



Sunday, February 8, 2015

ROMANS 12:9-21

Reflecting God's Grace

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SERMON NOTES: Romans 12:9-21

The first step in “Finding ME”: Realize I’m not God; I admit that I am powerless to control my tendency to do the wrong thing and my life is unmanageable. (Romans 7:14-25)

The second step in “Finding ME”: Earnestly believe that God exists, that I matter to Him, and that He has the power to help me. (Romans 8:1-17)

The third step in “Finding ME”: Consciously choose to commit all my life and will to Christ’s care and control. (Romans 12:1-2)

The fourth step in “Finding ME”: Openly examine and confess my faults to myself, to God, and to someone I trust. (Romans 12:3; 1 Timothy 1:12-17)

GOD’S GRACE TRANSFORMS OUR AFFECTIONS

Romans 12: 9- 21,

⁹ Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. ¹⁰ Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves. ¹¹ Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. ¹² Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. ¹³ Share with God’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. Do not be conceited. ¹⁷ Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everybody. ¹⁸ If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. ¹⁹ Do not take revenge, my friends, but leave room for God’s wrath, for it is written: “It is mine to avenge; I will repay,” 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.” ²¹ Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

OUR AFFECTIONS SHAPE OUR CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

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OUR AFFECTIONS ARE MEANT TO BLESS ALL PEOPLE

¹⁴ Bless those who persecute you; **ble^ss 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. Do not be conceited. ¹⁷ Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everybody. ¹⁸ If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. ¹⁹ Do not take **revenge**, my friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," 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." ²¹ Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

OUR TRANSFORMATION CARRIES A HIGH COST

Matthew 16:21–28, ²¹ From that time on Jesus began to explain to his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things at the hands of the elders, chief priests and teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life. ²² Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. "Never, Lord!" he said. "This shall never happen to you!" ²³ Jesus turned and said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; you do not have in mind the things of God, but the things of men." ²⁴ Then Jesus said to his disciples, "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. ²⁵ For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will find it.

The fifth step in "Finding Me":

Voluntarily submit to every change God wants to make in my life and humbly ask Him to remove my character defects.

CONNECT GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE: Romans 12:9-21

OPENING

- Review all of the affections described in Romans 12:9-21. Share how God is transforming you by his grace.

Leader's Notes: See the underlined terms in the passage printed in the Sermon Notes, above.

GOING DEEPER

- Read Romans 12:9-13 and apply them to your experience in Church. Discuss how this personal transformation can impact a community of believers.

Leader's Notes: You may wish to start the discussion by describing how you have experienced the unity of the church, how you have experienced the love and care of other believers.

- Gordon MacDonald, in his recent book *Who Stole My Church?*, writes "There are certain disagreements---about theology, politics, or church policy, for example---that can deep-freeze what you considered to be a durable friendship---and do it almost overnight. Someone needs to ask what it is about a doctrinally defined movement that makes it so easy for some people to dissolve personal relationships without warning or explanation." (p 90)

Leader's Notes: Discuss this quote with your group. Have you experienced division in Christ's body over things that were needlessly hurtful?

- Read Romans 12:14-21 and recall some experiences where you were tried and tested by those in the world. In particular, discuss the implications of vs. 21: **"Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good."**

Leader's Note: Can you recall a time where good overcame evil? Perhaps you have witnessed a hard heart eventually melt in the face of patient love, or a loving word calm an angry spirit.

CHALLENGE:

- **The fifth step in "Finding Me":** Voluntarily submit to every change God wants to make in my life and humbly ask Him to remove my character defects.

This step requires deep, personal transformation. What are some ways you can begin to live out this step?