

Love Does

Message 48

Romans Series

Romans 12:9–21 (CSB)

⁹ Let love be without hypocrisy. Detest evil; cling to what is good. ¹⁰ Love one another deeply as brothers and sisters. Take the lead in honoring one another. ¹¹ Do not lack diligence in zeal; be fervent in the Spirit; serve the Lord. ¹² Rejoice in hope; be patient in affliction; be persistent in prayer. ¹³ Share with the saints in their needs; pursue hospitality. ¹⁴ Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. ¹⁵ Rejoice with those who rejoice; weep with those who weep. ¹⁶ Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud; instead, associate with the humble. Do not be wise in your own estimation. ¹⁷ Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Give careful thought to do what is honorable in everyone's eyes. ¹⁸ If possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. ¹⁹ Friends, do not avenge yourselves; instead, leave room for God's wrath, because it is written, **Vengeance belongs to me; I will repay**, says the Lord. ²⁰ But

If your enemy is hungry, feed him.

If he is thirsty, give him something to drink.

For in so doing

you will be heaping fiery coals on his head.

²¹ Do not be conquered by evil, but conquer evil with good.

Have you ever gone out of your way to help someone, only to find they didn't return the favor?

A. When we were in school, we had a crush on someone, and we shared our snacks, let them peek at our homework, or kept them from getting in trouble.

1. And then you saw them skating with someone else or being super friendly with someone at the pool.

2. Or as an adult, you loan someone a car, help with a bill, babysit their kids, and all of these nice things, and they treat you as nothing.

- a. I gave someone mercy and got none in return.
- b. I gave them grace and they gave me nothing.
- c. I loved them, but that love didn't phase them.

3. We all expect that when we give someone mercy and grace that person should love in return.

B. Notice what the Apostle is saying about God so far in Romans 12:

- 1. Because of God's mercy, we can be living sacrifices.
- 2. Because of God's grace, we are given gifts for the health of the Body of Christ.
- 3. And because of this mercy and grace, we are empowered to love others.

C. It's like when someone pays for our coffee in front of us and tells us to pass it along:

- 1. We didn't deserve that or earn that.
- 2. And because they blessed us, take what you have and show love to someone else.

Mercy and Grace meet their goals only after we love someone else.

Love is hard to define, but we know when we see it, and we know when it's missing.

A. By my count, **there are 29 different commands in one section.**

- 1. All of these actions fall under 1 theme: LOVE
- 2. Some commentators have noted that this can be divided into two parts: love for those in the Church and love for those outside the Church.
 - a. There are really only two groups.
 - b. Those who are part of the Body of Christ and those who are not.

B. The Apostle Paul had just mentioned spiritual gifts.

- 1. Each of the gifts is an expression of grace within the Church...

2. Now, Paul mentions nearly 30 ways we are to show grace and love to those around us.¹

C. At this point this week, I had to make a decision.

1. I could do a 30-week sermon series.
2. I could do a month or two.
3. Or I can give us the 30,000-foot view (which is what I chose).

30,000' View

1. Love “values” the right things

A. Notice what Paul says about love here.

⁹Let love be without hypocrisy. Detest evil; cling to what is good. ¹⁰Love one another deeply as brothers and sisters. Take the lead in honoring one another. ¹¹Do not lack diligence in zeal; be fervent in the Spirit; serve the Lord.

1. Love values truth.
2. Love values what is good.
3. Love values people.
4. Love values honoring others.
5. Love values intensity/zeal.
6. Loves values intensity with the Spirit and service to God.

B. Do you value what loves values?

1. Are you a person who values truth, even when it's painful or costly?
2. Do you love what is good?
3. Do you love people?
4. Do you honor people, or is tearing people down and gossiping your favorite hobbies?

¹ Paul does this in 1 Corinthians also. 1 Cor. 12 talks about the Spiritual Gifts. 1 Cor. 13 is often called the love chapter, but it is really the motive behind the gifts. 1 Cor. 14 combines the Gifts with the Love and shows us how it works in a real setting.

