



The person who wrote best about love in the Christian era was Paul of Tarsus, who became Saint Paul. He was a tough [dude]. He is a super-intellectual guy, but he is fierce and he has, of course, the Damascus experience. He goes off and lives as a tentmaker. He starts to preach, and he writes this ode to love, which everybody knows from his letter to the Corinthians: "Love is patient, love is kind. . . . Love bears all things, love believes all things" – you hear it at a lot of weddings. . . .

Bono

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How do you write these things when you are at your lowest ebb? 'Cause I didn't. I didn't. I didn't deepen myself. I am looking to somebody like Paul, who was in prison and writing these love letters, and thinking, "How does that happen?" It is amazing.

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Where the battle for freedom to love lies:

- Men
- “Metrics”
- Meaning

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Galatians 1:11-12

For I would have you know, brothers, that the gospel that was preached by me is not man's gospel. For I did not receive it from any man, nor was I taught it, but I received it through a revelation of Jesus Christ.

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Galatians 1:10

For am I now seeking the approval of man, or of God? Or am I trying to please man? If I were still trying to please man, I would not be a servant of Christ.

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Freddie DeBoer

Sometimes I dream of another life, or really another me, a me who wasn't at war with myself, and the things I would have written then. But I'm too old for that now. I can only move forward. If there is any virtue to getting to a place where you say, to another human being, "I cannot go on like this, and I need help," it's that the part of you that cares for the opinions of other people dies, and however briefly, you live unmediated. I would like to think I can access it again, in times of better fortune.

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The best way to get approval is to not need it.

Hugh MacLeod, *Ignore Everybody*

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Galatians 1:13-14

For you have heard of my former life in Judaism, how I persecuted the church of God violently and tried to destroy it. And I was advancing in Judaism beyond many of my own age among my people, so extremely zealous was I for the traditions of my fathers.

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"When I was making money, I made the most money, and now that I'm spiritual I'm the most spiritual."

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Philippians 3

But whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ. . . . For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ

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David Brooks

Parents glow with extra fervor when their child studies hard, practices hard, wins first place, gets into a prestigious college. This sort of love is merit-based. It is not simply: I love you. It is, I love you when you stay on my balance beam. . . . Children in such families come to feel that childhood is a performance. . . .

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David Brooks

The shadowy presence of conditional love produces a fear, the fear that there is no utterly safe love; there is no completely secure place where young people can be utterly honest and themselves... . Parental love is supposed to be oblivious to achievement. It's meant to be an unconditional support—a gift that cannot be bought and cannot be earned. It sits outside the logic of the meritocracy, the closest humans come to grace.

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When good writing was my only goal, I made the quality of my work the measure of my worth. For this reason, I wasn't able to read my own writing well. I couldn't tell whether something I had just written was good or bad, because I needed it to be good in order to feel sane. I lost the ability to cheerfully interrogate how much I liked what I had written, to see what was actually on the page rather than what I wanted to see or what I feared to see.

Benjamin Nugent

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Galatians 2:15-17

But when he who had set me apart before I was born, and who called me by his grace, was pleased to reveal his Son to me, in order that I might preach him among the Gentiles, I did not immediately consult with anyone; nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me, but I went away into Arabia, and returned again to Damascus. . . .

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