

**I. Introduction.**

- A. God's love for us is the very first thing. Ro. 12:1a 5:8 8:35,39 I Jo. 4:9-10 John 3:16
- B. Our love for God comes next. Rom. 12:1b-2 Mt. 22:36-38
- C. Finally, our love for one another flows out of God's love for us. I Jo. 4:11,19

**II. Love is sincere. v. 9a II Co. 6:6**

- A. Why does Paul begin his moral exhortations with love? I Th. 4:9 I Pe. 1:22 He. 13:1
  - 1. Love is the summary of God's law. 13:8 Mark 12:28-34
  - 2. Love is the central demand of the New Covenant. John 13:34-35
  - 3. Love is the first and greatest of Christian virtues. I Co. 13:13 Gal. 5:22
- B. While we all favor love, love is not easy.
  - 1. We are by nature selfish. Mt. 22:39 Phil. 2:1-4 II Tim. 3:2
  - 2. Some people (even in the church community) are very hard to love.
- C. In what ways can love be tainted by hypocrisy?
  - 1. Love which playacts.
  - 2. Feigned love which hides hatred. Luke 22:48 Ps. 55:21
  - 3. Insincere love which has ulterior motives.
  - 4. Mistaking feelings of passion or infatuation for love.
- D. Instead, love must be genuine. I Co. 13:4-6 I John 4:7-11 3:18
  - 1. We are to love others as God has loved us. I Jo. 4:11
  - 2. Biblical love is not limited by the merit or the performance of the beloved.
  - 3. Biblical love is more than a feeling. It is defined by commitment and action.
  - 4. Is it insincere to do the right thing, even if you don't *feel* like it?
  - 5. Must you first love yourself? II Ti. 3:2 Mt. 22:39

**III. Love is discerning. v. 9b**

- A. True love hates (what is evil). I Th. 5:22
  - 1. Love is not mere mushy sentiment.
  - 2. God, Who is Love, hates wickedness. Prov. 6:16-19 Ps. 101:4 Co. 3:5-6 Is. 1:12ff Amos 5:21 Heb. 1:9 John 2:13ff
  - 3. If you love God, you will hate what God hates. Prov. 8:13 Ps. 97:10 Amos 5:15 Eph. 5:3-4 Jude 1:23 Ga. 5:19-21
  - 4. If you love others, you will want God's best for them. I Co. 13:6,5a Heb. 13:4
- B. True love clings to what is good. Phil. 4:8-9 I Co. 13:6 I Th. 5:21 Ps. 1:1ff
  - 1. When you have a renewed mind, you have a new idea of what is good. 12:2
  - 2. You love what God loves. Ps. 1:2 Ga. 5:22f
  - 3. True love seeks to enhance what is good for the beloved. Eph. 5:25-27
- C. Are you helping one another to avoid evil and seek good?

**IV. Love cares deeply. v. 10a**

- A. Be devoted to one another in the family of God. v. 10a
  - 1. We have a special affection for one another, simply because we are brothers and sisters in Christ. 8:14-15 I John 5:1 4:9-11 3:10 I Th. 4:9

2. Just as there is no perfect family, there is no perfect church.
3. To be in a family, you have to have a thick skin.
4. In order to be a family, you must spend time together building relationships.  
1 Thess: 2:17-3:13
5. Being part of the family involves serving and encouraging one another. 12:3-8  
Co. 3:16 He. 10:24-25 Rom. 15:14
6. Being in a family makes you emotionally vulnerable. v. 15

**B. Do you have a familial affection for your fellow believers? II Co. 6:11-13**

1. Our church is a family.
2. Some, however, are still on the fringe.
3. Do you see the church as “them” or “us”?
4. We need to work at deepening relationships in our church family.
5. Our love is an important part of our witness.

**V. Love shows honor. v. 10b**

**A. Do you treat every member of the church family with respect? I Co. 12:23-24 1:26ff**

1. Don’t seek honor for yourself. 12:3 Lu. 14:8-10 17:10 I Co. 13:4b-5b I Ti. 1:15
2. Put others first. Phil. 2:3
3. Treat everyone with respect. 15:7

**B. Encourage and appreciate one another.**

1. Commending one another is biblical. Rom. 1:8ff I Co. 1:4ff Phil. 1:3ff Rev. 2-3
2. Value the gifts and graces of other believers.

**VI. Concluding applications.**

**A. People are starving for love which is sincere, discerning, caring, honoring.**

**B. Our Lord Jesus exemplifies true love.**

1. He has proven the sincerity of His love. v. 9a John 15:13
2. Jesus seeks our good and delivers us from wickedness. v. 9b Eph. 5:25ff Ti. 2:14
3. Our Lord Jesus cares for us as His brethren. v. 10a 8:15,35 Mt. 12:46-50  
Mk. 10:29-30
4. Jesus put our interests ahead of His own. v. 10b Phil. 2:5 Rev. 2-3
5. He makes us a community of love. I Co. 10:16-17

**C. He offers His love to you today.**

**D. When you know His love, you can love as He loves. I John 4:19**

**Discussion questions for family worship.**

1. What is wrong with the world’s idea of love?
2. What love is the most important love?
3. How important is it that you love yourself?
4. How are people guilty of hypocritical love?
5. In what sense must a good lover be a good hater?
6. What can you (we) do to deepen family affection among us?
7. How can we show greater honor to one another?
8. How does Christ exemplify the love of which Paul speaks?