

Romans Chapter 12

1. **I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, *which is* your reasonable service.**

A. **I beseech you therefore, brethren**

1. **beseech**- Gr. **parakaleo**- *to call alongside; call to courage; exhort*

a. This is the verb form of the noun Paraklete. The noun Paraklete is used of the Holy Spirit as our Helper/Comforter. [John 14:16]

b. Paul was being used by the Holy Spirit to do the work of exhortation.

c. When we encourage our brothers and sisters in the Lord we are being used by the Holy Spirit to do His work in His people.

2. **brethren**- Gr. **adelphos**- *sharing the same womb*

a. These are fellow Christians

B. **by the mercies of God**

1. **by**- Gr. **dia**- *through the instrumentality of*

2. **mercies**- Gr. **oiktirmos**- *compassion, pity, mercy*

a. The mercies of God were described by Paul in the previous chapters. By the mercies of God we were saved, justified, sanctified, and glorified. This is true of our new identity in our reborn spirit. By and through these mercies we are now to yield our body to God for His mercies to show through our actions in order to serve others and be a witness in the world.

b. God's work first is a secret unseen work in our spirit. However, God wants that to become visible to everyone around us so that He can start a new work in someone else by the witness of our godly life!

C. **that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God**

1. **present**- Gr. **paristemi**- *to place beside or near, to place a person or thing at one's disposal.*

2. **your bodies**- Gr. **soma**

a. Paul already told us to present our members to God. [Rom. 6:13] The key to presenting our members unto the Lord is to present your smallest member to the Lord first, which is your tongue. The tongue is the smallest member in your body but it is set among our members as the member that controls all the others. The tongue can bring the whole body into submission. [James 3:3-5]

b. As we confess the Word about our new identity, then our body and actions will start to line up with that.

c. We can let the Holy Spirit tame our tongue by praying in the Spirit. This is empowerment to present our bodies to the Lord.

3. living sacrifice- Gr. **zao thusia**

- a. God does not want a dead sacrifice, but a living one.
- b. It would be easier to be a dead sacrifice than a living one. Being a living sacrifice lasts a lot longer! Many say they would die for the Lord, but are unwilling to live for the Lord.
- c. The Holy Spirit given to us empowers us to be a living sacrifice in front of the world. The Holy Spirit is constantly sharing the life of Christ within us to live supernaturally. It may seem like to the world that living this way is such a sacrifice on our part, but it is actually the life of Christ in us causing us to do this joyfully and from the heart.
- d. Whatever you present to God He gives life to. If we will present our body to God He will quicken it with His life which will mortify the evil deeds of our body and empower us to live holy. [Rom. 8:11,13; 2 Cor. 4:10]

4. holy- Gr. **hagios**

- a. Our lives are holy to the Lord. Are our actions? When we live out of our new identity we will not only be holy in our new identity, but our actions will be also.

5. acceptable- Gr. **euarestos- well pleasing**

- a. Some in the grace circles would say that the only way you can please the Lord is by trusting in Christ as your righteousness.
- b. **In this verse it is well pleasing to God when our life is expressing that righteousness!** What pleases the Lord is faith. [Heb. 11:6] It takes faith to be saved, but it also take faith to walk righteously. Many say they are trusting God as their righteousness, but are not trusting the Righteous One to live in and through them daily. There was grace given to us by the cross. This was the forgiveness of sins by the blood and legal right standing with God. There was also grace given to us at the resurrection, which was the new birth and the giving of the life of Christ through the Holy Spirit. We need faith in cross grace that makes us right with God, but we also need faith in resurrection grace that imparted the life of Christ to us to live holy. Cross grace establishes our vertical relationship with God, but resurrection grace empowers us to live holy in our horizontal relationships.
- c. [1Th_4:1] **Finally then, brethren, we urge and exhort in the Lord Jesus that you should abound more and more, just as you received from us how you ought to walk and to please God;**

[1Co_7:32] **But I want you to be without care. He who is unmarried cares for the things of the Lord—how he may please the Lord.**

[2Co 5:9] Therefore we make it our aim, whether present or absent, to be well pleasing to Him.

