

# Romans 12:9-21

1. Love must be sincere
2. Hate what is evil
3. Cling to what is good
4. Be devoted to one another
5. Honor one another above yourself
6. Never be lacking in zeal; keep spiritual fervor serving the Lord
7. Be joyful in hope
8. Be patient in affliction
9. Be faithful in prayer
10. Share with God's people in need
11. Practice hospitality
12. Bless those who persecute you
13. Bless and do not curse
14. Rejoice with those who rejoice
15. Mourn with those who mourn
16. Live in harmony with one another
17. Do not be proud
18. Be willing to associate with people of low position
19. Do not be conceited
20. Do not repay anyone evil for evil
21. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everybody
22. Live at peace with everyone
23. Do not take revenge
24. Leave room for God's wrath
25. Do not be overcome by evil; overcome evil with good.

- This is all part of being “transformed” so we “will be able to test and approve what God's will is” as in Romans 12:2.
- 12:9-13 address how to interact with other believers.
- 12:14-21 focuses on our attitude and behavior as demonstrated and perceived by unbelievers.
- This is a list of short commands with very little explanation or elaboration.
- There are missing verbs. The Greek has nine imperatives, yet English translations, such as NRSV, which try to capture Paul's Greek use 31 imperative verbs. So, many of these commands are verbless in the Greek.
- There have been several attempts to figure out how Paul was organizing his list or to present a sequential pattern of topics presented by Paul. None of the suggestions is overwhelming convincing. It seems to be a recitation of general Christian character.

## 12:9 - “Let love be genuine. Abhor what is evil; hold fast to what is good.”

3588 [e]	26 [e]	505 [e]	655 [e]	3588 [e]	4190 [e]	2853 [e]	3588 [e]	18 [e]
hē	agapē	anypokritos	apostygountes	to	ponēron	kollōmenoi	tō	agathō
9 ἡ	ἀγάπη	ἀνυπόκριτος	ἀποστυγοῦντες	τὸ	πονηρόν	; κολλώμενοι	τῷ	ἀγαθῷ ;
[Let]	love [be]	sincere	Abhorring	-	evil	cleaving to	-	good
Art-NFS	N-NFS	Adj-NFS	V-PPA-NMP	Art-ANS	Adj-ANS	V-PPMP-NMP	Art-DNS	Adj-DNS

- 12:9 clearly begins a new section after 12:3-8, but is part of the expansion of the introductory statements of renewing the mind and being transformed from 12:1-2.

- A point of clarification might be to realize that at this point in the letter Paul is exhorting, not providing descriptive, theological dialogue. Thus, he is speaking to motivate and direct the church, not to teach new material or concepts to the church. They should know these virtues already. Now, the church needs to be urged to do what they already know to be right.
- The literal Greek says “sincere love”.
- “Sincere” is from the Greek *anypokritos* which means “without hypocrisy”
  - Same word is used in 2 Cor. 6:6
  - And, for brotherly love in 1 Peter 1:22
  - For faith in 1 Timothy 1:5 and 2 Timothy 1:5;
  - For wisdom in James 3:17
- “Sincere Love” could be the heading and what follows a description of what sincere love would look like.
- Love that is not “sincere” is “fake” or a “pretense”.
- In Paul’s churches, as in churches today, there was a tendency for insincere or immature Christians to imitate the spiritual fruit of love.
- Today in the modern church this imitation love (or, love that is NOT sincere) has been replaced by the feminization of Christianity in the Western world.
- The imitation Christian love we see (and, are suppose to model) today is sentimental, emotional, soft, defenseless, vulnerable, non-judgmental, accepting, uncommitted. It is nomadic on a journey seeking truth and relationships.
- Love that is not sincere is powerless and a work of the flesh.
- Notice that in 1 Corinthians Paul’s chapter on love (ch. 13) follows his discussion of spiritual gifts as it does here in Romans 12 (12:9 follows 12:3-8 concerning spiritual gifts.)
- Love for others is the primary manifestation of the character of God. (1 John 4:19-21) But, because this is known as a basic Christian truth (or, measuring stick) many use a false show of love as a shortcut to apparent Christian character.
- The believer has already experienced “love” from God, now the believer is to live a life of love towards others as they imitate the Lord. (John 13:34; Colossians 3:12-14; Ephesians 5:1-2).

