

# How to Love 1- Sincerity

## How to Love Bumper Video

Greeting

## The World knows TO LOVE.

Many of our hit songs are about finding “Somebody to Love... I just need somebody to love.”

The songs we hear might even tell us “You’re Nobody ‘til Somebody Loves You.”

Songs about experiencing love are everywhere. Our world knows TO LOVE...

The World lacks the knowledge of HOW to love.

## How to Love

When the boyfriend hits the girl friend...

When there is infidelity in our marriages...

When the parent abuses their children...

These reoccurring actions scream that our society knows they need TO LOVE but lack the knowledge of HOW TO LOVE.

If you were to look to the patterns of our culture for a lesson on love you would get really confused.

If you want to receive a pure lesson on love you need to look to the Word of God.

If you were to learn about love from the Word of God, what passage would you turn to? The Bible is big! The Bible is 66 books, so where in all those books, chapters, and verses would you turn to learn how to Love.

I would expect someone to say 1 Corinthians 13. A chapter known as “the love chapter.”

\*1 Corinthians 13:4-8 4 Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. 5 It does not dishonor

others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. 6 Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. 7 It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. 8 Love never fails.

This verse is often quoted at weddings. I love for this verse to be quoted, but over the next few weeks let's make sure that we do more than read these words, let us live these words out.

A less quoted passage is also worthy of your attention.

Romans 12:9 Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. 10 Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves. 11 Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. 12 Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. 13 Share with the Lord's people who are in need. Practice hospitality.

Over the next weeks we are going to let the passage in Romans 12 reveal to us “how to love.”

If you want to love deeper, be here this month.

If you want to love your spouse and your children purely, tune in each week.

If you want the love of God to be revealed in you and through you, make up your mind right now that you will take on this teaching.

Make this your prayer. Say it aloud.

**Lord teach us how to love.**

We have need to be taught, but we also have need to be un-taught.

**The world: Love must be  
sexy**

The world incorrectly teaches us that being loved is being beautiful, handsome, and in really good physical shape. And because you are attractive, other people of similar attributes notice you. And then the world teaches you that love is actually “hooking up.” Love is being popular. Love is celebrity. Love is sexy.

Our culture sews this thread into every song, book, and movie. The world preaches from its own pulpit that “love must be sexy.”

**Lord teach us how to love.**

Show us Lord the correct way to love.

\*Romans 12:9 9 Love must be sincere.

The world teaches us that “love must be sexy,” but God teaches us “love must be sincere.”

## **God: Love must be sincere**

How to love, starts with sincerity.

Sincere means genuine, without hypocrisy, pure, unadulterated. It means true.

Does this describe your love? Is your love sincere?

Here the word translated as “sincere” appears to be a word that was coined by New Testament authors. They took a word that existed and stuck a negative on the



word... a lot like how I earlier added “un” to the word “taught” to make the word “un-taught.”

\*\*Alex make the following 1 slide

Hypokrinomai - to personate anyone, play a part, pretend.

Anypokritos – to UN-disguise, WITHOUT hypocrisy, sincere.

The word for hypocrite means an actor on a stage.

Sincere love cannot be “an act.” Paul took the word for hypocrite, an actor on that stage and literally

teaches us that love cannot be that way.

The irony here is that so many people get their example of “love” from actors on a stage.

Perhaps the problem in society is that we know how to ACT like we are in love, but we don't know HOW TO LOVE. We only know how to rehearse our lines whenever we are cued, but we are not really sincere.

**God: Love must be sincere**

Love is not a clever pick-up line.

Love is not a manipulation.

Love is not a one-night stand.

None of these actions are true.

# Hypocrite Actor Masks

The Greek idea of the actor on the stage would incorporate masks. The actor would put on a mask to impersonate another. They were not truly another person; they were pretending to be another.

The true love that God wants us to experience is a mask-less love. Love must be sincere, honest, true, and not a mask that can be put on and taken off as we choose.

Perhaps you know the love of a hypocrite? Perhaps you have experienced someone who merely ACTS like they love you.

Perhaps you have donned a mask to impersonate love.

This may be how the world perceives love, but it is not “how to love.”

Sincere love repents.

Sincere love regrets mistakes, asks forgiveness, and then ACTUALLY CHANGES a person!

Sincere love remains, even when the scene changes. Sincere love has integrity and stands true even though circumstances around ebb and flow.

Sincere love will make you a better more complete person.

Sincere love will make you the hero

of the story... while in-sincere love will make you the villain.

You want to know how to love?  
Take off the mask and be sincere.

**If it is fake – it is not  
sincere love**

It is time to really communicate what is true.

