

**Romans 12:9-21**  
**(Leviticus 19:17-18; Matthew 5:43-48)**  
**“A Call to Love”**

## **Introduction**

Paul is calling us in this final section of the letter to respond to God’s grace by living from that grace. We are to live in such a way that the truth of the gospel and the reality of God’s grace will be evident to those who experience God’s love through us, who have been made new in Christ Jesus.

The theme of our text is clearly stated in verse nine and summarized in verse 21: “Let love be genuine” (12:9). John Stott has rightly observed of these verses, “So far in Romans all references to *agape* have been to the love of God ... But now Paul focuses on *agape* as the essence of Christian discipleship.” But what does *agape* look like in action? Where and how do we start this life of loving as we have been loved?

## **Body**

### **1. We are called to love what is good (12:9).**

Abhor what is evil.  
Hold fast to what is good.

### **2. We are called to love one another within the family of God (12:10-13).**

Be generous with both honor & energetic service, in good times and bad.  
Be generous with both prayer and possessions.

### **3. We are called to love the world around us (12:14-20).**

Bless your neighbor by living in harmony.  
Bless your enemy by seeking peace.

## **Conclusion**

Finally, always remember the difference between true godliness and playing God: ours is to bless, his is to judge. So, in summary: “Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good” (12:21). When we return evil for evil, good is driven out and evil prevails. But when we return good for evil, evil is driven out and good prevails. *Agape* love is supernatural in that it is self-sacrificial, ready to lay aside its rights, its hopes and desires for the sake of those who least deserve it. We are called to love as we have been loved. In the words of the apostle, John, “Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God” (1 John 4:7).

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