Date: February 21, 2016

A Life of Love

Today's passage contains fourteen exhortations. Most scholars agree that the first one in verse 9 serves as a banner over all the rest: "Let love be without hypocrisy." The following thirteen commands explain the type of life that is compatible with genuine love — love for God and love for others. As we go through this passage pay attention to the specific command(s) that grabs your attention. It might be overwhelming to try to grow in all of these things at once and so hopefully God will lead each of us to focus on the one or two things that matters most in our lives right now.

Opening Question: Where do you find your capacity to love being most challenged these days?

Read Romans 12:9-13

1.	Steve mentioned that the first command, "Let love be without hypocrisy" (NIV =
	"Love must be sincere") is a banner over all of the other commands in these verses.
	Can you see how all that Paul says in these verses hangs together under the banner
	of love?

2. Why might Paul be focusing on the topic of love right after talking about spiritual gifts in 12:3-8?

3. In what ways could love be hypocritical or insincere (v. 9)?

Steve said:

There you have fourteen rapid-fire exhortations that describe a life of love, a life that is compatible with loving God and loving others. Can you identify one or two that are most relevant to your life right now? I suspect that some of you are "locked in" on something in this passage; you're excited about learning to hate what is evil or to honor those around you or to turn strangers into family. I also suspect that this list might seem overwhelming to others of you. If so, I'd encourage you to consider this passage from God's perspective. I think God would say to us, "This is the type of love I have for you. I am urging you to show each other the same love that I continually show you. This is the very best life you can live." These exhortations are good news, not bad news.

4.	Which command (or two) seems to stick out to you?
5.	Why do you think that phrase is important in your life right now?
6.	What are some practical ways that you can apply that command right now?
7.	As you reflect on how you answered the opening question, is there something in this passage that speaks to that challenging situation?