

“Love IS A Verb”
Romans 12:9-21
5/7/23
Message 24

Introduction

- Title Of The Message: “Love Is A Verb”

- **Illustration – Harry Roach**

- **When I think of LOVE**

- 1st Jesus

- Death, Burial & Resurrection
 - NO GREATER LOVE

- 2nd Harry my dear friend (**Show Pic**)

- What Harry would do at CCA

- Shared God’s love with EVERY Person that walked in
 - Modeled JOY
 - Jesus Others You
 - How he served the Lord – Involved in so Many ministries
 - How he started the prison ministry
 - He was a man of incredible Strength and Virtue in Christ

- **Now Virtue**

- **Virtue has fallen on hard time**

- The Word Virtue TODAY means

- The sense of innocence
- It means inexperience, even being naive
- Lacking sophistication, class & style.
- Today Virtue is not complement!
- Being “worldly” a compliment.
 - In a world FILLED with Self
 - Self-sacrificing is considered old fashion
- **NOW - What the Word Virtue Actually means**
 - Definition
 - Behavior showing high moral standards
 - Conformity to a standard of right – Morality
 - A particular moral excellence
 - Comes to us from the Latin virt-us
 - Which means strength; moral strength & excellence.
 - It spoke of a trait valued as good.

• **Review – Romans 12 - Called To Virtue**

- **Romans 12**
 - As the followers of Christ
 - We’re called to moral excellence.

- We're called to virtue (Holiness) because we don't just know what Truth is, we know Truth Himself.
- Romans 1-11 = DOCTRINE
- Romans 12 = DUTY
- Doctrine = DUTY
 - How we need to live our lives in light of ALL that He has done for us
 - By the Way – Not to be super heavy
 - What we have been learning about –
 - IS NOT AN OPTION – maybe I will, maybe I should, NO it is a MUST
 - This is why is BEGGING (Beseech) them v. 1
- **We outlined Chapter 12**
 - Total Commitment To Jesus vs. 1-2
 - Total Commitment To The Body Of Christ vs. 3-8
 - Total Commitment To LOVE vs. 9-21
- **Another way to look at this amazing chapter**
 - **Romans 12:1**
 - In Light of Romans 1-11
 - Were to be a LIVING Sacrifice
 - The rest of the chapter instructs on HOW to do that
 - **Romans 12:2**

- NOT Conformed But Renewed

- **Romans 12:3**

- Right Attitude about yourself

Romans 12:3 (NKJV)

3 *For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith.*

- **Romans 12:4-5**

- You are now a part of His Body

Romans 12:4–5 (NKJV)

4 *For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function,*

5 *so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another.*

- **Romans 12:6-8**

- Last Week - Use your gift for the glory of God and to build His Body

Romans 12:6 (NKJV)

6 *Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, let us prophesy in proportion to our faith;*

- **Romans 12:9-21**

- Today - LOVE / Love the Body / Love the World

- ***This morning 2 POWERFUL Examples on LOVE IS A VERB***

- Loving Fellow Christians vs. 9-13
- Loving Those In The World vs. 14-21

Loving Fellow Christians vs. 9-13

- **First: The Basis of Love v. 9a**

Romans 12:9 (NKJV)

9 Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good.

- **1st Love**

- **Different Words in the Greek for LOVE**

- Phileo – Brotherly Love – Word Philadelphia from
 - Storge - Familial love
 - Eros - Sexual passion

- **The Word here is Agape**

- God's LOVE
 - A Love that
 - GIVES
 - Filled Affection
 - Good will
 - Benevolence
 - Forgiveness
 - Based on a choice to value another person.
 - It is demonstrated by action
 - God Wants our love for one and another to based of the LOVE that HE has FOR US
 - (Phil. 2)

- **2nd Without Hypocrisy**

- Hypocrisy – Greek: Anupokritos
 - (“not” + “play acting”) – unfeigned, undisguised, sincere
 - In ancient Greece, the actors on stage in a play were called “hupocrites”, they were pretending to be someone else.
- Love without hypocrisy
 - Love with hypocrisy isn’t real love at all
 - But Sadly
 - Much of what masquerades as “love” in the Christian community is laced with hypocrisy!
 - We come together – “Hey Bro I love you” then we tear each other apart when we leave (Gossip)
 - **1st What Gossip is NOT**
 - It not calling out False Teaching & Teachers
 - It is NOT getting counsel for a struggle you’re going through
 - Although this can very easily become gossip if the counselor is not mature
 - It IS NOT leadership having to deal with a sinful person inside the church
 - Marking those that cause division (Romans 16:17)
 - **2nd What is GOSSIP**
 - It is talking about someone or slandering them behind their backs that creates a negative image

- Speaking destructively about others in their absence
- A negative spirit that is bent towards hurting others rather than helping them
- Degrading and defamatory information that you have on someone that you share with someone else
- Revealing embarrassing or shameful information regarding the lives of others to someone else
- Is also an excessive interest in the affairs of others.

