

Introduction:

- Last week: Main point of the section is 'think soberly' and humbly of ourselves. Paul is wanting us to view ourselves wisely because we are intended to fit together. And being fitted together we form One body, the Body of Christ.
- It should be of no surprise to us that Paul, in verse 9, brings up the topic of love. Love is what holds us all together.
- 9-21 becomes a deeper picture of what the person and community of those who have renewed minds looks like and what they strive for.

I. Don't Pretend To Love

- A. Verse nine begins as a heading. It is two words - un-hypocritical love. It serves as the introduction to the thoughts he is about to share.
1. Pauls purpose is to exhort and not to just describe what this renew mind, joined together body of Christ looks like. He is saying...Love! It is mandatory given the response of God to our utter lostness.
 - a) *"Jesus replied, "The most important commandment is this: 'Listen, O Israel! The Lord our God is the one and only Lord. And you must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your mind, and all your strength.' The second is equally important: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' No other commandment is greater than these." (Mark 12:29-31, NLT)*
 - b) *"So now I am giving you a new commandment: Love each other. Just as I have loved you, you should love each other." (John 13:34, NLT)*
 2. These two verses are the norm of Christianity!
 3. The Love of Christians is grounded in God's intense love of us through this son. Romans 5:5-8.
- B. Paul uses agape to communicate love but he puts a definite article in front of the Greek word to give focus and significance that this is a well known virtue. Paul is not exhorting us to love but to make sure that the love we posse is genuine.
1. This love must not be anything close to 'acting' hypocrisy. He wants it to be a genuine love that flows out of the nature of Christ in us.
- C. Genuine love:
1. Hates (to hate exceedingly) what is evil and clings to what is good. Cling = be married to.
 2. If your love is genuine you will abhor evil.
 3. A transformed life by love will cause a person to cling to what is good because he now knows the will of God.

II. Unto and For Each Other

- A. One another. The way Paul presents this love is that of a family that is one. Everything we do affecting others.
- B. Love each other with genuine affection
1. Philadelphia - brotherly love.

- 2. A brotherhood of love. Band of Brothers.
- C. Honor each other with desire
 - 1. Paul is calling Christians to out do each other in showing honor to one another.
 - 2. We are one body therefore everyone work together! Each part is too important.
 - 3. vs. 11 With be on fire to serve the Lord. We are to be motivated by His love towards us.
- D. Verse 12 Three exhortations. Seen also in 8:24-28
 - 1. Hope
 - 2. endurance
 - 3. Prayer
- E. verse 13 last exhortation in this series.
 - 1. When God's people are in need be ready to help them.
 - a) Be ready - koinonia. fellowship. Community
 - 2. Always be eager to practice hospitality.

III. Living Among Others

- A. A shift occurs here both in style and exhortations. Before it was about one another. Now the subject changes. The verb stays the same. Love well. But the object of that love changes to other...who do not know God.
 - 1. Blessing your persecutor is a way of expressing sincere love. *"Bless those who persecute you. Don't curse them; pray that God will bless them."* (Romans 12:14, NLT)
 - a) *"But I say, love your enemies! Pray for those who persecute you!"* (Matthew 5:44, NLT) Jesus was first to teach this."
 - b) *"But to you who are willing to listen, I say, love your enemies! Do good to those who hate you. Bless those who curse you. Pray for those who hurt you."* (Luke 6:27-28, NLT)
- B. In 17-21 Pau urges Christians to avoid retaliatory activities among others.
- C. vs 21 do not be overcome by evil but instead overcome evil with good.