

Becoming human- giving glory. 29 April\_2018.

**(PP1) Becoming human- giving glory x 20 Sunday 20 May\_2018.**

**Transformation through relating in Community.**

Background text READ **ROMANS 12: 1 – 2 and 13: 8 - 14.**

**This year we are exploring 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 in relationship to others and with God.**

**Romans:** Paul spends the first 11 chapters describing the full extent of God's mercy. Then he voices a **DOXOLOGY** and calls for others to praise: **to God be glory forever.**

Supremely **God has publicly displayed his glory in the person and works of Jesus** for all to see and consider their response. And we too can bring glory to God. ***The chief end of humanity is to glorify God and enjoy him forever.*** (*Presbyterians. Circa 1646*) (Others aim: to make as much money as can; to have a family; to be happy and fulfilled; to have a great career; to avoid paying tax, to do as much charitable work as I can...)

**(PP2) Romans 12: 1, 2 True worship** involves my whole self-including my mind (NOOS) and also my body (SOMATA) – a living sacrifice and not a dead one. True worship then is not just the words of praise I utter or sing with my lips but the way I think and live my life.

**In what way do you and I need to change our minds?** Do our attitudes need to change at any point? Perhaps our view of certain people? Our view of work? Our view of God? Our view of where we live? On this Pentecost Sunday let's ask what power of God to I need carry out what is pleasing to God? What change of mind do I need so that I may truly love my neighbour as I love myself?

**Indeed, Paul argues that the transformation of mind and behaviour that we need comes about as we make this personal offering and as we help and encourage one another in the community of God's people to do this.**

**V2 We are not simply to conform (SUSCHEMATIZO)** – to be squeezed into a mould of this present age. We are to resist the outward pressures to conform – instead we must seek to become what God wants us to be. Let God shape the way we think.

Within this is surely the understanding that human identity, purpose, meaning and satisfaction are **discovered in personal relationship with God BUT ALSO AS WE REITERATE TODAY IN RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHERS.**) **The priority** therefore is the *common good* rather than me. I am important and I do need "to love myself" but the **teaching of Jesus is that it is in serving God and the 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).*

**Paul's argument that a transformation of mind/ attitude is needed to bring about this way of living all the time.** Do we want this? A change of mind – the way we think

is surely not brought about just by human effort but by being in relationship with the Holy Spirit of God – on this PENTECOST Sunday we recognize that we need the help of the Holy Spirit – who comes to make his home in us. (Gospel *John 14: 15 fol*)

**Paul talks nonstop about relating**...he is he says unpacking **what it means to “love one another” (13:8) and to “love neighbour” (13:9)**. In verses 9 and 10 he talks about *sincere love and doing no evil to neighbour*.

The way Christians relate in the faith community and the way we treat our neighbours is a public witness statement about what we believe about God’s Commands to love God but also to love neighbour and within the Christian community.

**Paul argues in a simple and matter of fact way. He says in chapter 13 in the verses we read that if we *love our neighbour* then the practical consequences are that we will NOT:**

- Commit adultery
- Will not commit murder
- Will not steal
- Or desire (covet) what belongs to someone else
- All these and many other things that mean we do not love neighbour (all with reference to the 10 Commandments).

Paul says that we should “**not be under obligation to anyone except to love them**” as the Law of God requires. He is saying – do not default on what you owe because that makes others suffer.

**Do I need a change of mind (transformation: chrysalis to butterfly) about my neighbour?** Remember Jesus taught the Parable of the Good Samaritan to illustrate what loving neighbour meant.

**V9 Love your neighbour as you love yourself?** How do you love yourself? How do you care for yourself each day? Paul is not just reminding us of things of things we should NOT do but telling us what we should do!

**V10 If you love someone you will never do them wrong.** If I love neighbour **as I love myself** I will feed, clothe, shelter, educate, rest them, treat them well...We are not just Citizens which we thought about last Sunday – we are neighbours, living in community and we have a debt to love neighbour as well as fellow Christian. (We have debts to pay because God has loved us and he has commanded us to love!)

**As Bishop Michael Curry said yesterday at the wedding of Prince Harry and Meghan Markle when he spoke about the fiery power of love: *Someone once said that Jesus began the most revolutionary movement in history: a movement grounded in the unconditional love of God for the world – a movement mandating people to live that***

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*love, and in so doing to change not only their lives, but the very life of the world itself. I am talking about power. Real power, power to change the world.*

**Wake up and live as children of the day/ children of light.** (Clear metaphor about living as God's true children not children of the night and darkness).

What are the ***weapons of the Lord Jesus*** that we are to take up?

**We have a continuing debt to love others and to share and show the Good News to them. HOW can we do this on our own?** We cannot we need the Holy Spirit and the help of others.

*"The Holy Spirit brings us the inward power to love, and, because we enjoy the most intimate union with Jesus Christ we have the potential to reach out to a needy world".*  
*David Coffey, p205 Discovering Romans. Crossway Books.*

**V11 at this time in history** – we await Jesus return! The day will dawn at Christ's return. Metaphor of living as children of the day not the darkness. STOP night time activities which are of darkness – drunken parties, sleeping around in any old bed, envy and arguments. (Put aside old desires and lusts of the flesh).

A reminder – we are in a spiritual battle and are to wear "armour of light" – we are to put on Jesus.

***"Let Jesus be as close to you as the clothes you wear!"*** (David Coffey p 206).

Wrap yourself in light and love neighbour as you love yourself.

**RESPONSE TIME:** asking Holy Spirit to come around us and within us and bring about change of mind and behaviour.