

Living the life of love (Romans 12:9-21)

1. Our attitude towards our friends in the church

Fourteen qualities of love:

1. SINCERITY v9a “Don't just pretend to love others. Really love them.”
2. DISCERNMENT v9b “Hate what is wrong. Hold tightly to what is good.”
3. AFFECTION v10a “Love each other with genuine affection.”
4. HONOUR v10b “Take delight in honouring each other.”
5. ENTHUSIASM v11 “Never be lazy, but work hard and serve the Lord enthusiastically.”
6. JOY v12a “Rejoice in our confident hope.”
7. PATIENCE v12b “Be patient in trouble.”
8. FAITHFULNESS v12c “Keep on praying.”
9. GENEROSITY v13 “When God's people are in need, be ready to help them.”
10. HOSPITALITY v13b “Always be eager to practice hospitality.”
11. FORGIVENESS 14 “Bless those who persecute you. Don't curse them.”
12. SYMPATHY v15 “Be happy with those who are happy, and weep with those who weep.”
13. PEACE v16 “Live in harmony with each other.”
14. HUMILITY v16b “Don't be too proud to enjoy the company of ordinary people.”

In summary: LOVE

2. Attitude towards our enemies

v21 “Don't let evil conquer you, but conquer evil BY DOING GOOD.”

This is repeated FOUR TIMES.

This approach AVOIDS ESCALATION.

In summary: LOVE

3. How can we live this way?

We CAN'T live this way. It's TOO HARD.

“You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly. Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous person, though for a good person someone might possibly dare to die. But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” – Romans 5:6-8.

“We love because HE FIRST LOVED US.” – 1 John 4:19.

This is incredibly important: getting the order wrong is fatal.

We are FORGIVEN; *therefore* we want TO LIVE RIGHT.

We do *not* try TO LIVE RIGHT *in order to* be FORGIVEN.

That's why the unforgiving servant is so terrible (Matthew 18:21–35).

Christians holding grudges are RIDICULOUS.

“To be a Christian means to forgive the inexcusable because God has forgiven the inexcusable in you.” – C. S. Lewis.