

Facilitator Notes for *Set Free!* – A Study in Romans  
**Lesson 1 ~ Love Keeps Us Together! Romans 12:9-21**

**PLEASE DON'T READ THESE NOTES UNTIL YOU HAVE COMPLETED YOUR LESSON.  
HEARING GOD FOR YOURSELF IS WAY BETTER THAN MY COMMENTS!**

## Questions

### Read Romans 12:9-21.

1. As a way to acquaint yourself with this text, how many separate commands do you count in **12:9-21**? About 25

List at least three of the commands you know your heart needs to hear right now.

Have several share

List at least three of the commands you would like to understand better.

Have several share

List at least three of the commands that seem to be less of a struggle for you right now than the others.  
(This isn't pride, just an honest evaluation of yourself!)

Have several share

- ♥ What one or two words would you use to sum up the theme or main point of **12:9-21**. **Love one another might be one possibility** Why do you think Paul spends so much time on this theme, saying it in so many different ways? **Without love the Christian community has no chance to really be the body of Christ. Also, Paul says this is so many different ways because it does not come "natural" to us. The world does not operate this way, but the body of Christ does.**
  - ♥ Why do we need to be told all these things about how Christ-followers should relate to others? What does this imply? **That we don't know or we aren't doing what we do know.**
  - ♥ According to **Matthew 25:31-46**, why is the way we treat others so important? **"The King will reply, 'I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.' . . . "He will reply, 'I tell you the truth, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me.'** How does knowing this help change your attitude toward others – even the undeserving?
2. Love must be sincere and not pretentious (**12:9**). What is the difference between sincere love and insincere love (**1 John 3:16-18**)?  
**Jesus demonstrated real love by laying his life down for us. He didn't just say he loved us, he proved it by actions. It is the same with us. Saying we love someone is not enough. We prove it by actions – giving to others who need it, for example. . . . Dear children, let us stop just saying we love each other; let us really show it by our actions. (Laying down our lives for each other is not necessarily death (although it could mean that); rather, it is sacrificial love, putting the needs of the other over our needs.**
- ♥ Is love a feeling? **Love is not a feeling; it is an obedient action – often followed by emotion.** Why or why not? What is the solution if you really find it difficult to love another Christ-follower? What do you think Jesus would advise you to do in this case?
  - ♥ In **Luke 22:47-48** we find the epitome of pretend or hypocritical (insincere) love. Why is pretend or fake love especially hurtful and harmful? What would be its effects on a Christian community (church, small group, etc.)? What are some examples of insincere or pretend love among Christians? **James 2:15-16 is one example from the New Testament church of insincere love that still happens today – and your group will probably have many more examples**

3. How do the three commands in **12:9** relate to each other (**1 Corinthians 13:6-7**)?

Certainly, we are to generally hate what is evil and cling to what is good, but in the context of sincere love it means to hate, work against and take a stand against anything that is evil or destructive for the person you love and cling to (work for, promote) what may be good for them – even if it means sacrifice for you. 1 Corinthians 13, the "love chapter" echoes this thought. *1 Corinthians 13:6-7 "It (love) is never glad about injustice (toward the one you love) but rejoices whenever the truth wins out. Love never gives up, never loses faith, is always hopeful, and endures through every circumstance."* Love is always looking out for the well-being of the other.

♥ The Greek word for *devoted* (**12:10 NIV**) is a word used for the natural affection of relatives, typically the love of a parent for a child. *Brotherly love* (**12:10 NIV**) comes from the Greek word *phildelphia*, which denotes the love of brothers and sisters for each other. What would be the advantages of regarding and treating the others in your Christian community as if they were blood relatives? What, if any, might be the disadvantages?

♥ Read **12:10** in *The Message*. Consider your present relationships. What are some ways you can *practice playing second fiddle*? How would this benefit both you and the other person?

4. What do the commands of **12:11** have to do with loving others?

The way we serve God is to serve others. So, if my enthusiasm, zeal and fervor are lacking or I become lazy in spiritual work, it is really others that I am hurting because I am not serving and loving them. When I, by the Holy Spirit, keep my spiritual fervor going, I am loving others because I am able to serve them. Idleness, laziness or burn-out hurts ourselves, others and hinders God's work.

♥ Share with your small group some practical ways of keeping your spiritual fervor or enthusiasm in serving the Lord. Why is this sometimes hard to do? What is the best solution? The Holy Spirit is our power source and we must stay connected to him and his ministry in our lives if we want to keep our spiritual fervor. Some Bible translations translate "spiritual fervor" as "ardent in spirit", "fervent in spirit" or "aglow with the Spirit." The meaning of the word fervor is the idea of a boiling, bubbling pot – which is a picture of how the Holy Spirit bubbles up within us and keeps our spiritual fervor strong.

