

RHETORIC OF LOVE, JUSTICE, AND PATIENCE IN THE THEOLOGICAL DISCOURSE OF EBERHARD JÜNGEL

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The article explores the theological foundations of theonomic rhetoric in the works of the German Protestant theologian Eberhard Jüngel (1934–2021), focusing on the categories of love, justice, and patience as the core of Christian communication. Jüngel's fundamental thesis, "God is love," is understood as both an ontological and communicative paradigm that redefines the role of language: not merely as a neutral vehicle for transmitting information, but as an event of reciprocity, truth, and transformation. On this basis, Christian rhetoric is interpreted as testimony rooted in dignity, mercy, and responsibility, resisting manipulation, coercion, and fear. Methodologically, the study combines hermeneutical analysis (reconstruction of key theological concepts within their biblical and historical context), discourse analysis (examining rhetorical strategies that shift 'logos' from abstract truth to a relational event), and a comparative approach (juxtaposing Jüngel's conception of divine justice with perspectives of Hans Jonas, Jürgen Moltmann, Johann Baptist Metz, as well as Aristotle, Kant, and Luther). This interdisciplinary design highlights how Jüngel integrates theology, philosophy, and rhetoric into a unified vision of communicative action grounded in love.

The findings demonstrate that Jüngel reconceptualizes divine justice not as retributive or distributive but as transformative grace, rooted in God's creative and redemptive action. Equally significant is his interpretation of patience as an active expression of love that opens up space for human freedom, dialogue, and responsibility, challenging punitive and coercive images of God. The cross of Christ emerges as the ultimate rhetorical act – a silent yet decisive word of love that reshapes both speaker and recipient. By tracing how Jüngel's categories acquire communicative force, the article shows their relevance for contemporary ethics of dialogue, rhetoric of non-violence, and public Christian witness. In this way, Jüngel's theology not only restores salvific depth to language but also contributes to interdisciplinary discussions in philosophy, communication studies, and linguistics, providing a framework for truthful, loving, and transformative human interaction.

Key words: Jüngel, rhetoric, love, justice, patience, Christian communication, revelation.

Іванюк Людмила. Риторика любові, справедливості й терпеливості у богословському дискурсі Ебергарда Юнгеля

Стаття присвячена аналізу богословських засад теомонної риторики у працях німецького протестантського теолога Ебергарда Юнгеля (1934–2021), у центрі яких перебувають категорії любові, справедливості та терпеливості як концептуальний каркас християнської комунікації. Вихідною тезою виступає твердження «Бог є любов», яке розглядається не лише як богословське положення, але й як онтологічна та комунікативна парадигма, що змінює розуміння мови: від простого засобу передавання інформації до події взаємності, істини та трансформації. На цій основі християнська риторика інтерпретується як свідчення, укорінене в гідності, милосерді та відповідальності, що протистойть маніпуляції, страху та примусу. Методологічна основа поєднує герменевтичний аналіз (реконструкція змісту ключових богословських понять у біблійному та історико-богословському контексті), дискурсивний аналіз (виявлення риторичних стратегій, які перетворюють логос з абстрактної істини на подію взаємності) та порівняльний підхід (зіставлення Юнгелевого бачення божественної справедливості з підходами Ганса Йонаса, Юргена Мольтмана, Йогана Баптиста Меца, а також із класичною філософією Арістотеля, Канта й Лютера). Таке міждисциплінарне поєднання дозволяє показати, як Юнгель інтегрує богослов'я, філософію та риторику у єдине бачення комунікативної дії, що ґрунтується на любові.

