

Kindness to Saints and Strangers

Romans 12:13

Before we look at our text we need to remind ourselves of verses 1 and 2 of Romans 12. Paul has clearly stated that we are spiritually *alive* (living), *chosen* by God (a living *sacrifice*), *holy* unto Him, and completely *acceptable* to Him (all because of His mercy and grace). If you don't recognize that this is who you are (by renewing of your mind), you will look at these principles in Romans 12 and think like the world (*quid pro quo*). Most people think, "*If I do what God says, then God must bless me.*" This is why many Christians often become bitter. Our text is simply a description of us, not a duty for us.

I. Christ's people are to possess an eagerness to share with fellow Christians

A remarkable transformation that characterized early Christians was their heart of benevolence toward the **brethren** and toward those who were **strangers**. When they gave they pictured visibly what they knew spiritually --- God freely gives to us!

(A). Our giving is to be characterized as liberal.

This distribution (which means "*to share all things freely*") involves . . .

- (1). **Teaching believers** the principles that are necessary for their happiness including God's sovereignty and His love and provision for them.
- (2). **Giving financially** for the purpose of ministry to the saints.

This giving of what you have materially to those who have not. This was practiced often by the early church (Acts 2:44; I Cor. 16:1-2).

(B). Our giving is to be characterized as lawless.

That is, rather than giving in obedience to a particular law, we give out of the abundance of what we have, and in appreciation of what we've been given.

II. Christ's people are to possess an eagerness to share with strangers in this world

The verb in the phrase "*given to hospitality*" means "*pursuing as in a chase or hunt.*" The word "hospitality" (*philoxenia*) means to show brotherly love to strangers.

"This expression means that they should readily and cheerfully entertain strangers"

Albert Barnes

(A). This practice is often addressed in the Bible (Heb 13:2; 1 Pet. 4:9).

(B). This practice is one of the qualifications for a pastor (I Tim. 3:2; 5:10).

"The 'hospitality' of today, by which is meant the entertainment of friends or relatives, hardly comes within the Biblical use of the term as denoting a special virtue." - ISBE

(C). This practice was common among the patriarchs.

1. By Abraham, extending hospitality to "three men" – (Gen 18:1-8).
2. By Lot, pursuing hospitality to "two men" – (Gen 19:1-3).
3. By Job, who left no stranger in the street – (Job 31:32).
4. By Jethro, who rebuked his daughters for neglecting Moses – (Exod. 2:20).
5. In the support of early missionaries – (Mt 10:11,42; 25:35; 3 John 5-8).