

*The Christian Grace of Sharing with Those in Need*  
Romans 12:13

QUESTIONS:

*Do the thoughts of sharing the gospel and helping the needy seem in conflict?*

Do you feel like your unsaved neighbors do more than you do in meeting the needs of others?

Are you frustrated by people who live off of the generosity of others?

*Are you a net giver or a net taker?*

Am I to show hospitality even if I do not have the gift of hospitality?

*Are there limits on what we should do on ourselves while missionaries struggle?*

Is there validity in the criticism that Bible Christians fail in helping the needy?

*Do you feel that compassion for the needy is measured by the amount of money given?*

Should our church have a greater concern for the needy in our community?

**For too long Christians have been deficient in showing true Christian hospitality. Today Romans 12:13 challenges us to so practice the grace of Sharing.**

One reason for our negligence is that we have relegated compassion as a responsibility of the government. In the name of compassion, we have released ourselves from getting personally involved. We've gladly allowed compassion to be given out with credit going to the USA, rather than the Lord Jesus Christ and His church!

OUR ATTITUDE TOWARD STRANGERS:

We avoid strangers. Traffic Accidents. People looking for help. Someone needing directions.

**CAMPING - always lending a helping hand to strangers. Helping one another. Because out in the woods, you must depend on others.**

In the first century, sharing with your neighbor was a cultural expectation. At some time, you might be the one in need.

AMERICA'S ECONOMIC CRISIS:

Perhaps one of God's purposes in the economic troubles of the past 2 years is to cause us to **once again provide for the needs of one another.**

There may come a time in the near future that the Christian grace of **sharing** once again becomes a daily reality for **all of us.**

**There is a possibility that Christians will once again have to practice the kind of hospitality that every first century Christian understood.**

## Romans 12:13

### I. “Share with God’s People who are in need”

#### A. Translations

1. NAS “Contributing to the needs of the saints”
2. KJV “Distributing to the necessity of saints”

#### B. “Sharing” is a uniquely Christian term

##### 1. **κοινωνέω**

- a. HERE it is in the **present tense**
- b. Used 8x in the verb form
- c. Used 14 x in the noun form
- d. **Romans 15:16-17.** *Spiritual blessings and material blessings*
- e. **Gal. 6:6** *Sharing with those who teach you*
- f. Phil 4:15 *“not one church shared with me...”*
- g. **1 Tim 5:22** *sharing in the sins of others by hasty ordination*
- h. **Heb 2:14** *Jesus shared in our humanity*
- i. **1 Peter 4:13** *Participate in the sufferings of Christ*
- j. **2 John 11** *Sharing in the wicked work of a false teacher*

##### 2. The early church practiced koinonea

- a. **Acts 2:44-45**
- b. **2 Corinthians 8:1-4**

##### 3. *Illus - on the last Sunday before Michael went to Iraq, Ben Singer had a small cache of candy from one of his teachers. He wanted to share with Michael so he came up and handed him a pack of gummy bears. His prized possession. But it was too torturous. Ben changed his mind and exchanged the gummy bears for a life saver.*

### II. “Practice Hospitality”

#### A. **φιλοξενία** 2 WORDS: **philos** = friend or loving + **xenos** = stranger

1. “Love of strangers”
2. Our concept of hospitality is WEAK compared to this word.
3. BETTER EXAMPLE: **Luke 10:30-37** *Good Samaritan*

#### B. Biblical Hospitality

1. Genesis 24. Rebekah watered Abraham’s camels for his servant
2. OT LAW. (**Deut 15:7**) *“If there is a poor man among your brothers in any of the towns of the land that the Lord your God is giving you, do not be hardhearted or tightfisted toward your poor brother.”*
3. Expected to take care of a stranger for **3 nights!**
4. There were no “motels.” Travel was difficult and dangerous.

