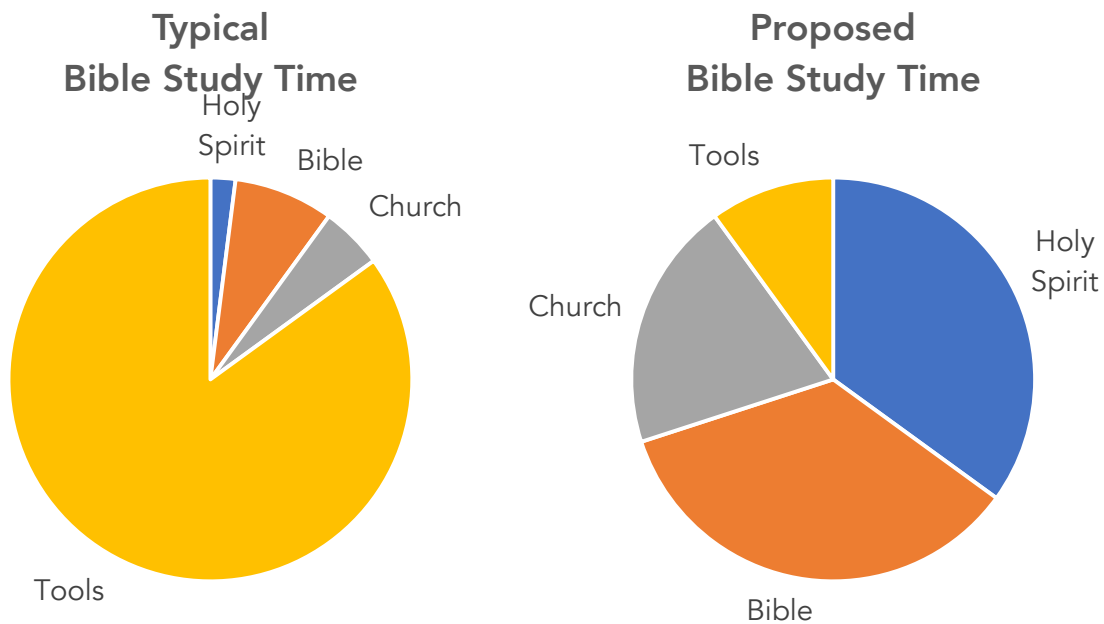


Romans

Marks of the True Christian ([Romans 12:9-21](#))

Introduction

A gentle review: **Did we do this?** Spend more time with God and His Word than with anyone and anything else.



Our approach each week will be REAP (read, explain, apply, personalize).

Here's our outline of the book of [Romans](#) (summarized from the ESV's outline):

- ✓ Paul's Introduction & Righteousness Introduced ([1:1-17](#)) (three weeks)
- ✓ Righteous Wrath ([1:18-3:20](#)) (six weeks)
- ✓ Saving Righteousness ([3:21-4:25](#)) (three weeks)
- ✓ Righteous Freedom ([5:1-8:39](#)) (11 weeks)
- ✓ Righteousness → Jews ([9:1-11:36](#)) (eight weeks)
- 6. Righteous Living ([12:1-15:13](#)) (September to October) (nine weeks)
- 7. Paul's Closing ([15:14-16:23](#)) (November to early December) (five weeks)
- 8. Righteousness Summarized ([16:25-27](#)) (December & wrap up) (two weeks)

Today's text ([Romans 12:9-21](#)) is the third part of this major section.

Before we read this text, my *mea culpa* about us being genetic Jews. Context matters and running to extremes helps (replacement theology). 5 hours → 4:15 removed.

A Living Sacrifice (12:1-2)

1 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. **2** 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.

Gifts of Grace (12:3-8)

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. **4** For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, **5** so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. **6** Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; **7** if service, in our serving; the one who teaches, in his teaching; **8** 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.

