real life.

## The Solution: God's Perfect Love Incarnate

---

But God did not abandon us to our slavery. In the fullness of time, Perfect Love Himself entered human history. The eternal Son of God became man—Jesus Christ, who "being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant" (Philippians 2:6-7)—true God and true man—to rescue us and restore us to the relationship we were created for.<sup>3</sup>

Jesus came proclaiming the Kingdom of God (a Kingdom where God's Love reigns) —not as a distant future reality, but as a present earthly Kingdom where God reigns and His people participate actively in His divine life.<sup>4</sup> Through His incarnation, Jesus shows us that God cares deeply about our earthly life and calls us to live the Kingdom life here and now, transforming this world through divine love.

Jesus Christ is perfect love incarnate. In His life, He showed us what authentic love looks like: truth spoken with compassion, justice tempered with mercy, sacrifice offered freely, covenant faithfulness maintained even unto death. He lived the perfect integration of body, mind, and soul—fully human yet without sin.

But Jesus didn't come just to be a good example. He came to do what we could not do for ourselves: to pay the price of our sins and open the way back to the Father.

## The Last Supper: Love's Greatest Gift

---

At the Last Supper, Jesus gave us the Eucharist—His own Body and Blood under the appearance of bread and wine. This wasn't just a symbolic gesture but the beginning of His sacrifice, the moment when He gave us everything He had and everything He was. Significantly, Jesus chose to institute the Eucharist within the Passover meal, revealing Himself as the true Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world (John 1:29). Just as the Passover lamb's blood protected the Israelites from death and freed them from slavery in Egypt, Jesus' blood frees us from the slavery of sin and protects us from spiritual death. In the Eucharist, Jesus makes Himself our food, our life, our strength for the journey home to the Father.<sup>5</sup>

The Eucharist reveals the depth of God's love: He doesn't just tell us He loves us, He gives us Himself. He doesn't just forgive our sins from a distance, He comes to dwell within us. He doesn't just promise us eternal life, He begins to live that life in us right now through His sacramental presence. Through this ultimate, perfect, sacred sacrifice—offered once for all time—Jesus shows us that no matter what we have done to offend God, His full and perfect mercy is available to every repentant heart.

## The Cross: Justice and Mercy United

On the Cross, Jesus revealed the full depth of authentic love by uniting perfect justice and perfect mercy in one redemptive act.<sup>6</sup> He took upon Himself all the consequences of human sin—not just the legal guilt we deserved, but the real wounds that sin creates in our body, mind, and soul. His cry "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (Matthew 27:46) was not a moment of separation from the Father, but Jesus quoting the opening line of Psalm 22—a messianic psalm that begins in anguish but ends in triumph and vindication. By invoking this psalm, Jesus was declaring that He was fulfilling the prophetic suffering described by David, while pointing to the ultimate victory that the psalm promises: "All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the Lord" (Psalm 22:27). He was taking upon Himself the full weight of human alienation from God that sin creates, while remaining in perfect union with the Father's will and pointing to the resurrection victory to come.

The Cross shows us that authentic love takes sin seriously—it's not cheap grace that ignores justice, but costly grace that fulfills Isaiah's prophecy: "But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed" (Isaiah 53:5). This is love that heals us completely, not just declares us forgiven from a distance.

## The Resurrection: Death Defeated, Life Restored

The Resurrection completes and validates this revelation of perfect love.<sup>7</sup> It shows us that God's love is not just forgiving but creative—it doesn't just pardon us but transforms us. The Resurrection is "the crowning truth of our faith in Christ" because it reveals that divine love has the power to create new life, to transform human nature itself, and to guarantee our participation in divine life.<sup>8</sup>

But the Resurrection points us toward something even more magnificent: eternal communion with Perfect Love Himself. Christ's glorified body after the Resurrection shows us what authentic love produces—not the destruction of our humanity, but its perfection and transformation. This is the love that will raise our own bodies on the last day and unite us forever with Perfect Love Himself.

The Resurrection reveals that when we follow Christ's love on earth—when we choose truth over lies, justice over exploitation, mercy over revenge, sacrifice over selfishness, covenant over convenience, and communion over isolation—we are already experiencing a foretaste of Holy Communion with Him in the deepest sense. Every act of authentic love draws us into deeper communion with the Trinity. Christ's Resurrection is the guarantee that death has been conquered, and every time we receive the Eucharist with faith, we taste this eternal communion. Every time we love as Christ loves, we participate in the divine life that the Resurrection makes available to us, becoming "partakers of the divine nature" (2 Peter 1:4).

