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Seven out in my. Outline. That I was going to. Uh, so The connection. Between distributing to the needs the saints and being given to hospitality I in Romans 12, and First, Peter four verse 9.

One of the important things. To know about the word hospitality in both places. Is that it's compound word. That means loving stranger's. Within the church showing hospitality to one another, it comes out of a realization. Uh, that we are no longer strangers to one another Uh, and yet there are still in the church, those who are more strangers to us than others.

And The command. Uh, to show hospitality to one another. Does mean. To specifically target those in the church who are quote unquote strangest to you not meaning they appear very odd. But those with whom you are at least familiar with him, you have not yet begun to build that glorious connection that all the members of Christ's body will have with one another in Christ forever and ever some of which Lord helping us.

We'll hear preached from Max 21. Not too long. From now. So in Romans 12, we had the service ministry. Uh, which is deaconing and remember, we're, we're all deacons with reference to the verb Uh, not with the reference to the office of overseeing, the service of the church. But that's an important thing to be reminded how often this word appears this verb appears in connection with all believers.

Uh, lust in. Desire to accommodate the church to things that are happening in the culture. Uh we blow the office wide open and had complete disregard for what the Lord has said about whom he. Calls to the office. Uh, no in the sense of serving. Uh, we're all deacons so there's the serving or the ministry as a translated here in verse 7.

There's giving. Uh, a generosity. And we know that that's not only for the wealthy, but the poor we Uh, we mentioned the Macedonians Upon him Paul bragged as it were to the Corinthians to the Ukians. To provoke them to be more generous. Uh, Jesus is the one person that Jesus highlighted.

Uh, in his own. Earthly ministry and doings is being exceedingly. Generous was the widow who put her. Uh, last two coins. All she had to live on, he said. And yet, when it came down to choose between living on those two coins or giving them away, Uh, she did as Uh, the previous widow had with Elijah, the prophet.

When? And she Gave first. For the sustaining of God, servant. And then God multiplied to her for the sustaining of herself, and her son and so forth. And so there's the the The serving the giving. Showing mercy. You all have the gift of showing mercy. Nobody, there's a lot of to say, well, I'm on merciful to them because that's not my spiritual gift.

Um, You know, just reminding us of the way that the Bible speaks here. And we all want to grow. Uh, particularly in the gifts that are Common graces to all believers. We're thankful for those in whom God has done. A. The work of his spirit. That is more than Than we ordinarily.

See we want to be with them, we want to walk in the means of grace, alongside them that the same spirit are the same means. Would sharpen us in union with the same price by our

interaction with one another. But showing mercy with cheerfulness. And that's part of the definition of mercy.

It's not merciful, if it's begrudging, is it? Just like Uh, children a few obey your parents. It needs to be cheerful. It's not honoring if it's begrudging, is it? And honoring is something that comes from the heart showing mercy. Should come from the heart as well. Giving From the heart, ministering.

From the heart. Uh, And then getting all the way down to verse 13. Distributing to the needs of the saints. And then given to Uh, hospitality looking out for opportunities. Uh, to love those that you are not yet connected with. And one of the things that the lord is forming in us as I don't know what.

What the ordinal word is between first and second. First and a half. Um, Anyway. The, the one and a half great commandment. Um, Because when Jesus says in your commandment, I give you. He gives us one. Doesn't he in the form of the two great commandments, but that has a priority even over the second one.

So, the two great commandments are what kids? Love the lord, your god. With all your heart. So, mind and strength. And Love your neighbor as yourself and the lord Jesus comes. And on the night that he was betrayed the night before he was going to go to the cross.

For us, he said a new commandment. I give you. And we're all like, what? Because Jesus has been the great defender and explainer and apply her of the law of God. Then, what is he doing? Giving us new commandments. Well, he's about to usher in an entirely new age.

Uh in in which he is ascended in and seated in heaven, and he is the head of his church from there and all Uh, priests and and Uh, priesthood and prophecy. And kingdom kingship is bound up in him. But we don't have him. Uh, to act directly upon physically upon, even though he is still the physical Jesus.

