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## ***Love One Another ..... Part Two*** ***Know How to Love***

**Lesson Verse:** *Be kindly affectioned to one another with brotherly love; in honor preferring one another.* Roman 12:10 (KJV)

*Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love; in honor giving preference to one another. (Verse 11 not lagging in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord.*  
Romans 12:10 (New King James Version)

**GOAL:** To strengthen Christian relationships with fellow Christian brothers and sisters by practicing the love of Christ.

**KNOW HOW TO LOVE** – Scripture References: Phil 1:9, Romans 13:10; Col. 3: 12 - 20; I Peter 4: 8, I Peter 3:8, I Corinthians 13

### **LESSON INTRODUCTION**

Last month's lesson exhorted us to be willing to love. Even though we are willing to love, we must know how to love not by worldly standards but as defined by our Lord. All too often, our willingness and ability to love has been conditioned by instances of rejection, criticism, racial bigotry and dysfunctional relationships among family members. In reality, these are weapons Satan uses to destroy relationships and to stifle your effort to obey the Word of God and truly love one another. It is through study of the Word of God and the internalization of its message that we learn how to love one another. Then, we are better able to push past the hindering tactics of the enemy to a more pleasing and fruitful relationship with others. Last month we learned that love is a decision. It is not based solely on our feelings. It begins by making a decisive choice to love another in obedience to God's Word.

### **Know How to Love**

In Romans 12: 10, Paul urges us to be kind and affectionate toward one another. '**Kindly affectioned**' is from the Greek *word, philostorgos*. The meaning of the word is the mutual love of parents and children and wives and husbands. 2) Loving affection, loving tenderly, prone to love. The root word of *philostorgos* is **storge**.

meaning cherishing one's kind, family. In essence, Paul is saying that we should love one another like we love our family. We tend to love our families with a certain loyalty, perseverance, and tenderness.

Jesus said to the disciples in John 13: 34-35, "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. We are all a work in progress toward achieving this standard.

In further study of the word, kindly affectionate or storge, we find that it is really an adjective (present, passive participle). This means that it is not a command but that we are to be **transformed**. This transformation comes about through the regenerative work of the Holy Spirit. We must allow Him to do the work in our hearts and minds. Our part is to renew our minds through the reading of God's Word, especially Scriptures pertaining to love. The Word of God is powerful, active, and operative (Hebrews 4:12). We will see its impact in our lives and the lives of others when we choose to do what God says. If we allow ourselves to be transformed by the Word and the work of the Holy Spirit, the brotherly love we display is genuine and from the heart.

The essential question raised is how do I show brotherly love in a manner that God would applaud? The only way is through **prayer, Bible study, faith, and yielding to God's Word**. When we fall short, **pray**, seeking forgiveness from God and asking Him for the strength to surrender to His will. Paul said in Philippians 1: 9, *"I pray this: that your love will keep on growing in knowledge and every kind of discernment."*

Jesus taught us to *forgive*, and God forgives us in the same manner that we forgive. Ask for God's forgiveness daily in order to prepare your heart for forgiving others. This will enable you to move to the fulfillment of love for one another. Pray until you feel His presence comforting your heart as you grow to love others.

Instructions on loving one another are found in I Peter 3: 8-9; *"Finally, all of you be of one mind, having compassion for one another, love as brothers, be tender hearted, be courteous, not returning evil for evil or reviling/or reviling, but on the contrary blessing, knowing that you were called to this, that you may inherit a blessing.*

Colossians 3:12 -17 has some clear and helpful points; i.e. 'heartfelt compassion, gentleness, humility, and patience.' We should look for opportunities to show compassion, gentleness, and patience.

Man's idea of love and God's description of love are different. Love is a demonstration. It is known from the actions it prompts. It is demonstrated and seen by what a person says or does. Love has an object or a receiver. In this case, it is the brethren (brothers and sisters in Christ). Love has a giver; that may be you or me. Words can reflect love in a powerful way or they can kill the spirit of another

person. Paul even admonishes us to speak the truth in *love* (Ephesians 4:15). Therefore, love should be the basis of all our behaviors. 1 Corinthians chapter 13 is referred to as the love chapter; *love is patient and kind. Love is not jealous or boastful or proud or rude. It does not demand its own way. It is not irritable, and it keeps no record of being wronged. It does not rejoice about injustice but rejoices whenever truth wins out. Love never gives up, never loses faith, is always hopeful, and endures through every circumstance.* (I Cor. 13: 4-7 NLT) Try reading it in different translations. To display/experience genuine love for one another is a Christian virtue that is like God, (*God is love*, I John 4:8) and pleases God.

Paul said that we are to show kindness and love in honor, preferring one another (Romans 12:10). The word 'preferring' is from the Greek word *proegeomai* (pro-ay-geh'-om-ahee) meaning to lead the way for others, i.e. show deference: - prefer. God wants us to lead the way in showing brotherly love. We should be the first to step out in saying or doing something good for another person. The Christian Standard version says to 'outdo another in showing honor'.

Sometimes, when it is not expected, just a kind word said to a person, such as "I am praying for you" or "How can I help?" is all that is needed to show brotherly love. *Selfishness seeks its own private happiness at the expense of others. Love seeks its happiness in the happiness of the beloved.* (John Piper, *Desiring God*, 206 -207). When a brother or sister is in bereavement just being present is ministry. The person is comforted knowing that you cared enough to take time to express your care for them. Finally, God first demonstrated love toward us. He gave the best He had, His Son, for the atonement of our sins. Therefore, if God our Father and Creator loved us this way and this much, we ought to love one another. (I John 4: 7-11)

Schools in the secular world will sometimes practice "Random Acts of Kindness". Here someone decides to perform a kind deed on behalf of another. In turn, the person who demonstrates the kind act is acknowledged or rewarded by the school. It is the hope of the administrators, that kind behavior will become a habit. This is what God desires from us. He wants us to grow in love. The plan or the blueprint for Christians on how to show brotherly love is in the Word of God. This is the master plan that we are to follow. Let us not let the secular world outdo us.

## **I. Summary:**

We often underestimate what it takes to fulfill the *true* experience of Christian love for one another. The application of *love* from the Word of God requires a conscious effort and commitment to deliberate acts of kindness, because its purpose is to grow in relationship with God as we obey the teachings of Jesus.

*Godly actions and feelings are contagious!* Love is the most powerful experience we

can share in our effort to understand God's purpose for creating us in His image and likeness. As you apply yourselves to this lesson do not measure your effectiveness by how much love you receive, but trust God to fulfill His purpose in your giving and forgiving and you will never be disappointed.

Real growth in a Christian life requires that we "Stay in a state of becoming." Jesus knows your heart! Never give up understanding and obeying the Word of God.

**II. Application Questions - Romans 12:10 (KJV):**

- Discuss your understanding of this scripture with examples of how it is applicable to home and family, church, job, and the community.
- How does this scripture embody or apply to the kind of love we should exhibit as Christians?
- Discuss and define key words in this scripture.
- Give examples of Philadelphia love and Agape love that we should exercise in our daily walk as Christians.

**III. Assignment**

Reflect on this lesson and what was discussed in your group and/or through your reading or further reading by cross-referencing Scriptures.