5. Are you fervent and zealous for God more than your kids, your job, your country, your hobbies?

C. The Apostle Paul was concerned that God's people in Rome would love the right way.

1. Pastor Paul is concerned for us to love the right way.

2. We have the great challenge of modeling Christlike love to the nations.

3. But when our "love" is indistinguishable from the world's love, we have a long way to go in the transformation and renewal of our minds.

2. Love "reads" the room.

¹² Rejoice in hope; be patient in affliction; be persistent in prayer. ¹³ Share with the saints in their needs; pursue hospitality. ¹⁴ Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. ¹⁵ Rejoice with those who rejoice; weep with those who weep. ¹⁶ Live in harmony with one another.

A. Do you know people who are terribly awkward around people?

1. Many times, they will laugh when they shouldn't or start crying at weird times.

2. They can't discern sarcasm, or they say things that are very insensitive in the moment.

3. What we would say is that they have a low "Emotional Intelligence." Low EQ

B. The most loving people can read a room.

1. They Rejoice in hope

2. Rejoice when others rejoice.

3. They are lovingly patient when afflicted.

Illustration: To put in human terms, loving people are more like dogs than cats.

a. Dogs are encouraging. If you have had a bad day, they will cuddle or encourage you.

b. Dogs sense sadness and can restore hope like few others of God's creation can.

c. Cats are jerks.

1. If you are having a bad day, a cat will pile on and make it worse.

2. If you are having a great day, the cat will find a way to ruin it.

3. A dog is a man's best friend; but a cat is no one's friend, just your master.
4. Loving people not only know when to rejoice, they actually do rejoice.
5. Loving people not only know when to mourn, but they will mourn with you.

C. Most importantly, Love is persistent in prayer.

1. We can all be persistent in the wrong things.
2. We obsess over what we shouldn't obsess over, and we ignore what we should be persistent in.

3. One of the greatest ways we love people is by being *persistent* in prayer.

- a. Not merely saying a few seconds' prayer, but persisting in prayer.
- b. Interceding for people with intensity and passion.
- c. **Persistent prayer knocks on the Lord's door until He answers.**

Love values the right things, love reads the room, and love values peace.

Love Values Peace

¹⁶Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud; instead, associate with the humble. Do not be wise in your own estimation. ¹⁷Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Give careful thought to do what is honorable in everyone's eyes. ¹⁸If possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.

A. This one is controversial and always has been.

1. We are prone to extremes:
2. We believe that peace means the absence of conflict.
3. Or, we value truth so highly that come across very prideful, vengeful, and end up having no peace with anyone.

B. Peace is not the absence of conflict.

1. Peace is being able to sit in conflict and not have it negatively affect our view of God.
2. You can be in a dangerous situation and have peace.
3. Your circumstances can be awful, and still feel peace.

4. You can be facing the worst day of your life and have peace.
5. You can also have the perfect spouse, the perfect job, perfect health, perfect teeth, and have no peace in your life whatsoever.

C. The Apostle Paul is describing a kind of life where the love of God is so strong in us, we:

1. Don't have to be vengeful because we trust Jesus.
2. We don't have to be prideful, because we know that if Jesus can love me He can love anybody.
3. Want to live honorable lives so that when people see me, they see the goodness of God.
4. You know what kind of life we call this? Peaceful.

D. Peace is not:

1. The absence of noise.
2. The absence of people.
3. The absence of pain.
4. The absence of suffering.

E. Peace is the Love of God poured out upon us.

If we were to ask, "What am I supposed to do with my life?

What am I called to do?"

Not only can we start here, but we can also live here.

IF I SPEND MY LIFE doing these things, I have lived a God-honoring life worth living.

HOW?

1. Transformed and Renewed Thinking

A. One of the big signs of transformation and renewal in our thinking is that our love for others grows.

1. People I formally hated or was taught to hate, I now love and pray for.
2. People I wanted revenge, I pray for their repentance.