Who died for us and glory and who will return for us? And we will be physically resurrected in order to be likened. And he is just washed her feet. Uh, he basically says where I'm going, you can't come. Love one, another. As I have loved you, you command and I give you And so there's this very specific part of our response to Christ.

Uh, who has loved us, even physically in the giving up of his body on the cross, which is done for all of us. He is not physically washed our feet, but he just communicated that to the disciples. It says, love one. Another is as I have Um, As I have loved you.

Uh, but there's something about the selflessness, in the order of the commandments, where the keeping of each one enables the others. There's no actual loving of neighbor as oneself. Not according to the Bible definition of love without loving the lord. Our God with all our hearts soul mind and strength.

We haven't recognized Who he is, that were made by him that were made for him that we live independence upon him that he is all Blessedness then we haven't made the first baby step on the road to selflessness. Because if we can't, If we can't put him ahead of Uh, ourselves.

Then how can we be expected? To love other people for the sake of their being in his image or to genuinely put any other person ahead of ourselves. We'll never be able to. To sort out all of that mixture of emotions and desires to make myself feel good by being good to others.

Because god, and his, in his great mercy to us has actually made it feel good. Uh, to do good to others and even Even the unbeliever. Who has not learned to exist for god and live for god, love god as our great purpose to. So that So that we are not our own purpose.

The unbeliever hasn't Uh, learned that About god and yet he still can draw great pleasure. Uh, from doing works of charity, and the way it feels, and the ability to see a difference that you make, There, there are many things, but loving your neighbor. As yourself loving your, your neighbor as if Uh, there's an inherent production of pleasure in it for you as an inherent part of your purpose.

We all don't hate our bodies but we nurse And cherish them, unless we're Mentally ill. Uh, but the the apostle, the spirit uses. That illustration. Because god has given us. Uh, to know him and belong to him and to be loved by him. Um, not only in our In our soul, but also in our body, And so there's the loving of neighbor that must necessarily flow out of love for God.

Which is one of the reasons why It's such a huge mistake. Uh, to, to focus exclusively on or even primarily on Second table issues. When we're thinking about god's commandments, And God's law. Uh, because it's the keeping of the first table. And really, The the places. Where we where we stumble the most the second commandment and the worship of god, only in the way that he has said that the fourth commandment and Uh counting a day blessed, because it's his and he blessed it as his and holy sacred consecrated because it's his, and he consecrated it As his.

So you have the the first table second table. Uh, But there's a similar way, and there's a middle step now, because if we love god with all our heart soul, mind and strength, which we have come to know is especially to love christ. With all our heart. Soul, mind and strength.

Something glorious has happened to the first great, commandment. Hasn't it? Uh, when when god, who spoke in many times, and that many ways, and his communicated about himself, Uh, to us actually communicated himself to us in the sun, who is the word and The last word and he presents himself to us in the sun.

We know god, his father, son, and holy spirit primarily through the lord jesus christ as their teaching about it in the Old Testament, absolutely. Uh, but He reserves for the honor of his son and the glory of his son as a communication of himself. So now we love christ with all our heart soul, mind, and strength.

And i hope you can see how commandment one is getting. Took amendment one and a half. Because christ has Not only has physical body in heaven. But i mystical spiritual body who have physical bodies. On earth. And we are able to as the wonderful southernism goes love on. The body of christ, even physically.

By physical service onto our brothers and sisters. And so, this loving one, another And of course, given to hospitality or pursuing. Now looking for opportunities to love those parts of christ's body, those members of him. Members of his visible church about him, we give the judgment of charity. All right, we don't say, well, i know there are members in good standing, but they don't seem like real christians.

To me, there's, there's absolutely none of that in the New Testament is there's, uh, there's instructions to examine yourself whether you're in the page, There's an instruction for the one who thinks he stands to take heed of himself. Lest he falls? Um and there is finding a brother or sister caught up in a sin and seeking to restore them or gain them.

Recover them as a brother or sister not coming to them and saying, yeah, i have a sneaking suspicion, you're not actually a brother. Um, I i'm glad that what's our Um, Somewhere between incredulous and amused. But i've been in church contexts in which Uh, that, that way of thinking.

