

PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY AS A CHRISTIAN

Romans 12:9-21

Good morning Church! This passage provides a full and required list of traits that characterize the Spirit-filled life. When discussing the church as the body of Christ, Paul stresses importance of love, echoing Jesus' teaching on this matter. Consistency breeds Character! — Character counts!

Ex who is Jesus? "what you see is what you get" Paul teaches us characteristics to demonstrate Christian Responsibility toward:

1) personal 2) family 3) others; 4) enemies.

— Teddy Roosevelt once commented, *"The things that will destroy America are prosperity at any price, peace at any price, safety first in stead of duty first, the love of soft living and the get-rich theory of life."* This is true today! The only productive life, as well as the only true satisfying life, is the self-disciplined life. When we subject ourselves to God, we will see God effectively working through us. **Freedom over evil is found in the willing submission of our hearts to God's authority.**

1. PERSONAL Duties (v. 9)

What we think about ourself internally reflects externally. We want to aim to become a new person, but can we actually be a new person? The true marks, signs, character of a follower of Jesus show up in our public & private matters.

• Love **GENUINELY**

To be genuine in Christian love should not be acting a part or wearing a mask, but giving an authentic expression of goodwill. **Ex: "Self love" is loving yourself before others**

"Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. 8 Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love."

1 John 4:7-8

Jesus knows we are good at loving ourselves, so the Bible focuses more on others.

Matt 22:37 - Self love replaces God's love **READ,**

"And he said to all, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. 24 For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will save it. 25 For what does it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses or forfeits himself" Luke 9:23-25

The Bible advocates against any hate or harm, and focuses on being unselfish, self-giving, and willful devotion... which is genuine love. Christian love is to be shown purely & sincerely, without self-centeredness or self-gain. The love of Jesus we express in how we love is not to be fake & not to be self-first.

• Hate **EVIL**

"Fearing the Lord is to hate evil" Prov. 8:13 Christians who genuinely love will genuinely hate what is evil. This is a personal duty! Evil is the enemy of God and the enemy of love, as the Psalmist says **"Hate evil, you who love the Lord" Ps. 97:10;** David said in **Ps. 101:4** **"A perverse heart shall depart from me; I will know no evil"**. Paul says in **Rom. 7**, **"I am not practicing what I would like to do, but I am doing the very thing I hate... For the good that I wish, I do not do; but I practice the very evil that I do not wish."** The Spirit disapproves sin. **Ex: throwing up in the bathroom over sin**

When you genuinely love God, you will have a distaste of what God hates.

Ex: killing innocent babies, cheating & divorce, laziness, pornography, drunkenness & drugs, disloyalty, fowl language, perverse entertainment, etc. — **Evil starts inside us; our hearts need renewed!**

You are a new creation that God loves and we can be rescued by our sin, despair or hate. We can't tap into ourself to find healing or love but we can find it in God & godly therapy.

"You will never change what you are unwilling to confront." - unknown quote

- **HOLD FAST to what is GOOD**

This is the third personal responsibility is to “cling” to what is good meaning as servants of Jesus Christ, we are to bind ourselves to that which is inherently right and worthy. What is good? **READ,**

“Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.” Philipians 4:8

We have to discern & evaluate everything, so we can decide what to reject and what to cling to. What comes out of us, reveals what is inside of us. The key of finding and following what is good is “not conforming to this world, but being transformed by the renewal of your mind to test and prove what God’s will is...” **As we separate ourselves from the world and saturate ourselves in the Word of God, the things that are good will replace the things that are evil.**

FAMILY Duties (v. 10-13)

- Be DEVOTED in Brotherly LOVE (v. 10a)
- Prefer ONE ANOTHER in HONOR (v. 10b)
- Never be LAZY, but SERVE God (v. 11)
- Rejoice in HOPE & PERSEVERE (v. 12a)
- Be CONSTANT in PRAYER (v. 12b)
- CONTRIBUTE to NEEDS of the Saints (v. 13)

Duty to ALL PEOPLE (v. 14-16)

- BLESS and Do Not CURSE Others (v. 14)
- REJOICE and WEEP with Others (v. 15)
- Live in HARMONY and Don’t be PROUD (v. 16)

Duties toward Personal ENEMIES (v. 17-21)

- Never Repay with EVIL and RESPECT What is Right (v. 17)
- Live in PEACE, Never AVENGE Yourself (v18-19)
- Overcome EVIL with GOOD (v 20-21)