Read: Marks of the True Christian (12:9-21)

9 Let love be genuine. Abhor what is evil; hold fast to what is good. **10** Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor. **11** Do not be slothful in zeal, be fervent in spirit, serve the Lord. **12** Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer. **13** Contribute to the needs of the saints and seek to show hospitality.

14 Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. **15** Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. **16** Live in harmony with one another. 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.

Explain: Marks of the True Christian (12:9-21)

Bible study is asking and answering questions about the text. Let's ask some questions.

Are there any literary/structural observations?

Today's text is primarily a list of do's and don'ts for believers. No Old Testament passages are quoted, but Paul gives us a glimpse into this large 'practical' section of Scripture by showing us more of what it looks like to live out [Romans 1-12:2](#).

What do the words mean?

9 Let love [agape] **be genuine** [undissembled, sincere, without dissimulation (hypocrisy), unfeigned]. **Abhor** [present active participle; detest utterly, abhor] **what is evil** [hurtful, evil, calamitous, ill, diseased, culpable, derelict, vicious, facinorous, mischief, malice, guilt, devil, sinners, bad, grievous, harm, lewd, malicious, wicked]; **hold fast** [present middle participle; **glue**, stick, cleave, join (self), keep company] **to what is good** [good, beneficial]. **10 Love** [*philostorgos*; cherishing one's kindred (especially parents or children), font of natural relatives, fraternal towards fellow Christians, kindly affectioned] **one another with brotherly affection** [*philadelphia*; fraternal affection, brotherly love (kindness), love of the brethren]. **Outdo** [present middle participle; lead the way for others, show deference, prefer] **one another in showing honor** [value, money paid, valuables, esteem dignity, honor, preciousness, price; same word used in [Romans 2:7, 10; 9:21](#)]. **11 Do not be slothful** [tardy, indolent, irksome, grievous, slothful] **in zeal** [*spoude*; speed, dispatch, eagerness, earnestness, business, earnest carefulness, diligence forwardness, haste], **be fervent** [present active participle; hot, boil (of liquids), **glow** (of solids), fervid, earnest, fervent] **in spirit** [*pneuma*], **serve** [*douleuo*; present active participle; future active indicative; be a slave, be in bondage, do service; same word used in [Romans 6:6; 7:6, 25; 9:12](#)] **the Lord**. **12 Rejoice** [present active participle; be full of cheer, calmly happy or well off, be well, farewell, be glad, God speed, greeting, hail, joyfully, rejoice] **in hope** [expectation, confidence, faith, hope; same word used in [Romans 4:18](#) (twice); [5:2, 4, 5; 8:20; 8:24](#) (thrice)], **be patient** [present active participle; stay under (behind), remain, undergo, bear (trials), have fortitude, persevere, abide, endure, (take) patiently, suffer, tarry behind] **in tribulation** [pressure, affliction, anguish, burden, persecution, tribulation, trouble; same word used in [Romans 2:9; 5:3](#) (twice); [8:35](#)], **be constant** [present active participle; earnest towards, persevere, be constantly diligent, attend assiduously all the exercises, adhere closely to, attend continually, continue, wait on continually] **in prayer** [prayer, worship, oratory, pray earnestly; same word used in [Romans 1:10](#)]. **13 Contribute** [*koinoneo*; present active participle; **share** with others, communicate, distribute, be partaker] **to the needs** [employment, an affair, occasion, demand, requirement, destitution, business, lack, necessity, need, use, want] **of the saints** [sacred, pure, consecrated, holy, saint; same word used in [Romans 1:2, 7; 5:5; 7:12; 8:27; 9:1; 11:16; 12:1](#)] **and seek** [present active participle; pursue, **persecute**, ensue

after, given to, press toward; same word used in [Romans 9:30; 31](#) **to show hospitality** [hospitableness, entertain strangers, hospitality].