Дослідження засвідчує, що в Юнгеля божественна справедливість постає не як принцип розподілу чи відплати, а як благодать творчого й перетворюючого характеру, що ґрунтується на Божій любові та спасительній дії. Водночас особливого значення набуває його вчення про терпеливість, осмислену як активний вияв любові, що відкриває простір для свободи людини, діалогу й відповідальності та протистойть образу суворого чи всесильного Бога. Хрест у цьому контексті постає як найвищий риторичний акт – «мовчазне слово любові», що трансформує і мовця, і слухача. Простежується, що богословські категорії Юнгеля набувають виразного комунікативного виміру та актуалізують мову як онтологічну подію одкровення й зустрічі. Таким чином, його богослов'я не лише повертає мові екзистенційний вимір, але й робить вагомий внесок у сучасні дискусії з філософії, комунікації та лінгвістики, пропонуючи модель істинного, люблячого та трансформуючого діалогу, релевантну як у богословському, так і в суспільному просторі.

Ключові слова: Юнгель, риторика, любов, справедливість, терпіння, християнська комунікація, одкровення.

Introduction. In the age of devaluation of the power of words, both in the interpersonal and socio-religious dimensions, there is an urgent need to rethink the principles of authentic communication. At the present stage of historical development, there is not only an increasing

blurring of the semantic boundaries of key concepts, but also a growing fragmentation of the discursive space in which truth is increasingly being replaced by its interpretations. Humanity is constantly searching for valid statements, striving for reliability, which is an essential

component of the anthropological and spiritual dimension of existence. At the same time, the Christian theological tradition retains its special significance, pointing to the path of *Love* as the fundamental orientation of communicative interaction. In this context, theological concepts not only do not lose their impact, but also remain key to the formation of a humane society based on dignity, mercy and responsibility.

The need to recode religious language from the language of condemnation and fear to the language of love is relevant for the development of peace [2]. Such a transmission of logos, from logos as a source of truth to logos as an event of reciprocity, is an urgent task not only for theological but also for communicative and ethical reflections. And at the centre of this task arises a key question: How can human speech truthfully and convincingly express the reality of God's love without distorting its meaning, and what does it mean to articulate truth in a logically consistent, theologically substantiated, and existentially meaningful form?

From a phenomenological perspective, truth is not just the transmission of objective information, but, above all, a living process of interaction between people that takes place in the space of love and truth and is capable of generating deep, vital speech acts [4; 8, p. 2]. Objective expression, according to this approach, additionally opens access to a deeper, existentially significant formulation of experience, which then takes the form of worldview comprehension. As a result, an idea of language is formed that does not just represent thought, but transforms, that is, it becomes an act of entering into a connection, in particular, a connection of love. It is this ability of language to change the subject and open access to the truth through love that is the defining feature of theonomic communication.

The Christian statement "*God is love*" (1 John 4:8) contains both an ontological as well as a communicative and semantic paradigm that not only describes God's being, but also forms the basis for all Christian rhetoric as a rhetoric of love [13; 14]. It emphasises a living, dynamic form of love as a common action. At the same time, this statement is neither a metaphysical thesis nor a purely rhetorical figure; it is a statement that, according to Eberhard Jüngel, must be thought with all the seriousness of logical structure and existential depth [12, pp. 25-26]. Moreover, it takes the form of personal experience to the universal dimension [1, pp. 13-14].

The purpose of this article is to study the theology of Eberhard Jüngel (1934–2021), one of the most prominent Protestant theologians of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, which forms the conceptual foundations for Christian communication. In his works, the author combined deep philosophical and ontological reflection with the hermeneutics of Christian revelation [15, p. 63]. At the same time, Jüngel developed an innovative theology based on the understanding of God as a verbal Logos that reveals itself in love. For him, God is not an abstract transcendent idea, but a dynamic and communicative act of self-revelation in the world, culminating in the cross of Christ as the *vestigium trinitatis* [6, p. 470]. In his main work "*Gott*

als Geheimnis der Welt", he presents a fundamental thesis: true being is being in love, which becomes clear only in the word addressed to the Other. That is why for Jüngel Christian rhetoric is not a tool of manipulation or external persuasion, but an ontologically rooted form of witnessing the truth and love.

