

August 20 2023
Romans 12:9-21
What is Love?

How do you know that you are a true Christian? What is the evidence that you are a true believer of Jesus Christ?

Romans 12:9-21

9 Let love be genuine. Abhor what is evil; hold fast to what is good. **10** Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor. **11** Do not be slothful in zeal, be fervent in spirit, serve the Lord. **12** Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer. **13** Contribute to the needs of the saints and seek to show hospitality.

14 Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. **15** Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. **16** Live in harmony with one another. Do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly. Never be wise in your own sight. **17** Repay no one evil for evil, but give thought to do what is honorable in the sight of all. **18** If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. **19** Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord." **20** To the contrary, "if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals on his head." **21** Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

[**Short Summary:** Key Points]

Romans 12:1-8

- When you present your body as a Living Sacrifice then you will know the Will of God.
- Why your body? Because God wants to use your body as a base of operation to do His Will. You are the vessel and instrument in which God's speaks through. "**Ambassador for Christ**"
- **Humility** and Measure of Faith.

So what does the word humility mean?

Humility means "Lowly in Mind"

- Humility to place your mind under God.

What is the evidence or fruit that shows you have humility?

Isaiah 66:2 Amplified Bible

"For all these things My hand has made,
So all these things came into being [by and for Me]," declares the Lord. "But to this one I will look [graciously],
To him who is **humble** and **contrite in spirit**, and who
[reverently] **trembles at My word** and **honors My commands**."

Humble means to **tremble** at **God's Word** and **honors God's commands**.

When you are trembling at God's Word and honor God's commands, your going to see some **positive results in your spiritual life**. like:

- What is my next step in life?
- Marriage / Relationship / Finance
- Or even conflicts in life. When you "**tremble at God's Word**" your going to see **conflicts turn to resolution**. Broken relationship become united.
- Why "humility"? God wants to start a new character trait in you.

- So when you don't tremble at God's Word then there is **no spiritual difference** in your life. Your *not going to have Peace in your mind and heart*. You will be at constant **spiritual warfare** with no end in sight.
- **No "trembling of God's Word" = Spiritual Warfare** "Tremble at God's Word" = Victory

But what does that mean to **"tremble"** at God's Word or **to be humble before God**? What does that look like?

John 3:30 (NLT)

He must become greater and greater, and I must become less and less.

- God your Word says this, but I'm struggling with what you say for me to do, so help me God to do it your way? I don't want to do it my way. ***You take control.***
- God, help me so that your Spirit is greater than my flesh.
- God, I don't know how to forgive that person, so I need you to take over my heart, so I can truly forgive.
- So tremble at God's Word simply means for **us surrender our body to God** and **let our body to obey God's Voice**.

So, when you **present your body** as a living sacrifice before God, then the Lord shows you **God's Will for you** in His timing. And because your **not conforming like the world**, then He starts to **renewal your mind** like Christ. And as you **humble yourself** before the Lord, you start to think with **sound mind**, then God starts to see that you are ready to be effective in your ministry. That's why God will start to pour out **spiritual gifts** but by the **measure of faith**. To the proportion that you can serve in the season you are in.

These are **not structure commands** like you have to do these in steps or building blocks, where you have to follow one by one. No, these are **natural progression** of someone who **truly repents** before God and desire for a life change. “Lord, I come before you, **use me.**”

These are just **natural spiritual progression** of someone who presents there body to God. Just start with, “**God, here I am. I present my body to you.**”

But how do you practice your salvation in real life? Or, how do you live out your salvation with other people? (**Romans 12, 13, 14, 15**)

Romans 12 has two principles:

1. Present your body to God to know God’s Will (**Vertical**)
2. Present your body to God to show God’s Love (**Horizontal**)

Remember Jesus said the Two Greatest Commandments are to Love God, then love your neighbor.

Paul is now saying is that now that you have presented your Body as a Living Sacrifice, now I’m going to show how you present your body as a living sacrifice to your neighbors.

