

Becoming human- giving glory. 29 April\_2018.

**(PP1) Becoming human- giving glory x 18 Sunday 06 May\_2018.**

**Transformation through Community Relating.**

Background text READ **ROMANS 12: 1 - 21. (and rest of the letter)**

**Our AIM for this year is to explore what it means to be truly human. Also, I pray that we will seek individually and together to bring greater glory to God by the way we live our lives.**

**(PP2) Romans:** Paul spends the first 11 chapters describing the full extent of God's mercy. **(PP2)** Then he calls for a **DOXOLOGY: to God be glory forever.** In chapter **11 of Romans vv 33 – 36** he calls upon Believers to bring praise to God who is worthy of all praise. Those who give glory to God must first have appreciated who God is and what God has done. **The Doxology (call to praise God) has an internal logic as to why we should praise God and seek to attribute glory to God.**

*God's GLORY: the manifest beauty of his holiness. It is the going public of his holiness. It is the way he puts his holiness on display for people to apprehend. (John Piper).*  
Supremely God has publicly displayed his glory in the person and works of Jesus for all to see and consider their response.

**Those of us who value what God has displayed in Jesus Christ are called to surrender our lives to live for God's greater glory and with the intention of bringing others to surrender their lives to God.** We want to draw attention to Jesus.

**Romans 12: 1, 2 True worship** involves my inner self including my mind and also my whole body – a living sacrifice. True worship then is not just the words of praise I utter or sing with my lips but the way I live my life.

**The chief end of humanity is to glorify God and enjoy him forever.** (Presbyterians. Circa 1646) Within this is surely the understanding that human identity, purpose, meaning and satisfaction are **discovered in personal relationship with God BUT ALSO AS WE SEE TODAY IN RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHERS.** So, our discovery of our true self is also inevitably a seeking for the greater glory of God PARTICULARLY IN THE WAY THAT WE RELATE TO OTHERS. **PP3)**

**Dalai Lama says – the purpose for life is to seek for happiness.** I am not sure that I agree with him.

Paul's logic: **"In the light of God's mercy"** – I should change my behaviours to match my beliefs about God. **Verses 1 and 2 of Romans 12 set the direction for the next 5 chapters.** (he deals with our lives lived in relation to others).

**Indeed, he argues within this chapter that the transformation of mind and behaviour that we need comes about as we make this offering:**

We will be discussing and thinking today and, in the weeks, ahead about how we might help and encourage one another in the community of God's people to do this.

**A change of mind as well as a change of behaviour is called for. HOW does this happen in a way that is not simply brain washing or conditioning?** Through a lifelong process of:

- Engaging with Jesus as revealed in Scripture as Romans 12 does
- Relationships: working together in the Body to God’s greater glory
- Living in the world and relating to others in all circumstances eg chapter 13 to the Authorities – principalities and powers.

All of this engagement changes us – our thinking, values, and behaviour. As we face our own weakness, as we face others, as we face the powers, as we struggle, as we encounter darkness and we change through the working of God’s grace within us.

**What attitudes do we bring to working with others** – both in the church community and society? Paul recommends *generous sharing, hard work and cheerful kindness and constant prayer and patience (v8 and vv11,12)*. In other words, Paul is saying if you begrudge what you are doing and giving. If we are miserable and moany or if we are lazy then we need a mind transformation – a change of attitude. A holiday might help for a brief moment, but a change of mindset is really what is needed – and that takes time.

**Paul talks nonstop about relating**...presumably unpacking what it means to “love one another”. In *verses 9 and 10* he talks about *sincere love and hating what is evil*. He talks *verse 4* using the metaphor of the human body to describe the community of the church – God’s people. Each of us *brings different gifts to enable the Body to work and live and we have different functions within the Body (v4)*. **Romans 12:6 These are graces that God gives for the common good not just to give me identity and fulfillment. Paul calls for us to change in community rather than in isolation. He uses another metaphor – extended family. (PP4 and PP5)**

V10	<i>Be devoted to one another – as a family of “brothers &amp; sisters”. Respect one another.</i>	Paul calls for this sort of behaviour.
V13	<i>Share your belongings with those fellow Christians who are needy and show hospitality – welcome strangers.</i>	
V14	<i>Ask God to bless those who persecute you, bless them don’t curse them.</i>	
V15	<i>Be happy with those who are happy, weep with those who weep.</i>	
V16	<i>Live in harmony with EVERYONE – don’t be proud but be willing to associate with people of low position (willing to do menial work).</i>	
V17	<i>Do not repay evil for evil.</i>	
	<i>Try to do what everyone considers to be good.</i>	
V18	<i>Do everything possible on your part to live at peace with everyone.</i>	

V19	<i>Never take revenge, my friends.</i>	<i>Let God take revenge &amp; pay back.</i>
v20	<i>Instead of revenge: If your enemy is hungry feed them; if thirsty give them a drink...(you will make them burn with shame)</i>	<i>As the Scripture says: Jesus Sermon on Mount...</i>
V21	<i>Do not let evil defeat you: instead, conquer evil with good.</i>	
Ch 13	<b>Relationship with Authorities</b>	
Ch 14	<b>Relationship of the "weak and strong"</b>	
Ch 15	<b>Relationship with "foreigners" - Gentiles</b>	
Ch 16	<b>Friends and co-workers</b>	

**Paul's argument that a transformation of mind/ attitude is needed to bring about this way of living all the time.** The human will needs to want this and be engaged but it is surely not brought about just by human effort but by being in relationship with the Holy Spirit of God – listening to God who has come to make his home in us. (Apostle John) **The priority** therefore is the *common good* rather than me. I am important and specially loved but the **teaching of Jesus is in serving God and the true common good I truly discover me.** (*By losing my life, (sacrificing it for God's glory and the common good) I will find it. Matt 10: 39; 16:25; Mark 8:35; Luke 9: 24; John 12: 25).*

**HOW? Through a lifelong process of commitment to grace – God's inner enablement: -**

- Engaging with Jesus as revealed in Scripture as *Romans 12* does using mind and body
- Relationships: working together in the Body of God's People to God's greater glory
- Living in the world and relating to others in all circumstances eg *chapter 13* to the Authorities – principalities and powers.