



February 22, 2026

Family Life

Romans 12:9-13

In Romans 12:1, Paul turns a corner. After eleven chapters explaining the gospel—what God has done for us in Christ—he begins to show us what that gospel should look like in everyday life. The church is not just an organization. It is not a weekly event. It is not a motivational gathering.

It is a family.

Throughout Scripture, believers are described as members of the “household of God” (Ephesians 2:19; 1 Timothy 3:15), adopted sons and daughters who cry out, “Abba, Father” (Romans 8:15–17). We are called the “household of faith” (Galatians 6:10), and we are told to treat one another as fathers, mothers, brothers, and sisters (1 Timothy 5:1–2).

That’s not sentimental language. That’s reality. When we say, “The church is family,” we often mean something light and symbolic—like saying, “We’re like family at work.” But when Jesus spoke of His people as family, He meant it with the highest level of commitment imaginable. He loved this family enough to die for it.

And one day, earthly relationships will pass away—but Christ and His bride will remain forever. That future reality should shape how we treat one another right now.

Key Thought: You are expected to demonstrate genuine love for one another.

Not optional. Not occasional. Expected.

THE EXPECTATION TO LOVE (v. 9)

Jesus said: “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another... By this all men will know that you are My disciples” (John 13:34–35).

Love is not a suggestion. It is the distinguishing mark of a true disciple. Paul echoes this throughout his letters:

- “Walk in love” (Ephesians 5:2).
- “Put on love, which is the perfect bond of unity” (Colossians 3:14).



- “The one who does not love does not know God” (1 John 4:8).
- “Honor all people, love the brotherhood” (1 Peter 2:17).

The first fruit of the Spirit is love (Galatians 5:22). Without it, everything else collapses.

Leon Morris said it well: “God’s love is not some vague, theoretical thing... It took the hard way; it meant the cross.”

Biblical love is not emotional softness. It is cross-shaped sacrifice.

- **Genuine Love Is Without Hypocrisy (v. 9a)**

“Let love be without hypocrisy.”

The Greek word means sincere, without a mask. No pretending. No performance. The word for love here is *agapē*—a self-giving, willful devotion that seeks the good of another regardless of cost.

This kind of love:

- Is not self-centered.
- Is not manipulative.
- Is not conditional.
- Is not for show.

Hypocrisy and love cannot coexist. Real Christian love is pure, sincere, and unmixed with selfish ambition. And Scripture says something sobering: “We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brethren” (1 John 3:14).

Love for fellow believers is evidence of spiritual life.

- **Genuine Love Hates Evil (v. 9b)**

Love is not sentimental tolerance. Paul says, “Abhor what is evil.” True love does not rejoice in unrighteousness (1 Cor. 13:6). Love and evil cannot partner together. If God hates evil, His children must hate evil.

Proverbs says:

- “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom” (Proverbs 9:10).
- “The fear of the Lord is to hate evil” (Proverbs 8:13).

Love does not mean approving sin. It means caring enough to reject what destroys people.



- **Genuine Love Clings to What Is Good (v. 9c)**

“Cling to what is good.” The word Paul uses means to glue yourself to something. Bind yourself to it. The good is whatever is:

- True
- Honorable
- Right
- Pure
- Lovely
- Of good repute (Philippians 4:8)

This kind of love is intentional. It doesn’t drift toward goodness—it attaches itself to it.

And this only happens when our minds are transformed (Romans 12:2). You cannot live this kind of love without a renewed mind.

THE EXPRESSIONS OF GENUINE LOVE (vv. 10–13)

Paul now shows what this love looks like in action.

- **Devoted Affection (v. 10)**

“Be devoted to one another in brotherly love.”

This is family language. Warm affection. Deep attachment. Loyalty.

- **Honor (v. 10)**

“Give preference to one another in honor.”

Put others first. Celebrate them. Value them. Lift them up. This fights pride and competition. Love doesn’t demand the spotlight—it hands it away.

- **Passionate Service (v. 11)**

Paul describes a kind of spiritual enthusiasm—boiling over with zeal. Not lazy. Not indifferent. Not apathetic. Chuck Swindoll once said, “Everyone wants to be loved enthusiastically and passionately, not passively or out of obligation.”

Real love is energetic.



- **Patient Endurance (v. 12)**

“Rejoicing in hope, persevering in tribulation, devoted to prayer.”

Love doesn’t quit when things get hard.

It keeps hoping.

It keeps enduring.

It keeps praying.

- **Generosity (v. 13)**

“Contributing to the needs of the saints.” The word means to share in—to participate in someone else’s burden. In a real family, no one suffers alone.

- **Hospitality (v. 13)**

“Practicing hospitality.” The word literally means love for strangers. And “practicing” means pursuing. Love doesn’t wait to be asked. It takes initiative. It looks for opportunities to bless.

CONCLUSION

Two truths:

1. To know genuine love, you must know Jesus Christ.
You cannot manufacture agapē love. It flows from being loved by Him first.
2. To express genuine love, you must be transformed by Christ.
This kind of love is supernatural.

Two questions:

- Do you truly love your fellow believers?
- Are you actively pursuing opportunities to express Christ’s love?

The church is not a weekly event.

It is a family.

And families love.