Materials and Methods. The material of this study consists of the theological writings of the German Protestant theologian Eberhard Jüngel (1934–2021), particularly his major works *Gott als Geheimnis der Welt*, *Wertlose Wahrheit: zur Identität und Relevanz des christlichen Glaubens*, *Das Evangelium von der Rechtfertigung des Gottlosen*, and others, in which he develops the concepts of divine love, justice, and patience as the foundations of Christian communication. In addition, contemporary interpretations and scholarly commentaries on Jüngel's theological heritage [12; 13; 14; 15] were used to contextualize his thought within the broader field of social-ethical and communicative reflection.

The methodological framework combines hermeneutical, discourse-analytical, and comparative approaches. The hermeneutical method was employed to reconstruct the meaning of Jüngel's key theological concepts ('love,' 'justice,' 'patience') in their textual and intertextual contexts, including biblical references and historical-theological traditions. Discourse analysis was applied to examine the rhetorical strategies shaping Christian communication in Jüngel's interpretation, particularly the transition from logos as the bearer of truth to logos as an event of reciprocity.

The comparative method allowed for an examination of Jüngel's conceptualization of divine justice in relation to other contemporary theological approaches (Hans Jonas, Jürgen Moltmann, Johann Baptist Metz) as well as classical philosophical traditions (Aristotle, Kant, Luther). This provided an opportunity to demonstrate the uniqueness of Jüngel's contribution to the formation of a new model of theonomic rhetoric based on love as the ontological and communicative foundation of being.

The study is qualitative in nature and does not involve empirical measurement but rather a theoretical and conceptual analysis that integrates historical-theological reconstruction with linguistic and rhetorical interpretation. This approach makes it possible to trace how Jüngel's theological categories acquire a communicative dimension and serve as the foundation for a contemporary ethic of dialogue and Christian communication.

Discussion

Theonomic conceptualisation

The understanding of Jüngel's theology is embedded in the context of a dialogue between different concepts (*Gottes Souveränität, der Bund, Willkür // God's sovereignty, the covenant, arbitrariness*) and their interpretation. The author places particular emphasis on the precise definition of the concept of God. In his doctrine of justification, he describes God as a God who makes contracts (*Verträge machenden Gott*), or even more aptly as a God of the covenant (*Gott des Bundes*), whereby this term is to be understood particularly in an Old Testament context. This idea

forms a clear contrast to an image of God as an arbitrary power. According to Jüngel, if God had absolute dominion and control, he would need no further legitimisation for his words and actions in the past. However, the theologian emphasises that God's sovereignty is not to be equated with arbitrariness. Rather, divine sovereignty manifests itself in faithfulness to divine authority [7, p. 33]. For Jüngel, it is therefore of central importance that in the new covenant (*im neuen Bund*) – without giving up one's own freedom – faithfulness to the old covenant (*zum alten Bund*) is maintained.

A central point of reference for understanding the concept of God by Eberhard Jüngel is the description of God's hiddenness (*Verborgenheit Gottes*). Through this explicit confrontation, the author demonstrates that God is not hidden in his innermost being. This insight is expressed in the biblical statement from 1 John 1:5: "*God is light, and in him there is no darkness*". The metaphorical representation of light functions as an expression of God's relationship with the world, because light is understood as the source of life on earth. In this way, the hidden God is depicted as creatively active, who brings light into the world through his revelation.

In contrast to Immanuel Kant's moral imperative, which views the realisation of the divine as a product of human reason, Jüngel differentiates between the concepts of the hiddenness (*Verborgenheit*) and incomprehensibility (*Unbegreiflichkeit*) of God. Jüngel asserts that God's hiddenness is the first insight granted by His self-revelation, not the result of human reasoning [5, p. 167]. Another important point in Jüngel's theology is the identification of God's hiddenness with his glory, which he calls KABOD (Jewish temple theology: the cultic presence of God). This idea forms a central component of Jüngel's understanding of revelation and becomes a fundamental definition of proper human discourse about God. Particularly important here is the insight that when people choose God as the addressee of their accusation, this does not lead to a degradation of God, but rather to a form of adoration. This accusation is not an expression of a negative judgement of God, but rather an act that brings the truth to light. In this context, person does not claim the weakness of God, but recognises his majesty [5, p. 168].