This is not just restorative love—bringing us back to where we were—but creative love, making us something entirely new. The Resurrection is the guarantee that our deepest longing—for love that never ends, never disappoints, never fails—will be fulfilled in eternal communion with Him who is Love itself.

## The New Covenant: God's Law of Love

Through His life, death, and resurrection, Jesus established a New Covenant—not written on stone tablets but on human hearts (Jeremiah 31:33; Hebrews 8:10).<sup>9</sup> This is God's law of love, which teaches us to live the same perfect love we defined earlier: **the sacred, sacrificial gift of covenant which binds true justice and true mercy into life-giving communion**. Here's how each aspect of this definition becomes lived reality:

- **Truth:** Seeing reality as God sees it and aligning our lives with what is genuinely good (*the sacred foundation*)

- **Justice:** Giving each person what they are owed according to their dignity as image-bearers of God (*true justice*)
- **Mercy:** Responding to human frailty with healing and forgiveness rather than condemnation (*true mercy*)
- **Sacrifice:** Choosing the good of others over our own immediate gratification (*the sacrificial gift*)
- **Covenant:** Choosing to enter into God's New Covenant relationship with us (*covenant which binds*)
- **Life Giving Communion:** Growing in union with God and authentic fellowship with others (*life-giving communion*)

## The Sacraments: Grace for the Journey

---

God knows that we cannot live this law of love by willpower alone. We need His grace—His own divine life shared with us—to transform our disordered hearts and enable us to love authentically. This is why Jesus gave us the sacraments: concrete encounters with His grace that heal, strengthen, and sanctify us.<sup>10</sup>

**Baptism** makes us God's adopted children and citizens of His Kingdom, washing away original sin and giving us new life in Christ. Through Baptism, we are brought into the Kingdom of God and become part of His royal priesthood. **Confirmation** strengthens us with the Holy Spirit for our mission to witness to God's love and advance His Kingdom on earth. **The Eucharist** feeds us with Christ's own Body and Blood, making us one with Him and with each other as we gather as the people of God's Kingdom. **Reconciliation** restores us to friendship with God and our place in His Kingdom when we fall into sin. **Anointing of the Sick** unites our suffering with Christ's redemptive passion, showing that even in illness we remain beloved citizens of His Kingdom. **Matrimony** creates a covenant of love that images God's love for His people and builds up the Kingdom through faithful families. **Holy Orders** provides shepherds to guide the people of God's Kingdom and ministers to serve us with Christ's own authority.

Through the sacraments, God doesn't just tell us about His love—He gives us His love. He doesn't just forgive us from a distance—He comes to dwell within us. He doesn't just promise us eternal life—He begins to live that life in us right now, making us active participants in His Kingdom.

## The Promise: Perfect Love Forever in the Eternal Kingdom

---

The Good News culminates in a promise that staggers the human heart: if you accept God's love and live in response to it, you will spend eternity in perfect communion with Perfect Love Himself in the fullness of His Kingdom.<sup>11</sup>

Heaven is not just a place but a relationship—eternal participation in the divine love that is the Trinity. As St. Paul teaches, "Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known" (1 Corinthians 13:12). While we cannot fully comprehend what this eternal communion will be like, Scripture promises that "no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man conceived, what God has prepared for those who love him" (1 Corinthians 2:9). What we do know is that we will find in God the fulfillment of every authentic longing our heart has ever had. The Kingdom that begins here on earth will reach its perfect fulfillment when Christ comes again and makes all things new (Revelation 21:5).

This eternal life begins now, not as a future reward we earn, but as a present reality we receive through grace. When you choose truth over lies, justice over exploitation, mercy over revenge, sacrifice over selfishness, covenant over convenience, and communion over isolation, you are living the very definition of perfect love we established at the beginning of this book. When you receive the sacraments with faith, you are receiving Christ Himself. When you love authentically, you are participating in the divine nature (2 Peter 1:4).

## The Response: Gratitude, Humility, and Love

---

How do you respond to such Good News? With gratitude that overwhelms the heart, humility that recognizes your complete dependence on grace, and love that can't help but overflow to others.

