

PITWM VERSE BY VERSE

ROMANS 12:9-21

LESSON: PRACTICING GENUINE LOVE—August 19, 2018

INTRODUCTION:

12:4 For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office:— Believers (the spiritual building) can be compared to the human body (the physical building). The human body (physical) has many parts or members, and no two members have the same function or office. So it is with believers (spiritual). We are part of one body and no member is a lone ranger; no one member leads. The one body must always be in unity with the rest. Our head is Christ!

12:5 So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another. There are many believers operating as one body in Christ, and every one is mutually dependent upon another to work together because we would need one another. The believer's connection is our relationship in Christ.

12:6 Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith;— The word "gift" means the very special ability given to the believer by God. It is not a natural talent, but, it is a spiritual gift given by the Spirit of God for spiritual purposes. Whatever the gift, it differs according to the grace given to us according to the proportion of our faith. If it is the **gift of prophecy**, we are to give inspired utterance proclaiming the Will of God. The Spirit of God does sometimes give believers a glimpse into coming events in order to prepare and strengthen them to face the events. Therefore, it includes both prediction and proclamation according to the proportion of our faith, and the prophet must first know Jesus Christ before he can proclaim the Good News about Jesus Christ.

12:7 Or ministry, let us wait on our ministering: or he that teacheth, on teaching;— Or if it's the gift of ministry, he is to wait on his ministry, for it deals with serving others. Or if it is to teach, he is to labor in teaching. There are no shortcuts. The passion may be there, but the timing may be wrong. It is good to wait on God, than to go before God!

12:8 Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness. Or if it's the *gift of exhortation*, which is where one has the ability to excite, motivate, advise, encourage, comfort, and warn people. Those who have the *gift of giving*, has the ability to give of one's earthly possessions such as money, clothing, and food, is to be done with simplicity (ease) having a generous heart. He that has the *gift of ruling*, he rules with diligence (with the ability of leadership, authority, administration and government). And he that has the *gift of showing mercy* has the ability of forgiveness and compassion as they show it cheerfully (gladly). Having these gifts is by the grace of God

LESSON: I. CHRISTLIKE AFFECTIONS ROMANS 12:9-13

12:9 Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good. Christlike affections is the love given by God through Christ to man. It was shown by Jonathan and David, and

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shown by God giving His Son on the cross for man. Now, our godly love is to be sincere without dissimulation (without hypocrisy or insincerity). We must genuinely love one another and abhor (despise) evil; and cleave (cling) to that which is good (right). Three words that stand out in this verse: love, abhor, and cleave. This lets us know how we are to demonstrate love:

1. The believer is to love without pretense or falseness. Loving others surely takes a move of God in our lives, for we are never to be pretenders. If we are pretending to love someone, we need to go to God so we can follow His way because He has shown forgiveness many times to us and still loves us in spite of ourselves. Ask God to re-connect that love needed in our spirit to love someone else. Christ is our example!
2. The believer is to love by hating evil. We should not expect God to remove sin from us until we actually hate it, and have it rooted out of our transformed lives any secret love that we still hold for that which is evil.
3. The believer is to love by cleaving to that which is good. When we join and fasten, and glue to that which is good, we're able to do good to all men, *especially of the household of faith* (Gal.6:10).

12:10 Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another;—

4. The believer is also to love by loving his brothers in Christ, by being kind and affectionate toward them. This charge is dealing with the Christian family, the brother and sisters within the church. We are a family of children who have actually been adopted by God as His sons and daughters. Therefore, we are to live as a family in love.
5. The believer is to love showing honor meaning reverence, respect, and esteem by preferring one another. We are to take the lead in esteeming and honoring others as a true picture of love and care. This is needed in the church and among believers because so many are overlooked – not thanked – not recognized – not given a position – not given a place or shown appreciation.

Remember, there is no dissension or divisiveness in love. The church is to live in love, and living in love is peace.