D. which is your reasonable service

1. **reasonable-** Gr. **logikos-** *pertaining to the reason or logic; spiritual*

- a. This word was often used to refer to what was spiritual.
- b. In the OT people worshiped God by killing animals. In the NT we worship God by serving God with our spirit that has been given life through the death of Jesus-the sacrificed Lamb of God! Paul said that he served God with his spirit. [Rom. 1:9]
- c. When we renew our mind to our new identity in our spirit, and trust by faith that the life and nature of Jesus is in us and act on it, then we give God worship in the earth by and through our life. What is in our spirit will be lived out where all can see it. The life of Jesus is most attractive. When we live out the life in our spirit by faith, our lives are most attractive! We will be seen as priests and kings unto God in this earth!

2. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what *is* that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

A. And do not be conformed to this world

1. **conformed-** Gr. **suschematizo-** *present passive imp. - to conform one's self (i.e. one's mind and character) to another's pattern. The present imperative means to stop what is presently happening.*

2. **world-** Gr. **aion-** *properly an age; by extension perpetuity (also past); by implication the world;*

- a. Being conformed to the world is like taking on a shape of an external mold that is placed upon you. The world is constantly putting pressure on us to conform to their image.
- b. Often Christians will submit themselves to this mold by choosing to watch T.V., movies, and listen to music and radio of the world. Although we are not forced to watch and listen to these, often we do it anyway of our own free will!

B. but be transformed by the renewing of your mind

1. **transformed-** Gr. **summorphos-** *speaks of a person changing his outward expression from that which he has to a different one, an expression which comes from and is representative of his inner being.*

- a. This word comes from the root morphe. This word means to take on an outward image of what is truly indicative of one's inner nature. This can be used of a butterfly. It starts out looking like a maggot, but it goes

through a process of metamorphosis. It will take on the image of the DNA that is locked up within it. It outwardly becomes what it already is in its inner nature! This is what happens when we renew our mind to our new identity in our spirit. This is who we are in Christ.

2. **renewing**- Gr. **anakainosis**- *a renewal in quality versus in time.*

3. **mind**- Gr. **nous**- *the mind, comprising alike the faculties of perceiving and understanding and those of feeling, judging, determining*

a. We renew our mind by meditating on the Word of God and speaking that Word over ourselves in faith.

b. We renew our mind by taking our mind off of the world, and putting it on the Word of God.

c. Instead of constantly gazing on the glass of the T.V. set, we need to constantly gaze into the mirror of the Word and behold the glory of the Lord. When we do that we are changed [morphed] from the inside out by the Spirit of God!

3. **For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith.**

A. **For I say, through the grace given to me**

1. **grace**- Gr. **charis**- *unmerited favor; divine ability*

a. This grace was given to Him as an apostle and teacher.

b. We often try to correct people where we have no grace or place of authority to do it.

B. **to everyone who is among you**

1. **Everyone** has the tendency of the flesh to think more highly of ourselves than we ought to think.

2. People who are shy are very self focused which means they think of themselves too much.

3. We often think that our gift is the most important.

C. **not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think**

1. **think more highly**- Gr. **huperphroneo**- *to over think*

a. One thing that plagues humanity is the tendency to over think ourselves. If someone over thinks something, that means they give way too much thought on it which tends to make it more complicated than it really is. This leads to second guessing and error. The same goes with over thinking ourselves. A life focused on self becomes very complicated and confusing. A person whose life is a big drama comes from them over thinking themselves. If we will focus on Jesus then life becomes much

more simple. We will have confidence and make good decisions.

2. **think**- Gr. **phroneo**- we are supposed to think about ourselves, but not to over think ourselves. We can tell we are over thinking ourselves when things start getting complicated and confusing and we are filled with anxiety.