Paul is addressing the Horizontal

Romans 12:9-10

9 Let **love be genuine**. Abhor what is evil; hold fast to what is good. 10 Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor.

Paul at the beginning, “**Let love be genuine.**” Why is he saying this to Christians who already believes God. **Shouldn't Christians already know how to love genuinely?**

Now this is where most people get confused with love because this word in the original language is different.

Because in English, If I say, “**I love my wife,**” is that the same way as “**I love cookie's and cream ice-cream?**”

So, am I saying that **my wife and ice cream deserves the same love?** Which do I choose, my wife or my ice-cream?

The Greek Words on the meaning of “Love”:

Koine Greek:

- The word “Koine” means “common.”
- It's the common language at the time of Jesus (New Testament)
- This language died about 300 years after the death of Jesus.

You are going to learn the “**common**” Greek words about “**Love.**”

Phillia (phileō): [Pronounced: **fil-eh'-o**] Refers to feelings one has towards close friends “brotherly love” This word was used in the New Testament to describe Jesus' love for his disciples in (John 20:2) and for Lazarus (John 11:3).

- One of the way of showing brotherly love was a **kiss of greeting** or a **welcoming kiss**. This is what they did in ancient near east and still do in the middle east.
- Philadelphia is called a city of brotherly love.

Eros has TWO ideas:

1. This Greek term is where the word “erotic” is derived from. The word “Eros” describes romantic or sexual love and the idea of “eros” is self satisfaction.
2. Eros describes the healthy, common expressions of physical love. In the Scriptures, *eros* primarily refers to those expressions of love carried out between a husband and wife. (1 Corinthians 7:8-9, Song of Solomon 1:2-4, Song of Solomon 7:6-8). This is God approved “**eros**.” And, **everything else is idolatry**.

Storge (natural affection): This Greek word refers to love we have for our parents, siblings, our children and other members of our family. (Romans 1:31)

Agape (*agapaō*): (Pronounced **ag-ap-ah’-o**) This love is defined as love for all men. It is a selfless kind of love that Christians must have in regard to acting in the **best interest for all human beings** (John 3:16). Paul’s definition of *agapē* love is the word **hesed (Greek)**, a word often translated “**lovingkindness**” (King James) or “**steadfast love**” (Revised Standard). **Hesed** is a combination of “**love**” and “**loyalty**.”

Psalms 136:1-3

- Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good,
for his **steadfast love** endures forever.
- 2 Give thanks to the God of gods,
for his **steadfast love** endures forever.
- 3 Give thanks to the Lord of lords,
for his **steadfast love** endures forever;

This basically means that **God’s love for you never quits**.

God’s Mercy = Steadfast love that never quits = Agape

So now God is asking you to Agape to Him (vertical) and then Agape (horizontal) to our neighbors.

Matthew 22:37-39

37 And he said to him, “**You shall love** the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. **38** This is the great and first commandment. **39** And a second is like it: **You shall love** your neighbor as yourself.

So as you love God through (**agapaō**) (my love will never quit God) now go and love the same (**agapaō**) with your neighbor and Love them with genuine heart.

So my next questions were:

What does that genuine love look like? How do I love people genuinely?

Romans 12:9 (ESV)

Let **love be genuine**.

Romans 12:9 NLT

Don't just pretend to love others. Really love them.

Romans 12:9 New King James Version

Let love be without hypocrisy.

The Word “**without hypocrisy**” in Greek is ***anypokritos*** pronounced “***an-oo-pok'-ree-tos***”

In Greek theater an “***an-oo-pok'-ree-tos***” was an actor. In the Greek stage or in the theater, there wasn't much of the back ground. There is no green screen (computer images) or any props that would make your story be entertaining. So basically, you had **no supporting**

background for your story. So actors would wear costumes or simply they would put on a mask. In fact to show different characters, they would put on different masks for each character.

