

Romans 12:9-13
Outdoing Yourself

1. Get Real 9, 10

A. Make Sure

Real community. Not manufactured or forced.

“And they devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. And all who believed were together and had all things in common. And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need. And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.” -Acts 2:42-47 ESV

“Now the full number of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one said that any of the things that belonged to him was his own, but they had everything in common. And with great power the apostles were giving their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all. There was not a needy person among them, for as many as were owners of lands or houses sold them and brought the proceeds of what was sold and laid it at the apostles’ feet, and it was distributed to each as any had need.” -Acts 4:32-35 ESV

“If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. If I give away all I have, and if I deliver up my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing.” -1 Corinthians 13:1-3 ESV

B. Headlining with Genuine Love

Love for God translates to our love for others.

“We put no obstacle in anyone’s way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry, but as servants of God we commend ourselves in every way: by great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities, beatings, imprisonments, riots, labors, sleepless nights, hunger; by purity, knowledge, patience, kindness, the Holy Spirit, genuine love;”
2 Corinthians 6:3-6 ESV

“Genuine love: hating what is evil, devoted to what is good;”

Ben Witherington

love unhyppocritically- This cannot be underestimated in importance.

“Hate the evil”

-Do we hate the evil enough?

“Do not despise prophecies, but test everything; hold fast what is good. Abstain from every form of evil.” -1 Thessalonians 5:20-22 ESV

“Clinging to the Good”

C. The Power of Love

“Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God. Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not put us to shame, because God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.” -Romans 5:1-5 ESV

D. Love as Family, but Better 10

“Philadelphia”

2. Real Zeal 11, 12

A. In Zeal Not Lazy

Zeal is for each of us. We should have a level of zeal for the Lord.

B. Boiling Over

“For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, “Abba! Father!” The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words.” -Romans 8:15-16, 26 ESV

C. Let Hope Keep You Joyful

“Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice.” -Philippians 4:4 ESV

“No one stares up at the northern lights thinking, ‘Wow, I’m incredible! We are hardwired to wonder and therefore worship... Linger here, rejoicing in God’s blessings before asking for any more.” Pete Greig

D. Prayer!

“Rejoice always, pray without ceasing,” -1 Thessalonians 5:16-17 ESV

“give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.” -1 Thessalonians 5:18 ESV

E. The Marathon of Life

Endurance

3. Real Relationships 13

A. An Invitation beyond the Superficial

B. Taking Care of the Saints

“To all those in Rome who are loved by God and called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.”

Romans 1:7 ESV

C. Loving the Strangers

“Show hospitality to one another without grumbling.” -1 Peter 4:9 ESV

“Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.” -Hebrews 13:2 ESV

“Hospitality is not so much a task as (it is) a way of living our lives and of sharing ourselves.” Christine Pohl

D. Outdoing Yourself

“I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.” -Romans 12:1-2 ESV

“When you lay down your life as a living sacrifice, you take up the power of the Holy Spirit to be truly who you are to be. You outdo yourself.”

Reflection: Which part of loving others challenges you the most from Romans 12:9-13? How are you trusting the Holy Spirit to give yourself to that work of love?

Follow UP in the Word through the Week...

Monday: Acts 4:32-35. How do we work out this expression of the church today? How would you be challenged to serve others in this way?

Tuesday: 1 Corinthians 13:1-3. How does love fill in the gaps and why does Paul say it is so much more important than the gifts?

Wednesday: 2 Corinthians 6:3-6. If you were asked for a definition of “genuine love” how would you explain it?

Thursday: Romans 5:1-5. How do we obtain this love that Paul speaks of in these verses?

Friday: 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18. Using these short verses as a mirror, how is your prayer life?

Saturday: 1 Peter 4:9. What has been your experience with hospitality? Has it been a time of genuine sharing or more of a worrisome task?