I don't know if they're a real christian, they sure seem to blah blah blah blah. Well. They have a credible profession of faith and they're in his body and they come to the table with you. They have his mark upon, then they attend upon the means of grace with you, and you have certain things that he's told you to do with brothers.

And you you go well. To pursue opportunities to love those with whom we don't yet have that strongest connection. There. That's the end of verse 13. Given to hospitality But that is that does translate over to if we have learned to love god. Uh, Uh ahead of ourselves with all our hearts, all minus strength, and to love christ, that way.

And then to love those who are united to christ. With the love that we have for him as in some way, one, way to think of it as the part of him that he left behind here. When he ascended to heaven, So that we may love and treasure and delight one.

Another There. So this is all training in putting others ahead of ourselves and it does spill over Uh, to strangers. Who are outside the church as we'll see. Especially when we get to galatians 6. Um, The lord helping us. Same connection, we won't spend. Now, as much time and we're doing mostly theological exposition.

There. Anyway, first beat or four. And he's, uh, he's talking about Uh, looking forward. To christ for seven. The end of all things as a hand, be serious. And be watchful in your prayers. Above all things have fervent love. For one another for love will. Cover a multitude of sins.

And then again, Be hospitable to one another. Uh, without grumbling. And so this love For those in the church with him. Who are strangers to us, still? And the heart is trained to love strangers. And we'll get to. Lord willing. It's not today. The next week. Um, galatians 6 and do good to all, and especially to the household of faith.

And so there's a doing good to the household of faith. That as we learn to imitate our father, that's he has a special love for his children. No one can read the Bible and deny that. And yet, when we love our enemies, we're still aren't we being children of our?

Heavenly father? This glorious marvelous, good creation that he's made, and the good providence of the sun shining or the rainbow falling that he gives to all. Even those who curse has name. And spend their life in the exhausting effort of suppressing, the truth and unrighteousness. Um how dreadful that those are cream, who are created to know him and praise him.

And love him would spend effort. Trying to not acknowledge him. Uh, And yet he is good. Even to them. And so there's this doing good to the household of faith. That is a special imitation of our god, but also a doing good to all. And even and especially to our enemies.

That works itself out. I think still within the church in Romans 12, where we were, If you're into me is hungry, feed him. If he is thirsty, give him a drink. In doing so you will heat pulls a fire on his head. Um, If he remains an enemy, the wrath of god against the more heinous sin of having been an enemy to someone who loved him and done, good to him, there will be more intense rap, some sins are more heinous than others by reason of several aggravations but we're not trying, To heap burning holes on her head.

Because we've just heard what? Leave the vengeance to god. Uh, we're trying to imitate our father in heaven. We're learning to love even our enemies. And even in these, if we can use the word this way, even in this diagonal sense, If your enemy is hungry, feed him. If he is thirsty, give him something to drink.

And so, you have this. Uh, this love that spills over. He's, he turns his attention outside. Uh, the church especially i think In in verse 21. Uh, well actually probably Maybe. Uh, as far back as verse 18, the peaceably with all men, do not be overcome by evil treats governing authorities and then he gets to Um, All neighbors, not just those who are an authority in chapter 13 verses 8 through 10.

Concluding with love does no harm. Uh, to a neighbor. Therefore love is the fulfillment. Of the law. Now, one of the things that i mentioned last time, And i think it's important for our thinking about the actual work of the deaconate is Uh, while the deaconate those who are Uh, given to us to oversee that aspect of our walking with christ and service to him in.

In his church. And in his world, they will want to help us identify places where the lord has providentially put us where we can intersect with our neighborhood where we can intersect with our community. Uh, it would be very short-sighted if If you're deacon was Helping you be generous in giving for the work of the lord in his worship and be generous with With the brothers and sisters in the congregation, and if a collection was needed, Like we take the the deacons fund collection, every third week or every the third launch day of every month, Or if there was something going on with another church somewhere, And like like the Macedonian of the Italian churches collected for the judean churches in the new testament.