[**Show illustrations of mask**] : They would have sticks with different expressions (happy or sad faces). So the word “hypocrite” would basically mean, someone who wears a mask or is an actor.

Let love be genuine means let your love be without a mask.

So, what Paul is basically saying is that let your love, your agape with fellow Christians be sincere, without a mask.

Remember that **Philia** (**phileō**): [Pronounced: **fil-eh'-o**] that friendship love and remember that one of the way you show the **Phileo** love was to give a **greeting kiss**.

And remember when Judas one of the original 12 disciples sold Jesus out for few pieces of silver. He met Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane with other soldiers from the temple. And how did He greet Jesus? He greeted Jesus with a kiss and Jesus said:

Luke 22:48

but Jesus said to him, “Judas, would you betray the Son of Man with a kiss?”

Judas with with Jesus for three years and for all those three years he was a hypocrite (he had a **mask on**) and didn't love others genuinely.

So what Paul is saying is:

- Let love be genuine
- Let love be without hypocrisy
- Love without a mask on

Romans 12:9

Let love be genuine. **Abhor** what is evil; hold fast to what is good.

Romans 12:9 New Living Translation

Don't just pretend to love others. Really love them. **Hate what is wrong**. Hold tightly to what is good.

So this is the mark of a True Christian:

Let love be genuine but "**Hate what is wrong**":

Hate in Greek **apostygeō** and pronounced "**ap-os-toog-eh'-o**"

- to dislike, abhor, have a horror of (**avoid this at all cost**)

I want you to love this but hate that. Why? Why can't you just be tolerant and accept every body?

- "If that's what you believe then that's fine with me."
- "If that is your lifestyle then, God will still love you." (**No!!!!**)

Part of an authentic and genuine love of being a true Christian, **is to hate what God hates**. If you don't hate what God hates, then you will not grow spiritually.

- God's character is that He hates evil.
- God hates unrighteousness
- But God loves what is Good
- God really hates hypocrites

So when you think of evil, most people think of things like stealing, murder, lying, adultery and things like that, right, and **God disapproves of these things**, right. But with stealing, lying, adultery can all be changed when you repent and make things right before God. **Romans 10:9**

Romans 5:8 but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

But this is what God really hates:

Isaiah 1:12-14 New Living Translation

12 When you come to worship me, who asked you to parade through my courts with all your ceremony?

13 Stop bringing me your meaningless gifts; the incense of your offerings disgusts me! As for your celebrations of the new moon and the Sabbath and your special days for fasting— they are all sinful and false. I want no more of your pious meetings.

14 I hate your new moon celebrations and your annual festivals. They are a burden to me. I cannot stand them! **[God is talking to His chosen people, to the Jews]**

These priest (they know the law) were tolerant of the people giving and offering to God half hearted (**like Cain**). They didn't care if they gave sacrifice that wasn't that good or high in quality. **They ritually gave but their heart was far from them.**

That's why Paul rebuked the church in Corinth because they tolerated sexual immorality in the church and that spread to other members of the body.

Paul rebuked the church in Galatia because they tolerated the legalism of religion above relationship with God.

Jesus rebuked The church at Thyatira saying I have this against you. You tolerate that women Jezebel.

Revelation 2:20 New Living Translation

“But I have this complaint against you. You are permitting that woman—that Jezebel who calls herself a prophet—to lead my servants astray. She teaches them to commit sexual sin and to eat food offered to idols.

Paul is saying that the true mark of being a Christian is that your love be genuine and not a fake, but **hate and don't tolerate evil, especially in God's house.**

Do you hate the evil within?

So what Paul is saying that you need to rebuke the evil that is outside of you and do not tolerate the evil on the inside.

- But here is the most important message about hating evil, is for you to hate the evil that is inside of you.

1 Corinthians 6:19-20

19 Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, **20** for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.

That's why Paul is saying, hold onto to what is good. Hold fast and hold it tight to what you know to be true and right with God.

Why, because it is evil that's going to stain you and divide you between you and God.

