

“Love Without Hypocrisy!”

Romans 12:9-21

Intro. – Americans love to fight. We were born in a war and our country has known wars abroad and on our own shores. *U.S. News & World Report* says, “Violence is the wave of the future. We are fast approaching the world’s most violent age.” David Alverson writes, “We Americans are living under the legend of the Wild West. We have a violent history and an instinct for violence. We have a tendency to dispose of problems by disposing of people.”

Now, this fighting instinct is not all bad. Without a little “fight” in us, the problems of everyday would eat us up. Why, we wouldn’t even have good games in the US without this fighting instinct. Can you imagine a football or hockey game where the players’ main consideration was politeness?

Not a person here that doesn’t realize it takes a lot of fighter’s instinct to grapple with sin. Selfishness, pride and lusts are avenues Satan uses to undo you and me. It is tough and Satan is a tough enemy. If he can’t tempt you one way, he’ll figure out another. He never shows mercy.

Fighting instinct is important also for *contending for the faith once for all delivered unto the saints* (Jude 3). Great are the men, women and young people who have the nerve to contend with those who scoff at, ignore or simply don’t realize the authority of God’s Word. This fighting instinct, however, can and is abused. We in X churches/churches of X have turned our guns upon each other. Gossip, character assassination, verbal abuse and thoughtlessness of brothers and sisters in Christ have beset the Lord’s Church from the first century.

Illus. – if you were to take the US casualties from the Revolutionary War, Mexican/Spanish War, WWI, Korea, Viet Nam = less than half total casualties of the Civil War where US fought US

Today, many churches are nothing but civil wars. Church history is checkered with church battles. Local churches are scared with bitterness/regret. Preachers are disillusioned/quitting... Worst of all, the world is nauseated by our petty fighting. Our unity/love for one another are our greatest tools for evangelism. Without love for one another and for the lost, we have nothing to say. Why would anyone want to join another fight?

Jude 18-19 refers to those who like to cause division: “...*In the last time there shall be mockers, following after their own ungodly lusts. These are the ones who cause divisions, worldly-minded, devoid of the Spirit.*” ^{NASB} Galatians 5:17-21 says fighting/divisiveness is *a work of the flesh*. 2 Timothy 6:4 says another reason for fighting is pride or the desire power. Thus, as long as there is a power play there will be fighting and disunity.

Purpose: to better see the urgency behind our loving without hypocrisy

Romans 12 describes a better way of reaching goals we’re after = love without hypocrisy.

I EXAMPLES OF LOVE WITH HYPOCRISY

- KJV “*love without dissimulation*” – without show, pretense or sham. LB “*don’t just pretend you love, really love others.*”

A. Professional Love

1. Observed this in churches and in my own life – love that is greasy, slick, polished = too practiced
2. This when one is oozing with charm at every pore – watch out for charm, never know where stand
3. Not putting down Xtian courtesies... addressing “polished” or “professional” love = fake love...

B. Ecumenical Love

1. This love says “Let’s forget our differences... and just love one another.”
2. Best example of this World Council of Churches – organization that isn’t a council, and has nothing to do with churches and breeds distrust in the truth...
3. Big difference between *redemptive friendships* and *brotherly fellowship*! Bible makes distinction...

C. California Love

1. Touchy, feeling movement... where emotions are given more credence than God’s Word.
2. Illus. – I’m for affection/emotions but not when such is given more significance than God’s Word!
3. This is love with hypocrisy whether its meant to be or not
4. Love in our text abhors evil, hates flirtation/divorce... loves righteousness instead...

II EXAMPLES OF LOVE WITHOUT HYPOCRISY

A. It Prefers One Another (v 10)

1. Imagine the change if we knocked ourselves out to see others got attention &/or recognition...
2. Illus. – Eric Liddle portrayed in the 1981 movie Chariots of Fire. Scotland's greatest athlete who competed for GB. Remarkable, clean-cut, hero type. Sermons preached by him and about him. Several books, radio and TV programs, comic books and even fan club. At death said, "All of Scotland mourned." Marvel of this movie it was made by secular producer who had no interest in Christianity. Made in an a-moral country. 60 years after his death. Why? Because he was a man who believed in honoring his friends, athletic buddies, and God!
3. When we give honor to each other, no need to worry about whom will be first in line!

