

# Romans

## Chapter 12

### Romans 12:1-2

“I 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.

Do 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.”

## Therefore

- Paul in chapter twelve is going to give a framework for living the Christian life from the standpoint of knowledge and trust in the gospel message.
- The only motivation for living as a Christian comes from a deep thankfulness to Jesus for what He has done for our salvation upon the Cross.
- This is the tenth therefore thus far used in the Book of Romans:
  1. The therefore of God giving up man over to their own lusts:
    - “**Therefore** God **gave them up in the lusts** of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves, because they exchanged the **truth** about God for a **lie**”-Romans 1:24-25a

2. The therefore of having no excuse in the practicing of the same things:
  - “**Therefore** you have **no excuse, O man**, every one of you who judges. For in passing judgment on another you condemn yourself, because you, the judge, **practice** the very same things.”-**Romans 2:1**
3. The therefore of having peace and justification by faith:
  - “**Therefore**, since we have been **justified by faith**, we have **peace with God** through our Lord Jesus Christ.”-**Romans 5:1**
4. The therefore of having been saved from the wrath of God eliminating the fear of punishment:
  - “**Therefore**, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be **saved** by him from the **wrath** of God.”-**Romans 5:9**

5. The therefore of Adam’s sin having entered the world spreading death to all men who sin in Adam’s likeness:
  - “**Therefore**, just as **sin** came into the world through one man, and **death** through sin, and so **death** spread to all men because all sinned”-**Romans 5:12**
6. The therefore of one man’s sin having led to the condemnation for all men yet through the one act of righteousness leads to the justification and life for all men:
  - “**Therefore**, as **one trespass** led to condemnation for all men, so **one act** of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men.”-**Romans 5:18**

7. The **therefore** of having been baptized into death with Jesus believer's are also being raised with Jesus in order that we might walk in a new way:

- “We were buried **therefore** with him by **baptism** into death, in order that, just as Christ was **raised** from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in **newness of life.**”-**Romans 6:4**

8. The **therefore** of not letting sin reign in our mortal bodies:

- “Let not **sin therefore reign** in your mortal body, to make you obey its passions.”-**Romans 6:12**

9. The **therefore** having no condemnation for those in Christ:

- “There is **therefore** now no **condemnation** for those who are **in** Christ Jesus.”-**Romans 8:1**

10. The **therefore** of having our spiritual worship be by the mercies of God:

- “I 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.”-**Romans 12:1**

## The Mercies of God

- All of the **mercies of God** that Paul has described thus far in the Book of Romans he now **appeals** to us to consider.
- The word used for **mercies** describes the **heart of compassion** that God has for man in sending His Son to die for our redemption.
- The **mercy of justification** that does not give to believer's our due death but instead through His grace a secure position before a holy and righteous God!
- The **mercy of the our adoption** as sons through the Spirit we cry out to God as our Father!

- The **mercy of being under grace** instead of under the law!
- The **mercy of having no condemnation** in Christ Jesus!
- The **mercy of the Spirit** of God indwelling within the believer!
- The **mercy of the Spirit** helping in our weaknesses and interceding for us in our afflictions and our present sufferings!
- The **mercy of being conformed** to the image of the Son which God had planned before time began!
- The **mercy of our future glory**!
- The **mercy of having a confidence** that nothing can separate us from the love of God!

- The **mercy of God's faithfulness** to be with us through to the end as He is going to be faithful to Israel to the end!
- These mercies should be adequate enough to give to the believer a motivation for living the Christian life.
- “For God beseeches us to be *persuaded by His mercies*...We must believe that these Divine mercies *have persuasive powers* over our wills. It is not that we can move our own wills; but that faith in God’s mercies, personally shown us, has power. It is the **goodness of God** that moves us,—when we really believe ourselves the free recipients of it!”-Newell, William

## Our Bodies

- In light of God’s wonderful mercies Paul urges believers to **present your body as living sacrifice**.
- Our physical body that occupies space is not our own. Our will controls what our bodies do but we have no control over sickness, aging, and finally death.
- The believer is to release his body to God by no longer idolizing it by making it an object of ultimate concern.
- “Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, nor about your **body**, what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the **body** more than clothing?...

- “Therefore do not be anxious, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ For the Gentiles seek after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.”- **Matthew 6:25,31-33**
- We give up our bodies by **presenting** it to God for usefulness in the furtherance of His kingdom.
- God is now in charge of every aspect of our bodies to do with it as He deems necessary for His purposes.
- “Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ?... You are not your own, for **you were bought with a price**. So glorify God in your body.”-**1 Corinthians 6:15a,19b-20**

- The word **living** means that the **sacrifice** is constant and ongoing. The word **sacrifice** describes something that is killed.
- Paul said, “I die **every day!**”-**1 Corinthians 15:30b**
- “**always carrying** in the body the death of Jesus, so that the **life** of Jesus may also be manifested in **our bodies**.”-**2 Corinthians 4:10**
- Paul discovered that physically dying to self daily would cause suffering to him but it was worth it since the life of Jesus was spiritually giving life to his mortal body.
- “But we have this treasure in jars of clay, to show that the surpassing **power** belongs to God and not to us.”-**2 Corinthians 4:7**

- The jars of clay were of little intrinsic value but only useful for the contents they held within them. In this case valuable because God chose to put His light and glory in ordinary everyday jars of clay, our bodies, to show that His transforming power comes from Him not us!
- A **living sacrifice** then is a **living killing** of the body that is a constant and an ongoing procedure daily to renew our bodies as holy and obedient for God's purposefulness.
- It what Jesus was referring to we He said: "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will save it."-**Luke 9:23-24**
- The **body** is **holy** (separated to God) we therefore take care of our body, i.e., eat right, exercise, get the proper amount of sleep but only in the framework how God values our body.

