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Sincerely Yours
Romans 12:9-13

INTRO: Sincere love is the theme of the love called for in the book of Romans. The old hymn by Albert C Fisher says:

Love is the theme
Of the themes that men have known,
One supremely stands alone;
Thro the ages it has shown,
'Tis His wonderful, wonderful love.

CHORUS:

Love is the theme, love is supreme,
Sweeter it grows, glory bestows;
Bright as the sun, ever it glows!
Love is the theme, eternal theme!

In chapters 1-11 of Romans, all references to love, agape love, have had to do with the love of God shown to sinners. His love:

1. Was demonstrated on the cross of Calvary Rom. 5:8.
2. Was shed abroad in the believer's heart Rom. 5:5.
3. Will not let us go Rom. 8:35,38-39.
4. Will not let the believer be condemned Rom. 8:1.

In chapters 12-16, we are exhorted to let love be our theme, to let love guide our lives, to let love influence us for good, to allow love to govern our relationships.

We are to love God supremely (Matt 22:37-40). We cannot love our neighbor if we do not love God.

In Romans 12:6-8, we have seen that the church is a body, a body differing in its gifts, diverse, yet unified in purpose, having unity without uniformity. Now in Romans 12:9-21 the need for God's love in the life of the believer is brought out. We are to love one another (vss 9-13), and we are to love our enemies (vss 17-21).

I. VS 9, THE BELIEVERS OBLIGATION PERSONALLY

A. Vs 9a, My love must be sincere.

1. "Let love be without dissimulation." This means without hypocrisy, genuine, without wax, without a mask.
2. There is to be no play-acting. We are not to be two-faced.
3. Our love is to be cleansed of self, and thus it is to be a pure stream of love going out to others.
 - a. The first fruit of the Spirit is love (Gal 5:22).
 - b. Our true love to other believers proves to the world that we are Christ's disciples (John 13:35).
 - c. Paul prayed for the saints at Thessalonica to "increase and abound in love one toward another..." (I Thes 3:12).

B. Vs 9b, I must hate that which is evil and cling like glue to that which is good.

"Abhor that which is evil."

- a. Here is love's hatred of evil.
- b. We must realize that evil is the enemy of God, the enemy of good, the enemy of virtue, the enemy of all that is lovely.
- c. We are to hate evil as much as we are to desire love.
- d. The Bible tells us to hate evil: "Ye that love the Lord, hate evil." (Psa. 97:10). Then note the words of David in Psalm 101:4: "A froward heart shall depart from me: I will not know a wicked [evil] person." Then in Prov. 8: 13, "The fear of the Lord is to hate evil..." God hates evil so should we.

2. "Cleave to that which is good."
 - a. The Greek word for "cleave" is *kolla* meaning glue.
 - b. We are to stick like glue to that which is good. We are to bind ourselves to right, to good, to righteousness, to good and righteous people.
 - c. We are directed back to Rom. 12:2, where we are admonished: "be not conformed to this world but be ye transformed..."
 - 1.) Fill up on the Word of God, be separated from the world and good will replace evil in your life.
 - 2.) Think on good (Philippians 4:8).

II. VSS 10-13, THE BELIEVERS OBLIGATION TO THE CHURCH FAMILY

- A. Vs 10a, We are to be affectionate and devoted to each other in brotherly love.
 1. "Kindly affectioned," this means family love in the Greek.
 - a. We are to love one another because we are members of the same family.
 - b. We are brothers and sisters because we have the same Father, God.
 2. "With brotherly love...."
 - a. As brothers and sisters, we are to love one another for brotherly love is the nature of a Christian (I Thes 4:9).
 - b. If we do not have love for the brethren, we are not in God's family (I John 4:20).

- B. Vs 10b, We are to prefer each other in honor.
 1. We are to put others first.
 - a. J— Jesus first
O— Others second
Y— yourself last
 - b. We are not to be conceited (Rom. 12:3).
 - c. We are to see others as important (Phil 2:3).

2. We are to honor others.
 - a. Not flattery, but genuine admiration and appreciation.
 - b. Some folks cannot honor others because they cannot stop honoring themselves.
- C. Vs 11 a, We must not be sluggish or lacking in zeal.
1. We are in a battle, and the world is the battleground. We cannot be “slothful in business.” We have to be diligent.
 2. It is better to burn out for the Lord than to rust out.
 3. We need to be busy for the Lord.
 - a. Do good to all men while we have the opportunity (Gal 6:10; II Thes 3:13).
 - b. One day our opportunity will be over (Eccl 9:10).
 - c. God will reward your diligent work for Him (Heb 6:10-12).
- D. Vs 11 b, We must be fervent in spirit.
1. We are to be on fire for the Lord; we are to be boiling for Him.
 2. We need to be enthusiastic in God’s work, aglow with the Spirit.
 3. We are not to be lukewarm in God’s work (Rev 3:15-16).
- E. Vs 11 c, We are serving the Lord.
1. We are not serving self; we are serving the Lord; and what we do is to honor and glorify Him. What Paul has written here is a safeguard to unbridled emotion.
 2. Our enthusiasm is to be in accordance with God’s Word, not contrary to it.
- F. Vs 12a, We are to rejoice in hope.
1. Christians are to be optimists for we know that, “the best is yet to come.”
 2. “There are no hopeless situations in life; there are only men who have grown hopeless about them.”
 3. Heaven is yet to come (John 14:1-6); rewards are yet to come (II Tim 4:8).

- G. Vs 12b, We are to be patient in tribulation.
1. We maybe in the fire; yet with us is the fourth man of Daniel
3:24-25, the Lord Jesus.
 2. Tribulation will make us bitter or better.
- H. Vs 12c, We must continue to pray.
1. When we do not pray, we are going on in life, on in spiritual battle without God and His power. We are going it alone.
 2. "No man should be surprised when life collapses if he insists on living it alone" (Barclay 166).
- I. Vs 13a, We are to share with those who have needs.
1. The world is bent on getting. Let us be bent on giving.
 2. Let us help our brothers and sisters when they are in need. a. "Distributing"-- Greek *koinoneo* meaning "to share in, share with, fellowship, communion."
b. The church is to have a spirit of sharing.
- J. Vs 13b, We are to be given to hospitality.
1. As Christians, we are to have a open hand, a open heart, and a open door.
 2. Prov 14:31.

CONCLUSION: May the Lord help us to live as we are instructed to in Romans 12:9-13.