**Sunday 3rd September 2023: Option 2 - Romans 12: 9-21**

*Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good.****10****Be devoted to one another in love. Honour one another above yourselves.****11****Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervour, serving the Lord.****12****Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer.****13****Share with the Lord’s people who are in need. Practice hospitality.*

***14****Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse.****15****Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn.****16****Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position.[*[*c*](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=romans+12&version=NIV#fen-NIV-28262c)*] Do not be conceited.*

***17****Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everyone.****18****If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.****19****Do not take revenge, my dear friends, but leave room for God’s wrath, for it is written: “It is mine to avenge; I will repay,”[*[*d*](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=romans+12&version=NIV#fen-NIV-28265d)*] says the Lord.****20****On the contrary:*

*“If your enemy is hungry, feed him;  
    if he is thirsty, give him something to drink.  
In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head.”[*[*e*](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=romans+12&version=NIV#fen-NIV-28266e)*]*

**Notes**

“*Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord”*

Zeal is a strange word, perhaps disappearing from common usage. It has unfortunate and perhaps negative overtones. We might think of “Zealot” perhaps even leading us to the word terrorist, or we might think a person is perhaps a little bigoted, too keen to apply rules that don’t really matter.  
  
Yet the word “zeal” is used as a description of Jesus. When the disciples watched, perhaps in horror at first, as Jesus drove the money changes out of the temple, they recalled the words of David who had said “zeal for your house consumes me” (Psalm 69: 9), and quickly took the phrase and ascribed it to Jesus (John 2:17).

In his letter to the Romans, Paul implores us not to be lacking in zeal, but to keep our fervour, in honouring other people above ourselves, sharing with those in need, and practicing hospitality.

So when it comes to our giving, do we do it with zeal? Are we eager, enthusiastic, energetic or passionate about what we’re doing? Do we believe in it? Is it a cause we really care for? Or do we find we are somewhat lacking in fervour, not that worried one way or the other? Happy to let the status quo continue, unchallenged?

Let our zeal or passion for the house of God, the Church, consume us too, and let that be reflected in our giving, our volunteering, and our commitment to all aspects of Church life.  
  
**End**