

Living with Authentic Love Romans 12:9-16

Our Standards in Love:

In authentic love we sincerely love what is right and hate what is wrong. Romans 12:9

"Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil; cling to what is good." Vs. 9

Psalm 119:163

Our Motive for Love:

In authentic love we serve the Lord by properly loving people. Romans 12:10-12

"Be devoted to one another in brotherly love..." Vs. 10

- **I offer a tender affection to others.** Vs. 10
- **I take the lead in showing preference for another.** Vs. 10; Philippians 2:3-4
- **I love with enthusiasm and diligence.** Vs. 11; I Peter 2:22-23
- **I joyfully maintain hope for others.** Vs. 12
- **I persevere for others even when in distress.** Vs. 12; II Corinthians 1:4
- **I am devoted to praying for others.** Vs. 12; I Samuel 12:23

Our Demonstration of Love:

In authentic love we care for the needs of others. Romans 12:13

"...contributing to the needs of the saints, practicing hospitality." Acts 2:44-45; I John 3:10, 17-19

Our Challenge in Love:

In authentic love we still love in persecution and suffering. Romans 12:14-15

"Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse." Acts 7:59-60; Luke 23:24

The Basis of this Kind of Love:

We express authentic love when we have a heart of humility. Romans 12:16

"Be of the same mind toward one another; do not be haughty in mind, but associate with the lowly. Do not be wise in your own estimation." Philippians 2:3-8

Digging Deeper

The greatest chapter in the Bible on this topic of love is I Corinthians 13. Even as Paul calls us to love sincerely in Romans 12, he describes the qualities of authentic love in action in I Corinthians 13. The columns below list those qualities of love in I Corinthians 13:4-7. The second column describes the opposite of those love traits so we can evaluate and compare how we are living up to that standard of love. Reflect on the following actions and assess how you are doing in pursuing and living according to this kind of love.

LifeGroup Discussion:

1. Take time to evaluate yourself on each item below. In which column do you find yourself? On a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being full of love, how would you rate yourself? Where can you grow?

If I love, I will...

Be patient
Be kind
Not be jealous
Not brag
Not be arrogant
Not act unbecomingly
Not seek my own
Not be provoked
Not take wrongs into account
Not rejoice in unrighteousness
Rejoice with the truth
Bear all things
Believe all things
Hope all things
Endure all things

If I do not love, I will....

Seek revenge, be angry
Do nothing to help, be selfish
Wish others did not do so well
Believe my thoughts and deeds are more important
Be self-centered, life is about me
Be rude, not caring if I offend others
Be more concerned with my needs than those of others
Be angry, bitter, and resentful
Hold resentments against others
Gossip, talk about other's faults
Lie, deceive, expose negative qualities of others
Expose other's sin and faults
Expect the worse, negative thoughts
Give up on someone
Break off relationships and plans

Love does not mean you accept all behaviors of people so you always seem so loving and tolerant of all. Romans 12:9 says that we should abhor or hate what is evil and cling to what is good. Love does not mean I have to give into evil behavior. In fact, God does hate some behaviors. That means we should never support or endorse evil things in attempting to sound more loving.

2. What does God hate in the following verses?
Psalm 97:10; Psalm 119:104, 128, 163; Proverbs 8:13, Proverbs 13:5; Proverbs 28:16; Proverbs 6:16-19.
Do you hate these things? How should a believer in Jesus express such hatred? Read Psalm 1:1, 2 for ways we can express that hatred and live in our society.
3. Romans 12:13 describes a way to express love. What is it? How did the first church express this love in Acts 2:44, 45? How can you or your LifeGroup express this kind of love? What does I John 3:10, 17-19 teach us about this kind of love in action?
4. Romans 12:14 calls us to bless those that persecute us.
How have you had to express love in that difficult situation? How can we pray for you?

Next Steps:

1. Join a LifeGroup for continued support in living this life of love. We are not created by God to love this way on our own or in our own strength.
2. Check out our website for places to express love to others in acts of service.
3. Get involved with one of Calvary's Grow ministries to help you grow in your faith. This could be receiving prayer, counseling, spiritual direction, discipleship, finding a LifeGroup, or attending the Core LifeLab 201: How to Grow. Find out more at calvarylife.org/grow