- The purpose of the body can be used for ungodly intentions as we saw in **Romans 3:13-17**: "...they use their **tongues** to deceive...Their **mouth** is full of curses and bitterness...Their **feet** are swift to shed blood...There is no fear of God before their **eyes**."
- In presenting our bodies as living sacrifices we have the opportunity to offer the parts of our body with **holy** intent: Our feet to walk in His path directed by the Bible and to spread the gospel to others. Our mouth to share the good news of the gospel to others and to encourage others. Our eyes to humbly behold His glory in Christ. Our ears to listen to His Word spoken. Our mind to understand His Word. Our arms to comfort those who are suffering and broken hearted.
- "The Christian life is to be a daily giving over of our lives and our bodies in obedience to God motivated by the view of God's mercy that we have as we stand at the foot of the cross and see His Son dying there for us."-Keller, Timothy

- “Oh, I have days I lose the fight, Try my best but just don't get it right Where I talk a talk that I don't walk, **And miss the moments right before my eyes.**
- Somebody with a hurt that I could have helped, Somebody with a hand that I could have held, When I just can't see past myself, Lord, help me be
- A little more like mercy, a little more like grace, A little more like kindness, goodness, love, and faith, A little more like patience, a little more like peace, A little more like Jesus, a little less like me
- Yeah, there's no denying I have changed, 'Cause I've been saved from who I used to be, But even at my best, I must confess, **I still need help to see the way You see**”-Less Like Me, Zach Williams

## Spiritual Worship

- When we as believers present our bodies daily to God for His purposes it is **acceptable to God** and is our **spiritual worship**.
- Young's literal translation of the Bible translates **spiritual worship** as **intelligent service**. The New King James as it as **reasonable service**.
- The English translations lose the intent of the original Greek. The word used in the original is ***logikos*** and literally is translated as **logical** conclusion.
- Reasonable service is a life of spiritual worship **according to God's Word.**

- Paul is saying that in the offering of ourselves freely, wholly, and completely to God in **spiritual worship** is the **logical conclusion** we arrive at in light of the **mercies of God** revealed in all that He has done for us in sending His Son as described in the Word of God.
- If a person offers himself partially or half heartedly they are not **concluding** or **understanding** what it cost the Father to send His Son to die for our sins.
- “Like newborn infants, desire the pure milk of the word, so that by it you may grow up into your salvation, **if you have tasted that the Lord is good.**”-**1 Peter 2:3**

- “But now Christ has come, propitiation has been made; Christ has been raised; the Holy Spirit has come; and “intelligent service” is now possible. And giving over our bodies to God is the path into it”.-Newell, William
- Jesus is the living Word and a relationship with him through the written Word will transform our thinking and change the way in which we live.
- “For the word of God is **living** and **active**, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.”-**Hebrews 4:12**
- Jesus said “Blessed rather are those who **hear** the word of God and **keep** it!”-**Luke 11:28**
- The word for **keep** means to **observe carefully** in order to preserve life from being led astray.

## Conformed and Transformed

- In **Romans 8:29**, we saw that God's ultimate goal was for believers to be **conformed** to the image of His Son.
- The word for **conformed** in **Romans 8:29**, is ***sýmmorphos***, and describes what is the **essence in character** and thus complete or durable, not merely a form or outline.
- In **Romans 12:2**, uses the word ***syschēmatízō***, for **conformed** and means to shape one thing in the **same pattern** and describes what is transitory, changeable, and unstable.
- The world's system or the standard of our culture and manner of thinking that is contrary to God is trying to **conform** people to its ungodly pattern that needs to be opposed.

- The word for **transform** is ***metamorphoō***, which describes a change that happens **inwardly** in a person's fundamental **character** and **condition**.
- In the equation of being **transformed** a person is **changed from** someone by being **changed into** someone else all together different in thought and lifestyle.
- “To put the words in their spiritual order we must recognize that we are to turn away from our past (not be **conformed** to the pattern of the world); by being **transformed** (as God makes us like the Lord Jesus Christ), by **conforming** us to the image of His Son.”-Barnhouse, Donald Grey
- Man's natural human perspective about the world needs to be changed, **transformed** so that believers can see the world and people through the life of Jesus.

- Paul testified about his **transformation** that it was no longer him **doing the work** but that it was Christ **doing the work** of change in Paul's life (**Gal. 2:20**).
- “Be **imitators** of me, as I **am** of Christ.” Paul was being transformed by **imitating** Christ. He intentionally **conformed** His life around Who Jesus is.
- He also desired **transformation** for others as well comparing it to childbirth, “my little children, for whom I am again in the anguish of childbirth until Christ is **formed in you!**”-**Galatians 4:19**
- The word for **form** is **Morphoo** and literally means, a **mind** and **life** in complete harmony with the **mind** and **life** of Christ being **formed** in you.

- The Bible teaches that people can have a new way of living now that impacts our relationship with others, our values, our behaviors and even our bodies.
- This **transformation** cannot happen by **human effort** but only through the grace of God by the **Holy Spirit**.
- “...when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of **regeneration** and **renewal** of the Holy Spirit”-**Titus 3:4-5**
- This **regeneration** and **renewal** requires a believers **response** of submission and cooperation with the Holy Spirit as we behold the glory of God in the life and teaching of Jesus.

- “But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will **teach** you all things and bring to your **remembrance** all that I have said to you.”-**John 14:26**
- The pattern of Jesus’ life here upon earth clears up God’s method of **transformation**. Jesus came to earth to **reveal** the Father and to clear up any of man’s false perception of Him.
- “All things have been entrusted to Me by My Father. No one knows who the Son is except the Father, and who the Father is except the Son, and anyone to whom the Son desires to **reveal** Him.”-**Luke 10:22**
- Jesus said, “He [the Holy Spirit] will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you. All that the Father has is mine; therefore I said that he will take what is mine and **declare** it to you.”-**John 16:14-15**

