

## Hallmarks of the Transformed Life Loving our brethren

**Intro: Paul in Romans 12 gives a beautiful portrait of the transformed life. Last week we noticed that the transformed disciples uses his gifts with excellence and humility for the good of the body and the glory of God. In the next few exhortations Paul shows us another hallmark of the transformed life.**

*Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil; cling to what is good. Be devoted to one another in brotherly love; give preference to one another in honor; (Romans 12:9-10)*

*Let us have no imitation Christian love. Let us have a genuine break with evil and a real devotion to good. Let us have real warm affection for one another as between brothers, and a willingness to let the other man have the credit. (Rom. 12:9-10, JB Phillip's translation)*

**Paul wants the Romans to understand that one of the hallmarks of a transformed life is love for others; but in this text Paul goes further, and shows us what kind of love it is and how it manifests itself.**

### The transformed disciples treats his brethren with a love that is unpretended.

*Let love be without hypocrisy.*

**"Let love be..." If we are to live the life of faith it must start with love. Lenski called it the "essential and supreme fruit of justifying faith" (Gal. 5:4).**

**Without hypocrisy. The ancient Greeks spoke the parts of their plays from under masks. Thus, an actor was called a "hypocrites" (a hypocrite) with no connotation of insincerity! Our very word hypocrite comes from this word meaning actor! But it has come to mean one who is insincere, a pretender!**

*Since you have in obedience to the truth purified your souls for a sincere love of the brethren, fervently love one another from the heart (1 Peter 1:22)*

### The transformed disciple treats his brethren with a love that is principled.

*Abhor what is evil; cling to what is good.*

**There is a lingering concept in the religious world that love embraces all and everything with approval and acceptance, that it is indifferent to truth and compromising. Our love, though unconditional, must also be principled.**

**Abhor the evil**

**This phrase urges in us a "divine disgust" (McGuiggan).**

**The word "abhor" comes from a work that mean "to shudder from". It seems to me that there are some people in this world that nothing makes them shutter. There is no evil that repulses them. But God's people have the ability to love while**

acknowledging what is morally repugnant and spiritually malevolent!

**Cling to the good.**

**Cling literally means "be glued to!"**

**The good thing (all good things).**

**For the Christian the key question is not merely, "What is wrong with it!?" but rather "What is right with it!" The transformed disciple clings unswervingly to what is morally and his love is guided by principle!**

**The transformed disciple treats his brethren with a love that acknowledges our common relationship to God the Father.**

*Be devoted in brotherly love*

**Greek scholars here point out that the form of the exhortations change. In short what they show is that Paul is not just giving a list of miscellaneous commands, but rather how the Christian responds in relation to certain things. These things often couple together to create a picture.**

**Lit. as regards the brother love--family-affectioned toward each other. The word Paul uses combines the Greek words for "affection" and "family". Thus it is translated "be devoted in". The idea is to have a family affection for one another!**

**The transformed disciple understands two important principles about the Lord's people.**

**They have been adopted into the family of God by His love.**

*In love He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. (Ephesians 1:4-6)*

**We must treat each other with the warmth and helpfulness of family members!**

**The transformed disciple treats his brethren with a love that takes the lead in honoring the other.**

*Give preference to one another in honor*

**Lit. as regards the honor--leading each other!**

**Some commentators miss the point a bit by paralleling it with the idea of regarding others better than you. One man thought it meant to prefer each other in business dealings. Unfortunately the verb doesn't mean prefer.**

**The picture of that of a man who freely seeks to take the lead in giving honor to others rather than taking it for himself! In other words, it is to give the respect and honor to which a person is due because of his faith and service to God and to want to be the first to say a word of appreciation or praise for another!**

**Conclusion: In a world of religious pluralism it is important to show the distinctive features of the faith that separate us from the religious world; but it is equally important to show the distinctive features of the faith that separate us from the unreligious world!**

*“By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.” (John 13:35)*

**Can the world see the transformation? Is our love sincere, principled, brotherly, and honoring?**

**The love that we give to one another is only a faint representation of the love God had for us when He gave His Son to die for our sins! Have you received His love!?**