

NOTES:

HOW TO GROW A LOVING CHURCH
Grace: God's Power to Change Your Life-Week 33
Romans 12:9-21

In this passage we have one of the most straightforward and practical descriptions of what it means to really love. Jesus said that love is the proof that we are His disciples. (John 16:33-34) Today, on Palm Sunday, we will be using Mary of Bethany's encounter with Christ to illustrate what a loving church family looks like.

I. LOVING BELIEVERS:
HOW TO GROW A LOVING CHURCH (8 STEPS)

1. Be genuine.

"Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good."
Romans 12:9

We must reject sin without rejecting people.

2. Be careful of other's needs.

"Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves." Romans 12:10

3. Be contagious with enthusiasm.

"Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord." Romans 12:11

"I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were either one or the other! So, because you are lukewarm—neither hot nor cold—I am about to spit you out of my mouth."

Rev. 3:15-16

"Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart as working for the Lord, not for men."

Colossians 3:23

4. Be positive, patient, and prayerful.

“Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer.”
Romans 12:12

“Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope.” Romans 5:3-4

5. Open your heart and your home to others.

“Share with the Lord’s people who are in need. Practice hospitality.” Romans 12:13

6. Never speak negative of a brother.

“Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse.”
Romans 12:14

“Brothers and sisters, do not slander one another. Anyone who speaks against a brother or sister or judges them speaks against the law and judges it. When you judge the law, you are not keeping it, but sitting in judgment on it. There is only one Lawgiver and Judge, the one who is able to save and destroy. But you—who are you to judge your neighbor?” James 4:11-12

7. Be sympathetic to each other’s feelings.

“Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn.”
Romans 12:15

8. Avoid pride and partiality.

“Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited.”
Romans 12:16

“Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everyone. If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. Do not take revenge, my dear friends, but leave room for God’s wrath, for it is written: ‘It is mine to avenge; I will repay,’ says the Lord. On the contrary: ‘If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head.’ Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.” Romans 12:17-21

**II. LOVING UNBELIEVERS:
HOW TO RESPOND WHEN WRONGED**

*** Counteract your natural instincts.**

“Do not repay anyone evil for evil...” Romans 12:17a

*** See things from their point of view.**

“Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everyone. If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.”
Romans 12:17b-18

*** Leave all revenge to God.**

“Do not take revenge, my dear friends, but leave room for God’s wrath, for it is written: ‘It is mine to avenge; I will repay,’ says the Lord. On the contrary: ‘If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head.’” Romans 19-20

*** Turn an enemy into a friend.**

“Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.”
Romans 12:2