

A Life of Generosity and Hospitality

Romans 12:13

"Share with the saints in their needs; pursue hospitality."

Introduction

Beloved, when Paul speaks in Romans 12, he is not laying down a heavy burden of guilt but lifting us up into the high calling of **grace-driven generosity**. Paul is not giving us a list of rules disconnected from the gospel. He's not burdening us with guilt, trying to squeeze generosity out of reluctant hearts. Instead, he is giving us the natural outcome of the gospel in a person's life. This is not about obligation; it is about *response*. **Paul has spent 11 chapters laying out the depths of God's mercy—how we were lost, dead in our sins, without hope, but God, rich in mercy, saved us by grace through Christ.**

So now, in Romans 12:1–2 lays the foundation: ***In light of God's mercies, offer yourselves as living sacrifices.*** This is the response of a heart captivated by grace.

- Paul turns the corner and says, If this mercy has changed you, then it will shape how you live, how you love, and how you give.
- Romans 12:13 gives us a picture of what that looks like: meeting the needs of the saints and actively pursuing hospitality.
- The commands that follow in Romans 12:9–13 are simply what happens when a life is shaped by the love of God. If we have been loved by God while we were enemies (Romans 5:8), if we have been made rich by Christ's poverty (2 Corinthians 8:9), then our lives must reflect that radical, self-giving love.

"We are not our own: let us therefore not set it as our goal to seek what is expedient for us. We are the Lord's: let us therefore live and die to Him."

—John Calvin

Paul gives us two specific ways to display this radical love:

1. **Sharing in the needs of fellow believers.**
2. **Actively pursuing hospitality.**

So, my brothers and sisters, today we're going to walk through **three ways we put Romans 12:13 into action:**

1. **Share in the Burdens of the Saints**
2. **Fight Greed and Cultivate Generosity**
3. **Pursue Hospitality as a Gospel Witness**

1. Share in the Burdens of the Saints

Generosity is an Act of Gospel-Shaped Love.

Paul says, “*Share with the saints in their needs.*” But that word “share” is much deeper than just handing somebody five dollars. The Greek word **koinonia** means **to enter into fellowship with their needs**, to make their burdens your burdens. This isn’t just *giving*—this is *joining*.

We see this radical sharing in Acts 2:44-45:

“Now all the believers were together and held all things in common. They sold their possessions and property and distributed the proceeds to all, as any had need.”

This was not communism—it was *community*. It was not forced—it was *fruit* of a transformed heart. The early church didn’t see their resources as their own but as a means to care for the family of faith.

Application

Somebody ought to ask today: *Who in my church is struggling, and how can I enter into their burden?*

- Maybe a single mother is trying to raise her kids and keep the lights on.
- Maybe a young man is trying to stay in school but can’t afford his books.
- Maybe an elderly saint is choosing between medicine and groceries.

This is not about just “writing a check”—this is about *walking alongside them*. The church should be the place where no one suffers alone!

“The measure of our understanding of the gospel is the measure of our willingness to give ourselves away for others.” —Dr. Martin Lloyd-Jones

The question is: *Are you sacrificing for your brothers and sisters in Christ?*

2. Fight Greed and Cultivate Generosity

Hospitality is an Act of Gospel-Driven Mission.

The reason Paul has to command us to share is because the flesh wants to hoard. Greed is not just for the rich—it is in all of us. You don’t have to have much to be greedy; you just have to love what you have more than you love God and His people.

Paul reminds us in 2 Corinthians 8:9:

“For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ: Though he was rich, for your sake he became poor, so that by his poverty you might become rich.”

Jesus, who had *everything*, gave *everything*. And He did it **not under compulsion, but out of love**.

Application: There are three ways to fight greed and cultivate generosity:

1. **See your resources as God's, not yours.** *Everything you have is a tool for His kingdom.*
2. **Give first, not last.** *Most people give from their leftovers; but Paul calls us to make generosity our priority.*
3. **Trust God to provide.** *Some don't give because they fear they won't have enough.*
 - a. *But we serve a God who says, "Test Me in this" (Malachi 3:10). If you release it, He will provide for you!*

Because when grace gets a hold of your heart, it *changes your hand*.

3. Pursue Hospitality as a Gospel Witness

Both Are an Act of Faith in the Kingdom of God.

