



CULTIVATE YOUR BEST RELATIONSHIPS

OCTOBER 30, 2022

WORSHIP

Great Things, Your Love Awakens, His Mercy is More, More Like Jesus, Build My Life

WELCOME

What would you say were some of the most frustrating times of your life lately? How about the most fulfilling moments?

WORD

ROMANS 12:9-21

Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil; cling to what is good.¹⁰ Be devoted to one another in brotherly love; give preference to one another in honor;¹¹ not lagging behind in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord;¹² rejoicing in hope, persevering in tribulation, devoted to prayer,¹³ contributing to the needs of the saints, practicing hospitality.¹⁴ Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse.¹⁵ Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep.¹⁶ Be of the same mind toward one another; do not be haughty in mind, but associate with the lowly. Do not be wise in your own estimation.¹⁷ Never pay back evil for evil to anyone. Respect what is right in the sight of all men.¹⁸ If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men.¹⁹ Never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of God, for it is written, “Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,” says the Lord.²⁰ “But if your enemy is hungry, feed him, and if he is thirsty, give him a drink; for in so doing you will heap burning coals on his head.”²¹ Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

A life surrendered to Christ is a transformed life. How does a transformed life look like? What did Jesus say should every Christian be known for?

I. LOVE YOUR FAMILY (ROMANS 12:9-16)

We are to “be devoted to one another in brotherly love”. The Greek word for “devoted” is “**philostorgos**” from “**phileo**” (brotherly love), and “**storge**” (love for family). This describes something very special about our relationship with other believers. There are no more barriers of social class, it’s not about what you like or don’t like. You love your Christian family because they’re your family! This is our best relationship. To live the full life, you must cultivate your best relationships with love.

Sincere (v.12:9a) - Love must be without hypocrisy. When “love” is used in the previous chapters, it’s the Greek word “agape” that refers to God’s unconditional, sacrificial love for undeserving sinners like us. But here, there is a shift --- God is now telling us to show His kind of love to others! It must be with sincerity, genuine and not fake. Judas, the disciple who betrayed Jesus, exemplified hypocrisy. Many times, we can hypocrites, pretending to love but not really loving. Let’s not be like Judas; instead let’s be like Jesus!

Discerning (v.12:9b) - The Greek word for “abhor” is only used here and it means “to loathe”. Avoid it at all costs, have nothing to do with evil! We are to “cling to what is good”. This is the same idea (**Genesis 2:24**) used to describe how a husband and wife are to permanently cleave to each other. Our lives should cling to what is good, abhor evil. It’s getting harder these days to know what is good and evil, but we have God’s Word that enables us to discern right from wrong. Love must be discerning, not a fluffy kind of feeling. You want what is best for others.

Affectionate (v.12:10a) - Not all of us come from wonderful physical families, but if you are in Christ, we are brothers and sisters, and God tells us to love each other with kindness and tenderness. We can show that with a pat in the back, or a hug. We are to be wise when we show kindness. In CCF, we encourage men to seek and give counsel to men, and women with other women. Adulterous affairs never start as planned so don’t put yourself in a situation that Satan can use to attack you.

Respectful (v.12:10b) - To give preference to one another is like competing to be the first to honor others. We don’t see this kind of love too often in church, because we don’t know how to love. But this is how God called us to love one another—to honor each other.

Enthusiastic (v.12:11) - We are to be passionate in showing love to our spiritual family! After all, it is the Lord that we are serving, and it is the Spirit that enable us to love fervently; we are not to be lazy in serving one another.

CULTIVATE YOUR BEST RELATIONSHIPS

OCTOBER 30 2022

WORD

Patient (v.12:12) - To rejoice in hope, persevere in tribulation and to be devoted in prayer means that we are to have a future view in this world to live a full life. Bad things happen and we cannot just see the world as it is, because there is so much more that is to come. We can be patient in tribulation because in God, the best is yet to come.

Generous (v.12:13a) - There are needs all around us, yet we only see the needs of our physical family. But the church is our family, and God wants us to be generous. God sees your heart, so give what you can give. Be generous and don't compare amounts given by others. Be generous with your time to help out.

Hospitable (v.12:13b) - "Philoxenia" is love for strangers, guests; this is the Greek word used for hospitality. It's amazing how a little bit of hospitality can do in the Body of Christ. Open your homes to welcome guests and minister to them.

Benevolent (v.12:14) - We are to bless and not curse those who persecute us. This is super challenging because we want to fight back!

Sympathetic (v.12:15) - Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. When your brother or sister does well in life, rejoice with them wholeheartedly; weep with those who weep. This is the heart of God. These things may not be normal or natural for us, but one of the ways we know we are Christians is when we see God transform us to love His way.

Harmony (v.12:16a) - In God's family, we are to look for what we have in common. You may not agree on everything, and you don't compromise the truth but be harmonious. Being divisive is not characteristic of Christlike love.

Humility (v.12:16b) - We struggle with relationships because we are so proud. We don't want to associate with people who are not from our "social class". In God's family, there's no more divisions based on race or social class. Be in a posture of humility; listen to other people, avoid giving your opinion all the time!

II. LOVE YOUR ENEMIES (Romans 12:14, 17-21)

Jesus commanded us to "love our enemies and pray for those who persecute you" (**Matthew 5:43-44**).

Paul gives us four negatives: do not curse, do not repay evil for evil, never take revenge, do not be overcome by evil. We are also called to do four positives. We are to bless (pray for them), respect (and do) what is right, be at peace with everyone as far as it depends on you, and make space for God's wrath. We can trust God to "repay", and He will do as He says. Show good to your enemy, which can lead them to repentance; this is God's way. Finally, overcome evil with good as Jesus' did on the cross on our behalf (**1 Peter 2:21-24**). Cultivate your best relationships today!

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

(Leaders: Please choose questions that are appropriate to the level of spiritual maturity of your members)

1. Self-Check.

In what aspect does your love need to grow?
How will you show love this week to your physical and spiritual family?

2. Setting It Right.

Who do you need to reach out to seek forgiveness from?

3. Living It Out.

Who do you need to forgive?
What goodness will you show to that person or persons this week?

WORKS

PRAY CARE SHARE IN ACTION

Pray for those who are still outside God's family, that they may see the brotherly love that we have for one another so that they will desire to be part of our spiritual family as well. Share the gospel, extending God's unconditional and sacrificial love towards others through the Holy Spirit.

WEEKLY PRAYER POINTS

I. Thanksgiving

- Worship God for who He is, what He has done, and what He will do in our lives

II. Country and the World

- Upright and moral governance of public servants; repentance and salvation for government leaders and citizens for a Christ-centered Philippines.
- Recovery and restoration for places devastated by recent typhoons and hurricanes.
- War in Ukraine to end, loss of lives prevented.

III. Church

- That CCF Members would honor and love God and make disciples.
- Elders, pastors, deacons, and families (holy, humble, harmonious, happy, heart-working).
- Ministries and churches expansion worldwide.

IV. CCF Facilities

- Worship and Training Center
- Prayer Mountain

V. Personal Concerns

- Deeper intimate relationship with God.
- Righteous living.
- Salvation of family and friends.

MEMORY VERSE

ROMANS 12:10, 21

¹⁰ Be devoted to one another in brotherly love; give preference to one another in honor; ²¹ Do not be overcome by evil but overcome evil with good.