But in addition to that the the deacons need to be helping you think about how are you ministering to your neighbor's needs? Perhaps. Perhaps you have someone who has made themselves your enemy. Uh, in Uh, in your life at your workplace. Uh, some of you have just been delivered of that, praise god.

Uh, others of us whether in our neighborhood or workplace and and so you may have your elder Helping you remember to pray for them, and bless those who curse you, and those ways in which you act upon god. With, with respect to this enemy that god's providence has given you.

But then, you're deacons coming along and saying, well, you know, the bible tells us One of the things to do with our enemy, Let's come up with it. Doesn't have to be exorbitant. Uh it's especially to the household of faith. You have to take care of your own household.

But let's come up with a simple practical way. That you can in earthly terms. Address actual needs not what they think our needs. Right, it's not loving your enemy to use their Pronouns prepositions verbs or whatever other abuse of language, they They want to make to rewrite reality and reinforcement of their rebellion.

Uh, you're just helping them consign themselves to hell. If you do that. Uh, but they still need food. I'm still need a drink. And you know, they might be disabled and your parking spot is closer and you offered a swap or, you know, whatever it is. But your deacon can help you think.

Of those things? Yes, they would. Doesn't the OPC orthodontal potential practice. My understanding is like, if there's something that has a invent their light in the completely, Profound. The denomination, for example, all the church in the mass of people to sin where anywhere in there. Yeah. That's that's often done.

The AMP has done it as well. They'll create a fund for within the church. Uh, one thing that One thing that the pca did, And that the opc started pig a piggybacking onto. Some years ago, as Um, the pca home missions agency and coming out of our senate, you should know what i think about the phrase.

How missions agency. Um, but they they came up with a very well-funded arm called the disaster response ministry. And it's something that, That the OPC is kind of joined in with them and it's not just, it's not just for the churches. Or for the believers, the opc usually does a better job of it.

And, and focusing on. Uh, making sure the ministry comes out of a local congregation. Um, I would say the scripture goes one further. And that ministered to the deaconal that we'll use that word. Minister to the earthly needs of Um, Of unbelievers in scripture. Does not come out of corporate collection.

In the church. It comes. It can come from individual believers. But we have no example in the new testament. Of the church collecting. Corporately. Uh, for the need. The earthly need of an unbeliever. My understanding with what i've seen practice. You know, we see it's not going to have a fun, it's where they.

If there's a need they say that i'll be being with your churches. Just ask people to respond. So it's it's very much. Okay. Well, maybe that's a mailing list that i haven't been on. Um, But usually, usually, when i get requests, it's you can give at this And they'll get, they'll give you a Uh, link or an address where, whatever it is is being collected.

I'm sure though that there are people who And i would be one of them, i Yeah, if it's not being overseen by Local deacons who are ordained in in the way that christ is instituted. I prefer to get person to person from myself to another individual but Um, For, for those needs.

Um, Man, how did we? Run out of time so quickly. Um, Let's just take a couple more questions if there are Uh, i did want to to Make sure that you saw the way. Uh, The word hospitality was being used. In the love of strangers within the church and how that does naturally lend itself, then.

Uh, to Um, Loving, not only those with whom you already feel and have a connection. Uh, but those Those who God gives you opportunity, but you don't have personal connection with them yet. And that's not just in the church. Given to hospitality or showing hospitality is also. Uh something, especially for our neighbor.

Any. The questions on that any Correction. Can you think of somewhere in the New Testament? Where The church collected for an unbeliever. Well, Ben I just Than what is what is the church's interaction with before the poor unfolding? What would be the correct to touch point? Nation point that you would have administrative.

Well, there are two ministries. There's Versus the Ministry of evangelism. Right. And that's Everyone to some extent. I'm gonna Maybe hit that a little bit this morning. When we talk about philips prophethood, daughters, and what in the world that means, And then, Uh, but that's especially ordained servants, too.

The, the minister, the elder is to do the work of an evangelist. Uh, therefore in a greater way than they know. If if they're unbelieving and It's part of the duty administry. Of. A believer to address. The poverty they have. That is greater. Not the proper poverty, they feel to be sorry, the church does that the other thing the church does is observe the regular principle.