- **3rd The Damage GOSSIP Does**

- Paul calls us the busybodies, sticking our nose where it does not belong.
- Gossipers
 - Are murderers and character assassins.
 - They kill other people's spirits.
 - Gossip is a sin that spreads hatred.
 - When we GOSSIP others we are acting in the capacity of agents for the devil.
 - When we listen to GOSSIP
 - We are giving the ENEMY foothold in our lives.

- **3rd Lesson – What this love should look like**

- Paul Lays out how this love is to function

- It is Genuine, without hypocrisy
 - Sincere, devoid of any deception
 - It's pure, honest
- Summed Up in 1 Cor. 13

1 Corinthians 13:1–8 (NKJV)

- 1** Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal.
- 2** And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing.
- 3** And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing.
- 4** Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up;
- 5** does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil;
- 6** does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth;
- 7** bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.
- 8** Love never fails. But whether there are prophecies, they will fail; whether there are tongues, they will cease; whether there is knowledge, it will vanish away.

- God wants our love to be the real thing. No fakes.

1 John 3:18 (NKJV)

- 18** My little children, let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth.

• Second: The Morality of Love v. 9b

Romans 12:9 (NKJV)

- 9** Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good.

- **1st Love doesn't tolerate evil, but hates it**

- Love it HATES EVIL

- The Word Abhor –

- Greek: Apostugeo
- Means:
 - (“from” + “detestable”) – to dislike, abhor, have a horror of
 - Hate the sin & love the sinner!

- **2nd Cling to What is Good**

- Cling – Greek: Kollao
 - Means: To glue, to glue together, cement, to join one’s self to, cleave to
- Good – Greek: Agathos
 - Means: Good, pleasant, agreeable, joyful; excellent, distinguished; honorable
- We are to HOLD FAST to GOD – What is GOOD

- **3rd Lesson**

- In our world
 - We are constantly told that every ideology, every viewpoint, is valid & must be affirmed...
 - No matter how outlandish, illogical, or immoral.
 - They say we are supposed to personally determine for ourselves what is true.
- God has made it very clear in His Word
 - We are to HATE what is EVIL

- There is no valid standard other than His own.
- Sin is not something to be winked at
- Sin is not something we just shrugged off, or tolerated away.
- Evil should be hated, & good should be clung to.
- **We should hate the SIN**
 - Murder
 - Violence
 - Discrimination, voicelessness,
 - Human Trafficking,
 - Sexual Sins
 - Corruption
 - Etc...
- **We should love justice that values life – Love the Sinner**

Micah 6:8 (NKJV)

8 *He has shown you, O man, what is good; And what does the LORD require of you But to do justly, To love mercy, And to walk humbly with your God?*

1 Thessalonians 5:21–22 (NKJV)

21 *Test all things; hold fast what is good.*

22 *Abstain from every form of evil.*

• **Third: The Expression of Love v. 10**

Romans 12:10 (NKJV)

10 *Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another;*

○ **1st It's Kind & Affectionate**

▪ **Affectionate –**

- Greek: Philostorgos
- Means: (“love” + “family love”) – the mutual love of parents and children and wives and husbands
- The words here combine friendship love & family love
- It speaks of the loyalty & warmth
- To be committed to & supportive of each other

▪ **This is a Command**

- Christians should not have a cold, stand-offish attitude.
- In honor giving preference to one another shows that the displays of affection are genuine.