D. **but think soberly**

1. **soberly**- Gr. **eis sophroneo**- **eis**- *into*; **sophroneo**- **from sozo**- *saved*; **phren**- *thinking*- *this word means saved, sound, safe thinking*

- a. Instead of over thinking ourselves, we need to over think Jesus!
- b. We are to focus on Jesus and His finished work for us. This will lead us **into saved thinking**. There is a simplicity in Christ. The devil wants to get us away from the simplicity of trusting in Jesus at all times. [2 Cor. 11:3] He wants us to focus on our own performance, failures, weaknesses, and even our own abilities, instead of the love of Christ for us.
- c. grace thinking will keep us humble because all we are, know, have, and can do is because we are in Christ. In ourselves we are nothing [2 Cor. 12:11], know nothing [1 Cor. 4:4], have nothing [1 Cor. 4:7], and can do nothing [John 15:5].

E. **as God has dealt to every one a measure of faith.**

1. **dealt**- Gr. **merizo**- *to apportion*

2. **to every one**- Universalists will use this verse to say everyone in the world is already saved because the faith of Jesus is given to every one. This is error. The book of Romans is written to Christians not to the world. Everyone here means every Christian.

3. **a measure**- Gr. **metron**- *a portion*- **not the measure or portion**.

4. **of faith**- Gr. **pistis**

- a. There is saving faith- [Eph. 2:8]
- b. There is living faith- [Rom. 1:17]
- c. There is ministry gift faith- [Rom. 12:3] The faith spoken here is not saving faith or even the faith we live by. It is faith we serve God by in using the gift he has given us.
- d. With every gift that God gives, he also gives a measure of faith to operate in that gift. When God gave us the gift of grace to be saved, with it He also gave us the gift of faith. [Eph. 2:8] It is the same with our grace ministry gift that was given to us. Along with that ministry gift, God also gave us faith to operate in it! We can grow that faith by operating in our gift over time. Our gift can grow and so can the faith to operate in that gift.

4. **For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function,**

A. **For as we have many members in one body**

1. eye, ear, hand, foot, head - [1 Cor. 12:14-21]

B. **but all the members do not have the same function**

1. **function-** Gr. **praxis-** *a doing, a mode of acting; business, office*

2. The eye and ear are equal members but have different functions. One is visible and the other is hidden somewhat. The hand and foot are equal members but have different functions. One is viable and the other is hidden most of the time. So it is with the different ministry gifts in the church. Some are more viable than others, but all are equally important to God and to men. There should be no boasting or jealousy over where we fit in the body of Christ. Our gifts were just that -gifts. They were given to us by the head of the body- Jesus Christ. We did nothing to earn them or deserve them. They did not come from us inherently. We do not operate in the gifts by the power of our own will and energy, but by the gift of faith God gave us to operate in them. All boasting and jealousy must be cast aside.

5. **so we, *being* many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another.**

A. As the eye can't function outside the body, so no individual person in the body of Christ can function as God intended outside of the body. The members of the body make up one body. So the individual members of the church make up one body.

B. It is a miracle that the body of Christ is doing anything today since so many members have gone awol! So many Christians are not in their place and using their gifts. Some are trying to fit in a place they were not called to fit in. This leads to burn out and frustration. Many of people have forsaken the hidden place of ministry for a more viable one, but are not graced for it nor have the faith to operate there.

C. For the purpose of understanding the next verses we must look at how God has set up the body of Christ. He has set in the church five equipping offices: apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor, teacher. These are to equip the body of Christ to do the ministry. [Eph. 4:11] God has also set in the church seven body ministry offices: prophecy, ministry [helps], teaching, exhortation, giving, administration [ruling], and mercy. These body offices are the "work of the ministry" that the equipping offices prepare the body of Christ to do. So in total there are twelve total offices in the body of Christ. Twelve is the number for government. God governs and operates through these twelve offices. Many call the seven body

ministry offices as motivational gifts. That is not really the case. These are offices just as much as the five equipping offices are.

- D. No one starts out in a five fold equipping office. They must start in a body office and be faithful there before they are separated unto the five fold equipping office. Prophets start out in the body office of prophecy. Teachers start out in the body office of teaching. Evangelists start out in the body office of exhortation.
- E. Everyone in the body of Christ that is not in a five fold equipping office will be in one of the seven body offices. Most Christians have no idea they have a ministry. Every Christian is called into the ministry and will give account for that ministry office they were given when they stand before the Judgment Seat of Christ. They will be shocked that they were given a ministry office just as much as the apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor, and teacher. Those in the equipping offices must stop trying to do all the ministry and teach the body they are called to the ministry and equip them to do the work of the ministry!