♥ When serving God and others, when have you become apathetic, discouraged, depressed or negative? What was the cause of these negative reactions? How can we guard against them?

5. In hard times, why are **all** of the instructions in **12:12** (**NIV**) important and needed? (*Hope* is the *confident expectation* of all that God has in store for you, but has not yet been received.)

This verse seems to cover everything that is important. **If we are in hard times, we can be joyful** because we know they will not last forever and that something much better is awaiting us (that is our **hope**). The best response to affliction or trouble is **patience**. **Patience** does not mean keeping your cool or not getting upset. Biblical patience means not giving up and throwing in the towel. It means that in hard times we keep on keeping on, keep on doing what is right and good and refusing to quit, walk away or turn our back on God. Patience is remaining faithful no matter what is going on in our lives. Faithful in prayer is also very important. Prayer is the thing that will bring change in us and in our circumstances, so we must be faithful to pray and keep on praying no matter what.

This verse is a wonderful picture of the balanced Christian life – joyful in hope, patient in affliction and faithful in prayer. If we can be these three things, we can weather any storm.

♥ What is often our normal tendency when it comes to **hope**, **affliction** and **prayer**? Hope means we focus on God's promises even though they haven't happened yet. Hope is fixing our eyes on God and not ourselves. The opposite of hope is fixing our eyes on the problem and believing nothing will ever change or get better. We are often tempted to give up in affliction, throw up our hands and say, "I quit – I have so had it!" Our normal tendency in hard times is to give up praying, convincing ourselves that prayer doesn't work and nothing will ever change. What helps you be **joyful**, **patient** and **faithful**?

♥ Why is it important to be patient (not quitting or giving up) in hard times (**James 1:2-4; Romans 5:3-4; Hebrews 10:36**)? There are two benefits from being patient and not giving up during hard times. One, our character grows and becomes strong and we mature and are ready for anything that might happen. Two, if we don't give up (persevere) we will receive everything that God has promised. Patience is difficult, but it always worth it in the end. We find ourselves saying, "I would never want to go through that again, but I would not trade for anything the person I have become because of it." Are these good enough reasons for you? Why or why not?

6. How did the first Christians live out the instructions found in **12:13** and why do you think they lived this way (**Acts 2:43-47; 4:32-37**)?

The first believers were so filled with the Holy Spirit and love that they wanted to be together and share and take care of each other. When they were together as the body of Christ, they so felt the presence of Christ with them that they did not want to be apart.

This is how it is with the body of Christ. When we come together, loving and taking care of each other, the real Presence of Jesus is with us and we can feel it and we will want to stay close to His Presence and Power.

We can not work these feelings up ourselves. The love and compassion the first believers experienced was a gift from the Holy Spirit. The American church may not have this experience often, but certainly other believers from around the world have reported to share and feel the same way the first Christians did – especially if they are under persecution.

♥ How are **sharing** and **hospitality** different from the other commands found in **12:9-13**? Sharing and hospitality are tangible actions. You have to really "do" them in order to experience them. Being devoted to someone or honoring them is something we can do with an attitude or with words and it may not require much a personal sacrifice. Sharing and hospitality forces us to "walk the talk." You can't really share and be hospitable with just words. They require actions. Why are they often difficult to practice? How can they be practiced today in the body of Christ?

♥ It is said that **entertaining** focuses on the host(ess) while **hospitality** focuses on the guests. With this in mind, what would you say are some differences between social entertaining and biblical hospitality? True hospitality is giving with no expectation of return. This kind of hospitality is totally focused on the other (the guest) and their needs. The attention is not on the host/hostess and how beautifully they give or serve. True hospitality is given to those who may never be able to give hospitality back. Nor is there is ever the thought of "Okay, now it's your turn." The only important thing is the needs and comfort of your guests (those being served) and are their needs being met. Hospitality is not limited to just the opening of our homes. It is also making space in our lives for others and sacrificing what we may want or need to meet the needs of others. We can do this because God is our host and he will meet our needs as we help others. How did Jesus distinguish between these two (**Luke 14:12-14**)?

♥ How are **creation** and the **Garden of Eden** supreme examples of **sharing** and **hospitality**? When we view creation as hospitality and all that God did to make the Garden of Eden a wonderful, inviting, safe, beautiful and bountiful environment for his first "guests", we get a glimpse of what true hospitality is. How do these examples motivate you?

7. Consider the actions in **12:15-16**. Obviously these actions benefit the recipient, but how do they also benefit the giver?