○ **2nd In Honor giving Preference**

▪ **Honor –**

- Greek: Time –
- Means: A valuing by which the price is fixed

▪ **Giving Preference –**

- Greek: Proegeomai
- Means: (“before” + “to lead”) – to go before and show the way; to prefer, to esteem more highly

- **AKA = It's humble, looking out for others**

- A form of the word is used in (Phil 2:3-4)

Philippians 2:3–4 (NKJV)

3 *Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself.*

4 *Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.*

- **How do you display honor to others?**

- You treat them as being higher than yourself
- You treat their needs as being of more importance to you than your own
- Unselfishness - In honor giving preference to one another
- Honor means to value & respect them
- Give this respect & affirmation to others, rather than seeking it for ourselves
- SERVING one Another

- **Fourth: The Energy of Love v. 11-12**

- **1st Not Lagging in Diligence, Serve with Fervent, Zeal v. 11**

Romans 12:11 (NKJV)

11 *not lagging in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord;*

- **Not Lagging in Diligence**

- Don't lack zeal
- Put your whole heart & soul into it.

- We've all drifted into a lazy, complacent, or indifferent routine in our walk with God.
- Paul wants to shake us out of that.
- The church is no place for laziness.

▪ **Fervent in Spirit**

- Could be translated, "with respect to the spirit, boiling."
- Fervent – zeo – to boil with heat, be hot; zeal for what is good
- Enthusiasm - Not lagging in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord

▪ **Serving the Lord –**

- Serve THE LORD
- It's simple – JUST DO IT
- No Burn OUT – if you serve the LORD – but if you serve others first – then BURN OUT

○ **2nd Rejoicing, Patient, Prayerful v. 12**

Romans 12:12 (NKJV)

12 *rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing steadfastly in prayer;*

▪ **Rejoicing in hope**

- This shows how we are commanded to do all these things with an eye towards heaven.
- This is how we fulfill the command for hope, patience and steadfast character described here.

▪ **Patient in Tribulation:**

- Trials do not excuse a lack of love in the body of Christ or a lack of willingness to do His work.
- Patient – Greek: Hupomeno – to remain; not recede or flee
- *Leon Morris explains these two important words. Patient “denotes not a passive putting up with things, but an active, steadfast endurance.” Tribulation “denotes not some minor pinprick, but deep and serious trouble.”*

▪ **Steadfastly in PRAYER**

- If Satan can keep us out of touch with God, he knows we won't cause any problems for his evil kingdom.
- Prayer is our lifeline with God

• **Fifth: The (Deeds) Compassion of Love v. 13**

Romans 12:13 (NKJV)

13 *distributing to the needs of the saints, given to hospitality.*

○ **1st Looking for the needs around us**

▪ **Distributing to the needs of the saints.**

- It is critical for believers who had plenty to share their abundance with those in need

▪ **NEEDS not GREED**

- We do not support Greed
- We support laziness
- God's love moves us to provide for the needs of others

- **Not All needs are met with Money**

- Seeds aren't always financial.
- Emotional support
 - Putting our arm around somebody's shoulder.

- **Hospitality**

- Hospitality means "love of strangers" (people who are foreign or different from us).
- Hospitality is a practical concern for the welfare of those within one's reach.

Loving Those In The World vs. 14-21

- **First: Our attitudes towards unbelievers vs. 14-16**

- **1st Forgiving & praying v. 14**

Romans 12:14 (NKJV)

14 Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse.

- **Bless those who persecute you:**

- We are not to have a hateful attitude towards anyone, not even towards those who persecute us.
 - Bless – Sermon on the Mount
 - This has nothing to do with self-defense, or being bullied for the sake of being bullied!
- Note (John 16:2)

John 16:2 (NKJV)

2 They will put you out of the synagogues; yes, the time is coming that whoever kills you will think that he offers God service.

- **Bless and Do not curse:**

- Jesus spoke of this same heart in Matthew 5:46

Matthew 5:46 (NKJV)

46 *For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same?*

- It's learning to Pray for those who are preying on us!

- **2nd Identify with them & feel with them v. 15**

Romans 12:15 (NKJV)

15 *Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep.*

- **Rejoice**

- Be genuinely happy for others

- **Weep**

- Be supportive for those going through the fire

- **Lesson**

- The tendency is to rejoice when our enemies weep & weep when they rejoice.
- But what kind of a testimony is that? All it does is prove we're living by the same rules they do.
- If we are to followers of Christ – we must be different than the world

- **3rd Humble not looking down on them v. 16**

Romans 12:16 (NKJV)

16 *Be of the same mind toward one another. Do not set your mind on high things, but associate with the humble. Do not be wise in your own opinion.*

- **Same Mind**

- Does not mean that we must see alike on nonessential matters.
- It is not uniformity of mind
- It is harmony of relationships

- **Mind on High things / Wise in your own Opinion**

- To be haughty with self-seeking pride

- **Associate with the humble:**

- We simply imitate Jesus

- **Second: Our actions towards unbelievers vs. 17-21**

- **1st We are not to engage in retribution v. 17**

Romans 12:17 (NKJV)

17 Repay no one evil for evil. Have regard for good things in the sight of all men.

- Repay no one evil for evil recalls Jesus' command in Matthew 5:38-45.
- We are to love our enemies and treat well those who treat us badly.