14 Bless [present active imperative; speak well of, bless (thank or invoke a benediction upon, prosper), praise] **those who persecute** [present active participle; pursue, persecute, ensue after, given to, press toward; same word used in [Romans 9:30; 31; 12:13](#)] **you; bless** [present active imperative [note: there are nine imperatives from [Romans 12:14-21](#)]; speak well of, bless (thank or invoke a benediction upon, prosper), praise; same word used earlier in [Romans 12:14](#)] **and do not curse** [present middle imperative; execrate [Webster: feel or express great loathing for, curse, swear]], doom, curse] **them.** **15 Rejoice** [present active infinitive; be full of cheer, calmly happy or well off, be well, farewell, be glad, God speed, greeting, hail, joyfully, rejoice; same word used in [Romans 12:12](#)] **with those who rejoice** [present active participle; be full of cheer, calmly happy or well off, be well, farewell, be glad, God speed, greeting, hail, joyfully, rejoice; same word used in [Romans 12:12](#), earlier in [Romans 12:15](#)], **weep** [present active infinitive; wail aloud, bewail, weep] **with those who weep** [present active participle; wail aloud, bewail, weep; same word used earlier in [Romans 12:15](#)]. **16 Live in harmony** [*phroneo*; present active participle; set the affection on, mind, regard, savor, think; used as part of a compound word in [Romans 8:5; 11:20; 12:3](#)] **with one another. Do not be haughty** [*phroneo*; present active participle; set the affection on, mind, regard, savor, think; used as part of a compound word in [Romans 8:5; 11:20; 12:3](#), earlier in [Romans 12:16](#); the next word means high/esteemed/lofty, but is not used in the ESV; same word used in [Romans 11:20](#)], **but associate** [present middle participle; take off together, **transport** with (seduce, passively yield), carry (lead) away with, condescend] **with the lowly** [depressed, humiliated, base, cast down, humble, of low degree (estate), lowly]. **Never be** [present middle imperative] **wise** [thoughtful, sagacious, discreet, conceited, wise; same word used in [Romans 11:25](#)] **in your own sight.** **17 Repay** [present active participle; give away, deliver, give, repay, perform, recompense, render, requite, restore, reward, sell, yield; same word used in [Romans 2:6](#)] **no one evil** [worthless, depraved, bad, evil, harm, ill, noisome, wicked; same word used in [Romans 1:30; 2:9; 3:8; 7:19, 21](#)] **for evil** [worthless, depraved, bad, evil, harm, ill, noisome, wicked; same word used in [Romans 1:30; 2:9; 3:8; 7:19, 21](#), earlier in [Romans 12:17](#)], **but give thought to do** [present middle participle; consider in **advance**, look out for beforehand, provide for] **what is honorable** [beautiful, good, valuable, virtuous, better, fair, good, honest, meet, well, worthy; same word used in [Romans 7:16, 18, 21](#)] **in the sight** [in his face, before, in his presence; same word used in [Romans 3:20](#)] **of all.** **18 If possible** [able, could, mighty, possible, power, strong; same word used in [Romans 4:21; 9:22; 11:23](#)], **so far as it depends on you, live peaceably** [present active participle; to be peaceful, be at peace, live peaceably] **with all.** **19 Beloved** [*agapetos*; beloved, dear; same word used in [Romans 1:7; 11:28](#)], **never**

