

Let Love Be Genuine – Romans 12:9a, 10a

We are in a “love” driving culture. Everything is about love, passion, romance but there is very little in the way of responsibility, work, forbearance and even self – sacrifice. As Christians, we are called to love. But do we fully understand what that love, or true love, is? How does this love categorize itself differently than the “love” of the world?

Paul, in verses 3-8 is talking about using our Spiritual gifts to serve God. But in verse 9, he shifts over to being and behaving like believers should behave within that covenant. This is the standard by which all other things are measured.

- I. Let Love be without hypocrisy
 - a. Love
 - i. Agape
 1. This is the love that God had for the world – John 3:16
 2. This is the love that comes from the Holy Spirit – Galatians 5:22
 3. This is the love that must manifest itself from a life that is led by the Spirit
 - ii. Some thoughts.
 1. With lawlessness, this love grows cold – Matthew 24:12¹
 - a. We see this in many homes and nations around the world
 - b. Last couple of weeks, a mother in NJ was arrested for murdering her 5-day old son because, “She didn’t want him”
 2. This is the love that will show the world whether we are the disciples of God or not – John 13:35
 3. Love is the fulfillment of the law – Romans 13:10 (fits very true with Matthew 23:37-40)
 4. This is the love that can only come from the Holy Spirit
 - b. But notice the charge...it is to be without hypocrisy.
 - i. What this tells me is that even though this love is a gift from God, we, as humans, can manipulate this gift.
 - ii. Without Hypocrisy is also translated as sincerity or being genuine
 - iii. There are many who love...but they love out of a pretense to gain.
- II. Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love – Romans 12:10a
 - a. This word is not in contrast to Agape, but instead its for the practical outworking of Agape.
 - b. This word:
 - i. Is representative of a co-patriot and a partner
 - ii. It is based on a covenant relationship based upon our shared faith in Jesus Christ and Him alone (Not Him and something else- this is heresy).
 - iii. Even the word found in Scripture, with its meaning, limits itself ONLY TO OTHER TRUE CHRISTIANS
 - c. It is a love that is to be between the body of believers.

¹ Matthew 24:12 - “And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold.”

- i. It is to be a love that grows – 1 Thessalonians 4:9-10²
 - ii. It is to be a constant – Hebrews 13:1
 - iii. It is what is to be added in our growth of faith (Note: This love progresses to Agape...the first love)– 1 Peter 1:5-7
- III. Let us now turn the proverbial mirror to ourselves. Let us match our lives against what we are about to learn through this love!
 - a. What should this love do in us and through us? (I will give the basis...let us each evaluate ourselves to see the practicality itself.)
 - i. It will cause us to look out for others even to our own grief - Romans 14:15³
 - ii. It will cause us to long for, and join in prayer - Romans 15:30
 - iii. It will cause us to edify (build up) others higher than ourselves - 1 Corinthians 8:1
 - iv. It will bring us to many different actions - 1 Corinthians 13:4-8 (Not just for a husband and wife)
 - v. It will be the lens that we filter all of our actions through - 1 Corinthians 16:14⁴
 - vi. It will give us the standards by which we work with and operate with each other as believers not only as corporate body but as individual believers - Ephesians 4:2, 16
 - vii. It will cause us to consider each other to stir up love and motivate each other to good works - Hebrews 10:24
 - 1. This means that we may have to confront.
 - a. And yes, this can also be love
 - b. Sadly, in the church, we are helping people to the pit of hell itself because we would rather “love” someone than tell them the truth.
 - 2. We help others to grow
 - a. This love is a call to be used by God to help each other grow. By not following this, we are denying a very powerful truth – Proverbs 27:17⁵
 - b. Each one of the effects should cause us to evaluate our actions and reactions. (Notice it is outward from us...NEVER INWARD TOWARD US)
 - c. This love demands a change of heart and mind and a refocus of who we are and what we do.
 - b. This covenant of love is a picture of something else that is even higher!
 - i. Each aspect of love and brotherly love was completely illustrated by Jesus during His life.

² 1 Thessalonians 4:9–10 - “But concerning brotherly love you have no need that I should write to you, for you yourselves are taught by God to love one another; and indeed you do so toward all the brethren who are in all Macedonia. But we urge you, brethren, that you increase more and more;”

³ Romans 14:15 - “Yet if your brother is grieved because of your food, you are no longer walking in love. Do not destroy with your food the one for whom Christ died.”

⁴ 1 Corinthians 16:14 - “Let all that you do be done with love.”

⁵ Proverbs 27:17 - “As iron sharpens iron, So a man sharpens the countenance of his friend.”

1. He loved unconditionally (Not loving the individual including the sin but loving despite the sin). – Romans 5:8
 2. He confronted sin – (The woman at the well, the hypocrisy of the Pharisees)
 3. He didn't love to gain for He had nothing to earn (dead animal illustration) – Matthew 13:45-46⁶
- ii. Therefore, it is up to us to exhibit this as well.
1. This is true if we claim to be followers of Jesus – 1 Corinthians 11:1
 2. This is true if we claim that we are in fellowship with Jesus – 1 John 1:6-7
 3. This is especially true if we are part of the covenant of Christ – Mark 14:24⁷

⁶ **Matthew 13:45–46** - “Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls: Who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it.”

⁷ **Mark 14:24** - “And He said to them, “This is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many.”