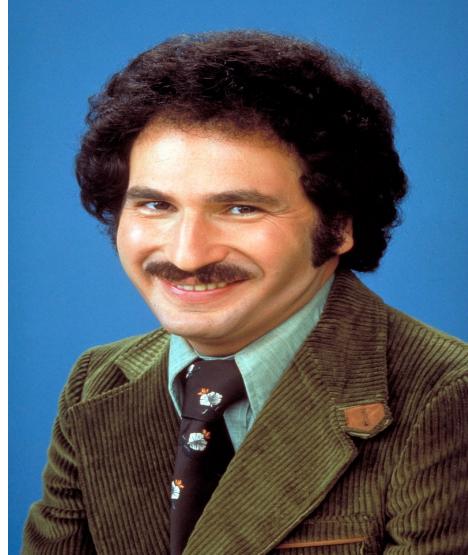
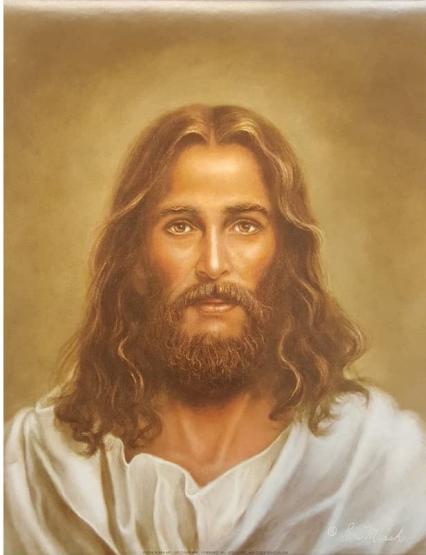
- “No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the **Father’s side**, he has **made him known**.”-**John 1:18**
- “If you **knew** me, you would **know** my Father also.”-**John 8:19b**
- Jesus came, “leaving you an **example**, so that you might **follow in his steps**.”-**1 Peter 2:21b**
- The reason Paul intentionally **imitated** Jesus was because the **glory of God** is in the **face** of Jesus Christ (**2 Cor.4:6**).
- Jesus is the **image of God** (**2 Cor.4:4**). Jesus is the radiance of the glory of God and the **exact imprint of his nature** (**Heb.1:3**) and He is the **image** of the invisible God (**Col. 1:15**).

- The very first thing we should learn about the person of Jesus Christ is that He is the perfect revelation of the Father.
- Jesus said, “Whoever has seen **me** has seen the **Father**...I and the Father are **one.**”-**John 14:9;10:30**
- We as believers behold the **glory of God** in the life of Jesus Christ; Who reveals the Father’s character to those who believe.
- “Moses said, “Please show me **your glory.**” And he said, “I will make all my **goodness** pass before you and will proclaim before you my name ‘The LORD... a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin”-**Exodus 33:18a;34:6b-7a**

- “We all, with unveiled face, **beholding the glory** of the Lord, are being **transformed** into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.”-**2 Corinthians 3:18**
- We must **look unto Jesus** by devoting our **mind** and our thoughts towards the **gospel**. When we do so the promise is that we will be assisted in being **transformed** by His grace and the Holy Spirit.
- Jesus was full of **grace** (**John 1:14**).
- Jesus felt **mercy** and **compassion** for the people (**Matthew 15:32**)
- Jesus had **love** for people (**John 13:1**).
- Jesus came to **seek** and **save** the lost (**Luke 19:10**).
- Jesus is **gentle** and **humble** in heart (**Matthew 11:28**).
- Jesus came to serve **not be** served (**Matthew 20:28**).
- Jesus is **forgiving** towards people (**Matthew 18:21-22**).

- External behavioral modification is not to be the focus but transformation of the inner self as we **look unto Jesus (Hebrews 12:2)**.
- Behavior modification most often will result in legalism.
- “Now the tax collectors and sinners were all **drawing near** to hear him. And the Pharisees and the scribes **grumbled**, saying, “This man receives sinners and eats with them.”-**Luke 15:1-2**
- “They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind. Now it was a Sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes. So the Pharisees again asked him how he had received his sight. And he said to them, ‘He put mud on my eyes, and I washed, and I see.’ Some of the Pharisees said, ‘**This man is not from God, for he does not keep the Sabbath.**’ But others said, ‘How can a man who is a sinner do such signs?’ And there was a division among them.”-**John 9:13-16**

- Merely attempting to act lovingly will lead to despair and to the defeat of love. It will leave us angry and hopeless of being transformed.
- Again, **transformation** of our inner self is not a **human attainment**. It is a gift of grace brought about by the Holy Spirit.
- “God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.”-**Romans 5:5**
- The problem of **transformation** or the lack of it among those who identify as believers in Christ is not that it is impossible or that the capable means have not been given to us by God.
- The main problem is that believers are not intentional because many believers do not see the benefit or the **need to be** transformed.
- The result then is we don’t ever decide to embark on the journey. It is so much more easy to simply **conform** to the pattern of the world than to be **transformed**.



“he had no form or majesty that we should **look at** him, and no beauty that we should **desire** him.”-**Isaiah 53:2b**

## Renewal of the Mind

- Is the picture of God that we have **formed** in our **mind** the picture that Jesus revealed to man when He came to live among us, or is it a fabrication of “philosophy and empty deceit, according to **human tradition**, according to the **world**, and not according to **Christ (Col. 2:8b)**?
- It is possible to be in the church and be **conforming** our mind to the pattern of the world and our traditions handed down to us for generations and not be allowing the Spirit to be **transforming** our **mind** and **thoughts**.

- “What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man imagined, what God has prepared for those who love him, these things God has **revealed** to us through the **Spirit**. For who knows a person’s **thoughts** except the spirit of that person, which is in him? So also no one **comprehends** the **thoughts** of God except the Spirit of God.”-**1 Corinthians 2:9-11**
- The Christian faith helps us form habits of seeing and shape directions of gaze that change the way in which we think about things, experience the world, and act within it”.-McGrath, Alister
- The discipleship of the mind is an intentional cultivation of thoughts as a part of being **transformed** through the **renewal** of the mind **fixed** upon the **gospel** that shows us **Jesus** the exact image of the Father.

- “Pussy cat, pussy cat, where have you been? I’ve been to London, to see the great Queen. Pussy cat, pussy cat, what did you see there? I saw a wee mouse under her chair”. – Author Unknown
- Why did the cat consider the mouse when his gaze could be upon the queen?
- When we as believers look to the mice of doctrine, traditions, and performance we take our gaze off of the most important aspect of our life, Jesus the image of God.
- We should be “**Looking to Jesus**, the founder and perfecter of our faith” (**Hebrews 12:2**) for a correct picture of Who God is.

