

What does God give, and what does God demand?

God gives love—both as unconditional acceptance and as action on the basis of such acceptance—and God demands faith—both as unreserved trust in God's love and as unqualified loyalty to its cause.

Precisely by giving love, however, God also gives the possibility of accepting it, which is to say, the possibility of faith—although the actualization of this possibility requires fulfilling God's demand.

But because unqualified loyalty necessarily implies—if, indeed, “loyalty” is not simply another word for—love, God also demands love in demanding faith; and because love, in turn, inevitably finds expression in justice, God also demands justice in demanding faith and love.

This means, among other things, that it is a mistake simply to correlate the gift of God's love with faith in the sense of unreserved trust and the demand of God's love with faith in the sense of unqualified loyalty; for in giving love, God gives the possibility of unqualified loyalty as well as of unreserved trust, and in demanding faith, God demands unreserved trust as well as unqualified loyalty.

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