You don't try to earn God's love—you can't. You don't try to deserve His mercy—you don't. You don't try to pay Him back—you couldn't if you tried. Instead, you simply receive His love with gratitude and let it transform you from the inside out.

You submit to His truth, not as a burden but as liberation from the lies that enslave. You embrace His justice, not as condemnation but as the foundation for authentic relationships. You accept His mercy, not as weakness but as the power that heals and restores. You offer sacrifice, not as payment but as the natural response of a heart that has been loved beyond measure.

You enter into covenant with Him, not as a contract but as a relationship of trust. You seek communion with Him, not as an obligation but as the deepest desire of your heart.

And in doing so, you become what you were always meant to be: a beloved child of God, living in freedom, growing in holiness, and sharing in the eternal love that is the source and destiny of all creation.

## The Call: Join Jesus in His Mission for the Kingdom

---

Here is where the Good News becomes personal and urgent. When a scholar of the law asked Jesus, "Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?" Jesus pointed him to the heart of everything: "You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your being, with all your strength, and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself." And then Jesus gave him—and us—the most beautiful invitation: "You have answered correctly; do this and you will live" (Luke 10:25-28).

This is Jesus' own invitation to enter into eternal life-giving communion, starting right here, right now on this earth. By loving God with perfect justice and loving our neighbor with the perfect love we learn from loving God, we discover what is required of the Christian—and the reward is communion with Love Himself.

God's love is not just for you to receive passively, but for you to participate in actively. Once you accept and submit to His truth, you become a citizen of His Kingdom, called to join Jesus in His mission for the salvation of the world and the transformation of this present age. As St. Paul teaches, this is the "law of Christ" (Galatians 6:2)—not a burden of rules but the liberating power of love that fulfills all righteousness and enables us to "bear one another's burdens."

The Kingdom of God is both a present reality and a future hope. Jesus reigns now, and we are called to live as His people, showing the world what life looks like when God is truly King. This means working for justice, practicing mercy, speaking truth, making sacrifices for others, keeping our commitments, and building authentic community—fulfilling Christ's commission to "go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you" (Matthew 28:19-20)—not as a way to earn salvation, but as the natural fruit of hearts that have been transformed by divine love.

This is the most liberating truth of all: when you stop trying to save yourself and instead focus on loving God and serving His Kingdom mission, you discover that your eternal destiny is secure in His hands. You no longer worry about whether you're good enough for heaven because you know that Jesus is good enough, and you are united to Him. You no longer fear death because you know that perfect love casts out fear (1 John 4:18).

Instead, you wake up each day asking: "How can I love God today? How can I serve His mission? How can I



be His hands and feet and voice in a world that desperately needs to know His love?"

You become a living witness to the Good News—not perfect, but being perfected; not sinless, but forgiven; not self-sufficient, but dependent on grace; not earning God's love, but responding to the love He has already given you.

If this call is what some mean when they say we are saved by "faith alone," then Amen. But as we have seen, when we truly trust God, we don't trust in a belief about Him—we trust Him completely. We trust Him with our whole heart, our whole being, our whole strength, and our whole mind. We trust Him to guide us, to teach us, to transform us, and to lead us to eternal life.

This is the complete Gospel our hearts were made for. And so we devote our entire life—body, mind, and soul—to being His disciples, servants of His love, and saints in the making.

## Living the Response

---

### Daily Practice:

- Begin each day by remembering who you are: a beloved child of God, created for eternal love
- Attend Mass regularly, receiving Jesus in the Eucharist as your spiritual food
- Spend time in prayer, both speaking to God and listening for His voice
- Examine your conscience each evening, confessing your sins and receiving God's mercy
- Live each day in service to others, especially the poor, the suffering, and those who don't yet know God's love
- Let everything you do be done in the name of Jesus, as St. Paul teaches: "And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him" (Colossians 3:17)
- Remember that you are not just saved from sin, but saved for mission—to be Christ's ambassador in the world

### Weekly Practice:

- Participate fully in Sunday Mass as the center of your week
- Spend time reading Scripture, especially the Gospels, to know Jesus better
- Practice the works of mercy—feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, visiting the sick
- Gather with other Christians for fellowship, encouragement, and mutual support

### Lifelong Practice:

- Receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation regularly to maintain friendship with God
- Study the teachings of the Church to grow in understanding of God's truth
- Pursue your vocation (marriage, religious life, or single life) as your path to holiness
- Share the Good News with others, both by your words and by your example of authentic love