- “The reason why our spiritual life decays and withers is because we fill our minds full of other things, and these things weaken the power of grace. But when the mind is filled with thoughts of Christ and his glory, these things will be expelled”-Owen, John
- “If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. **Set your minds** on things that are above, not on things that are on earth.”- **Colossians 3:1-2**
- “But that is not the way you learned Christ!, assuming that you have heard about him and were taught in him, as the truth is in Jesus, to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, and to be **renewed in the spirit of your minds**, and to put on the new self, **created** after the **likeness of God** in true righteousness and holiness.”-**Ephesians 4:20-24**

## VIM

- **Vim** is defined as **energy** and **enthusiasm** as in vim and vigor. It is also an acronym for use in discipleship of the **mind**.
- “His divine power has granted to us **all things** that pertain to **life** and **godliness**, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence, by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the **corruption** that is in the world because of **sinful desire**. For this very reason, **make every effort** to supplement your faith”-**2 Peter 1:3-5a**
  - **Vision**: The believer’s **vision** is the life and the teachings of Jesus as revealed in the Bible through the Holy Spirit.

– **Intention:** Launching ourselves with as strong of **intention** and **decision** as possible to follow the life of Jesus; **make every effort** to supplement your faith.-**2 Peter 1:5a**

- If failure occurs we can always start new but never give in to our natural laziness to spiritual things. “The spirit indeed is **willing**, but the flesh is **weak**”-**Matthew 26:41b**
  - **Mind:** Set our **minds** upon heavenly things lifting all of our problems, worries, and fears into the spiritual domain by looking unto Jesus. Thinking God’s thoughts towards the world according to the Spirit.
- “It is not an easy task, but a glorious difficult one, requiring the mightiest effort of our human nature, a task which lifts our thoughts into thinking God’s thoughts after Him”.-Chambers, Oswald
- VIM adapted from Dallas Willard’s

## The Will of God

- As we are looking unto Jesus the face of the glory of God we can rest assured that we are in the **will** of God.
- As we are being transformed in our character the Spirit is conforming us into the image of the Son.
- This is **acceptable** and **pleasing** to the Father.
- The word used for **acceptable** in the original Greek describes the recognition of something as being **genuine** after a careful examination.
- “The Jews therefore marveled, saying, ‘How is it that this man has learning, when he has never studied?’ So Jesus answered them, ‘My teaching is not mine, but his who sent me. If anyone’s will is to do God’s will, **he will know** whether the teaching is from God or whether I am speaking on my own authority.”-**John 7:15-16**

- “But solid food is for the mature, for those who have their powers of discernment trained by **constant practice** to distinguish good from evil.”-**Hebrews 5:14**
- If believers are willing to **present their bodies** to God then He will transform our character into the image of His Son; and by the renewing of our minds, we will be able to discern the things that are **genuinely acceptable** and **pleasing** to the Father.
- The Father willfully desires nothing more or less than to have the image of His Son fully **formed** in us!
- “We beg you to seek out some saints (for there are some!) who have yielded themselves to God, and study their faces: you’ll discover a light of joy found on no other countenances. Cling to such. Converse with them. Learn their secret. Be much with them. And follow such as **follow Christ**. Blessing lies that way!”- Newell, William

## **Romans 12:3**

“For 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”

## Sober Judgment

- In verse 3, Paul is speaking to those individuals within the church who may **think** that they have it all together.
- When we **think** we know it all; when we **think** we have arrived; when we **think** we have all the answers; we are **thinking** too highly of ourselves.
- The reason Paul addressed this issue is because there is a natural tendency of being tempted within believers to **think more highly of themselves** than they **ought to think**.

- The pattern of the world causes division among people as each person seeks his own power, his own promotion, and his own honor.
- The Church is the unified body of Christ and this type of arrogance destroys the unity of the body when the world's standard for living is allowed to operate within the Church.
- Jesus said, "For what is highly **admired** by people is **revolting** in God's sight".-**Luke 16:15b**
- While a believer is in the world it is easy for us to be conformed into the world's pattern for living; however the character of the believer is that he is now **in Christ**.
- "...If anyone is **in Christ**, he is a new creation (**2 Cor. 5:17**). The mark of the believers life is that we are now **in Christ** and that reality sharpens the lens by which we see our life and the world around us.

- Believers are to **think** of themselves with **sober judgment** in the light of being sinful people redeemed through the mercy and **grace given** to us **in Jesus**.
- When we **think** of ourselves through the lens of the gospel it is more difficult to be given over to the carnal pride of **thinking highly** of ourselves.
- The world and its culture teach us about the dangers of having a low self-esteem. The Bible teaches us that the real danger is an inflated **ego** or **self-centeredness**.

## Measure of Faith

- God has given to each believer a certain **measure of faith**.
- The **measure** of faith used here seems **not** to be speaking towards the **amount** of faith that a believer may **think** he has over another believers low amount of faith.
- The word used in the original Greek is **metron** of which we get the word **meter** from and describes a **standard of measurement**.
- In the context of this verse it seems Paul is saying that all believers have been saved by the **grace given** through faith in Jesus Who was crucified; therefore, the gospel is the **standard of measure** by which God has **assigned** to each believer the **gift of faith**.

- The gospel prevents believers from **thinking more highly** than we **ought to think**. We are sinners deserving of judgment but saved by the **grace given** to us by the Father whose view of us is the only truth that matters.
- In the practical living out of our **faith** we should realize that we are all the same regardless of our background or our abilities. The Father loves each one of us and gives **His gift of faith** not based upon the worth of a person but as He deems necessary to the furtherance of the gospel message.
- “This special belief was but a particular development of the faith by which each one accepted the general **Gospel preached** to all. Any self-conceit prompted by special capacity for usefulness is destroyed by remembrance that our spiritual stature is measured simply by the degree of our faith; and that this faith is God’s gift to us, a **gift possessed in some degree by all Christians**”.-Beet, Joseph

## Romans 12:4-5

“For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another.”