It is time to truly love and not just play the part.

It is time to give and receive a sincere love for who we authentically are.

It is time to value sincere love over everything that is less than true.

**The world: Love must be  
sexy**

**God: Love must be sincere**

Romans 12 continues, and you may find it surprising.

Romans 12:9-12 9 Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good.

Paul teaches us how to love by teaching us what to hate. That is interesting right?!

You are not supposed to love everything. There are some things you should hate.

I am sure you have heard that “hate is a strong word.” This is true. We as

people apply the words love and hate far too casually. We love pizza and hate red traffic lights. We must be careful about how we apply love and hate.

Yet, there is something we must hate according to scripture.

## **The world: Love must be deserving**

The world teaches us that we should love those that are deserving of love.

If people are kind to you, then you should love them.

If they can do beneficial things for you, then they ought to have your heart.

If they are beautiful, rich, talented, or popular, surely, they deserve your affection?

This lesson from the world gets out of hand really quickly. Here are some examples...

That drug dealer may give me free drugs! How kind!?! They might also offer me a job selling\\ drugs illegally in dark alleys in the worst parts of Dallas. How beneficial is this relationship!?! This same drug dealer is very popular, wealthy, and talented; am I so fortunate to have a relationship with them?

Does anyone see any warning signs here?



-It was not out of kindness they gave you free drugs. They want to get you addicted.

-They offered you a dangerous job that will get you killed, and before your body is cold they will have someone else in your place.

-The drug dealer may have many people around them, but half are looking to betray, and the other half will be gone the moment the money and the drugs dry up.

People who follow the teaching that love must be deserving might end up devoted to a drug dealer.

Here is an opposite example.

-My mom had the nerve to tell me that I need to turn off the video

games and study. She told me that she is disappointed with my attitude and is going to make me go to church. She doesn't really care about me. I hate her.

-My dad is making me do chores around the house. He is making me fix the car with him. He insists I get up early with him to do hard work. My dad just wants me to do all the work. I can't wait to have my own house.

-My parents won't let me go out tonight because it is a school night. They are so nosey and always ask who is going to be there and what is going on. They just want to control me and make sure I have no fun. I

would be so much better off without them.

Does anyone see the warning signs here?

-Your mom loves you enough to stand in the way of your undisciplined life. She cares more about your future than what you think about her.

-Your dad is trying to instill knowledge, ability, and character in you. Your dad is showing you that life is “what you make of it” and that it takes hard work to have a successful life. Your dad hopes that you do have your own house one day, and he wants you to be prepared to take care of that house.

-Your parents value you so much that they tell you “No.” They want you to make good decisions. They don’t want to control you, but they do want to influence you, because you are their treasure. One day they will not hold this role in your life; they are in a race against the clock to prepare you for the day they will not be present.

The world would have you believe the opportunistic drug dealer deserves your love and that your devoted parents do not deserve your love.

Thankfully, God’s word does not teach us, “Love must be deserving.” Instead, God teaches us this...

# God: Love must be discerning

To discern means to have good insight and judgment. Discernment can tell the difference between truth and a lie. It can shrewdly judge the correct route to take through the mazes of life.

Discernment can tell the difference between an actor's hypocritical impersonation of love and the evidence of a sincere love.

Everyone of every age and season of life needs a love that is discerning.

The kid in junior high that is tempted to hang out with the wrong crowd...

The married man or woman who is

tempted by the flirtatious co-worker...

You need to discern your own thoughts and desires..

Discernment ought to be on your prayer list. God give me discernment. And wouldn't you know it, God has already answered that prayer. One of the gifts of the Holy Spirit is discernment. (1 Corinthians 12:10)

God's Word teaches us that our love must be discerning.

Romans 12:9-12 Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good.

We must hate what is evil and cling to what is good. It takes discernment to distinguish evil and good.

What is good and what is evil? This has been an issue with mankind from the beginning. Adam & Eve did not understand the difference between good and evil when they listened to “the evil one” and rejected the commands of their good God. God had given them every good thing, yet without discernment they chose to taste the only thing in the garden that was not good to eat.

You must discern between good and evil. This takes maturity in God.

Hebrews 5:12-14 12 In fact, though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you the elementary truths of God's word all over again. You need milk, not solid food! 13

Anyone who lives on milk, being still an infant, is not acquainted with the teaching about righteousness. 14 But solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have



trained themselves to  
distinguish good from evil.

The truth of God's word is what the writer is talking about. Some are elemental Truths of God's Word, and these God calls milk.