5. A “Guest room” was common. **(Phile 22)** *Prepare a **guest room** for me, because I hope to be restored to you in answer to your prayers.*
6. *“In New Testament times, if not earlier, and even at present, a **room was set apart in each village** for the use of strangers, whose expenses were borne by the entire community. Most interpreters consider that the kataluma of Lk 2:7 was a room of this sort, but this opinion cannot be regarded as quite certain” (ISBE)*
7. **(Hebrews 13:2)** *“Do not forget to **entertain strangers**, for by so doing some people have entertained angels without knowing it.”*
  - a. A reference to ABRAHAM. Genesis 18:1-8

### III. Application

- A. BELIEVERS or NON BELIEVERS?
  1. 12:9 “Love must be sincere” (all people)
  2. 12:10 “Be devoted to *one another* in brotherly love”
  3. In Romans 12:13. **Context is believers.**
  4. The **FULLNESS of SCRIPTURE** teaches **BOTH**
    - a. **(Hebrews 13:16)** *“And do not forget to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased.”*
    - b. **(Galatians 6:10)** *“Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers.”*
  5. As **CHRISTIAN BROTHERS** we are to demonstrate **KOINONEA**
  6. As **CHRISTIAN CITIZENS** we are to demonstrate **COMPASSION** for those who in need.
    - a. (Psalm 41:1) *“Blessed is he who has regard for the weak; the Lord delivers him in times of trouble.”*
    - b. (Proverbs 21:13) *“If a man shuts his ears to the cry of the poor, he too will cry out and not be answered.”*
    - c. We would reject a Christian who does not pay his taxes, or keep his home decent, or who neglects his civic responsibilities such as following the community laws, reporting for military duty, obeying the police. ***Why do we feel that it is something less than Christian to involve ourselves in the care of the physical needs of those in our community?***
- B. **What happens when we demonstrate Christian Compassion?**
  1. The world sees the **compassion of Christ** in us.
    - a. (Matthew 9:36) *“When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep*

*without a shepherd."*

- b. (Matthew 15:32) *"Jesus called his disciples to him and said, "I have compassion for these people; they have already been with me three days and have nothing to eat. I do not want to send them away hungry, or they may collapse on the way."*

2. **We gain opportunities to share the gospel**

3. We prevent the WORLD from **HIJACKING** Christian compassion

- a. Accusation from militant atheists. Christians are not concerned with the real needs of people.
- b. **READ "What if Jesus Had Never Been Born" p 3**

4. We prevent **weak Christians** from falling prey to false teaching.

- a. The **EMERGENT church** movement **criticizes** American Christianity for its self absorption
- b. Some of the criticism is **CORRECT** because many Christians demonstrate a lack of concern for the needs of people.
- c. **BUT THE RESULT** is that **TRUE CHRISTIANITY** is being abandoned and replaced with a **POLITICAL MOVEMENT**
  - (1) earth worshiping environmentalism
  - (2) Global warming activists
  - (3) poverty campaigns that give away money and homes but do not present the life changing message of the gospel
  - (4) AIDS while remaining silent about sin

IV. **How can we practice hospitality today?**

**"Practice"** means to follow or **press hard after**, literally to pursue as one does a **fleeing enemy**. It means to **chase, harass, vex and pressure** and was used for **chasing down criminals**. Dioko speaks of an **intensity of effort** leading to a **pursuit with earnestness and diligence in order to lay hold of**. **Bruce Hurt**, [http://preceptaustin.org/romans\\_12\\_notes\\_\(.htm#12:13](http://preceptaustin.org/romans_12_notes_(.htm#12:13)

- A. We must be sure that **no fellow Christian goes without something to EAT or someplace to LIVE**. (1 Timothy 6:8) *"But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that."*

**BIBLICAL COMPASSION....**

- 1. Does not require that I pay for your **Cable TV bill**.
- 2. Does not require that I help with your **car payment**.
- 3. Does not require that **your lifestyle matches mine**.
- 4. **COMPASISON** does require that I am genuinely concerned for the needs of my fellow believer, and the neediest in my community and

in the world.

- B. Our **HOMES** are the greatest tool for winning someone to Christ.
- C. **New believers** need to be **welcomed** into our homes.
- D. We must **get our financial lives in order** so that we have something to give to those in need
- E. We must **resist the thinking** that **helping the needy is measured in dollars** and pursue any alternative other than giving money first.
- F. We must **not be satisfied** to allow the **GOVERNMENT to exclusive claim to helping those in need.**
- G. We must start to voice our opposition to uncontrolled government spending and mortgaging our children's future, so that we will be able to GIVE to those who are truly in need.
- H. We must **promote the church ministries** that **provide compassion** for those in need and **opportunity to sharing the gospel**
  - 1. A food pantry in our new building
  - 2. ESL for our community
  - 3. Veterans home
- V. This is our Christianity in practice. **1 John 3:16-18**
  - A. You may not be called to be a martyr.
  - B. But you can be generous with what you have