## Unity of Believers

- We are unique individuals and the Holy Spirit leads each one of us according to His will and yet we **function** together as **one body in Christ**.
- Jesus is our common ground by which the body functions for we are **one body in Christ**.
- Jesus is the **head of the body**, the church. For “all things were created through him and for him. And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together.”-**Colossians 1:18a;16b-17**

- All members of His body have the **same function** to do **together** which is to spread the message of the gospel both corporately and individually.
- The body of Christ does not revolve around us we are only **members**; it revolves around the only One it can, the head, Jesus.
- “There is **one body** and **one Spirit** just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all. But grace was given to each one of us **according to the measure of Christ’s gift**...

- ...to equip the saints for the **work of ministry**, for **building up** the body of Christ, until we all attain to the **unity of the faith** and of the **knowledge of the Son of God**...”-**Ephesians 4:4-7;12-13a**
- “Your right hand has never yet had a fight with the left: on the contrary, each constantly helps the other”.-Newell, William
- A football team cannot function if everybody wants to play the same position. The quarterback receives the glory but every humble quarterback knows that his success is directly related to the lineman who protect him.
- “...the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is **working properly**, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.”-**Ephesians 4:16**

## **Romans 12:6-8**

“ Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; if service, in our serving; the one who teaches, in his teaching;

the 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.”

## Gifts of Grace

- The Father bestows upon believers **His gifts** for the building up of the body (**Eph. 4:12**) not for the glory of the gifted but for the glory of the Giver.
- The **gifts** are not bestowed **according to merit** as the world would have it but because God chooses to give to believers **according to grace given** so that we can grow up in every way into Christ the Head (**Eph. 4:15-16**).
- All **gifts** come through the will of the Holy Spirit: “All these [gifts] are empowered by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he **wills**.”-**1 Corinthians 12:11**
- In knowing that the gifts are given to believers through the Holy Spirit should keep us from carnal pride.

- The sinful nature has the tendency towards praising certain gifts as more highly warranted promoting themselves or others for how the Spirit has gifted them; instead of exalting Christ, Whom the Spirit glorifies.
- [The Spirit] **He will glorify me**, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you.” **John 16:14**
- There also can be a false humility of which a person neglects the **gifts given** to them by the Holy Spirit (**1 Tim.4:14**).
- Pride also masquerades itself through the lack of contentment with the **gifts given** by coveting certain gifts yet not be gifted in the **use of them** (**1 Cor. 12:1-11**).
- Each member of the body should be satisfied with the gifts the Holy Spirit has so graciously given to the glory of the Father!

## The Gifts

- There are 7 gifts mentioned in the following verses: Prophecy, service, teaching, and exhortation, giving, leading, and showing mercy.
- This is not an exhaustive list of the gifts. Paul goes into greater detail of the gifts in **1 Corinthians 12:4-11**.
- **Prophecy**: Prophecy needs to be practiced according to the **proportion of faith**.
- **Prophecy**, in a Scriptural sense, isn't necessarily predicting a future event. It is more accurately declaring the heart and mind of God which may or may not include a predictive element.
- All **prophecy** is centered in Christ. It is a testimony of Jesus Christ (**Rev. 19:10**). He is at the center of prophecy because He is the central theme of all the Scriptures.

- In the Old Testament, the prophet was **called by God to speak God's Word** to the people but only the false prophets took the office upon himself of which was punishable by death (**Deut. 18:15-22**).
- “Do not despise prophecies, but **test** everything; hold fast what is good.” **-1 Thessalonians 5:20-21**
- In the New Testament the gift of **prophecy** would be the preaching of the gospel with a divine anointing.
- “On the other hand, the person who prophesies **speaks to people** for their strengthening, encouragement, and consolation”. **-1 Corinthians 14:3**
- “The effectiveness of the preaching is not in the prophet but in the Holy Spirit who gave the gift...and who tells the believer to exercise the gift”.-Barnhouse, Donald Grey

- “And we have the **prophetic word more fully confirmed**...knowing this first of all, that no **prophecy of Scripture** comes from someone’s own interpretation. For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the **Holy Spirit**.” **-2 Peter 1:19a;20-21**
- Prophecy, therefore, at this period, is nothing else in the Christian Church than the proper understanding of Scripture, and a peculiar faculty of explaining the same; since all the ancient prophecies, and all the oracles of God, were contained in Christ and His Gospel”.-Haldane, Robert
- **Service**: This is referring to practical service or ministry. **Young's Literal translation** has it as **ministration**.
- The original Greek word is the word for **deacon**.

- In **Acts 6** we have the word used twice, applied first to physical things: the daily **distribution** (of service to the widows); and secondly used towards spiritual things: ...we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the **ministry** of the word.
- Those who have the gift of ministry use their gift by practically serving the body by putting hands and feet to the message of the gospel and meeting people's material needs.
- The ministry of a deacon is a supportive and essential role in **service** to the body in order that the pastor is able dedicate his energy towards prayer and the preaching the Word of God.
- Paul mentions **deacons** with overseers (Elders) in **Phil 1:1**, and it is well-defined in Scripture that the two responsibilities are closely connected. The list of the requirements in **1 Tim 3:1-13**, are similar to that for overseers.