The multidimensionality of God's justice

In his work "*Wertlose Wahrheit: zur Identität und Relevanz des christlichen Glaubens*" (2003), Eberhard Jüngel addresses the problem of a faulty reception of theological concepts that arises when central concepts are viewed in isolation and their interrelationships are neglected. One example of this is the question of God's justice. Jüngel argues that an appropriate conceptualisation of divine justice is not possible without a prior reflection on God himself. Justice is therefore not to be understood as an abstract principle, but in its origin related to God himself.

From this perspective, it proves problematic to conceptualise the life of justice (*Leben aus Gerechtigkeit*) independently of the question of God [9, pp. 255-257]. Jüngel criticises approaches that view justice as an independent ethical ideal without taking its theological foundation into account. Equally problematic is the attempt to equate divine action with human action. In the tradition,

a person was usually understood as the addressee of divine action. Jüngel, to the contrary, reverses this perspective. Person becomes the purpose of divine action [5, p. 347]. This shifts the focus from a purely theological definition of God to an anthropologically orientated question: it is not primarily about God himself, but about the person and their relationship to God. This argument points to a fundamental shift in theological discourse: The question of God's justice is not treated in isolation, but is embedded in a relational structure that encompasses both ontological and epistemological dimensions.

Another central point of reference can be found in the theology of Martin Luther, who reached a new understanding of divine justice through the intensive study of Paul's letter to the Romans (Romans 1:17). The decisive difference here lies in the rejection of a traditional, formal-juridical understanding of justice in favour of a conception that finds its true meaning in the passivity of faith. Accordingly, divine justice is not understood as an active authority that demands human action, but as a received justice that arises from faith [5, p. 349].

Eberhard Jüngel takes up and develops this interpretation in his reading of Paul's doctrine of justification (Rom 3:28), where he emphasises the radical passivity of justice [5, p. 357]. In his view, justice is redefined theologically, shifting away from performance-oriented ethics toward a relational dynamic between God and the person, grounded in reception and transformation through faith. As a result, the question of justice is embedded in a theological structure of relationships, where the human being is no longer seen as the active author of their own righteousness, but as a recipient whose new existence depends on their relationship with God.

Eberhard Jüngel is critical of an overemphasised view of justice as a simply divine gift, which loses sight of the righteousness (*Gerechtsein*) of God himself. This problem was particularly emphasised within Protestant theology, although it already goes back to Augustinian interpretations. This line of tradition shows a shift: God's justice is not primarily determined by his own being, but by the just actions of people. For Jüngel, it is crucial to look at the different concepts of justice in Aristotle and Luther. While Aristotle defines justice as the result of just action – i.e. as something that is acquired through the practice of action – Luther emphasises the original disposition of being just, from which just action emerges. This juxtaposition points to two different approaches to the question of justice: an Aristotelian ethics of action and a Lutheran theology of conceived justice [5, p. 350].

Nevertheless, common lines can be recognised: Aristotle ties justice to action, while Luther (in *Operationes in Psalmos*, for example) sees human action as a constituent factor of God's justice. Here, Luther refers back to Augustine's thoughts, who already postulated in 'De spiritu et littera' that righteousness is infused into human beings through God's grace [7, p. 64]. Still, the designation of God and human justice remains problematic, as it reveals a tense relationship: Divine justice is bestowed upon a person, but at the same time remains inseparable from one's own

actions – a relationship that remains asymmetrical in itself and requires hermeneutical clarification.