More than anything else, serving others and focusing on their needs, delivers us from what A.W. Tozer calls the "self-life" and the "self-sins": self-centeredness, self-sufficiency, self-pity, self-absorption, self-abuse, self-aggrandizement, self-castigation, self-deception, self-exaltation, self-depreciation, self-indulgence, self-hatred, etc. – and the list goes on . . .

Serving and focusing on the needs of others may take sacrifice at first, but in the end it leads to **freedom** – freedom from self and freedom from always having to get your own way and freedom to care for others, to genuinely put their needs first, to give joyfully and freely.

8. Based on what you have learned in **12:9-13, 15-16** write a one sentence definition of love.

Have several share their answers

"Love is all about the other"

- ♥ When has receiving one of the expressions of love described in **12:9-13, 15-16** made a major impact on you? How does this help you extend love to others?
- ♥ Which of these expressions of love (**12:9-13, 15-16**) do you regularly see in your Christian community? Which ones are rare? Which ones are most needed now? What can you do?
- ♥ How often do you see these expressions of love practiced in the world among people who are not Christ followers? From your experience, do you generally see Christians doing better at relationships or non-Christians? Which group *should* be better at relationships? Why is this important?

9. In the chart below, record how we are to respond to those who mistreat us.

12:14	Bless them and do not curse them – pray that God will bless them
12:17	Do not repay anyone evil for evil
12:18	Do your part to live at peace with everyone – as far as it depends on you
12:19	Do not take revenge, but leave room for God's wrath – don't avenge yourselves; leave that to God
12:20	If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink
12:21	conquer evil by doing good – don't let evil overcome you

10. According to Jesus in **Luke 6:27-32**, what are some ways we can “bless and not curse” those who mistreat us?

Love your enemies; do good to those who hate you; bless or pray for the happiness of those who curse you; let them take advantage of you; if they take something of yours, give them even more and don't try to get it back; treat them as you would like to be treated

- ♥ How are some ways you might be tempted to “curse” someone who mistreats you (**12:14**)? Hoping the worst will happen to our enemies, trying to get back, talking behind their back, making sure everyone knows the "truth" . . . etc. Is blessing and not cursing for our benefit or for the one who is mistreating us? It benefits both, but mostly changes our heart toward the person and the situation. It could be the thing causes the one who mistreats you to want to reconcile or change. How so?
- ♥ What are some reasons why we are to bless and not curse (**Luke 6:35-36**)? Our reward in heaven will be great and here on earth we will be children who are just like our Father who is kind to the unthankful and wicked and who is compassionate and merciful. Are these good enough reasons for you? Why or why not? Can you think of other benefits?

11. What is the value of doing what is right and honorable, living at peace with everyone (**1 Peter 2:11-12; Matthew 5:16**)?

Others who don't know God will see your good works and be drawn to God. In the end, it is God that gets the honor and glory.

- ♥ What could make it *not* possible to live at peace with everyone (**12:18**)? Two things may make it not possible to live at peace with someone: 1) they may refuse to live at peace with you, or 2) you would have to compromise what is good and right in order to keep the peace. Ultimately, what is more important than peace? Truth and doing what is right, what God wants us to do is more important than peace. We are not called to disobedience or compromise of God's standards just to keep the peace.

♥ Why can God take vengeance and not us (12:19)? No human can ever know another human's heart. We can never know all the circumstances or motives that drive a person. Only God has complete understanding and only God is completely fair and just. He is the only one who can take vengeance fairly and rightly. Our personal demands for justice are always mixed with wounded pride, hatred, and sinfulness. Will God avenge? Yes, evil deserves to be punished and it will be. God says he will repay. Matthew 16:27 says that Jesus will reward each person according to what he has done at the final judgment. When? It may be in this life or it may not be until the final judgment. This is up to God – but we can be sure that he will repay and right all wrongs.

12. What would you have to know about your enemy in order to fulfill the command in 12:20 and what does this imply? Does your kindness excuse his misdeeds? Why or why not?

We are not just to abstain from revenge; rather, we are expected to actively pursue opportunities to benefit our enemies. We actually are called to care for our enemies needs – feed them if they are hungry and give them something to drink if they are thirsty – means to give them what they need. God invites us to observe our enemies and at the very points of weakness, where a counterattack of revenge might be most effective, we should mercifully meet that need. Instead of being indifferent or running the other way, we are to serve the one who has hurt or mistreated us.

- ♥ What can you do this week, in a practical way, to honor someone who irritates you? What effect do you think this will have on the person – and on you?
- ♥ When was the last time you tried to make friends of an enemy? What did you do and what happened?
- ♥ How will kindness given to your enemy “heap burning coals on his head” (12:21)? Are these coals intended to hurt or heal our enemy? How so?