avenge [present active participle; vindicate, **retaliate**, punish, revenge] **yourselves, but leave** [second aorist active imperative] **it** [topos; spot, space, location] **to the wrath** [desire, violent passion, abhorrence, punishment, anger, indignation, vengeance, wrath; same word used in **Romans 1:18; 2:5, 8; 4:15; 5:9; 9:22**] **of God, for it is written** [*grapho*; perfect middle indicative], **"Vengeance** [vindication, retribution, vengeance, punishment] **is mine, I will repay** [future active indicative; to requite, recompense, render, repay; same word used in **Romans 11:35**], **says** [present active indicative] **the Lord."** **20 To the contrary, "if your enemy** [enemies, foes, hateful, odious, hostile, adversaries; same word used in **Romans 5:10**] **is hungry** [present active subjunctive; famish, crave, be hungered], **feed** [present active imperative; supply with bits, nourish, feed] **him; if he is thirsty** [present active subjunctive], **give him something to drink** [present active imperative]; **for by so doing** [present active participle] **you will heap** [future active indicative; pile up, heap, load] **burning coals** [*anthrax*; a burning or live coal; the ESV omits *pyr*—the word for "fire"] **on his head."** **21 Do not be overcome** [present passive (Robertson) imperative; subdue, conquer, overcome, prevail, get the victory; same word used in **Romans 3:4**] **by evil** [worthless, depraved, bad, evil, harm, ill, noisome, wicked; same word used in **Romans 1:30; 2:9; 3:8; 7:19, 21; 12:17** (twice)], **but overcome** [present active imperative; subdue, conquer, overcome, prevail, get the victory; same word used in **Romans 3:4**; earlier in **Romans 12:21**] **evil** [worthless, depraved, bad, evil, harm, ill, noisome, wicked; same word used in **Romans 1:30; 2:9; 3:8; 7:19, 21; 12:17** (twice), earlier in **Romans 12:21**] **with good** [good, beneficial].

Are there any repeated words?

If, love, not,

What are some observations of the text?

9 Let love be genuine. [**Valovcin: It is foundational to Christian conduct.** Once again, we see love as the wrapper that drives the motives for all of the rest of this thought. **Valovcin: There is something indescribable that happens when believer after believer reach out to meet needs.**] **Abhor what is evil; hold fast to what is good.** **10 Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor.** **11 Do not be slothful in zeal, be fervent in spirit, serve the Lord.** **12 Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer.** **13 Contribute to the needs of the saints and seek to show hospitality.**

14 Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. **15 Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep.** **16 Live in harmony with one another** [**Mounce: Like spokes in a wheel that converge at the hub, the closer we are to God the closer we come to one another.**]. **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 [Ironsides: Savonarola said, 'A Christian's life consists in doing good and suffering evil.']. 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.

Apply (What is the point?)

1. Christian behavior is **hard**
2. Christian behavior is **simple**
3. Christian behavior looks like **Jesus'** life

Personalize (What do we do with that?)

1. Ask for **help** (the Holy Spirit is ready to help)
2. Review **often** (print this text off and put it where you see it often)
3. Live like **Jesus** (study Jesus' life to see how He lived)

Next week: Submission to the Authorities (13:1-7)

1 Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God. 2 Therefore whoever resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment. 3 For rulers are not a terror to good conduct, but to bad. Would you have no fear of the one who is in authority? Then do what is good, and you will receive his approval, 4 for he is God's servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword in vain. For he is the servant of God, an avenger who carries out God's wrath on the wrongdoer. 5 Therefore one must be in subjection, not only to avoid God's wrath but also for the sake of conscience. 6 For because of this you also pay taxes, for the authorities are ministers of God, attending to this very thing. 7 Pay to all what is owed to them: taxes to whom taxes are owed, revenue to whom revenue is owed, respect to whom respect is owed, honor to whom honor is owed.

Homework

Resources (our helps—order matters)

- Holy Spirit
- Bible: [Romans](#) (ESV)
- Church: bit.ly/FlemingSS

- Tools: bit.ly/romans2017

Our process

- Ask (the Holy Spirit for help)
- Read ([Romans](#))
- Talk (about [Romans](#)—bit.ly/romans2017group)
- Send (feedback to jim314@yahoo.com by Wed)

Quotes & Observations

Amy Valovcin (Hughes)

This was my favorite chapter in Hughes book yet.

Let love be genuine. It is foundational to Christian conduct.

Paul tells us that we must get beyond pretense, we must sincerely love.

Explicit counsel for loving a hostile world. This is supremely radical because it is supremely unnatural.