When explicating the question of justice, it is necessary to distinguish between a *legal* understanding and an *evangelical* understanding of God's justice. The legal understanding understands divine justice as a feature that is exclusively reserved for God, but which by its nature also extends to others. In contrast, the evangelical understanding formulates a dynamic concept of justice: "*Gott ist gerecht, indem er (Ungerechte) gerecht spricht bzw. gerecht macht*" // "*God is just by pronouncing or making just (the unjust)*" [7, p. 63-64]. This approach is based on Pauline theology (Romans 3:24-26), which understands God's justice as a *Genetivus subjectivus*, i.e. as an attribute of God himself. However, the *Genetivus auctoris* is assumed, whereby God's righteousness (*Gerechtsein Gottes*) is understood as the deep dimension of his justice (*Gerechtigkeit*). In this sense, God's justice is not understood as distributive, i.e. allocating or distributing justice, but as a gracious act [7, p. 63-64].

This perspective reveals a theological shift in the category of justice: it is not oriented towards a retributive model, but unfolds from the actions of God himself, who not only promises justice, but actively implements it. Accordingly, God's justice does not manifest itself in abstract form, but is concretised in God's creative and redeeming care for mankind.

In Christian theology, God is understood to be just, which implies the continuation of justice in the three hypostases of the Trinity: *Father, Son and Holy Spirit*. This structure highlights the fact that people often identify God's actions with human or worldly actions, especially since God became man in the figure of Jesus Christ. However, Christian theology emphasises that the divine aspect should be given greater prominence in the perception of God's humanity. The incarnation – the Word becoming flesh – requires a differentiated view, as the humanity of Jesus is not to be understood in isolation, but always in its relationship to the divine nature. It is in this field of tension between God's humanity and his divinity that the deeper understanding of God's justice unfolds [5, p. 361]. The hermeneutical question that arises in this context concerns the relationship between the human and divine aspects in the person of Jesus and the way in which this theology expands and shapes the understanding of justice. In this regard, the speech event of God's self-revelation redefines the human being *coram Deo* ('before God' or 'in the presence of God') enabling a renewed self-understanding grounded not in autonomous moral effort but in divine address [10, p. 92]. Justice, then, is not only a divine attribute, but a relational event in which the human subject is transformed by being spoken to by God.

God's love as a fundamentally creative power

The new image of divine almightiness and divine love implies their equality, which opens up a deeper theological reflection on the nature of God. Jüngel states that divine almightiness and love, if the statements 'God the Lord' and 'God is love' are considered in their full agreement, do not stand in a relationship of subordination or dialectic to one another. Rather, God's almightiness is to be understood

as the power of his love. From this perspective, it becomes clear: "*Love is almighty*" [6, p. 355].

The statement "*God is love*" not only evokes the idea of a biblical saying from the New Testament, but also refers to a concrete event: the death of Jesus and his resurrection. This event is anchored in human society and has manifested itself in various forms. Eberhard Jüngel formulates that it is the task of theology to 'think God as love' [6, pp. 430-432].

Jüngel argues that the sentence "*God is love*" can only be properly understood in the context of God's incarnation. However, he criticises Feuerbach's approach, which emphasises the predicate love without adequately considering the subject of God. Jüngel underlines that the true meaning of the sentence lies in the consideration of God as the holder (*subjectum*) of love. This brings the subject itself more into focus, which deepens the revelation. Another point in Jüngel's argument is the criticism of a Lutheran perspective that stresses the hidden God too much, which is closer to the sentence "*God has love*". Jüngel points out that Christian theology is not primarily about a God who has love, but about the God who is love itself [6, pp. 430-433].

Furthermore, Jüngel draws on the reflections of Regin Preter, who argues that a person who has or practices love cannot simply be said to be love itself. In this context, it becomes clear that only the person's actions – such as giving their life for their brothers or forgiving the prodigal son – show the true meaning of love. The subject as such can therefore not simply be equated with love. Love manifests itself in action, which reveals the deeper truth of the divine being [6, p. 433].

According to Jüngel's interpretation, the juxtaposition of *I* and *You* opens up a new perspective on closeness to oneself. In true love, the subject is always at the service of the object, which over time can lead to alienation both from the world and from oneself. However, this alienation results in an *intensity of self-understanding*, in which the subject (*I*) must re-conceptualise itself as the other – which, however, is not to be equated with selflessness.