B. There are a lot of attitudes and behaviors that are incompatible with Godlike love.

1. When we have the mind of Christ, we won't spout off with ideas that some like Satan.
2. We have a problem in America, from the highest officials all the way down to the kindergarten playground.
3. That problem is a love problem.

C. And not just any love, but Christlike love.

1. Not the hippy "love is love."
2. Not the "you do you" kind of love.
3. But the supernatural love that is supposed to be in us, changing us, and transforming us.

D. Part of role as followers of Jesus is to make that love as clear as we can to the world.

1. We can criticize the world for not being loving when we aren't loving.
2. We can't criticize the world for not loving God when we don't love God.
3. We can't criticize the world for not loving our neighbor when we don't love our neighbor.

E. But this can change as we submit ourselves to the transforming power of the Holy Spirit.

1. Christ's love is supernatural.
2. And he has given us that love so we can love others.
3. Turn off the hate and get into Scripture.
4. Get off the couch and serve others.
5. Let your mind be renewed by God.

2. Intentional Action based upon Intentional Reading

A. We often don't obey Scripture because we don't know Scripture.

1. We don't walk in complete obedience because we don't know what God has said.

2. We are asking God to reveal Himself to us and we don't know what He has already revealed in the Bible.

B. In Verse 9, Paul tells us to: "Cling to what is good."

1. The word cling has the meaning of gluing something.

a. Be glued to good.

b. Detest evil.

2. When we read Scripture like it's important, it changes us.

a. Too many of us read Scripture like our insurance policy or the terms of agreement to a device we just bought.

b. We looked at the page, and we signed on the line or clicked on the "I agree to terms."

c. This kind of reading doesn't change us.

3. We need to be clinging to the good things.

a. We need to break up with the wrong things.

b. We need to be clingy to Jesus.

c. Be more dog like than cat like.

3. Remember there is help.

A. We are empowered by God's grace, love, and faith.

1. Not one of these actions is impossible with God's empowerment.

2. They are hard, but not impossible.

3. Because God has given each of us grace and a measure of faith, we all can do THESE things.

B. Excuses don't work in the Kingdom of God because they are a result of the fall.

1. The first thing Adam does is make excuses for why he couldn't show himself.

2 Then he blames God for giving him Eve who made him do it.

3. Excuses didn't work then, they aren't working now.

4. The good news is that God has given us the power and the victory to live a life that Paul describes in Romans 12.

IF I SPEND MY LIFE doing these things, I have lived a God-honoring life worth living.

A. I don't know where you are in life.

1. Maybe your life is chaotic with work, kids, and everything else.
2. Maybe you are retired and are wondering if there is any meaningful work for you to do.
3. Maybe you are merely trying to survive, and hope that someday you will start thriving again.

B. Whatever and wherever you find yourself, I know this.

1. If I spend my life doing the things of Romans 12, I have lived a God honoring life.

2. If I live my life without hypocrisy,

If I live my life detesting evil;

If I live my life clinging to what is good.

If I live my life ¹⁰ Loving one another deeply as brothers and sisters.

If I live my life Taking the lead in honoring one another. ¹

If I live my life not lacking diligence in zeal; being fervent in the Spirit; serving the Lord.

¹² Rejoicing in hope; being patient in affliction; being persistent in prayer.

¹³ Sharing with the saints in their needs;

pursuing hospitality.

⁴ Blessing those who persecute me; blessing and do not cursing.

¹⁵ Rejoicing with those who rejoice;

weeping with those who weep.

Living in harmony with one another. Not being proud; instead, associating with the humble.

Not being wise in your own estimation.

not repaying anyone evil for evil.

Giving careful thought to do what is honorable in everyone's eyes. ¹⁸ living at peace with everyone.

If I devote myself to these things, we have fulfilled the Call of God upon our lives.

Let us be those kinds of people.