

## What Does Genuine Love Look Like?

### Fuel Your Faith 7

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How would you define *genuine love*? What does that look like in everyday life? How can I grow in it?

Today we'll examine a very practical text where Paul exhorts his readers (and ultimately us) to simply and sincerely love. For the Christian, this is something that should be well known, since it is a very basic and foundational aspect of our spiritual life. It is something far different from loving on pretense ... it is, love in action.

Today on Fuel Your Faith, we'll talk about how genuine love will lead us to do good and meet the needs of others, which is the result of the transformed heart and mind.

Paul's writing in the last main section of Romans is the what the transformed life of the person saved by grace should look like. And after speaking of our attitude toward relationships and gifts in the church, he then turns his thoughts to what this looks like in everyday life. He writes:

#### [Romans 12.9-13](#):

- 9** Let love be without hypocrisy. Detest evil; cling to what is good.
- 10** Love one another deeply as brothers and sisters. Take the lead in honoring one another.
- 11** Do not lack diligence in zeal; be fervent in the Spirit; serve the Lord.
- 12** Rejoice in hope; be patient in affliction; be persistent in prayer.
- 13** Share with the saints in their needs; pursue hospitality.

Let's focus on verse 9 for a moment. *Let love be without hypocrisy* it says in the Christian Standard Version. In the ESV it says: *Let love be genuine*. Next Paul says, *Detest evil*. Finally, he says, *Cling to what is good*. Imagine drawing a circle around this verse and noting that all three directives are individual in application. Each of us have been called to act with heartfelt, genuine love. This type of love is never passive ... it always takes the initiative. We are told to detest evil, i.e., possess a strong hatred for sin. And, we've been called to hold on to what is good. By holding on, Paul means that we cling to good. We stick to it like glue. Both of the last two exhortations are written with the strongest emphasis. It's got to be important to us.

Now, how do we express our genuine love?

In verses 10-13, we will now expand our circle of focus, where we give consideration not only to ourselves, but how we interact with others. There are 10 things listed here.

1. *Love one another deeply as brothers and sisters*. This is warm, affectionate love. Our relationship with our fellow church members is not just theological. It is exhibited by tenderness, kindness, true care, and concern.

2. *Take the lead in honoring one another.* This is led with the spirit of humility. Be the first. Be quick to do it. Be quick to love. Be quick to meet a need.
3. *Do not lack diligence in zeal.* Don't be lazy. Be in a hurry. Possess a sense of urgency.
4. *Be fervent in spirit.* There is to be an intensity to our Christian life ... in the way we relate to others.
5. *Serve the Lord.* This is written with the imagery of being a bond servant. Paul is speaking of total service. Jesus controls every waking moment of our life.
6. *Rejoice in hope.* We rejoice as we look ahead to the fulfillment of all things. We hope in our eternal reward. We move with the understanding we have something to live for.
7. *Be patient in affliction.* We stay. We remain. We know we can get through anything with the help of our God.
8. *Be constant in prayer.* We persist obstinately in prayer. We, with intensity, direct our hearts and minds in prayer for others.
9. *We share with the saints in their needs.* Our radar is always on. We're looking how to help others. When we see a need, we act. We don't wait for someone else to do it. We do it.
10. *We pursue hospitality.* I do wonder if this is becoming a lost art in our society. When is the last time you've been invited into someones's home? When is the last time you've had someone else in your home? It is in this type of setting where we can best express our genuine love for each other.

So, how devoted are you to genuine love? How committed are you to meeting the needs of others? Does it show, not just by your words, but in the things you do? I know some of you are doing such a great job here ... and it shows. As Paul said to the Thessalonians ... excel even more!

Thank you for listening to Fuel Your Faith. Join us again tomorrow as we take another look at how love endeavors to meet other's needs.