



Romans

Right With God

True Love

Romans 12:9-21

Lesson Forty

Mission Arlington/Mission Metroplex Curriculum

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True Love

We ended our last lesson with the thought that since God gives us abilities, we should give those gifts back to God, serving Him and joining Him in the work of God's Kingdom on earth. Today, we see through the eyes of the Apostle Paul, how we ought to love. God loves us and all that we have from Him is because of His love. So, we should do our best to love like He does.* Read Romans 12:9-13.

Jesus told His disciples, "A new commandment I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another." John 13:34. Paul, on the same subject, says that our love must be sincere. He makes a list to help us do that.

He says that we should join God in hating evil and loving good. We need to be sure that we are hating evil, not just evil people. Literally, he says that we should hold on to good. He assumed the folks at Rome were doing good things and that they should keep on doing them. This love should be real love. It is not pretend love. It's the kind of love that people can see without your saying anything about it. Then, Paul lists several things about love:

First, he says we should be devoted to each other. This is like family love. Nothing can come between family members. Second, he says that we should be humble in our love. We should never consider ourselves better than someone else. Third, our love ought to be passionate. We ought to be excited about serving God.

Then, he sort of sums up the characteristics of love: Love is happy and hopeful. Love is patient, even when there is trouble. Love is faithful. It never lets go. Even when our prayers are not answered immediately, we keep on believing. Love shares with those who are in need. Love is generous.

Paul goes on to tell us just how love behaves. Read Romans 12:14-21. Actually, we have to reach back to the last two words of verse 13. Paul says practice hospitality...be generous. And, here's how you do it: He told the Romans to bless those who persecuted them. We are reminded of Jesus on the cross who asked God to forgive those who put Him on the cross. Paul insists: "bless and do not curse." He says that they should be good neighbors, living together in harmony. He gets right down to it saying that they should be humble, definitely not conceited.

He goes on to say that they should do the right thing. One way to do that is to avoid revenge, that is, repaying evil deeds with evil deeds. He assures the Romans that God will take care of

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any revenge that is right. He says to take into consideration your responsibility to represent God in all that you do, so that no one can call you evil.

Continuing with his description of loving behavior, Paul said that if someone who does you wrong needs something to eat, give that person food and something to drink. Evil people will suffer guilt and shame. Guilt and shame are what Paul was talking about when he said that they would have coals of fire piled up on their heads. You get payback by doing good to those who mistreat you.

We always need to remember that all these things should be done in the power of God. We ourselves have very little strength to live in true love. That kind of love, and what it requires of us, can only come from God. Trust Him to guide you, to give you strength and to bless what you do for others. Now that is *true love*.

Scripture Memory: “Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. Share with God’s people who are in need. Practice hospitality. Romans 12:12, 13

*Underlined statements in this Teacher’s Guide appear in the Student Worksheet with blanks to be filled in by the student during the lesson. Words in the Student Worksheet may not appear exactly as printed in the Teacher’s Guide.

For the Teacher:

Lesson Goal: To let students know that God has very specific ideas about what true love is.

1. When Paul speaks of love being "sincere," he refers to brother-love. This is not brotherly love, which makes us think of brother-like love. No, this is love because we are brothers and sisters *in Christ*. You can find a lot about this kind of love in Scripture: I Thessalonians 4:9; Hebrews 13:1; I Peter 1:29; 3:8; II Peter 1:7.
2. In some versions of the Bible, "God's people" are referred to as saints. "God's people" or "belonging to God" are closer to what it really means. This refers to something holy. It means that the person is set apart or different. That's what God's people are. We are different from non-believers. We are set apart by God for His service. We are, as we discussed earlier in our study of Romans, adopted by God to be His children.
3. Christians are to "practice hospitality," verse 12. See Acts 4:34, 35; 9:27-30; Romans 15:25-27; II Corinthians 8:1-4; 9:1-4. Hospitality, in this case, is more than welcoming someone into your presence. It has to do with sincere generosity. It is a willingness to share what you have with others.
4. Love is primary in the life of the Christian. I John 4:19-21
5. Everett Harrison said, "Jesus is no ordinary master. Not the least element in His uniqueness is the confidence He instills in those who serve Him that, though He remains invisible, He is wonderfully real to the eye of faith, and this carries forward into the present the indelible influence of His life and ministry in the world during the days of His flesh. This arouses the hope, tinged with joy, of seeing Him in His glory and being united with Him." See I Peter 1:7, 8
6. When Paul told the Romans to bless those who were their persecutors rather than curse them, we should be reminded of Jesus words in Matthew 5:44 and Luke 6:28.
7. Mourning with those who mourn is easier for most of us than rejoicing with those who rejoice. It is easier to feel sorry for someone who is in trouble than it is to be happy with someone who has achieved something great, or someone who has received something that is very special. See I Corinthians 12:26

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Student Worksheet

True Love

=God loves us and all that we have from Him is because of His _____. So, we should do our best to _____ like _____ does.

=Not pretend _____. The kind of love that people can _____ without you saying anything about it.

=He says we should be _____ to each other. We should be _____; never consider ourselves _____ than someone else, and excited about _____ God.

=Love is _____ and _____, _____, even when there is trouble, _____, never lets go. Even when our prayers are not answered immediately, we keep on _____.

Love _____ with those who are in need. Love is _____.

=We always need to remember that all these things should be done in the _____ of God. We ourselves have very little strength to live in _____ love.

=Trust Him to _____ you, to give you _____ and to _____ what you do for others.

Scripture Memory: “Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. Share with God’s people who are in need. Practice hospitality. Romans 12:12, 13

A Roman Road to Salvation:

Romans 3:23 “For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.” Everyone is a sinner and needs salvation.

Romans 6:23a “For the wages of sin is death.” The law of God is unchangeable. If someone sins the penalty must be paid, the payment is death.

Romans 5:8 “But God demonstrates His own love for us in this: While we were still sinners Christ died for us.” God loves us so much, according to John 3:16, that He sent His Son, Jesus, to die for our sins.

Romans 6:23b “But the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.” The penalty for sin is spiritual death, but God, through the death of Jesus on the cross, took the penalty for the sins of all people, and now everyone can have eternal life. See also, II Corinthians 5:21

Romans 10:9, 10 “That if you confess with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved.” To personally receive the gift of God, eternal life in Christ Jesus, you trust God to be what He says He is. Believing that “God raised Him (Jesus) from the dead” is to accept all that the Bible says about God and His Son, Jesus. Then you speak (confess) the words, “Jesus is Lord,” as a statement of faith. Believing “with your heart” means that you believe with your mind and with everything that you are.

Romans 10:13 “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.” You have the promise of God Himself that if you do what Romans 10:9, 10 says, you will become God’s child and have eternal life.

Romans 12:1, 2 “I urge you brothers, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—His good, pleasing and perfect will.” Becoming a Christian is a life-long act of faith and worship.