



ROMANS

The Gospel of God

The Gospel of Redeemed Love!

Romans 12:9-21

Message #27 of 33 – S1158

Sermon given on July 13, 2025



Sunday Morning Service

Pastor Rick Lancaster

The Gospel of Redeemed Love!

Romans 12:9-21

Opening Comments

- Open your Bibles to **Romans 12**
- Today, we continue the series through the letter to the Romans – **The Gospel of God!**
- Let's open this time in our service with a word of prayer. - **Pray**

Teaching

- **The Gospel of Redeemed Love!**
- One of the things we discover after we come to faith is that God wants to change us to make us better, more like His Son Christ Jesus.

Romans 12:2

And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

- He changes us from the inside out.
- As we yield to the work of the Holy Spirit, He transforms our mind so that we think more like Christ.
- As our thinking changes, eventually our behaviors change.
- The way we interact with God and the world is changed as our mind is transformed by the Holy Spirit.
- One of the primary changes that must happen in our mind is our understanding of love. Why is that the main one?
- Jesus was asked a question in **Matthew 22:35-40**.
³⁵ Then one of them, a lawyer, asked *Him a question*, testing Him, and saying,
³⁶ “Teacher, which *is* the great commandment in the law?” ³⁷ Jesus said to him,
“ ‘*You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.*’ ³⁸ This is *the* first and great commandment. ³⁹ And *the* second is like it: ‘*You shall love your neighbor as yourself.*’ ⁴⁰ On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.”
- The one thing we can do to please God is to love Him with our whole being and to love others more than we love ourselves.
- The problem we have is that our minds need to be transformed so that we understand love from God's perspective, not our own, or the twisted views of the world.

- We need our minds renewed about what it means to love God and love others. I don't say that as an expert on the topic.
- I need my mind renewed, maybe even more than most of you.
- The rest of this chapter Paul's rapid-fire list of topics we need to let God, the Holy Spirit work on renewing in our mind.
- There are too many for us to drill down deeply into.
- My encouragement to you is don't tell yourself you have any of them mastered.
- Perfection is our goal, and we all need to work on each one of these.
- Some may be more urgent than others, but as your faith grows you realize you need to keep working on loving God and others.
- **Romans 12:9**
- "Let love be without hypocrisy." The ESV renders that phrase as, 'Let love be genuine.' We should not be faking it.
- When we love it should be real love, sincere and genuine.
- The word that Paul uses for love is 'agape'.
- We often hear this described as the unconditional, sacrificial love of God, which is true.
- What that means when we are loving other people is that we choose to express love to others in a way that puts their best interests over our own.
- True agape love is loving without need or expectation of a response from the person being loved.
- It is a love that gives without any thought of getting anything in return. It is one-sided in its expression.
- For a worldly perspective, it is unfair; it gives without getting anything back in return.
- That doesn't mean that people who love like this never get a response, it just means they don't need a response to keep on loving.
- In a marriage, I am called to love my wife unconditionally and sacrificially.
- That means I love her without any expectation of a response from her.

- My wife, Kelly, is also a Christ-follower and is commanded by God to love me unconditionally and sacrificially without expectation of a response from me.
- Because we are both trying in the power of the Holy Spirit to love with an agape love, we do respond to each other and experience the blessing of mutual agape love.
- Agape love is giving the other person what they need even if it means you don't get something you want or need.
- If I love my wife or any other person God calls me to love without consideration for my own needs, I trust God to meet my needs.
- Paul seems to shift gears with this next one, but it does flow.
- "Abhor what is evil." The word 'abhor' means to hate or to loathe.
- It makes sense that Paul would exhort us to hate evil right after telling us to love sincerely.
- You cannot love sincerely while you are flirting with evil.
- First, we need to understand what evil is.
- Evil is the opposite of good. Good is what God is.
- God is good, all the time.
- We need to allow the Holy Spirit to teach us, not what is evil, but what is God, what is good!
- The better I know who God is and what He says is good, the more I should grow to hate evil.
- For example, how does God feel about pride? He hates it, right?

James 4:6

God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble.