B. Practices Hospitality (v 13)

1. Personally, this is an area I need to improve... but those who come into our home are welcomed...
2. Historian, "Without hospitality of 1,000's Xtian women in 1st century, church never reached world - talking about people who baked the beans, meatloaf, cherry delight, apple pies = these were responsible for contributing greatly to the spread of the gospel!"
3. One of the most practical ways expressing love is to take someone tired from serving the Lord and show them clean sheets and warm food.
4. Day Judgment 2 groups: 1) religious hotshots "Lord we cast out demons... healed sick etc... we did everything. Jesus will say, "I don't believe we've met." 2) "Lord, when did we do anything worthy of You?" He will answer, "When you gave Me a cup of water."

C. Match Minds/Moods (vv 15,16)

1. Pure love matches minds to be supportive and encouraging to people – e.g. know a person depressed (weeping) – support them by coming along side them instead of kicking further down.
2. When bro/sis rejoices; instead, of being jealous and putdown "Yah, I know something about him..." we need to applaud and lift them up before each other!

D. Associate With the Lowly (v 16)

1. Get down on all fours – where little ones are... poor... afflicted etc.
2. We need to see each other as God sees each of us individually:
 - Illus. Moberly, MO home for retarded called Whitaker Home. Some were old, others young, all had identifiable mannerisms/expressions and child like minds. Can't help but admire what able to do... and to have compassion for them... Wonder how you and I look to the God know all and created all? I'll tell you how... we are all retarded when compared to our God. Instead of looking at one as being bright/stupid – realize we're all needing God's grace/mercy
3. Church is a modern landfill – takes in garbage turns it into a beautiful park!

E. Never Seek Revenge (vv 17-21)

1. Been said, "When a fight first breaks out, a baby's hand can stop it" but let a fight continue and retaliation kicks in and soon get out of control.
2. Illus. – Song entitled: "What If They Gave a War and Nobody Came?"
3. Somewhere, someone is going to have to absorb/take wrong... 1 Corinthians 6:7-8 *"The very fact that you have lawsuits among you means you have been completely defeated already. Why not rather be wronged? Why not rather be cheated? Instead, you yourselves cheat and do wrong, and you do this to your brothers."*
4. If you're going to retaliate do it with good...

III HOW TO EQUIP THE SAINTS WITH THIS KIND OF LOVE

A. Do What Jesus Would Do

1. John 13:34 *"A new command I give you: love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another."*
2. Psychologist now say Jesus was right – we learn to love by first being loved by others:

- Illus. – 4 years old, train episode in South Bend... brothers still loved me afterwards...
- 3. Now know what love is all about through a wonderful wife, family and friends...
- 4. To teach people HOW to love – forget about bumper stickers, catch phrases and trinkets... -- want people to bleed going to have hemorrhage ourselves!

B. Cultivate the Volunteer Crop

- 1. Simply look for love going on in church family and nurture/encourage it.
- 2. Need to talk up “love” and make it something desirable for all – men/women as our heroes:
 - Illus. – as long as our kids’ heroes are as follows: half naked, screaming rock stars, tobacco stained, foulmouthed ball players, gangster rappin’ 360 lbs football players, we haven’t a chance in teaching our kids love.
- 3. Need to talk up brethren who are committed, kind, patient and strong... We’ve been called to these modern times to act like kings and people of God!

C. Increase Communications

- 1. Why is it in the time of telecommunications, overnight express mail, satellite TV/telephones, hand held computers, and instant messaging we still don’t know what’s going on in the church family...
- 2. Lot of local churches’ problems result from rumors, suspicions and not knowing the facts
- 3. Obviously from leadership point of view we need to improve... you who are listening also share in the responsibility of good communications... Communication Covenant...

D. Proper Use of Anger

- 1. People get full of anger and don’t know what to do with it = get sick, ulcers etc.
- 2. Need to learn to identify good use of anger opposed to wrong use of anger:
 - a. wrong use = burst forth with rage, seek revenge and/or simply suppress it.
 - b. right use = turn this tremendous energy into service for our Lord
 - 1) A. Lincoln used anger to free the slaves.
 - 2) M. Luther “When I am angry I preach well, write well, and do all things well.”

Conclusion: Want to summarize and conclude with a warning, challenge and a hope.

Warning: Galatians 5 says without love there is the potential of cannibalism...

Challenge: use the energy given by God to wrestle the true enemy...

Hope: that we would be known as people of the Bible loving without hypocrisy...