6. **Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, *let us use them: if prophecy, let us prophesy in proportion to our faith;***

- A. Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us
 - 1. **Having-** We all have a gift but are we all using it for the Kingdom?
- B. **gifts-** Gr. **charisma-** *a favor with which one receives without any merit of his own grace or gifts denoting extraordinary powers, distinguishing certain Christians and enabling them to serve the church of Christ.*
- C. **according to the grace-** Gr. **kata charis**
 - 1. There are different graces. There are also spiritual gifts that go with each grace. The graces here speak of the ministry offices, and the gifts [charisma] speak of the gifts that go with that office in order to function in that office.
- D. *let us use them; if prophecy, let us prophesy in proportion to our faith.*
 - 1. **prophecy-** Gr. **propheteia-** *a discourse emanating from divine inspiration.*
 - a. This is the body office of prophecy. This does not mean you are a five fold equipping office of Prophet. Some stay in this office their whole life according to the will of God. Some who are faithful will be called into the office of Prophet.
 - b. This ministry office is not to forecast the future or tell people what and when to do things. The simple gift of prophecy is to exhort, comfort, and edify. [1 Cor. 14:3] Prophecy in the NT is to confirm what the believer already has in their own heart by the Holy Spirit and Word of God. In the NT each believer is led by the Spirit of God through their spirit by the inward witness. [Rom. 8:14, 16a]
 - 2. **in proportion to our faith**

- a. God gives a measure of faith that goes with your grace- office.
- b. As we operate in this grace then our faith will grow. We can't operate in our grace or the gifts that go with that grace beyond our faith level. That is why we need to keep using our gift in our grace office. As we use it, then we grow in it and become more effective.
- c. Many look at others that have a similar grace and gift and see that they are much more developed and are used more, so they just quit and do nothing. They never grow in their grace or gift. They bury their talent!

7. or ministry, *let us use it in our ministering; he who teaches, in teaching;*

A. ministry- Gr. **diakonia-** *dia-through; konis-* to run- *one who runs in service; helps.*
We get the word deacon from this.

- 1. This is the largest body office of all. The most amount of people are called to this office. This is the office of helps. Helps can include a myriad of supporting ministry in the church- greeter, usher, children's and youth worker, bookstore worker, custodian, etc.
- 2. The first named evangelist in the NT was Philip. He started out in this office of ministry- serving tables. Later he was separated unto the office of the evangelist and was powerfully used in Samaria and in other places.
- 3. Stephen became a teacher. He started out in this body office of ministry. He also was selected to serve tables but later was separated unto the office of teacher. His lesson he gave the Jews in Acts 7 is legendary! He as also the first Christian to attend a rock concert because of his teaching.

B. teaches- Gr. **didasko-** from *dao-* to learn

- 1. I have found that I never learn as much as when I am teaching people.
- 2. Notice that this is the body office of teaching and not the equipping office of Teacher. James warns that you must be called to be in the equipping office of Teacher and will have a stricter judgment. Some who are in the office of teaching will remain there their entire lives. Others who are called to an equipping office will be separated unto the office of Teacher if they are faithful.

8. he who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.

A. exhorts- Gr. **parakaleo-** *to call to courage and action*

- 1. This is the ministry of the Holy Spirit who is the Paraklete!
- 2. This is the body office where the Evangelists come out of.
- 3. This body office calls sinners and saints to action.

B. he who gives, with liberality

1. **gives**- Gr. **metadidomi**- *to give over*

- a. Those in this office are business people that are in the market place and are gifted at making money so they can fund the gospel.
- b. If you are a business person you are in the ministry and are called to give over the world's wealth to establish God's covenant in the earth.

