

## **SERMON SUMMARY**

Romans 12:9-21 challenges us to examine what truly marks our lives as followers of Christ. We're confronted with the uncomfortable truth that we often cherry-pick Scripture, embracing the comforting parts while avoiding passages that challenge our behavior. The sermon draws us into a profound meditation on genuine love—love without masks, filters, or pretense. We're called to a Christianity that isn't theater but authentic relationship, where our faith community becomes a place of real vulnerability and sincere connection. The passage pushes us beyond superficial pleasantries to ask deeper questions: Do we hate evil with the same intensity that God does? Are we clinging to what is good, or are we scoring goals for the other team by dabbling in sin? The imagery of a disoriented child running toward the wrong goal in a sports game becomes a sobering metaphor for how we sometimes live—celebrating our progress while heading in entirely the wrong direction. This message isn't about religious performance but about transformation, about allowing Christ's life to so thoroughly mark us that others might squint and see His resemblance in our daily choices, relationships, and responses to both blessing and persecution.

## **Key Takeaways from the Sermon**

1. Christians are called to be marked by the life of Jesus - Our lives should look noticeably different because of Christ
  2. Love must be genuine (without masks) - No filters, no pretense, no theater
  3. Christians should hate evil and cling to good - Love has conviction and discernment
  4. Christian community should be characterized by honor - We should compete at putting others first
  5. Jesus perfectly lived out all these characteristics - We need His life in us to live this way
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## **INTO THE SERMON**

- 1. What did you find most helpful or challenging about this weekend's sermon?**
- 2. Pastor Sam said Christians should be "marked by Christ." What do you think are some of the most noticeable ways a church community can reflect the life of Jesus?**
- 3. The sermon emphasized genuine love without masks or pretending. Why do you think authentic relationships can be difficult to build, even within a church community?**
- 4. Which illustration or example from the sermon stood out to you most, and why?**

## **INTO THE TEXT**

- 1. Read Romans 12:9-10. What do these verses teach about the kind of relationships that should exist among believers?**
- 2. In verses 9 and 21, Paul calls believers to reject evil and cling to what is good. What does this look like in everyday life, both personally and as a church?**
- 3. Read Romans 12:14-18. Which command in this section seems most countercultural in today's world? Why?**
- 4. According to verses 19-21, how are Christians instructed to respond to enemies and conflict? What does this reveal about God's character and His justice?**

## **TAKE AWAY / NOW WHAT**

- 1. Looking at Romans 12 as a whole, what markers should be most evident in a church that is seeking to reflect Jesus well?**
- 2. How can our church community create more opportunities for genuine relationships, hospitality, and encouragement?**
- 3. In what ways can we help one another identify and resist the influences of evil while holding fast to what is good?**
- 4. What would it look like for our church to become known for overcoming evil with good in our families, neighborhoods, schools, and workplaces this week?**