12:11 Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord;— This is how we serve the Lord:

1. Do not be slothful (lazy, sluggish, lethargic, complacent); in the business of serving the Lord. Do not lag in zeal (tenacious passion) in your business (diligence). The world is reeling in pain with millions starving and suffering due to man's selfishness and sin, hoarding, disease, war, death, and the list could go on and on. The believer must not give in to sluggishness and complacency. That's why we go to the nursing homes, the church building having meetings, the hospitals, the grocery stores, our workplaces, *etc.* to serve the Lord and not saying I have too much to do or I'm tired. We should never be too this or that to serve the Lord by serving others.
2. But be fervent (hot; set aflame for Christ) in the spirit of serving the Lord. This would be a holy zeal for Christ. Why? – Because the world is reeling under the weight of desperate need and dying without Christ and being doomed to an eternity separated from God.

We live in order to serve Him; that is our very purpose for being on earth. We minister for Him and His kingdom by serving others.

12:12 Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer;— While on earth, the believer will face problems, difficulties, troubles, trials, tests, tribulations, traumas, ordeals, sufferings,

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and pain. Nevertheless, the believer has an overcoming resource. He can conquer the trials of life by doing three critical things:

1. The believer is to rejoice in hope. The believer is the eternal optimist—no situation is hopeless for his hope is in the eternal God. Therefore, he not only hopes in the delivering power of God, he joys and rejoices in the hope God has given him.
2. The believer is to endure trials: being patient in tribulation. The word "*endure*" means to remain, persevere, abide, and bear up bravely. He actually experiences a surge of fortitude from Christ when trials confront him. The believer knows that God will do one of two things: either remove the trial or deliver him through the trial.
3. The believer is to continue in prayer. The word "*continuing instant*" means to give constant attention to; to be devoted and attentive to; to give increasing care to; to wait steadfastly upon, to persevere. Very simply, the believer overcomes trials by giving constant attention to God and waiting upon His delivering power—staying in constant communion with the Lord, depending upon Him to supply the strength to walk through the trials of daily living.

12:13 Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality. The believer is to meet the needs of people unselfishly.

4. The believer is to give generously to share with those in need. He is to distribute, that is, to give and share in order to meet their needs. We need a genuine concern for those who are poor and needy
5. The believer is to be given to hospitality. He is to open the door of his home to believers who are in need. Our hospitality must extend to them as automatically as did Abraham extended to the three strangers.

II. CHRISTLIKE ATTITUDES ROMANS 12:14-16

12:14 Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not. Attitudes are how we respond. Therefore, Christlike attitudes develop when we follow Him. We have to respond in the godly way. The word "*bless*" means to speak well of. Paul is a good example of one who lived up to this admonition. Treat enemies as if they were your friends (WOW!). Therefore, the believer is charged to do something that could be most difficult: to speak well of those who persecute you; one who verbally and physically attacks you, mistreated, insulted, by-passed, overlooked, slandered, abused, injured, and even cursed you; not only speak well of (bless), but also speak well about, pray for, and do good to them! If we are a believer, we are not to curse them, but pray that God will bless him. Can we do that in persecution?

12:15 Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep. Two particular acts mentioned:

1. We are to rejoice with them that rejoice. What it means is that we are to rejoice with our neighbors and friends and acquaintances when something good happens to them. Sometimes we have a difficult time in rejoicing over another person's success and have a tendency to become envious or feel disappointed, or act indifferent. However, the believer is to lay aside every weight. The success of another's joy may be yours someday, so if we think in that way, we can show that joy by congratulating and joining them in their moment of joy when they...
 - have a new baby
 - an achievement
 - a promotion
 - a new purchase
 - an honorGod rejoices in the prosperity of His people (Ps.35:27b).
2. We are to weep with them that weep. This of course refers to our family and friends, and

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those fellow men you don't even know of, but you know that they are going through a trial, hurt, loss or suffering that will cause your sensitive and compassionate heart to weep with them in their hardship, and to pray.

Jesus Christ rejoiced at the marriage feast with those who rejoiced (Jh.2:1-12). And He wept at the gravesite of Lazarus with those who wept (Jh.11:1-44). We need to be so sensitive with the lives of other believers, that we know their joys and their sorrows, and can identify with each.

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. Although we may not always see eye to eye with other believers, nevertheless Paul is saying this to preserve the unity of belief, and practice what characterized the early church.