Paul says we should "*pursue hospitality*." Now, don't miss this—he doesn't just say *be hospitable*, but *pursue* it. That means **go after it, chase it down, be intentional about it**.

What is Biblical Hospitality?

The Greek word **philoxenia** means "*love of strangers*." This is not just about inviting your friends over for Sunday dinner—

The concept of "love for strangers" in the Old Testament is most prominently found in **Deuteronomy 10:19**

"Love the stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt,"

Emphasizing the importance of treating foreigners with kindness and compassion because the Israelites themselves were once strangers in Egypt.

Key points about this concept:

- Direct instruction: The verse explicitly commands to "love the stranger."
- Reason for compassion: The Israelites are reminded of their own experience as foreigners in Egypt, prompting them to show empathy towards others in similar situations.
- Beyond just not harming: This goes beyond simply not mistreating strangers and actively encourages showing love and hospitality toward them
- And Jesus is the ultimate love of Strangers of the Covenant
 - We were sinners; only home was hell without Christ,
 - but he paid full price for damaged goods.

This is about **welcoming those who have no place**.

- In the early church, hospitality was crucial.
- Traveling believers needed places to stay.
- Persecuted Christians needed places of refuge.
- The gospel was often spread over a shared meal.

Jesus said in **Luke 14:13-14**:

"When you host a banquet, invite those who are poor, maimed, lame, or blind. And you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you; for you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous."

This is *not* about status or return on investment. This is about **showing Christ's love to those who cannot repay you.**

Application: How Do We Pursue Hospitality Today?

1. Be aware of those who are alone. Who is in your church, workplace, or neighborhood that has no real community?
2. Open your home and your table. Stop making excuses! You don't have to serve filet mignon—sometimes a peanut butter sandwich in love is more powerful than a five-star meal in pride.
3. Use hospitality as a tool for the gospel. The early church spread the gospel through relationships. Invite unbelievers into your life, let them see Christ in you, and let God do the work!

"The Lord commands us to do good to all without exception... we are to regard everything we have as given to us in trust, that we may use it for the good of our neighbor."—John Calvin

This is a radical *reframing* of wealth and possessions. The world tells us, "Accumulate, secure, protect." The gospel says, "Give, trust, release."

Conclusion: Live a Life that Reflects Christ

Beloved, **Romans 12:13 is not just a command; it is a reflection of Christ Himself.**

- He *shared* in our need by leaving heaven and coming to earth.
- He *fought against greed* by giving everything He had.
- He *pursued hospitality* by inviting sinners to His table and saying, "Come to me, all who are weary."

Romans 12:13 calls us to "share with the saints in their needs; pursue hospitality." But we cannot read this verse apart from the One who perfectly embodied it—our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Christ is the ultimate expression of hospitality. He did not merely share resources; He gave Himself. He did not only welcome guests; He made enemies into family. When we were

strangers, alienated from the life of God, Jesus left the glories of heaven to pursue us. He did not offer us a temporary refuge—He made us His own and brought us into the household of faith.

Look at His life: He fed the hungry, healed the sick, touched the outcast, and welcomed sinners to His table. But the greatest act of hospitality was the cross. There, Jesus bore our sin, paid our debt, and flung open the doors of God's kingdom to all who would come. He pursued us when we had nothing to offer. And now, through His Spirit, He calls us to reflect His generous love in the way we care for one another.

This is not merely a call to moral effort—it is a call to live in the reality of Christ's finished work. We do not share with the saints in their needs to earn God's favor; we do so because we have already received His abundant grace. We do not pursue hospitality to gain righteousness; we do so because we have been clothed in the righteousness of Christ.

So, Mountain View, let us love as we have been loved. Let us give as we have received. Let us pursue hospitality with the joy of those who have been pursued by Christ Himself. And as we do, may the world see not merely our generosity, but the glory of the One who has welcomed us into His eternal home.

And now He calls you to do the same.

So I leave you with three final questions:

1. Who in your church or community needs you to share in their burden?
2. Where is greed keeping you from generosity?
3. How can you use hospitality to show Christ's love?

"If you've been blessed, don't just sit on it—be a blessing! If God poured into you, pour into someone else!

So let's get to work, church.

Share, give, and pursue hospitality.

Because in doing so, you reflect the heart of Jesus Christ Himself.

Amen!

