

PREVIOUSLY IN CHAPTER 12

- Our Response to the Age of Grace | Romans 12:1-2
- The Humility of Being Part of a Team | Romans 12:3-5
- The Exercise of Spiritual Gifts | Romans 12:6-8

INSTRUCTIONS ON CHRISTIAN DEPORTMENT | ROMANS 12:9-13

- Verse 9 - Paul continues to discuss personal behavior and activity in the Body of Christ. The **love** shown in the body is to be ἀνυπόκριτος [anhypokritos], or *unhypocritical*. **Evil** is to be viewed as despicable while good is something to **cleave to**.
- Verse 10 - In summary: if you have opportunity to do good, focus your good labors on your brothers and sisters in Christ. Compare Galatians 6:10.
- Verses 11-13 –
 - As Paul continues, he gives a list of simple and quick instructions that are, for the most part, self-explanatory.
 - Rather than explanation, they need self-inventory.
 - Enumerating the list poses challenges; are **fervent in spirit** and **serving the Lord** part of **not slothful in business**, for example? Nonetheless, without making it more difficult than it needs to be, the list is *simple and to the point*.

INSTRUCTIONS ON CHRISTIAN INTERACTION | ROMANS 12:14-18

- Verse 14 –
 - This instruction should not be misunderstood to mean that we are to affirm the persecutor in any way. Both Jesus and Paul readily condemned the men who caused them harm.
 - In Luke 24:30, among other passages, the word translated **bless** is used to refer to a prayer, and such would be perfectly in line with the Sermon on the Mount, in which Jesus said, **pray for those who persecute you** (Matt. 5:44).
 - Note that both Jesus (Luke 23:34) and Stephen (Acts 7:60) prayed forgiveness upon their persecutors, but they did not affirm their actions in any way.
- Verse 15 –
 - There is a time to dig deeply into issues, but Christians find the right time.
 - A time of rejoicing is not the time to inject a sad reality, and a time of weeping is not a time to "pour salt in the wound."
- Verse 16 –
 - To **be of the same mind toward one another** is to agree on your priorities, thought process, and values.
 - The encouragement to not waste your thought process on the **high things** but to esteem *the lowly* (literal translation) is wise advice. Our chasing after prestige typically ends in sorrow.
- Verse 17 –
 - In v. 14 (see note) the instruction did not prohibit condemnation of evil men. However, this verse *does* prohibit *fighting fire with fire* if the weapon used is evil.
 - Rather than evil, we are to **provide things honest** (literally, *good*) **in the sight of all men**.

- Verse 18 –
 - We do ourselves (nor those around us) any favors when we try to right all wrongs and address all sins/inconsistencies/shortcomings, etc.
 - Discernment is the practice of seeking peace **if it be possible**.
 - One of the greatest failures to heed this instruction comes when we take the offense of another as our own.

INSTRUCTION FOR INTERACTION WITH ENEMIES | ROMANS 12:19-21

- Verse 19 - This verse shows us that **wrath** belongs to God. Even Jesus did not judge when it was not his place to do so (John 12:47).
- Verse 20 - A quote from Proverbs 25:21-22.
- Verse 21 - A reminder and a summary.