*“Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you. Be imitators of God, therefore, as dearly loved children and live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.”*

- Ephesians 4:30-5:1

The rest of 12:9 holds two exhortations from two participles which would seem to indicate that these two are necessary for “sincere love”:

“Hate what is evil”

- “Hate” means to “strongly abhor” and “hate exceedingly” from the Greek “apostugountes” (ΑΠΟΣΤΥΓΟΥΤΕΣ)
- The “apo” in “apostugountes” (or, ΑΠΟ in ΑΠΟΣΤΥΓΟΥΤΕΣ) makes the verb emphatic. This is the only place this word appears in the Greek NT. ΑΠΟΣΤΥΓΟΥΤΕΣ breakdown:
  - ΣΤΥΓΟΥΤΕΣ expresses a strong feeling of horror
  - ΑΠΟ- gives the word an intensive force
- Interestingly, hating evil or loving righteousness/purity, is compatible with sincere Christian love.
- In fact, if a believer’s love does not leave room (even demand) a hatred of evil then that love would NOT be sincere love.
- True love involves a deep rooted hatred of evil. (Think Ephesians 4:26, “in your anger do not sin”

“Cling to Good”

- Like the word “hate”, the verb “cling” (κολλάω or, *kollao*) is very strong and refers to an intimate union that is expected to be found in marriage.

- The verb “cling” (κολλάω or, *kollao*) can mean “to glue” which again reflects the closest possible connection.
- “Cling” means more than “approve of what is good”. It means your love and your character are good. (“Good” as defined by God’s definition of “good” as in the first days of creation, etc.)

Sincere Christian love can be identified as strongly abhorring evil while having a strong, intimate relationship with good.

## 12:10 - “Love one another with brotherly affection. Out do one another in showing honor.”

3588 [e]	5360 [e]	1519 [e]	240 [e]	5387 [e]	3588 [e]	5092 [e]	240 [e]	4285 [e]
tē	philadelphia	eis	allēlous	philostorgoi	tē	timē	allēlous	proēgoumenoi
10 τῆ	φιλαδελφία	εἰς	, ἀλλήλους	φιλόστοργοι	; τῆ	τιμῆ	, ἀλλήλους	προηγούμενοι ;
with the	brotherly love	toward	one another	devoted	-	in honor	one another	esteeming
Art-DFS	N-DFS	Prep	RecPro-AMP	Adj-NMP	Art-DFS	N-DFS	RecPro-AMP	V-PPM/P-NMP

## 12:11 - “Do not be slothful in zeal, be fervent in spirit, serve the Lord.”

3588 [e]	4710 [e]	3361 [e]	3636 [e]	3588 [e]	4151 [e]	2204 [e]	3588 [e]	2962 [e]	1398 [e]
tē	spoudē	mē	oknēroi	tō	pneumati	zeontes	tō	Kyriō	douleuontes
11 τῆ	σπουδῆ	, μὴ	ὀκνηροί	τῷ	πνεύματι	, ζέοντες ;	τῷ	Κυρίῳ	δουλεύοντες .
-	in diligence	not	lagging	-	in spirit	being fervent	the	Lord	servicing
Art-DFS	N-DFS	Adv	Adj-NMP	Art-DNS	N-DNS	V-PPA-NMP	Art-DMS	N-DMS	V-PPA-NMP

## 12:12 - “Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer.”

3588 [e]	1680 [e]	5463 [e]	3588 [e]	2347 [e]	5278 [e]	3588 [e]	4335 [e]
tē	elpidi	chairontes	tē	thlipsei	hypomenontes	tē	proseuchē
12 τῆ	ἐλπίδι	, χαίροντες ;	τῆ	θλίψει	, ὑπομένοντες ;	τῆ	προσευχῆ ,
-	In hope	rejoicing	-	in tribulation	being patient	-	in prayer
Art-DFS	N-DFS	V-PPA-NMP	Art-DFS	N-DFS	V-PPA-NMP	Art-DFS	N-DFS

4342 [e]

proskarterountes

προσκατεροῦντες .

being constant

V-PPA-NMP

12:13 - “Contribute to the needs of the saints and seek to show hospitality.”

