

## Transformed

### *Sincere Love*

*“Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good.  
Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves.”*

-Romans 12:9-10

The verses above are beautiful, with a call to love others. It's often easy to see these verses and think, ok, I can do that... but then life hits and you realize that sometimes it's not so easy to love everyone around you. So how do we do it? When someone wrongs you or even when someone is just annoying you, how do you love them and love them *sincerely*?

We all have examples in our lives of people that we struggle to love with a sincere love. Admit it, right now I am guessing that someone comes to mind for you. I confess that someone came to mind for me. How do we overcome our own human emotions of hurt and anger and pain to love in the way that God is calling us to love?

Scripture poses the challenge or the question, but it is also the place where we can find the answer. Even in this verse we can begin to see the answer of how to love with a sincere love. The verse says to “hate what is evil; cling to what is good”, so perhaps that is our first step. To hate or flee from evil and to hold tightly or “cling” to the things that are good.

I think it is easier to know what is evil, but sometimes it's hard to know what is “good.” How do I know what is good? As I sat and pondered this question, I could come up with lots of things in my mind that I think are good, but how do I know what God thinks is good and how do I live that out? Again, the answers can be found in Scripture.

Luke 18:19 says,

*“No one is good-except God alone.”*

We must first recognize that we are not good, God is. So, when reading Romans 12:9 when it says to “*cling to what is good*” it is really saying to cling to God. When we struggle to love with a sincere love, we must hate or flee from evil and cling to God!

In order to pursue what is good we must understand that God is good and cling to Him. Now, as we meet with God and follow his Word, we begin to see what he says is good. In 1 Thessalonians 5:11 it says to “*encourage one another.*” In Isaiah 1:17 it says to do good by defending the oppressed and taking up the case of the fatherless and the widow. Philippians 2:3-4 tells us to do nothing out of “*selfish ambition*” but to be humble “*and value others above yourselves.*” Throughout Scripture we can find instructions on how to see what is good and how to cling to God. These are just a few of the verses that I happened to find in my relatively quick search. When we pursue Him and trust Him, He shows us what is good.

Now that we know He is good and that he provides insight into things that are good, perhaps the task of loving others sincerely can feel less daunting. When I am struggling to love that

## Transformed

### *Sincere Love*

person that comes to mind (or any person really), I know the first place I need to go is to Him, to be reminded of His goodness. Then I can think about ways that He calls me to be good and it shifts my perspective. I don't deserve sincere love, but I have it from Him. So, if I have it (undeservedly), shouldn't I also be able to give it? It is a daily practice, learning to love others sincerely. It doesn't happen naturally for me, but I am grateful for a God that has patience with me as I learn how to daily cling to Him so that I can have love and grace for those around me.

- 1) How do you love those that love doesn't come as naturally? Have you ever developed a good friendship out of a relationship that had a rough start?**
  
- 2) 1 Thessalonians 5:11 says to "encourage one another." Do you remember a time that someone encouraged you, and it really made a difference? Consider sharing or reaching out to make sure that person knows you appreciated their encouragement.**
  
- 3) 1 John 4:19 states that "We love because He first loved us." We are unconditionally loved, so we must then turn and love others. What are some ways that we can show God's love to our classmates, co-workers, and people we see every day?**



*Shannon Gibbs joined CVM full-time in 2021. She began her ministry in the local church, serving as a ministry director and leading teams in short term missions. Her experience in missions was a catalyst to extending her education, achieving a Masters in Christian Leadership and a Master of Public Health. She served in organizations such as World Vision, World Concern, and Northwest University. Shannon is married to Curtiss Gibbs, CVM's West Region Rep. In her personal time, Shannon likes to hike, kayak, and travel.*

*Email: [sgibbs@cvm.org](mailto:sgibbs@cvm.org)*