

## **“How to Love and Live Better”**

**Romans 12:9-10**

**February 19, 2017**

Being a better lover is the key to living life better. Loving others is something Jesus did very well ... and we can actually mimic His kind of love toward:

- |                    |                   |               |
|--------------------|-------------------|---------------|
| -- Spouse.         | -- Friends.       | -- Boss.      |
| -- Dating partner. | -- Co-workers.    | -- Neighbors. |
| -- Strangers.      | -- Church family. | -- Customers. |

Even your ENEMIES! Matthew 5:44 (NLT), Jesus said, “But I say, love your *enemies*! Pray for those who persecute you!” If love even works on an enemy, it must be some powerful stuff. Let’s see how the Apostle Paul dealt with this issue ...

### **A. Love genuinely.**

Romans 12:9-10, Don’t just pretend to love others. Really love them ... <sup>10</sup> Love each other with genuine affection, and take delight in honoring each other..

- There IS pretend love.
- Real love involves
  - genuine affection.
  - Delighting in their honor. Love LIFTS others.
- ILLY: “Antiques Road Show” is a TV program where you can bring some old thing in to see if it have any value. The experts on the show can spot a fake easily. What are some signs of “pretend love”? 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 (NLT)
  - Love is not jealous
  - or boastful
  - or proud
  - or rude.
  - It does not demand its own way.
  - It is not irritable,
  - and it keeps no record of being wronged.
  - It does not rejoice about injustice.

- Genuine Love is modeled upon Jesus: Philippians 2:5-7 (NIV), Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus ... he made himself nothing, taking on the very nature of a servant.

## **B. Stick yourself to good.**

Romans 12:9b, "... Hate what is wrong. Hold tightly to what is good."

- What do you abhor? What disgusts you? That's how we're to feel about doing wrong.
- Hate is a strong word ... intentionally used here by Paul to alert us to the danger of tolerating wrong in our lives.
- There IS an alternative to being stuck in the bad stuff! You can cling to the good stuff.
- ILLY: "Hold tightly" means to "glue yourself to what is good." Have you ever found yourself glued to something with SuperGlue? You're amazed at how tight that bond can be, to the point of tearing skin or hair. The idea of this verse is for God to be amazed at how glued we are to what is good.
- Let's go back to 1 Cor. 13:4-7 (NLT) to see what the good stuff looks like:
  - Love is patient,
  - love is kind.
  - rejoices with the truth.
  - It always protects,
  - always trusts,
  - always hopes,
  - always perseveres.

**EXPERIMENTAL MAIN POINT:** Pour your life into lifting others up and doing good ... and see what happens.

A closing prayer ... "Dear God, we know love is the answer. We know it. Now, help our actions and emotions catch up to the high ideal of servant-love shown by Jesus. Amen."