

# “LOVE IN ACTION; A LIFE OF SURRENDER FOR CHRIST”

Romans 12:9-21

## INTRODUCTION:

When you look at these thirteen verses we have just read, there is one thing that should be immediately recognizable, ***“Loving Christian Behavior.”*** We are incapable of any of these actions that Paul outlines for us unless we are living a life of ***“Loving Surrender For Christ.”*** Think with me this morning about the behavior that Paul has outlined for each of us? There are at least **TWENTY- SIX** attributes of Christian behavior mentioned in these verses. Though there are so many, they can be broken down into two significant categories:

- Love In The Church, **(vv. 9-13)**
- Love In The World, **(vv. 14-21)**

There was nothing more important that Jesus could have imparted to His disciples than the ability to love Him and one another. Jesus didn't talk a lot about love as a topic, but He sure did show it by a life of serving others through a faithful example, miraculous deeds, and simple words of encouragement. It seems that Paul has caught on to some of these simple truths towards the end of Romans 12. Without a doubt there is a strong exhortation for all of us in these thirteen verses, ***“Love In Action.”***

## Illustration:

Illustrator/painter Gustave Dore, one of the patron saints of the DreamWorks team of Spielberg/Katzenberg/Geffen, was handed a painting of Jesus just finished by one of his students. Asked for his critique, Dore studied it, his mind searching for the right words. At last he handed it back to the student. "If you loved him more," he said, "you would have painted him better."

Lovers understand better than haters, the importance of loving in those times when it would be easier to hate, or in some instances, to learn the lessons of Christ' love so that we never give place to bitterness.

## **John 15:9-11**

**9 "As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love.**

**10 "If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love.**

**11 "These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full.**

**1 Corinthians 16:22 If anyone does not love the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be accursed. O Lord, come!**

It is important to remember that Paul seems to be asking us one simple question in these verses. How do we, who are committed to Christ and have experienced His love toward us, love those in the church as well as those in the world? The love for the church, and the world have to be considered together because we cannot love those in the church without loving those in the world, and vice versa. When we talk about loving those in the world let us be careful to qualify that statement. We are really talking about a love for the lost not a love for what they do, but rather a love for what they can become in Christ.

**15 Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.**

**16 For all that *is* in the world--the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life--is not of the Father but is of the world.**

**17 And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.**

**1 John 2:15-17 (NKJV)**

How are we to love the Church, and how are we to love the world? These are the questions we want to answer this morning in our study. At the same time remembering that the love we refer to is not in any way to be confused with the world's idea of love.

***Frederick Buechner put it so well: "Romantic love is blind to everything except what is lovable and lovely. But Christ's love sees us with terrible clarity and sees us whole. Christ's love so wishes our joy that it is ruthless against everything in us that diminishes our joy. The worst sentence love can pass is that we behold the suffering which love has endured for our sake and that is also our acquittal. The justice and mercy of the judge are ultimately one."***

**-- Don McCullough, "Jesus the Judge," Preaching Today, Tape No. 129.**

**Romans 5:8 But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.**

**1 John 3:16 By this we know love, because He laid down His life for us. And we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.**

It is fascinating to see how Paul begins this section, ***"Let love be without hypocrisy..."*** What a sobering thought for each of us this morning, the statement is simple and straightforward, ***"Love Must Be Sincere."*** Now that Paul has established that love is best understood by action rather than just word, he gives us the specifics.

## **I. LOVE IN THE CHURCH! (VV. 9-13)**

### **A. Love's Ministry: v. 9a - (learn to love with sincerity)**

**Let none of you think evil in your heart against your neighbor; And do not love a false oath. For all these *are things* that I hate,' Says the LORD. '**

**Then the word of the LORD of hosts came to me, saying, "Thus says the LORD of hosts: 'The fast of the fourth *month*, The fast of the fifth, The fast of the seventh, And the fast of the tenth, Shall be joy and gladness and cheerful feasts For the house of Judah. Therefore love truth and peace.'** Zech 8:17-19 (NKJV)

- B. **Love's Morality: v. 9b** - (learn what is right & wrong from God's perspective)

**He has shown you, O man, what *is* good; And what does the LORD require of you But to do justly, To love mercy, And to walk humbly with your God? Micah 6:8 (NKJV)**

- C. **Love's Mandate: v. 10** - (learn family devotion & affection for each other)

**"A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. "By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another." John 13:34-35 (NKJV)**

- D. **Love's Method: vv. 11-12** - (learn to love with the zeal of the Spirit)

**"He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him."  
Judas (not Iscariot) said to Him, "Lord, how is it that You will manifest Yourself to us, and not to the world?"  
Jesus answered and said to him, "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him.  
"He who does not love Me does not keep My words; and the word which you hear is not Mine but the Father's who sent Me. John 14:21-24 (NKJV)**

- E. **Love's Message: v.13** - (learn to share and practice the life of loving)

**For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.**

**For all the law is fulfilled in one word, *even* in this: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself."**

**But if you bite and devour one another, beware lest you be consumed by one another!**

**I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. Gal 5:13-16 (NKJV)**

**But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.**

**Gal 5:22-23 (NKJV)**

## **II. LOVE IN THE WORLD! (VV. 14-21)**

### **F. Love In Action: vv. 14-16**

- 1) The importance of being a blessing rather than a burden.  
(v.14)

**The blessing of the LORD makes *one* rich, And He adds no sorrow with it. To do evil *is* like sport to a fool, But a man of understanding has wisdom. Prov 10:22-23 (NKJV)**

- 2) Knowing when to rejoice (excited about everything God does). (v. 15a)

**Philippians 4:4 Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice!**

- 3) Knowing when to weep (learning to share in the sorrows of others strengthens our love)  
(v. 15b)

**Sing praise to the LORD, You saints of His, And give thanks at the remembrance of His holy name.  
For His anger *is but for a moment*, His favor *is for life*;  
Weeping may endure for a night, But joy *comes* in the morning. Now in my prosperity I said, "I shall never be moved."  
Psalms 30:4-6 (NKJV)**

- 4) Knowing how to have the mind of the Lord (keeping everything in Biblical perspective) (v.16)

**Therefore if *there is* any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and mercy,  
fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, *being* of one accord, of one mind.  
Let *nothing be done* through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself.  
Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.  
Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus,  
Phil 2:1-5 (NKJV)**

**g. Loving When Wronged: vv. 17-21**

1. First, don't fall into the, "Get Even Trap." (v.17a)
2. Second, think about what is good, "Do The Right Thing." (v. 17b)
3. Third, look for a peaceable solution, "Mend Fences." (v.18)
4. Fourth, trust that God knows what's happening, "Let Wrath Pass You By." (v.19)

5. Fifth, do the out of the ordinary, *“Fan The Flame of Forgiveness.”* (v.20)
6. Sixth, stand against evil and give good time to work, *“Become an overcomer.”* (v.21)

## **CONCLUSION:**

Who do you Love?  
Do you love the church?  
Do you love the lost world?  
Who do you love?

**I love those who love me, And those who seek me diligently will find me. Proverbs 8:17 (NKJV)**