



Radical Love

BISHOP RONALD K. POWELL
KEYNOTE SPEAKER

CROSSWINDS INTERNATIONAL MINISTRIES



Don't just pretend to love others. Really love them. Hate what is wrong. Hold tightly to what is good. Love each other with genuine affection, and take delight in honoring each other. Never be lazy, but work hard and serve the Lord enthusiastically. Rejoice in our confident hope. Be patient in trouble, and keep on praying. When God's people are in need, be ready to help them. Always be eager to practice hospitality. Bless those who persecute you. Don't curse them; pray that God will bless them. Be happy with those who are happy, and weep with those who weep.

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

Today, let us delve into the profound teachings of the apostle Paul in his letter to the Romans, specifically focusing on Romans 12:9-15. In these verses, Paul speaks to us about the transformative power of love and the radical nature of genuine Christian love.

Paul begins by saying, "Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good." This sets the tone for the kind of love that we, as followers of Christ, are called to embody. Our love should not be superficial or hypocritical, but sincere and genuine. It should be a love that is rooted in God's love for us, a love that is willing to hate what is evil and cling to what is good.

As we continue to read, Paul goes on to say, "Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves." This is a challenging command, as it requires us to put the needs and interests of others above our own. It calls us to a selfless love that seeks the well-being of others before our own desires. This kind of love is radically different from the self-centered love that the world often promotes.

Paul further instructs us to "Share with the Lord's people who are in need. Practice hospitality." This emphasizes the practical outworking of love in our lives. Love is not just a feeling or an emotion; it is action. It is seen in our willingness to help those in need, to open our hearts and homes to others, and to show kindness and compassion in tangible ways.

In the next verse, Paul says, "Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse." This is perhaps one of the most challenging aspects of Christian love. It is easy to love those who love us in return, but true Christian love goes beyond that. It extends even to our enemies, to those who persecute us or speak ill of us. We are called to bless them, to pray for them, and to respond with love instead of retaliation.

Finally, Paul concludes this passage by saying, "Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn." This highlights the empathetic nature of love. Love is not indifferent to the joys and sorrows of others; it rejoices in their triumphs and weeps with them in their sorrows. It is a love that is deeply connected to the fabric of humanity, sharing in both the joys and the pains of life.

In conclusion, the message of Romans 12:9-15 is clear: love is the radical fabric that holds together the Christian life. It is a love that is sincere, selfless, practical, forgiving, and empathetic. It is a love that reflects the very nature of God, who is love.

As we meditate on these words, let us ask ourselves: Are we truly embodying this radical love in our lives? Are we known by our love for one another, just as Christ commanded? May we be inspired and empowered by the Holy Spirit to love in such a way that the world may see Christ in us and be drawn to Him.

Let us pray.

Heavenly Father, we thank you for the gift of love that you have shown us through your Son, Jesus Christ. Help us to love as you have loved us – sincerely, selflessly, and radically. Fill our hearts with your love so that we may be beacons of light in a dark world. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

May the grace and peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.