There are different ideas of what "heap burning coals on his head" means, but we know from the context that whatever it is, it is something that works to the benefit of our enemy in the long run. It probably means that if we treat our enemies with kindness, they may become ashamed of their wrong-doing and turn from their sin. To say the burning coals somehow punish the wrong-doer or get back at him would be the opposite of what Paul is saying in these verses.

## *Response*

What relationship in your life most needs what you have learned in this lesson? In what ways have you been overcome by evil in this relationship, letting it get the best of you (12:20)? Ask God what you can do to overcome evil with good. How can **Romans 12:12** encourage you? In what will you put your hope?

BELOW IS THE SUPPLEMENTARY SCRIPTURE FOR THIS LESSON THAT CAN BE PRINTED OUT FOR SMALL GROUP TIME.

## NIV

**Matthew 25:31-46** “When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his throne in heavenly glory. **32** All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. **33** He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left. **34** “Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. **35** For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, **36** I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.’ **37** “Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? **38** When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? **39** When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?’ **40** “The King will reply, ‘I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.’ **41** “Then he will say to those on his left, ‘Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. **42** For I was hungry and you gave me nothing to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, **43** I was a stranger and you did not invite me in, I needed clothes and you did not clothe me, I was sick and in prison and you did not look after me.’ **44** “They also will answer, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or needing clothes or sick or in prison, and did not help you?’ **45** “He will reply, ‘I tell you the truth, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me.’ **46** “Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life.”

**1John 3:16-18** This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers. **17** If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him? **18** Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth.

**Luke 22:47-48** While he was still speaking a crowd came up, and the man who was called Judas, one of the Twelve, was leading them. He approached Jesus to kiss him, **48** but Jesus asked him, “Judas, are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?”

**1Corinthians 13:6-7** Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. **7** It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.

**James 1:2-4** Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, **3** because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. **4** Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.

**Romans 5:3-4** Not only so, but we also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; **4** perseverance, character; and character, hope.

**Hebrews 10:36** You need to persevere so that when you have done the will of God, you will receive what he has promised.

**Acts 2:43-47** Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles. **44** All the believers were together and had everything in common. **45** Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need. **46** Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, **47** praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

**Acts 4:32-37** All the believers were one in heart and mind. No one claimed that any of his possessions was his own, but they shared everything they had. **33** With great power the apostles continued to testify to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and much grace was upon them all. **34** There were no needy persons among them. For from time to time those who owned lands or houses sold them, brought the money from the sales **35** and put it at the apostles’ feet, and it was distributed to anyone as he had need.

**Acts 4:36** Joseph, a Levite from Cyprus, whom the apostles called Barnabas (which means Son of Encouragement), **37** sold a field he owned and brought the money and put it at the apostles’ feet.

**Luke 14:12** Then Jesus said to his host, “When you give a luncheon or dinner, do not invite your friends, your brothers or relatives, or your rich neighbors; if you do, they may invite you back and so you will be repaid. **13** But when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, **14** and you will be blessed. Although they cannot repay you, you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous.”

**Luke 6:27-32** “But I tell you who hear me: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, **28** bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you. **29** If someone strikes you on one cheek, turn to him the other also. If someone takes your tunic, do not stop him from taking your tunic. **30** Give to everyone who asks you, and if anyone takes what belongs to you, do not demand it back. **31** Do to others as you would have them do to you. **32** “If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? Even ‘sinners’ love those who love them.

**Luke 6:35-36** But love your enemies, do good to them, and lend to them without expecting to get anything back. Then your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, because he is kind to the ungrateful and wicked. **36** Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.

**1Peter 2:11-12** Dear friends, I urge you, as aliens and strangers in the world, to abstain from sinful desires, which war against your soul. **12** Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us.

