

w/b 25th March 2018 THEME: PRACTICAL HOLINESS – Life application

PASSAGE: Romans 12:9-21

Romans 12:9-21 New Century Version (NCV)

⁹ Your love must be real. Hate what is evil, and hold on to what is good. ¹⁰ Love each other like brothers and sisters. Give each other more honour than you want for yourselves. ¹¹ Do not be lazy but work hard, serving the Lord with all your heart. ¹² Be joyful because you have hope. Be patient when trouble comes, and pray at all times. ¹³ Share with God's people who need help. Bring strangers in need into your homes.

¹⁴ Wish good for those who harm you; wish them well and do not curse them. ¹⁵ Be happy with those who are happy, and be sad with those who are sad. ¹⁶ Live in peace with each other. Do not be proud, but make friends with those who seem unimportant. Do not think how smart you are.

¹⁷ If someone does wrong to you, do not pay him back by doing wrong to him. Try to do what everyone thinks is right. ¹⁸ Do your best to live in peace with everyone. ¹⁹ My friends, do not try to punish others when they wrong you, but wait for God to punish them with his anger. It is written: "I will punish those who do wrong; I will repay them,"^[a] says the Lord. ²⁰ But you should do this:

*"If your enemy is hungry, feed him;
if he is thirsty, give him a drink.*

Doing this will be like pouring burning coals on his head." [Proverbs 25:21–22](#)

LAUNCH

Imagine that you are a spectator at your own funeral. Your work colleagues, friends, church and family are all gathered. They are all saying nice things about you but what might they be thinking? What do you want them to think?

DISCOVERY

Galatians 5:22-23 New International Version (NIV)

²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.

At what points do these qualities crop up in the Romans passage?

As you read the Romans passage do any of the verses jump out at you as being a real challenge? Which ones and why?

Do any of them really inspire you and cause the response – yes I want to do that more?

UNDERSTANDING

In what ways can our love for others in the church be fake?
What should we do about it? (v9)

In verse 10 Paul's encouragement to love each other like brothers and sisters is amusing because often brothers and sisters fight like cats and dogs. What do you think he is getting at in this verse? (v 10)

In what areas of life can you find yourself getting lazy? What first steps might you take to address this? Why is the heart important in sorting this out? (v11)

Geoff Lucas suggests that often Christians can be grim and miserable (the frozen chosen). What hope do we have and how does this make us more joyful?

Describe a stressful situation where your response has shown a thorough lack of patience. How might you have responded more usefully?

Verse 13 is both practical and wonderfully challenging. What should you be sharing and who should you be inviting?

Sometimes our hearts can be nothing short of delighted when we hear about the failure of others. Why is this and what sinful nature does it reveal in us?

(Feel free to discuss the remaining verses but these are probably enough questions)

APPLICATION

Pray for one another in any area that each member of the group finds a challenge. Pray that the fruit of the Spirit will replace self-centred (fleshly) responses.

In your meeting please pray for the Good Friday service as we reflect on 4 of Jesus's sayings from the cross.

Also for the guest family service on Easter Sunday