3588 [e]	5532 [e]	3588 [e]	40 [e]	2841 [e]		3588 [e]	5381 [e]	1377 [e]
tais	chreiais	tōn	hagiōn	koinōnountes		tēn	philoxenian	diōkontes
<b>13</b> ταῖς	χρειαῖς	τῶν	ἁγίων	κοινωνοῦντες	,	τὴν	φιλοξενίαν	διώκοντες
to the	needs	of the	saints	Contributing		-	hospitality	practicing
Art-DFP	N-DFP	Art-GMP	Adj-GMP	V-PPA-NMP		Art-AFS	N-AFS	V-PPA-NMP

12:14 - “Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them.”

2127 [e]	3588 [e]	1377 [e]	4771 [e]	2127 [e]	2532 [e]	3361 [e]	2672 [e]	
eulogeite	tous	diōkontas	hymas	eulogeite	kai	mē	katarasthe	
<b>14</b> εὐλογεῖτε	τοὺς	διώκοντας	[ὑμᾶς]	;	εὐλογεῖτε	καὶ	μὴ	καταρᾶσθε
Bless	those	persecuting	you		bless	and	not	curse
V-PMA-2P	Art-AMP	V-PPA-AMP	PPro-A2P		V-PMA-2P	Conj	Adv	V-PMMP-2P

12:15 - “Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep.”

5463 [e]	3326 [e]	5463 [e]		2799 [e]	3326 [e]	2799 [e]
chairein	meta	chairontōn		klaiein	meta	klaiontōn
<b>15</b> χαίρειν	μετὰ	χαιρόντων	,	κλαίειν	μετὰ	κλαιόντων
To rejoice	with	rejoicing [ones]		to weep	with	weeping [ones]
V-PNA	Prep	V-PPA-GMP		V-PNA	Prep	V-PPA-GMP

12:16 - “Live in harmony with one another. Do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly. Never be wise in your own sight.”

3588 [e]	846 [e]	1519 [e]	240 [e]	5426 [e]	3361 [e]	3588 [e]	5308 [e]	5426 [e]	235 [e]
to	auto	eis	allēlous	phronountes	mē	ta	hypsēla	phronountes	alla
<b>16</b> τὸ	αὐτὸ	εἰς	ἀλλήλους	φρονοῦντες	, μὴ	τὰ	ὑψηλὰ	φρονοῦντες	, ἀλλὰ
the	same thing	toward	one another	minding	not	the things	haughty	minding	but
Art-ANS	PPro-AN3S	Prep	RecPro-AMP	V-PPA-NMP	Adv	Art-ANP	Adj-ANP	V-PPA-NMP	Conj

3588 [e]	5011 [e]	4879 [e]	3361 [e]	1096 [e]	5429 [e]	3844 [e]	1438 [e]
tois	tapeinois	synapagomenoi	mē	ginesthe	phronimoi	par'	heautois
τοῖς	ταπεινοῖς	συναπαγόμενοι	. μὴ	γίνεσθε	φρόνιμοι	παρ'	ἑαυτοῖς
with the	lowly	going along	not	be	wise	in	yourselves
Art-DMP	Adj-DMP	V-PPP-NMP	Adv	V-PMM/P-2P	Adj-NMP	Prep	RefPro-DM3P

**12:17 - “Repay no one evil for evil, but give thought to do what is honorable in the sight of all.”**

3367 [e]	2556 [e]	473 [e]	2556 [e]	591 [e]	4306 [e]	2570 [e]	1799 [e]	3956 [e]
mēdeni	kakon	anti	kakou	apodidontes	pronouomenoi	kala	enōpion	pantōn
<b>17</b> μηδενὶ	κακὸν	ἀντὶ	κακοῦ	ἀποδιδόντες	, προνοοῦμενοι	καλὰ	ἐνώπιον	πάντων
to no one	evil	for	evil	repaying	providing	right [things]	before	all
Adj-DMS	Adj-ANS	Prep	Adj-GNS	V-PPA-NMP	V-PPM-NMP	Adj-ANP	Prep	Adj-GMP

444 [e]  
anthrōpōn  
ἀνθρώπων .  
men  
N-GMP

**12:18 - “If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all.”**

1487 [e]	1415 [e]	3588 [e]	1537 [e]	4771 [e]	3326 [e]	3956 [e]	444 [e]	1514 [e]
ei	dynaton	to	ex	hymōn	meta	pantōn	anthrōpōn	eirēneuontes
<b>18</b> εἰ	δυνατόν	τὸ	ἐξ	ὑμῶν	, μετὰ	πάντων	ἀνθρώπων	εἰρηνεύοντες ;
if	possible	-	of	you	with	all	men	living at peace
Conj	Adj-NNS	Art-ANS	Prep	PPro-G2P	Prep	Adj-GMP	N-GMP	V-PPA-NMP