**Matthew 5:16** In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.

## NLT

**Matthew 25:31-46** “But when the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit upon his glorious throne. **32** All the nations will be gathered in his presence, and he will separate them as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. **33** He will place the sheep at his right hand and the goats at his left. **34** Then the King will say to those on the right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. **35** For I was hungry, and you fed me. I was thirsty, and you gave me a drink. I was a stranger, and you invited me into your home. **36** I was naked, and you gave me clothing. I was sick, and you cared for me. I was in prison, and you visited me.’ **37** “Then these righteous ones will reply, ‘Lord, when did we ever see you hungry and feed you? Or thirsty and give you something to drink? **38** Or a stranger and show you hospitality? Or naked and give you clothing? **39** When did we ever see you sick or in prison, and visit you?’ **40** And the King will tell them, ‘I assure you, when you did it to one of the least of these my brothers and sisters, you were doing it to me!’ **41** “Then the King will turn to those on the left and say, ‘Away with you, you cursed ones, into the eternal fire prepared for the Devil and his demons! **42** For I was hungry, and you didn’t feed me. I was thirsty, and you didn’t give me anything to drink. **43** I was a stranger, and you didn’t invite me into your home. I was naked, and you gave me no clothing. I was sick and in prison, and you didn’t visit me.’ **44** “Then they will reply, ‘Lord, when did we ever see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and not help you?’ **45** And he will answer, ‘I assure you, when you refused to help the least of these my brothers and sisters, you were refusing to help me.’ **46** And they will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous will go into eternal life.”

**1John 3:16-18** We know what real love is because Christ gave up his life for us. And so we also ought to give up our lives for our Christian brothers and sisters. **17** But if anyone has enough money to live well and sees a brother or sister in need and refuses to help—how can God’s love be in that person? **18** Dear children, let us stop just saying we love each other; let us really show it by our actions.

**Luke 22:47-48** But even as he said this, a mob approached, led by Judas, one of his twelve disciples. Judas walked over to Jesus and greeted him with a kiss. **48** But Jesus said, “Judas, how can you betray me, the Son of Man, with a kiss?”

**1Corinthians 13:6** It is never glad about injustice but rejoices whenever the truth wins out. **7** Love never gives up, never loses faith, is always hopeful, and endures through every circumstance.

**James 1:2-4** Dear brothers and sisters, whenever trouble comes your way, let it be an opportunity for joy. **3** For when your faith is tested, your endurance has a chance to grow. **4** So let it grow, for when your endurance is fully developed, you will be strong in character and ready for anything.

**Romans 5:3** We can rejoice, too, when we run into problems and trials, for we know that they are good for us—they help us learn to endure. **4** And endurance develops strength of character in us, and character strengthens our confident expectation of salvation.

**Hebrews 10:36** Patient endurance is what you need now, so you will continue to do God’s will. Then you will receive all that he has promised.

**Acts 2:43-47** A deep sense of awe came over them all, and the apostles performed many miraculous signs and wonders. **44** And all the believers met together constantly and shared everything they had. **45** They sold their possessions and shared the proceeds with those in need. **46** They worshiped together at the Temple each day, met in homes for the Lord’s Supper, and shared their meals with great joy and generosity—**47** all the while praising God and enjoying the goodwill of all the people. And each day the Lord added to their group those who were being saved.

**Acts 4:32-37** All the believers were of one heart and mind, and they felt that what they owned was not their own; they shared everything they had. **33** And the apostles gave powerful witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and God’s great favor was upon them all. **34** There was no poverty among them, because people who owned land or houses sold them **35** and brought the money to the apostles to give to others in need. **36** For instance, there was Joseph, the one the apostles nicknamed Barnabas (which means “Son of Encouragement”). He was from the tribe of Levi and came from the island of Cyprus. **37** He sold a field he owned and brought the money to the apostles for those in need.

**Luke 14:12-14** Then he turned to his host. “When you put on a luncheon or a dinner,” he said, “don’t invite your friends, brothers, relatives, and rich neighbors. For they will repay you by inviting you back. **13** Instead, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind. **14** Then at the resurrection of the godly, God will reward you for inviting those who could not repay you.”

**Luke 6:27-32** “But if you are willing to listen, I say, love your enemies. Do good to those who hate you. **28** Pray for the happiness of those who curse you. Pray for those who hurt you. **29** If someone slaps you on one cheek, turn the other cheek. If someone demands your coat, offer your shirt also. **30** Give what you have to anyone who asks you for it; and when things are taken away from you, don’t try to get them back. **31** Do for others as you would like them to do for you. **32** “Do you think you deserve credit merely for loving those who love you? Even the sinners do that!”

**Luke 6:35-36** “Love your enemies! Do good to them! Lend to them! And don’t be concerned that they might not repay. Then your reward from heaven will be very great, and you will truly be acting as children of the Most High, for he is kind to the unthankful and to those who are wicked. **36** You must be compassionate, just as your Father is compassionate.

**1Peter 2:11-12** Dear brothers and sisters, you are foreigners and aliens here. So I warn you to keep away from evil desires because they fight against your very souls. **12** Be careful how you live among your unbelieving neighbors. Even if they accuse you of doing wrong, they will see your honorable behavior, and they will believe and give honor to God when he comes to judge the world.

**Matthew 5:16** In the same way, let your good deeds shine out for all to see, so that everyone will praise your heavenly Father.