

Battle Attitude: Loving Boldly

ROMANS 12

Bold love is courageously setting aside our personal agenda to move humbly into the world of others with their well-being in view, willing to risk further pain in our souls, in order to be an aroma of life to some and an aroma of death to others.

—DAN ALLENDER AND TREMPER LONGMAN III, *Bold Love*

It often seems that the church is back on its heels in a purely defensive stance against Satan's attacks. But we are also called to take aggressive, positive steps in this spiritual battle. By taking the offensive, we must guard against the danger of becoming like the enemy we are fighting—hateful and vengeful. We must not lose track of God's call to live and love as Jesus did.

What does it mean to love those who hate us and attack us? How can we seek their good while they are seeking to destroy us? The ability to love and bless our enemies can only come from the unshakable realization of who we are in Christ and of God's overruling sovereignty in the daily affairs of life.

This is the crux of spiritual warfare on the practical level. Love disarms the power of hate and is our most potent weapon against evil.

1. Christians are to love one another. What are some creative ways in which you have loved others or have been shown love in difficult situations?

READ ROMANS 12:1-8.

2. Paul challenges us to find appropriate ways to thank God for his mercy shown to us through Christ. With this in mind, what does it mean on a practical, daily level to offer our bodies as “living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God” (verse 1)?

3. Why is it so important for us to think of ourselves with “sober judgment” as we relate to others (verse 3)?

4. How can the gifts mentioned in verses 6-8 be used to love others boldly?

5. We know that Satan is a liar and a murderer. In light of this fact, what are some ways he might tempt us to abuse spiritual gifts in our churches?

READ ROMANS 12:9-21.

6. How did Paul say we are to overcome evil (verses 9,21)?

What practical ways did he offer for doing this (verses 10-20)?

7. In what ways can love be insincere?

8. Read carefully each command found in verses 9-13. Choose one command and tell how it might be used in spiritual warfare to thwart and overcome evil in the church.

✎ 9. Bold love demands that we bless those who persecute us (verse 14). What does this mean?

What attitudes are necessary for us to obey this command wholeheartedly?

10. What are some of the ways Satan uses the desire for revenge to gain an advantage over people and to divide Christians?

11. Paul encourages us to live at peace with one another (verse 18). Is there a difficult situation you face in which a peaceful solution depends on you? How can you deal with that situation in a loving way?

12. In light of the many ideas in this passage, discuss some positive steps you will take to begin to love more boldly. Be specific.

13. How have the lessons in this studyguide expanded your understanding of the different aspects of spiritual warfare?

Which study has been the most meaningful? Why?