- **Teaching:** Teaching is the gift of making the Word of God understandable, "so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes."-**Ephesians 4:14**
- The **teacher** needs to teach himself, "you then who teach others, do you not teach yourself?"-**Romans 2:21a**
- The **teacher** needs to rightly divide the Word of God, "Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth."-**2 Timothy 2:15**

- The **teacher** has a greater responsibility to God, “My brethren, let not many of you become **teachers**, knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgment.”-**James 3:1**
- James is concerned that people don’t become a **teacher** without realizing what a huge responsibility it is to be a **teacher** of the Word of God.
- All believers ought to work towards being qualified to **teach** (**1 Peter 3:15; Hebrews 5:12-14**).
- The Lord has given to the Church **teachers** for equipping believers for ministry (**Acts 13:1; Eph. 4:11-12**).
- “For the time is coming when people will not endure sound **teaching**, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves **teachers** to suit their own passions”.-**2 Timothy 4:3**

- **Exhortation**: The word used here in the Greek is *paraklesis* and means to come alongside and give comfort by offering a word of encouragement that lifts a person up.
- Teaching is the gift of instruction, whereas **exhortation** is encouraging believers to put into practice that which they have been taught.
- There are those who have the **gift** to stir people into action and give counsel to those whom have already been instructed by a teacher in the Word.
- **Contribution**: This is the gift of giving. The person who has this gift enjoys giving from their resources with **generosity**.
- The word for **generosity** is described in the original as **singleness of mind** or **simplicity** which means **generosity** is never self-seeking.

- You may never know that a person has the gift of **generosity**.
- **Leads**: The word for **leads** means to be **earnestness** in accomplishing, promoting, or striving after anything.
- A person who has the gift of **leading** has the ability to set a vision and inspire others to follow.
- It is the gift of setting one's self to a task by taking the **lead** and getting things done without lording over those who follower.
- The exercising of this gift should be accomplished with **zeal**, or rather with **diligence** and **eagerness**.
- It is difficult for **leaders** and they may be prone to become discouraged and feel like giving up of which is the reason that it becomes so important to **pray** for those in leadership.

- “Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you.”-**Hebrews 13:17**
- The reason we are to follow their **lead** is because they **watch over our souls**.
- **Leaders** will have to **give an account** to the Lord for the way in which they have led His people.
- Just as there must be godly **leaders** there must be godly **followers** who make **leading** a joy.

- **Acts of mercy:** Those who have the gift of **mercy** work with the poor, sick, and prisoners. They help those overtaken by misfortune and who are afflicted and brokenhearted.
- The expression **with cheerfulness** is literally interpreted as **with hilarity** of mental attitude.
- Therefore, the function of this gift is one of **cheerfulness**, joy, not in mere actions only but also with a proper **mental attitude**.
- It is having a **joyful compassion** to help those who are hurting.
- The seven spiritual gifts that we have looked at fall into three categories: **Communication** gifts, **serving** gifts, and **leadership** gifts that involve the agency of being a teacher, a deacon, and a pastor/elder.

## **Romans 12:9-13**

“Let love be genuine. Abhor what is evil; hold fast to what is good. Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor.

Do not be slothful in zeal, be fervent in spirit, serve the Lord. Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer. Contribute to the needs of the saints and seek to show hospitality.”

## Love

- Tina Turner sang the song , “**What’s love got to do with it, it just a secondhand emotion**” but for those saved by Jesus it is the mark of a true believer and has everything to do with it.
- The word for **genuine** in the original text is literally **without hypocrisy**.
- **Hypocrisy** is an acting term and describes putting on a false face.
- **Hypocrisy** is putting on a false front by being phony. It’s giving off as being **loving** towards others but inside we are actually despising and resentful of the person.
- **Hypocrisy** also masquerades as being **loving** on the outside appearance but is attempting to manipulate its own desire to get something in return.

- In loving others it doesn't mean we have to like them but it does mean we should be **seeking all things** for their **highest good** which is what **agape love** desires.
- "Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children. And **walk in love**, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us..."-**Ephesians 5:1-2a**
- The believer's manner of walking in love is the only response to the love that Jesus has shown to us in the gospel.
- Thus to walk **in Christ** is to walk **in love** as Christ **has loved** us.
- God has **revealed His love** to believer's through the Holy Spirit (**Rom. 5:5**).
- "...we have come to know and to believe the **love** that God has **for us**...-**1 John 4:16a**

- We know that it is hypocritical to **act loving** towards someone on the outside all the while despising them in our heart.
- Yet at the same time it is not feasible to wait until we have warm fuzzy feelings to put **love** into action.
- "The better we are acquainted with His **love**; It's character, fullness, blessedness; the more will our hearts be drawn out in love..."-Pink, Arthur
- We **love** because he **first** loved us."-**1 John 4:19**
- He **demonstrated His love** towards the ungodly, the weak, and the sinner in dying for us which is the gospel message!
- The solution is to **fix our eyes upon Jesus** Who died for us when we were very unloving towards Him and by the act of repentance our heart may become softened by the gospel.

- “Must Christians continue to stand with arms folded, presenting to men and women a tarnished image of God—a shattered body of Christ? **How should we show the world that we are Christians?**”- Schaffer, Francis
- “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: **just as I have loved you**, you also are to love one another. By this all people **will know** that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”-**John 13:34-35**
- If we desire to love **as Christ loved us** we will need to depend upon the Holy Spirit to reveal His love in us by **fixing our eyes** upon His love for us!
- “Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.”-**1 Corinthians 13:4-7**

## **Abhor and Cling**

- In the light of seeking the highest good for people by our love for them we should **detest** anything that would bring harm to them or ourselves.
- We are to love as God has loved us; we are also to **hate** what God **hates**; anything that would bring harm to individuals. **Hatred** should be directed towards the harmful **evil** not individuals.
- “The LORD **hates** six things; in fact, seven are **detestable** to him: arrogant eyes, a lying tongue, hands that shed innocent blood, a heart that plots wicked schemes, feet eager to run to evil, a lying witness who gives false testimony, and one who stirs up trouble among brothers.”-**Proverbs 6:16-19**
- There is a list of the deeds of the sinful nature that God hates in **Galatians 5:19-21**.