1. The believer is to be of the same mind toward others. This refers primarily to our attitude and behavior toward others and their lot in life. Sometimes there are some things underneath that we don't know about. So, the believer is to try to understand the other person to such a degree that he can identify and feel with the person. How? - By having an impartial mind and having empathy (understanding).
2. The believer is not to mind high things, but to condescend to men of low estate. The believer's attitude is to seek harmony and be ready to mix with lowly humble people. This is the base of humility. High things refer to seeking the things of preeminence, honor, privilege, and recognition. We are not to be snobbish, not to allow our minds to roam around in the high things of this world, and not to be above the lowly of this world. He is not to neglect, ignore, separate, criticize, or despise the lowly.
3. The believer is not to be wise in his own conceits (excessive pride in oneself). Proverbs 3:7 says *"Be not wise in thine own eyes..."* He has to stop talking about himself in a prideful manner; having too high an opinion of himself, as though he is above and better than the lowly. What is it that makes people conceited; that makes them feel above or better than others? Well it could be clothes, social group, position, cars, job, recognition, honor, or wealth. The list could go on and on, but note how weak a foundation each of these provides to human life.

III. CHRISTLIKE ACTIONS ROMANS 12:17-21

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

1. The believer is not to react; he is not to return; compensate nor reward evil for evil to anyone. When we are wronged our natural insight is to fight to assert ourselves and right the wrong. In the believer's life there is no room for retaliation. God is our vindicator.
2. The believer is to demonstrate good behavior in the sight of all men. The word **"provide"** means to think before acting; take thought of things. The idea is when someone does evil against the believer, the believer is to think before he acts. He is to think and pray through his behavior, so that he can respond in the right and proper way. And in doing so, everyone can see that he can do the honorable thing. This would be a strong testimony of God's love in the sight of all men.

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

- If it is possible, the believer is to live at peace with all men.
- As much as possible, the believer is to live at peace with all men.

Paul says if it's possible, for some have no interest in living at peace. There are some troublemakers:

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grumblers, complainers, splitters, fighters, self-centered leaders, or image-seekers. However, in so far as; as much as possible (it is convenient) with our obedience, the believer is not to give up, not as long as there is hope to live for some degree of peace with all men.

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.** Paul says "*dear friends*" never avenge yourselves, for the day of God's wrath is coming, so give place to God's wrath. "*It is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.*" This means that vengeance belongs to God, not man.

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.** This talks about feeding your enemy and giving him a drink as all being apart of doing good and being kind, for in doing such things you heap coals of fire on the enemy's head. This means at least two things:

1. Kindness will shame and cause anguish for an enemy. In his lonely moments his thoughts will focus upon his evil treatment of believers and cause him to think and wonder about God. And there is some chance the enemy might repent and be converted.
2. Kindness will store up wrath against the evil against the evil doer in the Day of Judgment. If the evil doer represses his thoughts of God and hardens himself more and more and continues in his wicked treatment of God's people, then he stores up more and more wrath against himself in the terrible Day of Judgment (Rom.2:5).

12:21 **Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.** The believer is to conquer evil, never allowing evil to conquer him. And he does that by doing good toward those who mistreat and abuse him.

SUMMARY: OUTLINE:

¹Our Christianity should affect the following:

Our character (12:9)

Our contacts (12:10)

Our conduct (12:11)

Our convictions (v. 12)

Our concern (12:13)

When dealing with non-Christians, we are:

To discern him (12:14) - By speaking well of him

To discover him (12:15) - By building bridges

When dealing with Christians we are:

Not to be partial (12:16a) - But considerate and compassionate

Not to be proud (12:16b) - But lowly and meek

²Four Biblical principles on how to treat our fellow men, no matter how they may treat us.

Recompense to no man evil for evil" (12:17a).

Provide things honest in the sight of all men" (12:17b).

Live peaceably with all men" (12:18).

Avenge not yourselves" (12:19).

Three reasons we are to not take revenge:

Vengeance belongs to God and not to us (12:19).

We are to treat men with kindness (12:20).

Evil can never be conquered by evil (12:21).

¹ <http://www.family-times.net/commentary/romans-129/>

² <http://www.family-times.net/commentary/romans-1217/>

<http://www.pitwm.net/pitwm-sundayschool.html>