

THE SPIRIT-CONTROLLED LIFE – PART 4

--ROMANS 12:14-21--

INTRODUCTION:

Paul has been exhorting us to live a godly life and he is giving us the characteristics we should be exhibiting to those around us that show that we are living an obedient, disciplined, Spirit-controlled life. These characteristics can be grouped into four categories that are like ever widening circles, like the ripples of a pool when a stone is thrown into the middle of it. We have looked at the first two categories and this morning we will look at the third which widens to take in all people, believer and unbeliever, and the characteristics that we should be living out before them, reflecting Christ to them. All these characteristics are governed by the first three, by having *agapē* love for all and hating evil and clinging to what is good.

III. DUTIES OF THE SPIRIT-CONTROLLED LIFE – ALL PEOPLE

(Romans 12:14-16)

IIIa. Bless those who persecute you (Romans 12:14a)

- a. Paul begins this third category with a very difficult exhortation, he writes, “_____ those who persecute you...” (Romans 12:14a, NASB95)
- b. Jesus essentially said the same thing in His _____ on the Mount. (Matthew 5:43-44; Luke 6:27-28)
- c. Jesus was our supreme example of _____ those who persecute us. (Luke 23:34; 1 Peter 2:21-23)

IIIb. Bless and do not curse (Romans 12:14b)

- a. Paul goes on in his next exhortation to us to make sure that we understand that our _____ of those who persecute us is to be ongoing, all-inclusive, and constant.
- b. We in this nation have not known physical or political persecution for our _____, although as I have said I believe that it may be coming.

IIIc. Rejoice with those who rejoice (Romans 12:15a)

- a. Paul now exhorts us to do what at first thought would seem to be an easy characteristic to act on. He writes, “_____ with those who rejoice....” (Romans 12:15a, NASB95)
- b. Paul is reminding us that as Spirit-controlled Christians we should _____ over the joys, accomplishments, honor, and blessings of others. (Matthew 5:44-48)

IIIId. Weep with those who weep (Romans 12:15b)

- a. Not only are we to rejoice with those who rejoice, but Paul also admonishes us to, “..._____ with those who weep.” (Romans 12:15, NASB95)
- b. Multiple times in the Old Testament is God called a _____ God. (Joel 2:13; Lamentations 3:22)
- c. The New Testament also records this _____ of our God. (James 5:11; 2 Corinthians 1:3)

IIIe. Show no partiality (Romans 12:16a)

- a. Paul next admonishes us to “Be of the _____ mind toward one another...” (Romans 12:16a, NASB95) (Romans 15:5)
- b. The greatest New Testament passage on impartiality is found in the book of _____. (James 2:1-4, 9; Romans 2:11)

IIIIf. Be humble and associate with the lowly (Romans 12:16b)

- a. Paul follows up his exhortation on impartiality with another that is closely related to it, he writes, “... do not be _____ in mind, but associate with the lowly.” (Romans 12:16b, NASB95) (James 2:1-4)
- b. What Paul is trying to get across to us who wish to live the obedient, disciplined, Spirit-controlled life is that there is no _____ status in the church.

IIIg. Be not wise in your own eyes (Romans 12:16c)

- a. Paul goes on to add one more exhortation that relates to this topic of impartiality, he writes, “Do not be _____ in your own estimation.” (Romans 12:16c, NASB95) (Proverbs 3:5-6)

- b. The point that Paul is seeking to make here is that if we are going to treat all people _____ there are two things we must realize:
 - 1. In the church there are no _____ classes.
 - 2. In the church there are no _____ classes.
- c. The _____ ought to be a wide spectrum of people, young and old, rich, and poor and in-between.
- d. But this even goes beyond the church, outside the church _____.

CONCLUSION:

These are some pretty high orders in Paul's exhortations today. Is it truly possible to live the way that Paul exhorts us to live in these verses? It is only possible when we have been redeemed by the blood of Jesus Christ. Once we have believed in the sacrifice of Christ in His death on our behalf and agreed with Him that we are unable to save ourselves from the penalty of sin, then we are justified and we receive the Holy Spirit who begins that transformation of our minds, conforming us to the image of the Lord Jesus Christ. When this begins to happen and as we surrender and yield ourselves completely to God will and control, then and only then can we live the way Paul exhorts us to live here.

Where are you this morning? Have you fully surrendered your life as a living and holy sacrifice to God? Paul is not suggesting that this is the way a Christian should live; he is saying this is the way a Christian must live if he desires to be utterly pleasing to the Lord. Is Jesus only your Savior, or is He your Lord also? These are some hard questions that we must answer. One day we will stand before the judgment seat of Christ and we will be judged according to how we lived our life as a Christian. (1 Corinthians 3:11-15) My brothers and sisters in Christ, build on the foundation with gold, silver, and precious stones by surrendering to God's will and control in your life for His glory and live the life we are commanded to live here by Paul. I do not want one of you to be saved, yet so as through fire. Surrender is not easy, but it will be so worth it when we stand before our Lord that we love.