2. **liberality**- Gr. **haplotes**- *singleness, simplicity, sincerity, not self seeking, openness of heart manifesting itself by generosity*

- a. Those who are gifted and called to make money need to be cautious against covetousness and having a double mind. This means that you say you are making money for the kingdom but you really are out to make money for you.
- b. Many will promise to give to the kingdom when they are millionaires but if they don't start giving when they have little few give when they have much. Business people you need to make sure you are not self seeking in your business dealings. A Christian business person must be sincere and pure in their motives and dealings with others. God is never going to help or bless you to cut corners or not be honest in your dealings just to fund His kingdom. God is just as concerned about our methods as our end result.
- c. Ananias and Sapphira were not honest and sincere in their giving to the Lord. They said they were giving to the Lord all the while they were keeping for themselves. This is hypocrisy.

C. leads, with diligence

1. **leads**- Gr. **proistemi**- *to stand in front to lead*

- a. This office is also called administration. This body office would be like department heads in a church. It could even be an associate pastor who usually is in charge of the administration in the church.

2. **with diligence**- Gr. **spoude**- *speed, earnestness, eagerness*

- a. Sometimes when a good worker in the church is promoted to administration or leadership they will start to slack off. Everyone kingdom worker is called to work diligently from the senior pastor to the custodian. We are working as unto the Lord and from Him we will receive the reward of the inheritance. [Col. 3:24]

D. shows mercy, with cheerfulness

1. **mercy**- Gr. **eleeo**- *compassion, mercy*

- a. These in this office would be counselors, hospital visitation, workers with the poor, etc.

2. **cheerfulness**- Gr. **hilarotes**- *we get the word hilarious from this Greek word!*

- a. Why would you need to serve in this office with hilarity? It is because

this office mainly deals with the sorrows and griefs of humanity. If you do not stay filled with joy which is your strength then people's problems will sap the joy and life out of you!

- b. We are called to help people, not take on their burdens. We must cast all our burdens on the Lord. We need to stay full of the joy of the Lord.
- c. I would encourage those in this office to often watch funny movies or clean comedies. It is important to keep your joy level up in this office.

9. Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good.

A. Let love be without hypocrisy

- 1. **love-** Gr. **agape-** *The God kind of love*
- 2. **without hypocrisy-** Gr. **anupokritos-** *from hupokrites- to judge from under the mask.*

- 1. This term "to judge under the mask" was used of those in the theater that played a role while wearing a mask. They put on an act that was untrue of their true identity.
- 2. Hypocrites are those who judge others for things they are guilty of. However, they wear a mask to fool you into thinking they aren't. The Pharisees did this. Jesus had strong rebukes to them for hypocrisy.

B. Abhor what is evil

- 1. **Abhor-** Gr. **apostegeo-** *to dislike, abhor, have a horror of*
- 2. **evil-** Gr. **poneros-** *hurtful, causing pain and trouble; of a bad nature or condition*

- a. How many movies and tv shows are filled with what causes pain and trouble? Do we abhor them?

C. Cling to what is good

- 1. **cling-** Gr. **kollao-** *to glue to*
- 2. **good-** Gr. **agathos-** *intrinsically good*

- a. What God has and has given is good. Let us glue ourselves to the Word, church, and to our families!

- D. We cannot function in our unique offices and as the body of Christ without love. We cannot be the body of Christ as we should if we don't abhor what is evil and cling to what is good.

10. Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another;

A. Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love

- 1. **Kindly affectionate-** Gr. **philostorgos-** *The natural love of within in a family*
- 2. **brotherly love-** Gr. **philadelphia-** *love of brothers*

- a. In Christ and through the new creation all Christians are brothers and sisters. We must not regard Christians after the flesh any longer.

B. in honor giving preference to one another

1. **honor**- Gr. **time**- *weight, value, honor*

2. **giving preference**- Gr. **proegeomai**- *lead the way for others*

- a. We are to each lead the way in showing honor to others. We do this by leading the way in serving others.
- b. Many want to be out in front to be honored, but we are to lead the way in honoring others by service. Jesus did not come to be served but to serve.

11. not lagging in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord;

A. not lagging in diligence- Gr. **okneros spoude**- *slow in speed*

- 1. This basically means we are not to be lazy!
- 2. Laziness is a by product of the flesh
- 3. When we are lazy it is a sure sign we are walking according to our flesh and not according to our spirit man.

