

Romans Chapter 12 Continued

Romans 12:13 "Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality."

“Distributing” comes from a Greek word that means commonality, partnership or mutual sharing, which is often translated “fellowship,” and “communion”.

“Given to hospitality” means the pursuing the love of strangers and not merely entertaining one’s friends. In New Testament times, travel was dangerous and inns were evil, scarce and expensive. So the early believers often opened their homes to travelers, especially to fellow believers. Church leaders should be role models of the virtue.

Acts 9:39: "Then Peter arose and went with them. When he was come, they brought him into the upper chamber: and all the widows stood by him weeping, and shewing the coats and garments which Dorcas made, while she was with them."

We see that Dorcas had certainly fulfilled the lesson in the Scripture above. She saw a need and took care of it. Many believe that this same Dorcas paid for a great deal of Paul's necessities. We do know from this Scripture, that she was a very giving person. She was loved dearly by her sisters and brothers in Christ (as you can see from Acts 9:39). I will include several more Scriptures here that will demonstrate how important it is to God for us to be concerned about the needs of the saints, and in this we can also see how important it is to be hospitable, as well.

Galatians 6:10 "As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all [men], especially unto them who are of the household of faith."

1 Timothy 5:10 "Well reported of for good works; if she have brought up children, if she have lodged strangers, if she have washed the saints' feet, if she have relieved the afflicted, if she have diligently followed every good work."

Romans 12:14 "Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not."

Here we are told to treat enemies as if they were your friends.

One of the most important teachings on this subject is found in Jesus' own words in the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew.

Matthew 5:44 "But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;"

A Christian's greatest desire should be to be like Jesus. The one thing that set Jesus aside from other people was that He loved us enough to die on the cross for us while we were yet in sin. He blessed us when we really deserved to be persecuted.

1 Peter 2:23 "Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed [himself] to him that judgeth righteously:"

Romans 12:15 "Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep."

One of the shortest verses in the entire Bible is a good example of weeping with those who weep. Jesus had great love for His friends, Mary and Martha, and His sorrow was sharing in their pain at the loss of their brother. Jesus knew that Lazarus would rise and He was not weeping for Lazarus.

John 11:35 "Jesus wept."

The truth of the matter is that we need to share in the griefs of our friends and, also, to rejoice with them in their victories. We must not be jealous of their victories. We need to be happy for them when they succeed.

1 Corinthians 12:26 "And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honored, all the members rejoice with it."

We are told to be glad in the blessings, honor and welfare of others, no matter what one's own situation and to be sensitive or compassionate to the hardships and sorrows of others.

Romans 12:16: "[Be] of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits."

"Same mind" means to be impartial.

"Mind ... high things", means not to be haughty with self-seeking pride.

"Wise in your own conceits" tell us that Christians are not to have conceit or feeling of superiority toward fellow believers.

1 Peter 3:8 "Finally, [be ye] all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, [be] pitiful, [be] courteous:"

We see from (verses 15 and 16), that we are not to have someone as a friend just because they are wealthy or highly thought of in the community. In other words, we are not to have them for a friend because of what good they can do for us, but perhaps because we might be able to help them. If we think too highly of ourselves, we think the world and its entire people owe us something.

We need to be thinking how we can help, rather than always wanting to be helped. The best Scripture that comes to mind pertaining to this is found in 1 Corinthians chapter 13. In this chapter speaking of charity, it is speaking of great love for your fellow man.

1 Corinthians 13:1-4 "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become [as] sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal." "And though I have [the gift of] prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing." "And though I bestow all my goods to feed [the poor], and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing." "Charity suffereth long, [and] is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up,"

1 Corinthians 13:8 "Charity never faileth: but whether [there be] prophecies, they shall fail; whether [there be] tongues, they shall cease; whether [there be] knowledge, it shall vanish away."

What I see in this is, if what you are doing is being done for the wrong reason, even if it is a good deed, it will do you no good. God is more interested in why you are doing something than how much you do. Your heart must be in it to please God.

Romans 12:17 "Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men."

Recompense in this instance means to repay. We could see in this that God does not want us to get even for the things people have done to us. God wants us to turn the other cheek when we have been dealt a blow on one side.

Matthew 5:39 "But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also."

1 Thessalonians 5:15 "See that none render evil for evil unto any [man]; but ever follow that which is good, both among ourselves, and to all [men]."