## A Prayer of Response

---

*Lord Jesus, You are the Good News incarnate. You are perfect love made visible, divine mercy made tangible, eternal life made accessible. Thank You for creating me in Your image, for rescuing me from sin, for calling me to share in Your divine life.*

*I believe that You are God, that You died for my sins, and that You rose from the dead. I trust in Your*

*mercy, not in my own goodness. I submit to Your truth, not to my own understanding. I choose Your love over all the lesser loves that would enslave my heart.*

*Help me to live each day in response to Your love—not trying to earn what You have already given, but letting Your grace transform me from the inside out. Make me an instrument of Your peace, a witness to Your truth, a servant of Your justice, a channel of Your mercy.*

*Use my life, however imperfect, to draw others to You. Help me to love my family, serve my community, and fulfill my vocation in a way that gives You glory and brings others closer to Your heart.*

*I offer You my body, mind, and soul—not as payment for Your love, but as the natural response of a heart that has been loved beyond measure. Do with me whatever brings You the most glory and serves Your mission for the salvation of the world.*

*Mary, Mother of God, pray for me. All you saints, intercede for me. Holy Spirit, guide me. Jesus, I trust in You. Amen.*

## Examen: Living in Response to Perfect Love

---

### Evening Reflection:

1. How did I experience God's love today? In what ways did He show me His mercy, provide for my needs, or speak to my heart?
2. How did I respond to His love? Did I live in gratitude, humility, and service, or did I take His gifts for granted?
3. Where did I choose lesser loves over the Supreme Good? How did these choices affect my peace and my relationships?
4. How can I better join Jesus in His mission tomorrow? What specific acts of love, service, or witness is He calling me to?

**Daily Practice:** Before making any significant decision, ask yourself: "How does this choice serve God's mission of love? Will this draw me and others closer to Him or further away?"

**Act of Faith, Hope, and Love:** "My God, I believe in You because You are Truth itself. I hope in You because You are Mercy itself. I love You because You are Love itself, and You first loved me."

---

## A Final Word

This book is the culmination of 35 years of living life as someone committed to understanding what the Bible says when it mentions "God is Love". I pray that in reading this book, you have heard the Word of God made flesh, and that you have been transformed by the love of God, and that your heart now burns with desire to become one with Jesus in His Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity—united to Him in every way possible, as He is united to the Father.

May you go forth as His beloved servant of love, carrying His perfect and true love to a world dying for truth, justice, mercy, and sacrifice until all hearts are set aflame with the fire of divine charity and every soul finds its ultimate Communion in Perfect Love Himself.

Amen.

---



## Footnotes

---

<sup>1</sup> *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (CCC) 253-267. See also Pope Benedict XVI, *Deus Caritas Est* §§7-8.

<sup>2</sup> CCC 385-421. See also Pope John Paul II, *Reconciliatio et Paenitentia* §14.

<sup>3</sup> CCC 456-478. See also Vatican II, *Dei Verbum* §4.

<sup>4</sup> CCC 541-556. For deeper study: Pope Benedict XVI, *Jesus of Nazareth* Vol. 1, Ch. 3; Vatican II, *Lumen Gentium* §5.

<sup>5</sup> CCC 608-609, 1340. For deeper study: Pope Benedict XVI, *Sacramentum Caritatis* §§9-11.

<sup>6</sup> CCC 599-618. For deeper study: Pope Benedict XVI, *Spe Salvi* §§39-40; St. Anselm, *Cur Deus Homo*.

<sup>7</sup> CCC 638-658. For deeper study: Pope Benedict XVI, *Jesus of Nazareth: Holy Week* Ch. 9.

<sup>8</sup> CCC 638. See also Pope John Paul II, *Redemptor Hominis* §18-19.

<sup>9</sup> CCC 715-716, 762. See also Pope John Paul II, *Redemptoris Missio* §12-14.

<sup>10</sup> CCC 1113-1134. See also Vatican II, *Sacrosanctum Concilium* §§5-6; Pope John Paul II, *Ecclesia de Eucharistia* §§16-20.

<sup>11</sup> CCC 1023-1029. See also Pope Benedict XVI, *Spe Salvi* §§10-12; Vatican II, *Lumen Gentium* §§48-51.