



The human race is loving poorly.

“Sin will be rampant everywhere, and the love of many will **grow cold**.” *Matthew 24:12*

“Therefore, go and make **disciples** of all the nations...”
Matthew 28:19

A disciple is a student of Jesus.

“This is my command: **Love** each other.” *John 15:17*

Romans 13:10

“*Love is seeking and doing what is best for another.*”
— Dr. John Townsend

Loving the lovable is easy.

“If you love those who love you, what **credit** is that to you? Even sinners love those who love them.” *Luke 6:32*

“*The loveability of the other person is ultimately irrelevant.*”
— Dr. John Townsend

Luke 6:35

And may the Lord make your love for one another and for all people **grow** and **overflow**, just as our love for you overflows.
1 Thessalonians 3:12

People who hurt you.

1. Refuse to retaliate.

Dear friends, **never** take revenge. Leave that to the righteous anger of God. For the Scriptures say, “I will take revenge; I will pay them back,” says the Lord. *Romans 12:19*

2. Choose to forgive.

1 Peter 4:8

Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord **forgave you**.
Colossians 3:13

3. Set a boundary.

A hot-tempered person must pay the penalty; rescue them, and you will have to **do it again**. *Proverbs 19:19*

Who is the person who has hurt you? Will you choose to love them?

SG | Small Groups

Group Prep

In preparation for group, please read Romans 12:9-21 and listen to the Weekend Service message, then answer the following discussion questions.

Introduction

What happens when love grows cold in someone’s heart? People stop caring. They become indifferent. They mistreat others. Without love, our world, our workplaces, our communities, even our families become chaotic. It has become the norm to slander others on social media, depression and anxiety diagnoses are rising, sexual misconduct cases are rampant, and school shootings are at an all-time high. What’s the answer?

Discussion Questions

1. Describe what loving well looks like. Who loves you well? Why does this person come to mind?

2. What resonated with you most as you read Romans 12:9-21? What prerequisite does Paul give in Romans 12:9-21 when asking Christians to love well? (see Romans 12:1-2) What could motivate us to love in this way?

Read Luke 6:32-33. Do you have trouble loving someone because they’ve hurt you? How so?

Dr. John Townsend said, “The loveability of the other person is ultimately irrelevant.” The more lovable the other person must be for us to do what is best for them, the less loving we are. Do a quick self-evaluation. Where/when can you find yourself loving conditionally?

Romans 12:14-21 deals specifically with loving those who’ve hurt us. How do these verses cause you to think differently about the difficult situation you find yourself in?

3. How do we love those who’ve hurt us?

- Refuse to retaliate. Read Romans 12:19. What could help keep us from acting in retaliation?
- Choose to forgive. Read Colossians 3:13. What does it look like to truly forgive someone?
- Set up a boundary. Allowing a bad behavior to continue without consequence will only reinforce the behavior. How can we set boundaries in a wise way?

Share additional passages of Scripture with your group that could help them trust God and love well, even in the midst of dealing with pain and hurt.

Action Step

4. This coming week, how can you take one step toward showing love to someone who has hurt you? Or... Who do you know that is hurting, and how could you love them?

My action step is _____.

I will encourage and pray for _____ to follow through, and their action step is _____.

My memory verse is _____.

This coming week, I’m praying for _____.

Outreach: Groups in Action

Throughout the month of February, we will be collecting specific clothing items to provide school uniforms for students at the Rosa Parks Kindergarten Academy. These items are crucial for the students who have accidents that ruin their uniforms or for families who struggle to purchase larger sizes of uniforms mid-year because their child has outgrown them.

Specific sizes needed are 4T-10. Please donate solid colored polo shirts, navy/khaki/black pants, navy/khaki/black shorts or skirts, and new underwear.

For more information, please contact Emmanuel’s Outreach Director, Kerry Carmichael at kcarmichael@eclife.org.