With love, the withdrawal of the subject does not mean giving up one's own existence, but rather a mutual devotion. Love is thus constituted as an encounter between two selves, whereby self-centredness – and not selflessness – forms the fundamental breeding ground for affection. Radical devotion in love is therefore characterised by turning away from oneself and turning towards the other. Love is a reciprocal relationship that unites the loving *I* and the beloved *You*, thereby creating a new being (*neues Sein*). The true meaning of love therefore lies in the change that it brings about. Jüngel emphasises that it is not the mere being in love that defines the lovers, but rather the fact that they are both lovers and receive each other from the *You*. This reciprocal relationship between *I* and *You* constitutes the origin of their existence *ex nihilo*, out of nothing, which opens up a deeper dimension of human existence and of love itself [6, pp. 434-442].

As part of his reflections, the author presents the idea that "*das Dasein vom anderen her eine mit dem Potenzial des eigenen Nichtseins geladene Existenz*" // "*existence from the other is an existence charged with the potential*

of its own non-existence” [6, p. 447]. This understanding of love becomes a necessary prerequisite for the recipient in order to realise that subject and predicate in the sentence “*God is love*” are mutually revealing. In this context, God is identified with the crucified Jesus. Jüngel describes Jesus' unity with God as an act of God in order to explain the problem more precisely. Referring to the dispute in 1 John (chapter 4), which raises the question of whether Jesus is the Christ, the author draws the conclusion that “*Liebe nur Liebe ist, wenn sie aus Gott ist*” // “*love is only love if it is from God*” [6, p. 447]. The ability to love is understood as a consequence of having previously been loved by God himself. This dynamic illustrates the deeper relationship between God's love and human love, which are inextricably linked.

Jüngel's work is concerned with the theological concept of the Son of God. Through this act, Jüngel expresses that He (Son) is both the Lover and the Beloved. This line of thought can be interpreted to mean that “*Gott demnach ein sich selbst Liebender*” // “*God is therefore a self-loving one*” [6, p. 448], although this should not be misunderstood as self-love in the conventional sense. Rather, reference is made at this point to the hypostases of Father and Son. God radiates his love, he gifts it – or in other words, he gifts himself. In this context, God is spoken of as Spirit. The offering of his beloved Son illustrates that people can be included in his eternal life after death. Humans are included in this love through God's Spirit. The complete articulation of the sentence “*God is love*” presupposes the threefold distinction of God's being – as Father, as Son and as Holy Spirit. The comprehensive meaning of divine love is made understandable and accessible through this threefold distinction.

The biblical text from 1 John 4:19 postulates: “*We love because he first loved us*” and in 1 John 4:10: “*This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins*”. These passages indicate that love has its origin in God himself. In this study, it is argued that God is presented as the Lover who is not dependent on first receiving the love of humans in order to be able to love. The understanding of love as an unconditional act initiated by God presents divine love as the original source of all love.

God's patience and the space for human fulfilment

In his work, Eberhard Jüngel emphasises the central importance of divine patience, which he closely associates with love [5, p. 183]. In contrast to other theological views, Jüngel makes it clear that divine patience (*potentia*) is not to be equated with divine endurance (*pati*). He criticises an overly negative interpretation of passion and calls for a positive reinterpretation in the context of love. Passion in God is therefore not to be confused with heated excitement, but must be understood as a form of love that also had a positive connotation in stoic philosophy. Furthermore, Jüngel states that divine patience should in no way be interpreted as weakness or as a mask of powerlessness. On the contrary, it shows God's willingness to give people space and time instead of destroying them. This infinite patience is aimed at the triumph of love. Even in the apocalyptic images often

associated with the end of the world in the Bible, the end of divine patience is not to be found. Instead, the victory of love is depicted in the vision of a new heaven and a new earth [5, pp. 184-193].