B. fervent in spirit- Gr. **zeo pneuma**- *glowing hot by spirit*

- 1. Our reborn spirit is aglow with the glory and life of Jesus. When we walk by faith in what the Word says about our spirit, we will experience a release from our spirit. We can be red hot for Jesus by simply believing what the Words says about who we are in our spirit!
- 2. When we meditate on who we are in our spirit and pray in the Spirit we will be red hot for Jesus and give heat to those who are cold!

C. serving the Lord- Gr. **douleuo kurios**- *rendering servitude to the Lord*

- 1. Paul said that he served [Gr. **douleuo**] the Lord by His spirit. [Rom. 1:9]
- 2. Jesus is Lord over our spirit at the new birth. By renewing our mind to our new identity in our spirit, which is in Christ and is of Christ, we will have Jesus become Lord over our minds, wills, emotions, and actions.

12. rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing steadfastly in prayer;

A. rejoicing in hope- Gr. **chairo elpis**

1. [Pro 10:28] *The hope of the righteous will be gladness, But the expectation of the wicked will perish.*

- a. If you have no hope there will be no joy or strength.

2. The tendency of our flesh is to expect bad things to happen to us to spoil the good.

- a. [Jeremiah 29:11]

B. patient in tribulation- Gr. **hupomeno thlipsis**- *to remain under the pressure*

1. Satan will not sit by and just let all the good plans for your life to come rolling in unchallenged. He will bring pressure against us and his number one way he does it is through people. We do not have authority over people's will so sometimes we must endure this kind of pressure. Paul dealt with this kind of pressure and prayed for it to end, but God said His grace was sufficient for him. He was being constantly persecuted by religious people. Paul patiently endured this tribulation. [2 Cor. 12] However, when Satan or devils attacked him directly he took authority over them.
2. There will be pressures come to you to get you off track or get bitter at God or get into sin so you miss the mark.
3. The temptation of the flesh is when pressure comes is to run or get out of it as soon as possible. Often when people do this they get out of the will of God or out of position for God's best.
4. If we will remain under the pressure that comes with doing God's call and will we will develop the character necessary to keep us at the place where God is taking us. Our gift can take us places our character can't keep us.

C. continuing steadfastly in prayer- Gr. **proskartereo proseuche-** *to exercising ruling power in prayer*

1. Often we will just sit by and let Satan do what he wants. This is not what it means by being patient in tribulation. This is being stupid and ignorant of our position and authority in Christ.
2. Here Paul says we need to exercise our authority in prayer over Satan and his works. The best time to do this is at the first hint of his movement. Many wait until Satan has built a fort in their backyard before they stand against him. No, when He brings in the first log in to build you run him off in Jesus name!

13. distributing to the needs of the saints, given to hospitality.

A. Distributing- Gr. **koineneo-** *to share in common with, we get the word koinonia from this word*

B. needs- Gr. **chreia-** *occasion, demand, requirement or destitution*

C. saints- Gr. **hagioi-** *holy ones*

1. charity begins in our own house and among our own love ones. We are to do good to all men but especially to those of the household of faith. [Gal. 6:10]

D. given to hospitality- Gr. **philonexia-** *from philos- friendly love, xenos- strangers- being kind and friendly to strangers*

1. We are not to be just concerned about ours and our own, but also of the needs of strangers and of the lost.

14. Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse.

A. Bless those who persecute you

1. **ble**ss- Gr. **eulogia**- *to speak well of*
2. **persecute**- Gr. **dioko**- *to pursue hotly*

B. bless and do not curse

1. **do not curse**- Gr. **katarao**mai- *to curse, doom, imprecate evil upon- the present imperative here means to stop cursing!*

C. This is a carry over from the Sermon on the Mount- [Matt. 5:44]

1. Jesus ministered to unregenerate men and women when he gave this command. This command cannot be kept by the flesh. It takes the new birth and grace to fulfill this verse. The natural tendency of the flesh is to speak evil of those who show us ill will.
2. Here Paul is speaking to born again men and women who have the nature and grace of God to fulfill this!
3. If you speak evil of someone that is showing you ill will reveals that you are acting in the flesh and not according the Spirit/spirit.
4. God placed on Jesus every and all curses so that He has nothing but blessing to give us today! If a curse is working in your life it is NOT from God! Every good and perfect gift comes from the Father above. [James 1:17] God has spoken good things over you today. It is up to you to believe them, receive them, and speak them over your life! You need to add your AMEN to God's PROMISES! [2 Cor. 1:20]

15. Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep.