**12:19 - “Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.’ ”**

3361 [e]	1438 [e]	1556 [e]	27 [e]	235 [e]	1325 [e]	5117 [e]	3588 [e]	3709 [e]	1125 [e]
mē	heautous	ekdikountes	agapētoi	alla	dote	topon	tē	orgē	gegraptai
<b>19</b> μὴ	ἑαυτοὺς	ἐκδικοῦντες	, ἀγαπητοί	, ἀλλὰ	δοτε	τόπον	τῆ	ὀργῆ	; γέγραπται
Never	yourselves	avenging	beloved	but	give	place	-	to wrath	it has been written
Adv	RefPro-AM3P	V-PPA-NMP	Adj-VMP	Conj	V-AMA-2P	N-AMS	Art-DFS	N-DFS	V-RIM/P-3S

1063 [e]	1473 [e]	1557 [e]	1473 [e]	467 [e]	3004 [e]	2962 [e]	
gar	Emoi	ekdikēsis	egō	antapodōsō	legei	Kyrios	
<b>γάρ</b> ,	Ἐμοὶ	ἐκδίκησις	. ἐγὼ	ἀνταποδώσω	, λέγει	Κύριος	.
indeed	Mine [is]	vengeance	I	will repay	says [the]	Lord	
Conj	PPro-D1S	N-NFS	PPro-N1S	V-FIA-1S	V-PIA-3S	N-NMS	

**12:20 - “To the contrary, ‘if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals on his head.’ ”**

235 [e]	1437 [e]	3983 [e]	3588 [e]	2190 [e]	4771 [e]	5595 [e]	846 [e]	1437 [e]	1372 [e]	4222 [e]
alla	ean	peina	ho	echthros	sou	psōmize	auton	ean	dipsa	potize
<b>20</b> ἀλλὰ	ἐὰν	πεινᾶ	ὁ	ἐχθρός	σου	, ψώμιζε	αὐτόν	; ἐὰν	διψᾶ	, πότιζε
On the contrary	If	should hunger	the	enemy	of you	feed	him	if	he should thirst	give drink
Conj	Conj	V-PSA-3S	Art-NMS	Adj-NMS	PPro-G2S	V-PMA-2S	PPro-AM3S	Conj	V-PSA-3S	V-PMA-2S

846 [e]	3778 [e]	1063 [e]	4160 [e]	440 [e]	4442 [e]	4987 [e]	1909 [e]	3588 [e]	2776 [e]	846 [e]
auton	touto	gar	poiōn	anthrakas	pyros	sōreuseis	epi	tēn	kephalēn	autou
<b>αὐτόν</b> ;	τοῦτο	γὰρ	ποιῶν	, ἄνθρακας	πυρὸς	σωρεύσεις	ἐπὶ	τὴν	κεφαλὴν	αὐτοῦ
him	this	for	doing	coals	of fire	you will heap	upon	the	head	of him
PPro-AM3S	DPro-ANS	Conj	V-PPA-NMS	N-AMP	N-GNS	V-FIA-2S	Prep	Art-AFS	N-AFS	PPro-GM3S

**12:21- “Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.”**

	3361 [e]	3528 [e]	5259 [e]	3588 [e]	2556 [e]	235 [e]	3528 [e]	1722 [e]	3588 [e]	18 [e]	3588 [e]	2556 [e]		
	mē	nikō	hypo	tou	kakou	alla	nika	en	tō	agathō	to	kakon		
21	μὴ	νικῶ	ὑπὸ	τοῦ	κακοῦ	,	ἀλλὰ	νίκα	ἐν	τῷ	ἀγαθῷ	τὸ	κακόν	.
	not	be overcome	by	-	evil		but	overcome	with	-	good	-	evil	
	Adv	V-PMM/P-2S	Prep	Art-GNS	Adj-GNS		Conj	V-PMA-2S	Prep	Art-DNS	Adj-DNS	Art-ANS	Adj-ANS	