

ESV Scripture Text: Romans Chapter 12	Commentary/Teaching
<p>12 ¹I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. ²Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.</p> <p>Gifts of Grace</p> <p>³For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. ⁴For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, ⁵so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. ⁶Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; ⁷if service, in our serving; the one who teaches, in his teaching; ⁸the one who exhorts, in his exhortation; the one who contributes, in generosity; the one who leads, with zeal; the one who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness.</p> <p>Marks of the True Christian</p> <p>⁹Let love be genuine. Abhor what is evil; hold fast to what is good. ¹⁰Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor. ¹¹Do not be slothful in zeal, be fervent in spirit, serve the Lord. ¹²Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer. ¹³Contribute to the needs of the saints and seek to show hospitality. ¹⁴Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. ¹⁵Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. ¹⁶Live in harmony with one another.</p>	<p>¹ What empowers the new life? Answer: the mercies of God! In view of God’s mercies, we are driven to be obedient. Point of fact. Just so long as we remember that this is not the basis for our justification. // “present your bodies...”: Against Gnosticism which puts spirit over body. No. In the Christian faith, the body and spirit are inseparable. Thus, our bodies must “express” our faith; must do the good works which evidence our faith. When our bodies are driven by faith = “spiritual worship” or “reasonable worship” = consistent with the Word of Truth. Inspired, not imposed.</p> <p>² “Conformed” = the world is capable of molding and defining us to live according to its way (“world” here is the spirit of sin and Satan). // “Transformed” = same word as Christ’s transfiguration! We become a new creation at Holy Baptism. Point of fact: we are different now even as we battle our sinful nature daily. We don’t treat people as the world treats people. // “discern”: 1) know the will of God; 2) know what is good, acceptable, and perfect...for example: Matthew 5:48: “Be perfect as...”.</p> <p>³ “Sober judgment” = realize all good gifts are from God, not from us. We take no credit. If we do = foolish. // Faith attributes all gifts from God. The world says greatest is to be greater than others; Christ says greatness is to be a servant of all.</p> <p>⁴ The human body is one organism. We NEED each other in the Church. Each member is invaluable. // Each member has a different function (see 1 Cor. 12:21-26).</p> <p>⁵ Individualism is rejected, our view is the opposite of the culture’s philosophy.</p> <p>⁶ All members of the church have different abilities or gifts from the Holy Spirit. Fact.</p> <p>⁶⁻⁸ St. Paul goes through a sampling of gifts. // “prophecy” = forthtelling God’s Word; “in proportion to our faith” = holding to the Word and not going beyond the Word. // “Exhort” = rouse the will of God’s people and move them to unanimous action or endurance. // “zeal” = with the whole heart.</p> <p>⁹ This is AGAPE love; faith and love inseparable. The mark of genuine love is an abhorrence of evil coupled with a holding fast to what is good. (Franzmann, p. 224) // Love must have the</p>

Do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly. Never be wise in your own sight.
¹⁷ Repay no one evil for evil, but give thought to do what is honorable in the sight of all. ¹⁸ If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. ¹⁹ Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord." ²⁰ To the contrary, "if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals on his head." ²¹ Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

courage to call evil by its name so that we may gain the brother caught in evil. (ibid, 224).

¹⁰ Different love, affection. We are called to this as well. "Philadelphia" = City of Brotherly Affection/Love. Where there is agape love, affection will follow. Family affection. // "Showing honor" = Emphasize the positive, put on God's eyes who sees past sin.

¹¹ This kind of love can't be just sentiment in the heart. It must be expressed! It becomes ACTION. When we serve the other, we serve the LORD! We see others as if they were Christ.

¹² Love and hope go together. How? Objective hope means you have the Kingdom, you have it all! You're covered. So don't worry about having "enough" to love others. Of course you do. You have the Kingdom. We pray continuously: "Come, Lord Jesus!" (Revelation 22:20)

¹³ Not only do we have endurance through hard times, but our hearts are enlarged by the Holy Spirit to show sympathy to our fellow saints. // "Hospitality" = empirical aid to fellow Christians.

¹⁴ The Spirit also gives us the capacity in Christ to treat those who persecute us in the way that Christ treated those who persecuted Him.

¹⁵ Compassion, empathy, and sympathy leads us to enter the lives of others.

¹⁶ St. Paul is clearly speaking about believers towards believers in the Church. We are called to love all people, but especially within the household of faith. (Galatians 6:10) The ESV fails to bring out the literal translation of "have a mindset; set one's mind" occurring 2x within this verse. Our orientation is towards peace within the congregation united in God's grace. (Middendorf, p. 1268) Jews and Gentiles might be tempted to ask, "Who has the more favorable status before God?" Don't go there.

¹⁷ If haughtiness is cut off, so will the desire for vengeance be cut off.

¹⁸ Jesus said, "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God." (Matthew 5:9)

¹⁹ God is judge. Leave it to Him.

²⁰⁻²¹ Love shown to an enemy may lead the enemy to contrition. "Burning coals" = being convicted and feeling sorrow for one's sins. If we are treated poorly by someone, but we do not return evil for evil, the offender might be convicted.