A. Rejoice with those who rejoice

1. **Rejoice**- Gr. **chairō**- *to rejoice exceedingly*

B. weep- Gr. **klaio**- *weeping as the sign of pain and grief for the thing signified*

1. Jesus set this example for us. When Lazarus died and he saw the people weeping, it is written, "Jesus wept". [John 11:35] This was in the face of the fact that He knew He would be raising Lazarus from the dead!
2. This too cannot be kept by the flesh. The flesh is very self focused and self preoccupied.

16. Be of the same mind toward one another. Do not set your mind on high things, but associate with the humble. Do not be wise in your own opinion.

A. Be of the same mind toward one another

1. **same mind**- Gr. **autos phroneo**- *same thinking*

a. Again, this is impossible if we walk in the flesh.

b. This same mind is the mind of servanthood. We are to have the same mind of Christ, which is servanthood. [Phil. 2:6-7] The kingdom of God

is based upon servanthood- first of God and then others.

B. Do not set your mind on high things, but associate with the humble

1. **mind**- Gr. **phroneo**- *thinking*

2. **high things**- Gr. **hupselos**- *lofty position or character; influence and honor; high things (as honors and riches), to be aspiring*

3. **associate**- Gr. **sunapago**- *to be carried away with so as to experience with others the force of that which carries away; to take off together; to go together-associate with*

4. **humble**- Gr. **tapeinos**- *low lying*

a. This command means that we are to not only associate with people and things that have influence and honor, but to associate with those that hold seemingly mundane positions and do mundane tasks. This would mean that the senior pastor of a very large church should hang out with the custodians as well as other big name ministers. I think it would be cool if a traveling minister would take out the custodians to lunch of the church he is visiting to thank them for their service.

b. Paul keeps laying on commands that cannot be kept by the flesh! These commands are even more stringent than the Sermon on the Mount!

c. These commands are not for our flesh to keep, but for our spirit to live out! These commands are snapshots of the new creation at work in relationships!

d. To walk in these we have to walk in the Spirit/spirit with a renewed mind. These commands are lived out from the grace of God in our hearts, not the effort of our flesh.

17. Repay no one evil for evil. Have regard for good things in the sight of all men.

A. Repay no one evil for evil

1. **Repay**- Gr. **apodidomi**- *to give back*

2. **evil**- Gr. **kakos**- *moral bad, ill will*

B. Have regard for good things in the sight of all men

1. **Have regard for**- Gr. **pronoeo**- *to think of in advance; provide in advance*

2. **good things**- Gr. **kalos**- *what is attractive and useful*

3. **sight**- Gr. **enopion**- *in the presence of*

4. This verse means that we should keep thinking about others and make sure we keep from any appearance of evil. [1 Thess. 5:22] We are to provide for what is honest both in the sight of God and people. [2 Cor. 8:21]

5. Again, the flesh cannot keep this verse. The flesh wants to pay people back evil for evil done to it. The flesh also wants to do its own thing no matter how it affects or looks to others.

18. **If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men.**

A. If it is possible

1. I am glad this was added to Holy Scripture! It is not possible to live peaceably with some people! Some people are bound and determined to act in opposition and hostility to you. In cases like this it is best to withdraw from them and love them from a distance.

B. as much as depends on you- Gr. **ek humon-** *out of you*

1. This means to not let a separation be caused by anything that came out of you.
2. Almost all separation involves more than just one party. However, we tend to only focus on what someone else did to contribute to the split. We need to ask the Holy Spirit to shine a light in our heart to see things as they really are.