We also see that the Old Testament law of an "eye for an eye", "tooth for a tooth" was never intended to be applied by individuals in the Old or New Testaments, but it was a standard for the collective society to use to enforce good conduct among people.

Christians are to respect what is intrinsically proper and honest. "God" also carries the idea of visibly and obviously having the right behavior when they are around others, especially unbelievers.

Romans 12:18 "If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men."

We see from the Scripture above, that it is not always possible to live in peace with all men. Paul found this to be very true. He was stoned, whipped, and even left for dead when all he was trying to do was good. Sometimes it seems the more good you do, the more you are attacked by your fellow men.

Although we should do everything possible to be at peace with others, it will not always come, because it also depends on others' attitudes and responses.

Jesus is the King of Peace. If we are truly His followers, then we want to have peace as well. There is a peace that we can have and it is a peace in our heart that no one can take away from us.

Colossians 3:15 "And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful." This is a peace that we have within when in the world around us there is no peace.

Romans 12:19 "Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but [rather] give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance [is] mine; I will repay, saith the Lord."

In (verses 18 and 19), we see that God will take care of those who are abusive to us. We do not have to fight someone who is out to destroy us; God will do it for us. A really simple way to say this, is kill them with kindness.

Romans 12:20 "Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head."

Heaping coals of fire on his head refers to an ancient Egyptian custom in which a person who wanted to show public contrition carried a pan of burning coals on his head. The coals represented the burning pain of his shame and guilt. When believers lovingly help their enemies, it should bring shame to such people for their hate and animosity.

This may refer to a sense of shame or remorse engendered when we treat an evildoer kindly. Paul is discussing personal, not national enemies. He is not teaching pacifism.

Proverbs 25:21-22 "If thine enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat; and if he be thirsty, give him water to drink." "For thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head, and the LORD shall reward thee."

This is the very same Scripture we read in Proverbs.

Matthew 5:44-45 "But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;" "That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust."

These Scriptures here in Matthew are the Lord Jesus speaking because these are printed in red in a red letter Bible. If we are to be like Jesus, then we must love people who do not deserve our love. He loved us while we were yet in sin. He gave His body on the cross for you and me, not because we deserved it, but because He loved us. We must love in spite of, rather than because, to be like Him.

Romans 12:21 "Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good."

Evil is of the devil. Christians are not of the devil, but of Christ. Jesus did not fight back. He submitted Himself to the humiliation of the cross. His goodness was so great that even in His pain on the cross, "He said Father forgive them for they know not what they do". His goodness has lived on for thousands of years.

We must follow His example. In Jesus' own Words, we read how we are to handle those who oppress us in Luke:

Luke 6:27-30. "But I say unto you which hear, Love your enemies, do good to them which hate you," "Bless them that curse you, and pray for them which despitefully use you." "And unto him that smiteth thee on the [one] cheek offer also the other; and him that taketh away thy cloak forbid not [to take thy] coat also." "Give to every man that asketh of thee; and of him that taketh away thy goods ask [them] not again."

Romans Chapter 12 Continued Questions

1. In Romans 12:13, we are not to give to the wants, but to the _____.
2. In Acts 9:9 why were they crying for Dorcas?
3. In Galatians 6:10 as we have _____, let us do good.
4. Bless them which _____ you.
5. In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus teaches us to do what to our enemies?
6. Jesus blessed us when we deserved to be _____.
7. What are we to do when others rejoice?
8. Quote the shortest verse in the Bible.
9. Why was Jesus weeping?
10. What two ladies were very close friends of Jesus?
11. What lesson is taught in 1 Corinthians 12:26?
12. Romans 12:16 says, Be not wise in your own _____.
13. In 1 Peter 3:8, we are told to be what two things?
14. Instead of always wanting someone to help us, what should we be thinking?
15. What is the love chapter in the Bible?

16. What is another word interchangeable for love?
17. God is more interested in _____ than _____.
18. What does recompense mean?
19. Are we to get even for the wrongs done to us, explain?
20. Is it always possible to live in peace?
21. Who is the King of Peace?
22. Where is the peace of God to rule?
23. We find that vengeance is whose?
24. If we are good to our enemies, what happens to them?
25. We are to kill them with what?
26. How can we be the children of our Father in heaven?
27. Be not overcome with evil, but overcome evil with _____.
28. What showed the great goodness of Jesus on the cross?
29. To be like Jesus, we must love _____ instead of _____.
30. What are we told to do when someone strikes us on the cheek?