

GOD'S FAMILY TRADEMARK

Romans 12:9-13

I was a bit shaky seeking right word for this morning's title.

I couldn't decide if a family can have a trademark.

I looked up definition of "*trademark*."

It was too good to pass up! Doesn't matter whether a family *can* have a trademark, it's the right message!

*What's a **trademark**? "Name, symbol, figure, word, or mark adopted by manufacturer to designate products he makes or sells & distinguish them from those made & sold by others."*

What's mark God uses to designate those He made & distinguish them from others?

What distinguishes God's family from others?

Jn 13:35: "By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another"

Paul describes *logical response to God's love*:

Commit our life to God and live for Him

See ourselves from a new perspective

Dedicate ourselves to serving Him enthusiastically,

Another logical response:

Since God demonstrated His love for us, we ought to show love to others

Love for God's family ought to be *our* trademark.

CALL TO GENUINE LOVE 12:9

"Love must be sincere. Hate what's evil; cling to what's good"

Love among God's people should be *different* than world's

World practices ***TWO KINDS OF LOVE:***

Erotic "love"—isn't love at all!—*physical* attraction

Fraternal love—better than first. Still **reciprocal** love.

We love *because they love us*; sees something *attractive*.

God's love' is different. **Rom 5:8** "*God shows His love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us*"

God loves regardless of how others respond.

Expressed even when loved one rejects us.

God loves because He *chooses* to love us!

That's how He wants us to love each other

—we CHOOSE to love others, regardless of merit!.

God's love demands that we love each other

God's kind of love can't be **faked**—it's the real thing!

It's genuine Lit., doesn't "wear a mask"

Culture urges us to maintain image. "*Image is everything*"

Entertainers => people *pretend* something they're not.

We smile, when we *feel* like screaming at someone!

Kent Hughes: We smile at policeman handing us ticket; inside saying, "*May your days be filled with traffic jams!!!*"

We deceive ourselves,

thinking we care about people we don't even *like*!

We ought to have *sincere* love for one another—*no faking*!

Authentic love isn't based on emotions.

It's not about feelings

When authentic, we *choose* to love if we *feel* like it or not!

Authentic love is realistic

Not *afraid* to look at reality—see things as they are!

When we realize what person we love is *really* like, then...
Authentic love's accompanied by 2 related habits:
Rejecting what's evil Clinging to what's good.
 Seek what's best—help people become all God wants us to
 be—*shed what's harmful; cling to what's good!*

*We love each other too much to allow people to go on doing
 what will ultimately harm them, or destroy their life.*

Such love seeks what's in other person's best interest

DEMONSTRATIONS OF GENUINE LOVE 10-13

9 commands: what authentic love looks like in real life!

—appears to be disjointed grocery list of commands

9 areas set out by a *[hidden]* parallel construction.

Introduced: "*concerning...*" "*as it relates to...*" => "*in...*"

All linked to exhortation to love each other sincerely.

What should authentic love for one another look like?

Real love shown by practical attitudes & actions

1) As it relates to brotherly love, show affection for one another 10a "*Be devoted to one another in brotherly love.*"

Members of the body of Christ are *members of a family*.

Devil deceives us into believing we can stand alone.

"We don't need nobody!"

No one's independent, self-sufficient, super-capable, all-powerful hotshot, quit playing lone ranger!

We need each other. We're not isolated islands.

For the church to do its thing, we must work together as a team, as a family. Diverse—yet **one family!**

Remember how we used to fight with our brother/ sister, & defend them before anyone else?

Families stick together!

We ought to stick together as members of GOD'S family

We can do without the family spats!

We should care about each other; let people know we care!

2) As it relates to honor, show preference to one another 10b *"Honor one another above yourselves"*

Instead of elevating self, acknowledge value of others.

Treat others as more important than ourselves.

We'll never do it by our efforts—Spirit produces attitude

3) As it relates to zeal, diligently show concern for one another 11a *"Never be lacking in zeal."*

—not lagging behind [Don't drag your feet!]

—*lacking zeal for one another!*

Don't be lazy in concern for each other

Ministering to others takes energy! Don't lose your zeal!

4) As it relates to attitude, get excited about belonging to family! 11b *"Keep your spiritual fervor."*

Bubbling over—enthusiasm to show love for others

5) As it relates to the Lord Himself, serve Him together 11c *"Serving the Lord."*

Love motivates us to **serve Him continuously** together

6) As it relates to our hope, rejoice together 12a *"Be joyful in hope."*

We rejoice because our hope promises blessing.

Fellowship now's only sample of what we will enjoy
 Love causes us to **rejoice together about our future**
 We encourage one another!

7) As it relates to suffering, endure it patiently

12b *"patient in affliction"*

Enduring affliction together—encouraging each other
 Rather than lashing out at others (Cp. James)
 When we've had "one of those days" do we show love to those
 around us, or are we short-tempered & angry?
 Ability to endure suffering often comes from encouragement
 of others who love us & urge us to go on.

Brother I knew years ago had 3 daughters, in and out of hospital
 continually. Youngest daughter—nearly 3—spent more time at
 hospital than at home. His wife "lived" at hospital. He told us
 repeatedly how great a blessing encouragement of brothers who
 loved him was.

8) As it relates to prayer, pray constantly for one another. **12c** *"Faithful in prayer."*

Love causes us to **continuously pray for one another!**

9) Related to needs [a] share with each other **13** *"Share with God's people who are in need."*

Practice hospitality"

Knowledge of needs motivates us to **share** what we have
...& [b)] seek opportunities to help each other

One way of sharing is through **hospitality**—"love for
 foreigner/stranger"—someone we don't know

*Love for God & His people motivates us to **help others in need, though we may never be repaid.***

Love shows hospitality, not only when opportunity knocks;
we should **seek it—“search everywhere for it!”**

God’s people should be *generous people!*

We should be known for reaching out to people in need
—even people we don’t know! [EDF fund]

Risk in this type of message.

Check list of commands—focus on loving one another— showing affection—caring for one another like family.

But it’s still a **list of things to do.**

We get bogged down in details & miss main point.

Paul’s idea: ***care for each other like family!***

We should *never* hear *objective* criticism that our church is “cold”
—That we don’t care about one another.

If God *cares so much for us,*
we ought to *care about each other!*

Authentic love will motivate us to *look for* ways to help others.
It will take us our entire lifetime to put ALL these into practice.

What has God been talking to YOU about this morning?

Who should WE show that WE care about them? How?