

MARKS OF A CHRISTIAN – SHOWING HONOR

Romans 12:10 “Outdo one another in showing honor”

“Look out for number one!” There are many who do this. They want to be first in line at a pot luck. They want to be the center of attention at a gathering. They want to be thought of highly by others. They are self-centered, self-focused, striving to make sure that they are number one.

Paul’s list of “marks of a Christian” in Romans chapter 12, addresses the difference that exists in the conduct of a person whose life is centered in Christ compared to one who is not. Here in verse 10, St. Paul says, a Christian will strive to outdo others in showing honor, respect, showing deference to others rather seeking attention for themselves.

The following Bible passages expand on Paul’s words in Romans 12: 1) [Philippians 2:3] “Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves.”; 2) [1 Peter 2:17] “Honor everyone”; 3) [Ephesians 5:21] “submit to one another out of reverence for Christ”; 4) [1 Peter 5:5] Clothe yourselves, all of you, with humility toward one another, for “God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.”; 5) [1 Peter 5:6] Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time He may exalt you.

Luther, commenting on Paul’s exhortation to “show honor,” wrote that this means “that each may honor and elevate the other and humble himself.” English Bible translations use the following wording: 1) NASB – “give preference”; 2) TEV – “be eager to show respect”; 3) J B Phillips – ‘have profound respect for.’”

Giving honor and respect to another is included in verse 10 with “loving one another with brotherly affection.” It is not by accident that St. Paul includes “outdoing showing honor” with “showing brotherly affection.” These exhortations flow from verse 3, “For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think.”

As Christ humbled Himself, giving up heaven, to save you, you in response are encouraged by St. Paul to humble yourself for the good of those with whom you

come in contact in your daily life. Your honoring others is a mark of your Christian faith.

Prayer: O LORD, send Your Spirit to work in me, by the power of the Gospel, a humble heart whereby I honor, respect and love those with whom I come in contact in my daily life. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Fruitful trees, the Spirit's sowing, May we ripen and increase,
Fruit to life eternal growing, Rich I love and joy and peace.

Laden branches freely bearing Gifts the Giver loves to bless;
Here is fruit that grows by sharing, Patience, kindness, gentleness.

Rooted deep in Christ our Master, Christ our pattern and our goal,
Teach us, as the years fly faster, Goodness, faith and self control.

Fruitful trees, the Spirit's tending, May we grow till harvests cease;
Till we taste, in life unending, Heaven's love and joy and peace.
(LSB 691)