Matthew 5:38–45 (NKJV)

38 "You have heard that it was said, 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.'

39 But I tell you not to resist an evil person. But whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also.

40 If anyone wants to sue you and take away your tunic, let him have your cloak also.

41 And whoever compels you to go one mile, go with him two.

42 Give to him who asks you, and from him who wants to borrow from you do not turn away.

43 “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’

44 But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you,

45 that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.

- People should be able to see what is good and what is not based on our conduct.

- **2nd Live at peace with others v. 18**

Romans 12:18 (NKJV)

18 *If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men.*

- I’m so thankful for the qualifier Paul gives here.
 - After reading all of this we might wonder if Paul lived on the same planet we do.
 - I mean, some of this looks impossible, unrealistic.
 - This verse proves Paul knew there are some people, no matter what you do, they’ll just continue to be difficult.
 - We’re going to have strained relationships; just make sure it’s not coming from you.

- **3rd Trust the Lord to take care of things v. 19**

Romans 12:19 (NKJV)

19 *Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, “Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,” says the Lord.*

- **Do not avenge yourselves**
 - The one who trusts in God will not think it necessary to avenge themselves.

- They will leave the issue of vengeance to God, and give place to wrath – giving no place to their own wrath, and a wide place to God’s wrath
- Stay out of the Holy Spirits WAY
- **4th Do good to unbelievers vs. 20-21**

Romans 12:20–21 (NKJV)

20 Therefore *“If your enemy is hungry, feed him; If he is thirsty, give him a drink; For in so doing you will heap coals of fire on his head.”*

21 *Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.*

▪ **Overcome evil with good**

- With this mind-set, we will do good to our enemies
- Looking for the most practical ways we can help them.
- This is the way we are not overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

▪ **Heap coals of fire on his head**

- *Guzik; “Is the heaping coals of fire on his head something good in the eyes of our enemy or is it something bad? It most likely refers to a “burning conviction” that our kindness places on our enemy. Or, some think it refers to the practice of lending coals from a fire to help a neighbor start their own – an appreciated act of kindness.*

Closing

• **This is God CALL – LOVE is a VERB**

- Will we answer His CALL?
- **Some People are**

- Protective

- Fearful – Opening our hearts to others makes us vulnerable.
- We might be rejected.
- Past experiences of being burned can make us gun shy.
- Instead of taking a risk, we back off in self-protection.

- Passive

- A lot of us wait to let the other person make the first move.
- Instead of finding out what someone's needs are, we want someone to tell us what to do.

- Preoccupation

- It's so easy to get wrapped up in our own lives, our own pleasure & pains, isn't it?
- Some get so busy with their lives where they aren't spending time with others anymore or take time to notice their feelings.
- Their pursuit of their own interests drains their energy & dims their care, crowding out love.

- Procrastination

- "Tomorrow"
 - I'm going to do this or that for the Kingdom.
 - I'll be generous when I get that next raise.
 - I'll be hospitable when I get a larger home.

- I'll love when I'm positive to be loved back.
- I'll pray when I have time
- I'll help the poor when my bills are all paid.
- *C.S Lewis; "There is no safe investment. To love at all is to be vulnerable. Love anything, and your heart will certainly be wrung and possibly be broken. If you want to make sure of keeping it intact, you must give your heart to no one, not even to an animal. Wrap it carefully round with hobbies and little luxuries; avoid all entanglements; lock it up safe in the casket or coffin of your selfishness. But in that casket – safe, dark, motionless, airless – it will change. It will not be broken; it will become unbreakable, impenetrable, irredeemable. The alternative to tragedy, or at least to the risk of tragedy, is damnation. The only place outside Heaven where you can be perfectly safe from all the dangers and perturbations of love is Hell."*

- **Invitation to Receive Christ**

- **ABC**