

## **Love and the New Year**

The most important and precious thing in life is love. Without love, life loses its true meaning and becomes nothing more than an empty shell. Love is the deepest, purest, and most sublime emotion within a person. When we love, we not only shine a light on others but also illuminate ourselves.

Love is the energy of life. It nourishes and nurtures the soul, helping it grow and bringing true peace. When we love, we become most like Christ. Christ came into the world to teach love- not only to share in people's suffering but also to reveal the power and sanctity of love. True love is not merely a feeling towards others; it is a way of life, a perspective on existence.

Yet, learning to love selflessly is not easy amidst the struggles of life. The fast pace of the world constantly forces us to focus on various distractions. More often than not, we prioritize our own interests and needs over those of others. While this attitude is inherently flawed, it is also part of human nature. For man, by nature, is a self-centered being. The real challenge is to transform and transcend this self-centeredness -to recognize that true fulfillment lies in valuing another person's dignity and well-being as much as our own.

The pursuit of personal comfort and security creates mental barriers to love. Love, after all, requires compassion, empathy, and sacrifice (and sometimes, even renunciation). These emotions conflict with selfish tendencies, often leading us on a demanding and exhausting journey.

Learning to love is a lifelong endeavor. Love is not just an emotional response; it is also a skill that requires continuous growth and refinement. Building connections, being sensitive to the suffering of others, and giving without expecting anything in return—these are the elements of a journey that deepens over time and fosters personal maturity. Yet, they must be nurtured with love,

patience, and effort. The more one gives and receives love, the more it flourishes and strengthens within.

Therefore, love is a value that must be learned and lived. Walking this path throughout life is only possible by filling each day with love. Love can make the world a more beautiful place, but this beauty can only be realised if everyone embarks on this journey. Love is not just a personal sentiment; it is a responsibility we owe to those around us. Carrying this responsibility is one of the highest virtues of being human.

### **Today marks the first day of 2025...**

Today is a moment of celebration—to embrace and make sense of the experiences the past has given us.

On this special day, when the human soul reaches for deeper meaning, we step together into a new doorway.

As we embark on a journey to understand the essence of existence, my sincere wish and prayer as we pass through this new threshold is this:

- May this year be a time of bridges built with love, deep reflection, and genuine awareness.
- May this year be a time of horizons and souls uniting, a year where hearts grow stronger in their bonds.
- May this year be a time when humanity rediscovers its roots and reaches towards the sky with courage.
- May this year be a time when we discover the light within ourselves and use it to illuminate the world around us—where dreams transform into reality.

- May this be a year in which we live each moment with consciousness, act with moral responsibility, touch lives with compassion, and speak the language of mercy.
- May this year be one of transformation, revival, and awakening for all humanity.
- May every step we take bring forth new blossoms and fruits on the tree of life.

... And may life be blessed.

Wishing you a 2025 filled with peace, wisdom, and love.

**With my deepest regards,**

**Yusuf Beğtaş**