- The Lord **hated** anything that would bring harm or injury to His people's highest good; therefore **holdfast** onto what God sees as righteous and **good** as revealed in His Word.
- The word for **hold fast** literally means **to glue** ourselves to what God considers as **good**.
- “But solid food is for the mature, for those who have their powers of discernment trained by constant practice to distinguish good from evil.”-**Hebrews 5:14**
- The discernment of knowing the difference between good and evil is for the spiritually mature.
- “It is a characteristic of little children that they lack discernment. A baby will put anything into its mouth. An immature believer will listen to any preacher on the radio or television and not be able to identify whether or not he is true to the Scriptures.”-Wiersbe, Warren

## Brotherly Love

- God's **love** is described by the Greek word *agapao*, which is an unconditional love. It is love that is chosen and acted out by the will.
- It is **NOT** a love based on the goodness of the person that love is directed towards nor upon natural like-mindedness or feelings. Rather this is a giving love that always seeks the good of the one loved.
- “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall **love** your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I say to you, **Love** your enemies ”- **Matthew 5:43-44**

- **Phileo** is a love that signifies friendship, fondness, affection, delight, and like-minded attachment. This word is one of feeling.
- **Storage** love describes loving one's family. The mutual love of parents and children; a loving affection for a person's family members.
- The New King James has **verse 10**, interpreted as **be kindly affectionate (phileostorge)** to one another **with brotherly love (philadelphia)**; a love for those born in the same family.
- As believers we are born again and attached together as a family through our Father and His Son Jesus.
- “ For whoever does the will of God, he is my **brother** and **sister** and mother...For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many **brothers**.”-**Mark 3:35;Romans 8:29**

- “For he who sanctifies and those who are sanctified all have one source. That is why he is not ashamed to call them **brothers**”-**Hebrews 2:11**
- “I made known to them your name, and I will continue to make it known, that the **love** with which you have **loved** me may be in them, and I in them.”-**John 17:26**
- “Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you...Therefore welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God.”-**Ephesians 4:32;Romans 15:7**
- The common denominator between these verses is the phrase: **as Christ has**. The bond that binds us together is nothing more or less than Jesus and His love toward each individual.

## Showing Honor

- Believers are to **out do one another** in **showing honor** (vs.10).
- In other words we are to **honor** one another **above** ourselves.
- The word for **honor** in the original describes **valuing someone by which a price has been paid**.
- “Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility **count others more significant** than yourselves.”-**Philippians 2:3**
- “How can you believe, who receive **honor** from one another, and do not seek the **honor** that comes from the only God?.. for they loved the **praise** of men more than the **praise** of God.”-**John 5:44;12:43**
- We need to understand that when we **honor** one another in Christ we are **honoring Christ Himself** Who paid with His blood!

## Keep the Fire

- In **verse 11**, believer's are admonished to not be **slothful** or **lazy** towards spiritual things in **service** to the Lord.
- The word for **fervent** means to be **boiling over with fire**. There is a tendency within the believer to become sluggish towards the things of the Spirit as time goes on.
- Believers need to maintain our spirit at a **boiling point** for the Lord. The people whom Jesus could not tolerate was the man who was neither **hot** nor **cold** (sluggish in mind towards God).
- “I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish that you were cold or hot. So, because you are **lukewarm**, and neither hot nor cold, I am going to vomit you out of my mouth”.-**Revelation 3:15-16**

- The Lord knows our works and the world is a relentless battleground between good and evil and believers must not take things in an easy-going way because the time is short.
- “**Look carefully** then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, making the best use of the time, because the **days are evil**. ”- **Ephesians 5:15-16**
- When we as believers fix our eyes upon the world we can become anxious, fearful which wears our spirit down and burns us out.
- “I sought the LORD, and he answered me and delivered me from all my fears. Those who look to him are **radiant**...”-**Psalm 34:4-5a**
- **Look** to our first love often and **remember** the cost He paid for our salvation and let us **fan the flame** of the gift of the gospel back to life in our heart.

## **Rejoice, Be Patient, and Be Constant**

- When tribulations and trials of life are faced **rejoicing** plays out because we have the **hope** that the trial is not forever but it will pass in time (**vs.12**).
- Our **hope** is not mere wishful thinking but is **fixed upon Jesus** Who is heaven interceding for us.
- “Therefore, preparing your minds for action, and being sober-minded, **set your hope fully on the grace** that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. ”-**1 Peter 1:13**
- As a result we can be **patient** in difficult times in **constant prayer** seeking the Lord’s direction
- In the midst of difficulty **prayer** becomes a constant reminder that we are to be dependent upon our Father and His resources not our own attempt to fix the situation which can become exhausting.

- And it came to pass is one of the most encouraging passages in the Bible. It is used an estimate of **452** times in the Scriptures. It was used by my mother often during difficult times, "this too shall pass" she would say.
- "I think of a brother down in my Southland years ago. In a church service they were giving favorite Scripture verses. He stood and said that his favorite verse was 'It came to pass.' Everyone looked puzzled. The preacher stood up and said, 'Brother, how in the world can "It came to pass" be your favorite?' His answer was, 'When I have trouble, and when I have problems, I like to read that verse, 'It came to pass,' and I know that my trouble or my problem has come to pass; it hasn't come to stay.' He was looking for a new day out there, and that is what Paul has in mind when he says, 'rejoicing in hope.'"-McGee, J. Vernon

## **Contribute and Show Hospitality**

- **Contributing** the **needs** of fellow believers and practicing **hospitality** helps keep us from our natural inclination of self-centeredness (**vs.13**)
- Believers are instructed to give out of what they have for the needs of others less fortunate within the body of Christ.
- “ If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, and one of you says to them, “Go in peace, be warmed and filled,” without giving them the things needed for the body, what good is that?”-**James 2:15-16**

- The Greek word for **hospitality** is literally translated **love for strangers**.
- The idea is to **seek** people we don't know and **show** them **hospitality**.
- "Do not neglect to show **hospitality to strangers**, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares."-**Hebrews 13:2**
- "... one is not just to wait and take the stranger in, if he actually presents himself at the door, but to go out and look for those to whom one can show hospitality..."-Vine, W.E.
- The Father by sending His Son to seek and save the lost is our **example** to seek out people in need.

## **Romans 12:14-21**

"Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. Live in harmony with one another. Do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly. Never be wise in your own sight.

Repay no one evil for evil, but give thought to do what is honorable in the sight of all. If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. 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.”