Our class has lived out these verses to my family. Celebrating with us, crying with us and reaching out to us. There is something indescribable that happens when believer after believer reach out to meet needs (sometimes before you know it's a need) without even asking. Loving us, with the true love of the Lord.

Love in the church and love for the world go together. They are the demands of commitment. Our minds have been renewed. Our lives have been transformed. And the Holy Spirit can do all this through us.

Darla Skinner (Mounce)

Pride sows the seeds of discord. The tendency to regard oneself as worthy of preferential treatment is universal in scope. The entire range of personal conflict, which reaches all the way from minor squabbles to international wars, reflects the misguided idea that we are better than they or that they have done something against us. So Paul counseled us to **"live in harmony with one another"** (v. 16). This unity is less the result of accommodation to the other person's point of view than it is the result of arriving at a mutual understanding of God's way of thinking. Like spokes in a wheel that converge at the hub, the closer we are to God the closer we come to one another. Paul admonished his readers not to be proud since it is pride more than anything else that destroys the harmony of the body.

Jessica Norris (Kroll)

Kroll sums up this section with 28 servant actions:

1. Love without hypocrisy
2. Hate everything evil
3. Hold on to everything good
4. Be devoted in brotherly love
5. Give preference to others
6. Be diligent
7. Be fervent
8. Serve the Lord
9. Rejoice in hope
10. Persevere in tribulation
11. Be committed to prayer
12. Contribute to the saints
13. Practice hospitality
14. Speak well of your persecutors
15. Rejoice with those who rejoice
16. Mourn with those who mourn
17. Preserve harmony in the church
18. Do not be huge-headed
19. Befriend the unlikely
20. Be honest with yourself
21. Don't repay evil for evil
22. Respect what is right
23. Live in peace with all
24. Never take personal revenge
25. Allow God to make things right
26. Treat your enemy with respect
27. Do not be overpowered by evil
28. Overpower evil with good

Mourn with those who mourn got me and reminded me of how our country is currently doing that with the recent destruction from the hurricanes. Prior to the hurricanes, it has been pointed out, the hot topic was the removal of the Confederate statues. Did God allow the hurricanes to get the country's focus back on to what matters which is to love one another instead of tearing each other down? I don't know. Maybe. I can see both sides of that and think it is a very tricky argument that further alienates non-believers. I do find it funny though that in this chapter, Kroll quotes Robert E. Lee when referring to his servant action #14 "**Speak well of your persecutors.**" The story goes that a soldier asked General Robert E. Lee what he thought about a subordinate who had been particularly critical of him. General Lee replied that he thought that the man was a good soldier. When asked if he knew what the officer had been saying about him and if

that would change his opinion, General Lee replied, "You asked me what I thought of him, not what he thought of me." As a whole how often does our society speak well of our persecutors and would rather take the more childish route of "I know you are but what am I?" I think that I'm going to print off this list and put it in my cubicle as a good reminder of how I need to be behaving every minute of every day because it is SO easy for me to just want to disregard nearly every one of these servant actions.

McGarvey (Ironsides)

It's hardly necessary to take up each verse in detail. The exhortations are too plain to be misunderstood. . . . The last five verses possibly have the world in view rather than fellow Christians, and yet it is unhappily true that even in all dealings with fellow believers the same admonitions are needed.

Savonarola said, 'A Christian's life consists in doing good and suffering evil.' By the way, Girolamo Savonarola was a Florentine friar, which is also a decent MMA fighter name, I should think. Get that one out, Bruce Buffer!

Ironsides this week also uses the phrase "**inculcating condescension**," if perchance you seek potential names for a new band . . . or VIP handling service . . . or technical support vendor.

But here we have exhortation to walk in accord with the new nature that we possess as children of God. . . . It is the manifestation of the Spirit's work in those who belong to the new creation.

Overall, this is your quintessential "that's what we do" passage.