

Bible Study Lesson
Characteristics of Growing Christians - Part 2
Romans 12:12-13 (NIV)

INTRODUCTION:

- a. The Christian life is never easy, and never more so when we are zealous for the Lord. The more our service for the Lord is honoured by God, the more difficult things become in many ways. The reason for this is that the more active we are in glorifying Jesus, the more angry will the devil become and more forceful will be his attacks against us, and the whole work of Christ's church.
- b. The next practical exhortation Paul presents to us is in verse 13, and it is an exhortation to sharing and hospitality. Sharing is not just giving of our wealth and resources, but includes sharing of ourselves in love and giving of ourselves for help and comfort and companionship.

I. A growing Christian will – **Rejoice in Hope**

Romans 12:12 (NIV) “Be joyful in hope...”

- a. Are hope is in God, God's presence, concern, and care. The believer knows that God will do one of two things: either remove the trial or deliver him through the trial.
- b. The believer knows he does not have to face trials alone, that no situation is hopeless. The believer is the eternal optimist: his hope is in the eternal God. Therefore, he not only hopes in the delivering power of God, he joys and rejoices in the hope God has given him.

Romans 5:2 (NIV) “through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we boast in the hope of the glory of God.”

I Peter 1:6-9 (NIV) “In all this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. 7 These have come so that the proven genuineness of your faith—of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire—may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed. 8 Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy, 9 for you are receiving the end result of your faith, the salvation of your souls.”

II. A growing Christian will be – **Patient in Tribulation**

Romans 12:12 (NIV) “...patient in affliction...”

The word patient here means to endure, remain, persevere, abide, bear up bravely.

The believer experiences a surge of **Strength** from Christ when trials confront him.

Philippians 4:13 (NKJV) “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.”

Ephesians 3:16 (NIV) “I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being.”

III. A growing Christian will be – **Persistent in Prayer**

Romans 12:12 (NIV) “...faithful in prayer.”

The KJV says “continuing instant” means to give constant attention to; to be devoted and attentive to.

a. We overcome trials by giving constant attention to God and waiting upon His delivering power. The believer stays in constant communion with his Lord, depending upon Him to supply the strength to walk through the trials of daily living. He is persistent.

Luke 18:1 (NIV) “*Then He spoke a parable to them, that men always ought to pray and not lose heart.*”

I Thessalonians 5:17 (NIV) “*pray continually,*”

IV. A growing Christian will – **Gives Generously**

Romans 12:13 (NIV) “...*Share with the Lord’s people who are in need.*”

The believer is to give generously, to share with those in need.

Acts 4:34-35 (NIV) “*that there were no needy persons among them. For from time to time those who owned land or houses sold them, brought the money from the sales 35 and put it at the apostles’ feet, and it was distributed to anyone who had need.*”

V. A growing Christian will be – **Hospitable**

Romans 12:13 (NIV) “...*Practice hospitality.*”

We are to open the door of our homes to believers who are in need.

- Ministers have an open heart to help others in need. I Timothy 3:2 (NIV)
- Strangers (Hebrews 13:2 (NIV))