C. live peaceably with all men

1. **peaceably-** Gr. **eireneuo-** *to be joined in harmony*
2. **all men-** Gr. **pas anthropos-** *all of mankind-* This includes women! This verse does not give you a pass if your problem person is a woman!

19. **Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but *rather* give place to wrath; for it is written, "VENGEANCE IS MINE, I WILL REPAY," says the Lord.**

A. Beloved

1. With every hard command there is a divine truth or promise we can draw on to perform it under the New Covenant! Here we can obey the command not to avenge ourselves by focusing on the term "beloved". Do you know you are God's beloved and the apple of His eye? He cares deeply for you and wants to protect, bless, and exalt you. We can trust God to take care of injustices done against us. The flesh wants to inflict wrath and vengeance and take care of itself. This will only lead to heart ache and to make the matter worse.

B. do not avenge yourselves- Gr. **ekdikeyo-** *to give out justice*

1. When we take it upon ourselves to meet out justice it is done in the flesh. Nothing good dwells in the flesh. Justice will ALWAYS be perverted when the flesh tries to meet out justice. God can only do this rightly and in love.

C. but rather give place to wrath- Gr. **didomi topos he orge-** *give room or space for the wrath*

1. The wrath of God was poured out upon Jesus for all sin and injustices. We need to make room in our heart for this truth when injustices are done against us.
2. Because the wrath of God has been poured out on Jesus for us, when we do an injustice towards God, He shows us His kindness and goodness. It is the goodness of God that leads men to repentance. [Rom. 2:4] This is why in the

next verse we are told to do good to those who do injustice to us. This unnatural goodness and kindness leads to repentance. God will not ask us to do something He is not willing to do with us and others.

3. When we make room in our heart for the truth that the injustice against us has been paid for by Jesus bearing God's wrath, we can show true kindness and goodness to those who hurt us and trust that God's goodness will protect and bless us as His beloved.

D. for it is written, "vengeance is mine, I will repay"

1. **vengeance**- Gr. *ekdesis*- *justice that is given out*

- a. God has already taken out vengeance for all injustices in the person of His Son Jesus.

2. **repay**- Gr. *antapodidomi*- *to give back*

- a. No matter what was taken from you by injustice, if you will make room in your heart for the fact that the wrath of God has paid for that injustice done to you, and if you will show the goodness and kindness of God to those who hurt you, you will be repaid for what was taken. When God repays He always gives back with interest!

20. Therefore "IF YOUR ENEMY IS HUNGRY, FEED HIM; IF HE IS THIRSTY, GIVE HIM A DRINK; FOR IN SO DOING YOU WILL HEAP COALS OF FIRE ON HIS HEAD."

A. Therefore "if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him a drink.

1. God is not telling us to do kind things for our enemies, and if we will, then he will toast them in His fiery indignation! That makes no sense folks! Again, God has poured out His wrath on His Son and executed vengeance for our sins in Him. Now, God treats us in goodness and kindness which leads to repentance. God is asking us to do the same and trust Him to repay us for what was done to us.

B. for in so doing you will heap coals of fire on his head

1. **heap**- Gr. *soreuo*- *to pile up*

2. **coals of fire**- Gr. *anthrax pur*- *we get our word anthrax from this Greek word for coal.*

3. This is a metaphor that pictures showing kindness that causes someone the pain of repentance. When we act in goodness and kindness in exchange for injustice then often the pain of searing conviction takes place in the heart of the one that did wrong.

4. Here again, this is impossible to do in the flesh. It is important that we walk in the Spirit through the renewed mind and active trust in the grace of God in us.

21. Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

A. Do not be overcome by evil

1. **overcome-** Gr. **overcome- nikao-** *to gain the victory over*
2. **evil-** Gr. **kakos-** *moral bad*

B. but overcome evil with good

1. **good-** Gr. **agathos-** *intrinsic good that comes only from God*

a. evil is darkness and good is light. We overcome darkness by the light!

This divine light is in our spirit. Darkness resides in our flesh. As we walk in the Spirit with a renewed mind trusting in the grace of God within us we will walk in the light and have victory over the darkness.