Uh, first corinthians 14. Uh, that we accommodate worship to god. But we do it in a known tongue. So that the other worldliness of our worship. Is. Patently irritating. To the unbeliever who comes in among us. But he has the secrets of his heart exposed. Um, His loved. Well, it becomes in among us but the outsider comes in, we're speaking such plain english.

That Uh there is a god and it is not he and he deserves the wrath of that god that that god has actually redeemed sinners such as he because he's surrounded by redeemed. Sinners now who are worshiping God making those things as as clear and plain Uh, by the means that god has appointed as possible.

Um, in hope that He will fall on this face. And god will give him repentance. Um, so those are the corporate things that we do, especially when Uh, the minister or elder. Is. Is doing evangelism because of his office in the churches. He's something of an ambassador or an extension of the corporate body that way.

William perry, put forth. The admissions board in England was saying, we don't do missions in. Before the great wave missionaries in the 1800s, he put forth as an Get a study and offer to a speech on on why we should view emissions in that he said, International missions that is and in that he, he included good works and and And those acts of service.

Clean water, better food, you know, something among beyond believers. That among the even, Do the categories you're offering. Uh only applied to those around us. So the places that are within where Christ has already had sway like because obviously the poor in america are nothing like the poor and you know Uh, the bush of south america.

So um, It's a little bit broader question but the same priority applies because if you study the history of the world, The places where charity have exploded, it's almost exclusively. A result of the gospel coming and producing christians. Christians alone until. And this has been I suppose one of the benefits, although Um, it masks over the hideousness of humanism.

Uh, even the humanists now in our very kind of closely connected world is shamed into things that ape true charity. Because christianity exists and true charity exists. Uh, But, you know, go over a list of non-profits sometime. And you'll find there are many things that are pure hate. That are called charity by the world.

Now, Uh, but yes. Uh, one of the things where There are poor and there is no one being charitable to them. One of the things that that exposes Is that the gospel has not come there and it has not produced. Um, It has not produced church there. So the first thing you want to do is plant a church.

And they will start being generous even out of their poverty because that's what christians do. And then you have rich churches and poor churches. And then a testament tells us. Exactly what to do. Uh, in a situation like that. Christian. Let me pop somewhere. That air come from in churches of thinking that We ought to set up the homeless ministry, you have to set up a Food and whatever it may be and even labeling it.

The ministry. We're um, we're a little bit out of time, but my initial thought and i haven't really studied. It extensively, is that arose in the early 19th century? And the rise of volunteer societies in america. And churches having to Compete with charitable societies. For dollars and bodies and interests and zeal.

And so the church kind of producing its own. Um, Versions of those things as arms of the local congregation. And then, of course, that morphs a bunch of different ways. Uh, recently. Uh, i

think in the in the 70s. The rise of. Kind of social justicey evangelism. Uh, was was Uh, had it was a twin sister of the secret friendly movement.

Um, Anyway, so those are some scattered talks but that's not coming from. Uh, anything. Personally, or focused study. All right, let's pray. Our group is god and our heavenly father, how we thank you. That you have been willing. Uh, for us to feel our neediness. But most of all are neediness of christ.

That you have humiliated us as starving. And parched and naked and filthy. And homeless. And then great danger. As concerns. Are standing before you and Our condition eternally and spiritually. So that we might Um, Confess that poverty and rejoice. Uh, not just in provision and sufficiency But divine abundance in, jesus christ, your indescribable gift.

And we pray, lord. That as you have taken care of us, both soul and body. You would make us imitators of you. As beloved children. And does conformed to your son to whom you have united us by your spirit through faith. We pray, lord that you would help us to follow your word.

Um, not just carefully. That we would do things in the manner of the Bible, says, but conscientiously With the heart that you produce. Through the Bible that you have given us. As a means of your grace. So, work in our hearts, we pray. And do it for us. Now, as we come to worship you.

Uh, when we turn our attention to acting directly upon you, For, we ask it in jesus name. Amen.