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

## **Bless and Do Not Curse**

- Our initial human reaction is to get even when someone who does us harm.
- We see the harm caused by others as a good reason to cause harm to them.
- Long ago God promised to take care of His people when others wronged them (**Deut. 32:35**). We have a concern to defend the weak and to pursue justice but we should not retaliate but trust in God when others do us personal harm.
- This is one of those things in which grace is most difficult but remember that the Lord Jesus on the Cross said, “**Father forgive them, for they know not what they do**” giving us an example to follow.
- “But I say to you who hear, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, **bless** those who curse you, **pray** for those who abuse you.”- **Luke 6:27-28**

- “With it we bless our Lord and Father, and with it we **curse** people who are **made in the likeness of God**. From the same mouth come blessing and cursing. My brothers, these things ought not to be so.”-**James 3:9-10**
- Human beings are worthy of respect and are to be treated in such a way because we are all made in the **image of God** even those who may cause us persecution.
- A good man hates, as God himself does: he hates not the **persons of men**, but their sins; not what God made them, but what they have **made themselves**.”- Horne, George
- “We hate sin and love the sinner everyday in our own lives”- Lewis, C.S.

- “...in our present verse it is not mere outward blessing that is commanded, but refraining from inward reservations, or private expressions, for sometimes we speak sweetly to opposers, but our after words prove that we did not allow our hearts to go out in love to those enemies”.-Newell, William
- To **bless** involves both **seeking** God's best on people and **praying** for their best interest.
- “Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely **on my account**.-  
**Matthew 5:12**
- On my account** is the key not our **own account** but this reviling and persecution is coming on us because we believe in Jesus.
- Peter addressed the persecution that comes to some people for reasons other than their belief in Jesus (**1 Peter 4:15-16**), and this is not what Jesus nor Paul is referencing.

## Rejoice and Weep

- “Jesus' first miracle [turning water into wine, John 2] was performed in rejoicing with them that rejoice and His greatest miracle [the raising of Lazarus, John 11] while weeping with those that wept.”-Vine, W.E.
- In following the **example** of Jesus believer's are to share the joy and sorrows of our neighbors.
- Someone at work gets that promotion you desired , or a student you can't stand receives the best grade in the class, or a pay raise is given, and our natural tendency is so often one of envy or self-pity resulting in unwelcomed thoughts towards them.
- “If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together.”-**1 Corinthians 12:26**

## Live in Harmony and Peaceable

- In **verse 16**, Paul advises believer's to live among our neighbors in **harmony** which goes along with **verse 18**, to live **peaceably** with everyone, as far as it **depends on you**.
- There are people, especially today in our society, who will never allow you to be at peace with them.
- The believer should not be the **instigator of trouble** under any circumstance but should live in harmony and peaceable towards their fellow man.
- It is not always possible to live peacefully with some people because they make it impossible or sometimes truth is causing the conflict as with Paul and Peter in **Galatians 2:11-14**.
- “Just do the best you can”-McGee, J. Vernon

## Wise In Our Own Sight

- To be **haughty** in mind is simply to be **conceited** (**vs.16**).
- If we as believer's have thoughts of superiority it is neither realistic nor appropriate for those who owe all to God's grace.
- “A man's wisdom makes his **face shine**, and the hardness of his face is changed.”-**Ecclesiastes 8:1b**
- “The fear of the LORD is the **beginning of wisdom**, and the knowledge of the Holy One is insight.”-**Proverbs 9:10**
- Fearing the Lord is humility. Humility is freedom because it looks beyond one's self to God for **strength** and **wisdom**. Pride says, “I don't need God for strength and wisdom”. Humility says, “I have no understanding or wisdom without Him”.

- “Self-conceit is an evidence of weakness of mind and of ignorance. So far as it manifests itself among Christians, it evidences low attainments in the knowledge of the things of God, and is most destructive to the harmony of a church, and the improvement of the individual under its influence”.- Haldane, Robert
- “Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but **emptied** himself, by taking the form of a **servant**, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he **humbled** himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.”-**Philippians 2:5-8**
- The **lowly** are what society labels as the outcasts the ones whom society frowns upon as screw ups, losers, and misfits.

- **Proud** people will not **associate** with the **lowly** because:
  1. **Pride** says, “I deserve God’s love, others don’t.” In **Luke 14**, Jesus was invited to the home of a ruler of the Pharisees. He notices the competing for the **place of honor** that is happening and so he says, “When you are invited, go and sit in the **lowest** place” (**14:10**).
  2. The **proud** invite friends, brothers, relatives and the rich who will prove to be a benefit (**14:12**). They invite those who will make them look good. They invite for their own **self-benefit**.

- In contrast believers are to associate with the lowly, “But when you give a feast, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, and you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you. For you will be repaid at the resurrection of the just.” **Luke 14:13-14**
- Humility doesn’t seek its own honor but shifts honor to the Father for sending His Son to save people from the crippling and blindness that is caused by our own sin.
- In a horrific turn of events, Jesus eventually tells us the **proud** are shut out from the eternal dinner (**Luke 14:24**).

## When Evil Is Present

- Paul tells believer’s not to react to others with **evil** even when others treat us with **evil**; But to repay what is **honorable** and do so in the **sight of all** (**vs.17**).
- The book end to **repay no one evil for evil** is do not be **overcome** by evil, but **overcome** evil with good (**Vs.21**).
- The Greek word for overcome is **nike** and means to **conquer** or to **carry off the victory**.
- If we **repay evil for evil** we will lose the battle. The only way of being **victorious over evil** is by **doing good** to the person who has done us harm.
- “To the **contrary**, if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink”-**Vs.20**

- This is the direction for active behavior towards those who have done us harm: Pray for them, feed them, and give them something they need.
- "...When we identify evil too closely with the evil doer we believe we need to destroy the evildoer in order to destroy evil. So it seems good to do evil; and we unwittingly become a pawn of the evil force behind the evildoer".-Keller, Timothy
- It profits a man never to **avenge** himself but leave it to the wrath of God(**Vs.19**).
- "When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but continued **entrusting** himself to him who **judges justly**."-**1 Peter 2:23**
- The gospel promises justice and reminds believers that we are not the one to be giving it.