Perhaps milk could be the truth that God loves you. It could be truth that the blood of Jesus saves and that He will forgive you of your sins. Elemental truth could be that you can't earn your own salvation but that it is a gift from God.

Yet the writer associates "the teaching about righteousness" with solid food. This "is for the mature, who by constant use have trained

themselves to distinguish good from evil.”

To discern good from evil you must become a growing mature Christian. You must constantly use God’s Truth and train yourself in teachings about righteous living.

Is this you? Do you have discernment from constantly training yourself in God’s Truth?

The persons who claim to love God and love people yet gossip, steal, refuse to forgive, and maintain secret sins are not a mature, growing Christians. They are lacking discernment and they are not doing as we are instructed in Romans 12.

Righteous choices that are in alignment with God's Truth teach us HOW TO LOVE.

Romans 12:9-12 Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good.

We must HATE WHAT IS EVIL and CLING TO WHAT IS GOOD.

Now it important to point out this.

**It says Hate WHAT is evil and not Hate WHO is evil**

We are never instructed to hate people. We are instructed to love people... even our enemies.

We are to hate the evil act but love the evil actor. Hate the evil done but love the evil doer.

We hate murder, but we pray for murderers and want a better future for them.

We hate stealing, but we love those lost souls who steal and want them to find redemption.

We hate addiction, but we love the addicted and want to free them from the snare.

We hate sin, but we love the sinner.

We love the sinner enough to receive him into our midst.

We love the sinner enough embrace them.

We love the sinner enough to

separate WHAT THEY HAVE DONE  
from WHO THEY ARE.

It is easy to love the sinner because  
when we look in the mirror, we see  
them.

It is out of love for the person that  
we hate evil. We discern the  
difference of WHAT and WHO.

**musician**

**God: Love must be  
discerning**

If we can discern evil from good and  
hate the evil and hold on to what is  
good, this is HOW TO LOVE.

**God: Love must be sincere**

If we can have a sincere love, a mask-free love, this is HOW TO LOVE.

God instructs us HOW TO LOVE, but God does more than give us a lesson; God demonstrates how to love.

Romans 5:8 But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

God gives us a demonstration on how to love, and it is this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Let's take what we have learned today and compare it to Jesus on the cross.

**God: Love must be sincere**

Was the love of Jesus on the cross sincere? Was Jesus putting on a show?

Did Jesus ever put on the mask and pretend like He loved you, only to later take the mask off when it was inconvenient to love you?

Jesus sincerely loved the thieves hanging on the cross next to him. Jesus sincerely loved his disciples who were too afraid to appear at the crucifixion.

Jesus sincerely loved Pilate, Herod, the pharisees, and the Roman centurions who harmed him.

Jesus loved the crowd that spat on him and laughed at his pain.

This is HOW TO LOVE. Love must be sincere. Jesus loves us while we are still sinners. It would be insincere if Jesus only loved you after you repented and were baptized. His love is sincere, and He loves you WHILE you are sinning. He loved the Roman centurion WHILE the man drove nails through His hands & feet.

I don't know what you are going to do with this sermon today.

You may come to this altar today and repent. You may surrender your heart to Jesus. You may have Jesus change the way you love and see your marriage and relationships healed.



You may sit there and refuse to make a move towards God. You may refuse to repent and change your heart. You may sit there and talk to your neighbor thinking all the while that this sermon was for someone else and not you.

Or you may walk out of here angry and say “what a stupid group of people. They are just trying to control me with their preaching.” You may deny God. You may deny Jesus’ love on the cross. You may promise to never go to another church as long as you live.

No matter what you do with this sermon, Jesus sincerely loves you.

# God: Love must be discerning

The love of Jesus was not about deserving... The roman soldiers, the thief on the cross, his disciples, the pharisees... none of them deserved His love. WE DO NOT DESERVE HIS LOVE.

Yet God demonstrates His love by dying for undeserving sinners. On that cross the loving Jesus discerns something. Jesus in love prays “Father forgive them, they do not know what they are doing.” If you have ever felt like you don’t know what you are doing, you need to know Jesus prayed for you on the

cross.

On the cross Jesus discerns between the sin and the sinner. On the cross he hated what was evil, and he held on to what was good. Jesus held on to everyone who through His blood could be made good.

## **How to Love**

The person you are having difficulty loving... Jesus loved them on the cross. God is demonstrating to you HOW TO LOVE that person.

The person you have trouble loving might be yourself. Jesus loves you and He died for you. Will you pray today and ask Jesus to teach you

how to love yourself? Will you  
come today and grab ahold of the  
love of Jesus Christ?

Lord teach us how to love.