

A SERIES OF DEVOTIONS BASED ON PAUL'S LETTER TO THE CHURCH IN ROME

HONOR FELLOW BELIEVERS ABOVE YOURSELF

Romans 12:10 "Honor one another above yourselves."

A dictionary defines to give honor to someone means showing them great respect and holding them in high esteem. St. Paul, in today's devotional verse says that honoring someone means putting them above yourself. The Greek word that Paul used in this verse for to honor above means, "to an exceptional degree, with eagerness." Luther defined above as "to outdo one another in showing honor."

In a recent devotion I quoted Philippians 2:1-3 in regard to putting your Christian love into action. In these three verses, Paul ties your relationship with your fellow believers in Christ with your first being united with Christ (verse 1), recalling the love that Jesus has for you and being filled with the Holy Spirit. He then says in verse 2, "make my joy complete by being like-minded (same mind as Jesus), having the same love, being one in spirit and one in mind." In this connection with Jesus, he concludes with this exhortation, "Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves."

According to Romans 12:10, your honoring fellow believers begins with your heart being filled by the Holy Spirit with love for them. Once again, the picture is drawn from the words of this verse showing your love for others flowing from the love you have first received from God. Like a river must have a source so your love needs a source. You have that source! "God so loved you that He gave His only begotten Son. . ." (John 3:16) His love is so great for you He sent His Son to die in payment for your sins. (1 John 4:10) Talk about valuing others. Out of love for you, God gave the ultimate price of His Son's death on Calvary's cross to claim you as His very own child.

God says, "Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another." (John 13:34-35) You are enabled to put your fellow believers "above" yourself because of the love you have received from your God through His Son Jesus.

Prayer: Father, grant me all necessary love to honor my fellow believers and put them above myself. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Your kingdom, O God, is my glorious treasure,

My pearl of incomp'able worth
Its value exceeds ev'ry standard of measure,
Surpassing the wealth of the earth.
Lord, give me Your grace and the pow'r of the Spirit
To value this treasure aright That, never allured by the world,
I inherit Your kingdom of glory and light.

Your kingdom, O God, is alive with the power
Your Word and Your Spirit bestow.
Like yeast, they affect the whole measure of flour—
Enabling Your kingdom to grow.
Empower me, Lord, as I live Your commission,
Though humble my service may be,
And bring ev'ry planting to perfect fruition,
A mustard see grown to a tree.

Your kingdom, O God, is a field for the growing
Or seeds that Your mercy has sown;
But still in our midst is the enemy sowing
The weeds that imperil Your own.
Sustain me, O Lord, till Your day of returning
And harvest me homeward at last.
To Shine in the homeland that quiets all yearning,
Where sorrow and danger are past.
(LSB 654)