

Romans 12:9-13
For the week of January 28, 2024

Reflection

1. What were some of the takeaways, for you, from Sunday's sermon?

2. Were there questions, comments, concerns...?

Love is primary, but if it is not sincere, it is not real love but only pretense. When one recalls that Paul paused in his discussion of spiritual gifts to inject a chapter on love (1 Cor 13), it is altogether fitting that he should follow his presentation of spiritual gifts here in Romans with the same emphasis. The whole of the believer's conduct, in fact, should be bathed in love. If he fails to love his brother, doubt is cast on his professed love for God (1 John 4:19–21).¹ Honor one another above yourselves" (v. 10). To honor is to accord recognition and show appreciation.²

Paul now momentarily directs attention toward the Lord and his service before returning to horizontal relationship with the body of Christ (v. 13). After converts have experienced the initial glow and ardor of Christian life there is often danger of their slipping back into a deadening spiritual inertia. To counter this, the apostle urges diligent endeavor fed by fervency of spirit.³ In brief, the thrust here (v. 11) is that the Lord's service calls for our best. Jesus is no ordinary master. Not the least element in his uniqueness is the confidence he instills in those who serve him that though he remains invisible, he is wonderfully real to the eye of faith, and this carries forward into the present the indelible influence of his life and ministry in the world during the days of his flesh. ⁴At this point, Paul's mention of prayer is natural, since it is the Christian's great resource when he is under stress and strain.⁵

To share with others is never more meaningful than when one is hard pressed to find a sufficient supply for himself. When this sharing takes place under one's own roof, it is labeled "hospitality." The Greek term (*philoxenos*) is more expressive than the English, for it means "love for strangers."⁶

¹ Everett F. Harrison, "[Romans](#)," in *The Expositor's Bible Commentary: Romans through Galatians*, ed. Frank E. Gaebelin, vol. 10 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1976), 132.

² Everett F. Harrison, "[Romans](#)," in *The Expositor's Bible Commentary: Romans through Galatians*, ed. Frank E. Gaebelin, vol. 10 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1976), 132.

³ Everett F. Harrison, "[Romans](#)," in *The Expositor's Bible Commentary: Romans through Galatians*, ed. Frank E. Gaebelin, vol. 10 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1976), 133.

⁴ Everett F. Harrison, "[Romans](#)," in *The Expositor's Bible Commentary: Romans through Galatians*, ed. Frank E. Gaebelin, vol. 10 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1976), 133.

⁵ Everett F. Harrison, "[Romans](#)," in *The Expositor's Bible Commentary: Romans through Galatians*, ed. Frank E. Gaebelin, vol. 10 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1976), 133.

⁶ Everett F. Harrison, "[Romans](#)," in *The Expositor's Bible Commentary: Romans through Galatians*, ed. Frank E. Gaebelin, vol. 10 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1976), 133.

Observation (vs. 9-10)

3. What is Paul saying in these two verses?

Interpretation

4. What is genuine love?

5. What does “abhor what is evil; hold fast to what is good” have to do with genuine love?

Application

6. Do you “outdo one another in showing honor”? Why or why not?

Observation (vs. 11-12)

7. What is being said in these verses?

Interpretation

8. Define:

Slothful (see also Matt 25:24-30) –

Fervent in Spirit –

Serve the Lord –

9. How do the 3 directions in verse 12 remedy the issues in verse 11?

Rejoice in hope –

Patient in tribulation –

Constant in prayer –

Application

10. What does rejoicing in the future produce in the present for you?

11. How are you patient in tribulation?

12. Are you in constant prayer? Why or why not?

Observation (vs. 13)

13. What is Paul saying to the Roman church in this verse?

Interpretation

14. Paul uses the Greek word “koinonia”, which means to have fellowship by sharing (translated in the ESV, Contribute...). How does contributing to the needs of the saints show fellowship?

15. How is seeking to show hospitality a natural outgrowth of love? (see also Heb 13:2, 16 and 1 Pet 4:9)

Application

16. Is sharing what you have and showing hospitality easy for you? Why or why not?