In Jüngel's theology, this interpretation of God's patience serves as a counterpoint to the traditional image of an all-powerful and punishing God. It is not a powerless contemplative state, but an active, loving presence that chooses not destruction but waiting, not coercion but an invitation to relationship. In this sense, the rhetoric of God's love takes on a deep existential meaning: it is a discourse that does not force, but opens up space for freedom. God's patience appears as a rhetorical gesture – a gesture of withholding, allowing a person to respond, to enter into a dialogue, to take a step forward. Such rhetoric is not a means of persuasion, but a form of being, a ‘speech of love’ that does not demand but waits, does not press but opens up horizons of hope. It is in this capacity for patient waiting and hope that Jüngel sees the true power of God, a power that does not require violence to manifest itself [5, pp. 185-187].

In this context, Eberhard Jüngel proposes a new paradigm for understanding love as a logos, a language that is an expression of deep ethical self-dedication. In “*Gottes Geduld – Geduld der Liebe*”, he insists that “*patience is nothing other than the long breath of divine passion*” [5, p. 183]. This formula excludes the interpretation of God's love as sentimental weakness or emotional instability. It opens up a fundamental rhetorical model of enduring, long-suffering ‘being with the other’ in word and action. This approach is based on a deep theological understanding: God does not interrupt, but listens; does not force, but invites.

In his major work “*Gott als Geheimnis der Welt*”, Jüngel argues that the essence of God is self-transcending love that reveals itself: God goes beyond himself in love, and thus, God is God's Word – *self-communication* that grounds both revelation and creation [11, p. 93]. In this sense, the cross is seen not only as an event of salvation, but as an act of maximum linguistic openness: God ‘speaks’ His love to the end, that is, to self-denial and death. This ‘silent’ word of the cross is the ultimate expression of the logos of love, which is the basis of true theonomic rhetoric [3, pp. 95-97]. Christian communication, according to Jüngel, carries this structural pattern – to be faithful to the truth of love, which does not impose but testifies. It is this rhetoric, rooted in the speech of God, who is love, that is called upon to shape the church's evangelism and human relationships in a spirit of dignity, freedom, and deep responsibility.

Results. In Eberhard Jüngel's theology, language is not a neutral tool for transmitting information, but an ontological event in which truth and love are revealed simultaneously. For Jüngel, the logos is not just a word, but God himself, who reveals himself through communication, in particular in the cross of Jesus Christ. It is the cross that is the highest form of God's rhetoric of love – a rhetoric that does not force, but testifies. In this context, Christian communication should follow this model: it should not be a means of control, but a gesture of openness, reciprocity and service to the other.

Jüngel emphasises that love is not only an attribute of God, but His essence: “God is love”. This means that every act of God's expression is an act of love, which is not based on coercion but on freedom. The theologian pays special attention to patience as a form of divine love: God gives a person time and space to respond, and does not act through violence. Such rhetoric is deeply ethical – it is a speech that listens, waits, and invites to relationship. Thus, truth in Jüngel's theology is not an abstract formula, but a living event that transforms both the speaker and the recipient.

The innovative approach of this study lies in the fact that the article proposes, for the first time, an interdisciplinary understanding of Jüngel's rhetoric, in which theological categories are combined with contemporary philosophy of language, rhetoric and communication. This allows us to show more clearly that language in a Christian context can be not only a bearer of truth, but also an event of love that forms a new humane space for communication. This

approach makes a significant contribution to contemporary scientific discussions, as it demonstrates that theonomic rhetoric remains relevant not only in theology, but also in broader social and ethical contexts.

In summary, Eberhard Jüngel's theology not only restores the existential dimension of language, but also has practical significance for contemporary forms of communication. The results obtained can be applied in theology (in particular in preaching, where language should sound like a testimony of love, not condemnation), in the field of communication studies (the formation of discourse that opposes manipulation and hate speech), as well as in intercultural and interfaith dialogue (creating a space of mutual respect and solidarity between different communities). Examples of such applications can be found in preaching, where the rhetoric of love helps to overcome prejudice and revives trust, as well as in interfaith dialogue, where patience as a form of love opens up space for genuine encounter.

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