- Pride is sin, and we all will struggle with it from time to time.
- The question we need to ask ourselves, do I hate my own pride?
- The same is true of all sins, do you abhor, hate, and loathe the sin in your life.
- If it is still there, you might not hate it enough.
- The counter to that is, 'Cling to what is good.'
- Very often, to deal with the sin or evil in your life you need to replace it with something good.

- A person who struggles with things like pornography, getting high or drunk, or gets angry, or worries, needs to replace those things with something good, something of God. If you need help, ask for help.
- Paul has been talking generally about people.
- Next, he addresses our relationship with other believers.
- **Romans 12:10**
- In verse 9, Paul said our love should be sincere.
- Love is one of the pillars of our faith.
- Jesus said that was how the rest of the world would know that we are His followers. **John 13:34-35**
- ³⁴ **A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. ³⁵ By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.**
- Love ought to be motivation for everything we do, first loving God, and then loving others.
- Notice the phrase ‘one another’. This is pointing to the relationship a Christ-follower has with other believers.
- It is not uncommon in the church to hear someone to refer to others as brother or sister.
- This is communicating the reality that we are all part of the family of God.
- We are spiritually related to one another through Christ.
- There are two Greek words used in the first part of this verse that are important for us to understand.
- The phrase ‘kindly affectionate’ is the Greek word ‘philostorgos’.
- Philostorgos: being very affectionate, devoted, loving dearly.**
- This is a love that is devoted to another person.
- It is deeper and more committed than the love we are called to show the world.
- The next Greek gives us a sense of the depth.
- Philadelphia – brotherly love.**
- The city of Philadelphia is nicknamed the city of brotherly love, probably because that is what the word means, not because of their attitude toward one another.
- So, what is Paul telling us here.

- He is telling us to treat other Christ-followers like they are part of our biological family.
- As Christ-followers we are called by God to love everyone.
- God even gives us the love we need so we can do that. **Romans 5:5**
Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us.
- We are all able to love everyone, but we are not called to love everyone the same way.
- I love my wife differently than I would love any other woman.
- I express my love to her in way that I would never do with another woman – it would be sinful to do so.
- The way we express love must be based upon the biblical instructions God gave us through His Word.
- The phrase ‘kindly affectionate’ includes the idea of devotion.
- That’s what differentiates this love from the love I express to the rest of the world.
- The love I express to the rest of the world is opportunistic.
- If an opportunity arises for me to express love to someone in the world I do.
- If God puts someone in my path, He wants me to express some amount of His love.
- It might be as simple as a smile or a kind word, or it might be to share the gospel.
- There is no devotion or commitment to them.
- When the opportunity passes the commitment ends.
- With the love we are to express and show to the family of God there is an ongoing commitment of devotion to one another.
- The people in this are not just the church who go to the same church you do. They are family.
- That means we are to care about each other and care for each other.
- And to do it, as verse nine tells us, without hypocrisy, with sincerity.
- And yes, some of them might be a little strange, maybe even annoying, but they are family.

- The second part of verse ten says respect each other and puts others, especially fellow-Christ-followers ahead of ourselves. **Philippians 2:3-4**

Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. ⁴ Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.

- That's as far as we are going to get this morning.
- We will finish the rest of the chapter in two weeks.
- Next week Pastor David is going to begin a series in the Old Testament book of Joshua.
- When we started the church over twenty years ago, that was the first book I taught through.
- Brothers and sisters, as we prepare to close, I would like you to reflect on the reality that we are family.
- In a few minutes we are going to partake of Communion together, remembering how we became family.
- God expressed His love in the most profound way possible, He gave us His Son. **John 3:16**

For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

- He also gave us His love letter to the world, the Word of God, the Bible.
- And then so that we might know His love in our heart, God gave us His Holy Spirit.
- It is not a trite thing to say God loves you.
- He proved His love two-thousand years ago and He proves it every day.
- And now He asks us to be conduits of His love into the world around us. That seems reasonable to me.
- The guys are going to come and distribute the elements.
- Please hold onto them and we will partake together.
- While they are doing that, we will take a little and reflect on God's love.
- Also, ask Him if you are loving how He wants you to.
- Let's pray and ask the Holy Spirit to stir our spiritual gifts.
- **Pray! Last Song!**