

## 20230723 TRUE AND PROPER WORSHIP

Romans 12:1-21

(Understanding the Gospel Part 14)

1 And so, dear brothers and sisters, I plead with you to give your bodies to God because of all he has done for you. Let them be a living and holy sacrifice - the kind he will find acceptable. This is truly the way to worship him.

2 Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect.

3 Because of the privilege and authority God has given me, I give each of you this warning: Don't think you are better than you really are. Be honest in your evaluation of yourselves, measuring yourselves by the faith God has given us.

4 Just as our bodies have many parts and each part has a special function, 5 so it is with Christ's body. We are many parts of one body, and we all belong to each other.

6 In his grace, God has given us different gifts for doing certain things well. So if God has given you the ability to prophesy, speak out with as much faith as God has given you.

7 If your gift is serving others, serve them well. If you are a teacher, teach well.

8 If your gift is to encourage others, be encouraging. If it is giving, give generously. If God has given you leadership ability, take the responsibility seriously. And if you have a gift for showing kindness to others, do it gladly.

9 Don't just pretend to love others. Really love them. Hate what is wrong. Hold tightly to what is good.

10 Love each other with genuine affection, and take delight in honoring each other.

11 Never be lazy, but work hard and serve the Lord enthusiastically.

12 Rejoice in our confident hope. Be patient in trouble, and keep on praying.

13 When God's people are in need, be ready to help them. Always be eager to practice hospitality.

14 Bless those who persecute you. Don't curse them; pray that God will bless them.

15 Be happy with those who are happy, and weep with those who weep.

16 Live in harmony with each other. Don't be too proud to enjoy the company of ordinary people. And don't think you know it all!

17 Never pay back evil with more evil. Do things in such a way that everyone can see you are honorable.

18 Do all that you can to live in peace with everyone.

19 Dear friends, never take revenge. Leave that to the righteous anger of God. For the Scriptures say, "I will take revenge; I will pay them back," says the LORD.

20 Instead, "If your enemies are hungry, feed them. If they are thirsty, give them something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals of shame on their heads."

21 Don't let evil conquer you, but conquer evil by doing good. (NLT)

### REASONABLE WORSHIP: INSIDE OUT (From HEART of worship to LIFE of worship)

#### 1. Invitation to life of worship

Foundation: The mercy of God incarnated (God's grace revealed in the Gospel of Christ) (v1)

<sup>1</sup> And so, dear brothers and sisters, I plead with you **to give your bodies to God** because of all he has done for you. Let them be a living and holy sacrifice - the kind he will find acceptable. **This is truly the way to worship him.**

#### 2. Transformation (v2)

<sup>2</sup> **Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think.** Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect.

Transformation is what God does in us. But He needs our cooperation: We must change the way we think. Transformation is the product of renewing our mind.

The consequence: Knowing the will of God by testing and approving what's in front of us.

#### 3. Transformation and service (ministry)

Principle: According to God's calling and placement (the grace of God)

<sup>3</sup> **Because of the privilege and authority God has given me,** I give each of you this warning: Don't think you are better than you really are. Be honest in your evaluation of yourselves, **measuring yourselves by the faith God has given us.**

Examples in the Bible:

(1) Paul – the sinner of sinners, yet God called him to be an apostle. Physically he was weak and had a speech problem. But God sent him to the gentiles to preach and teach. The people of God received him by faith. And Paul's ministry was successful and gentile churches flourished.

(2) Moses – a murderer and Egypt educated (cultural distance), son-in-law of Midian priest, a shepherd, old (social distance). Yet God called him to lead the people of Israel out of Egypt. But the people of Israel (out of Egypt generation) didn't accept him properly. As the result, they had to wander the wilderness over and over again. Moses couldn't lead them to their destination. The people failed to enter the promised land.

(3) Roman Christians – They were not better than Jewish believers even though they were more influential in Roman society. What's important is God's calling by His grace in each person's life. Evaluate others, not by our own evaluation system, but by God's calling upon them. Even though there was dissension and discord in the church, but as they obeyed the Word of God and evaluated others based on God's grace upon one another, they experienced unity.

Attitude in practice of God's grace in serving others (vv4-8)

Principle: One body with many members (parts)

4 For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function,

5 so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others.

6 We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your faith;

7 if it is serving, then serve; if it is teaching, then teach;

8 if it is to encourage, then give encouragement; if it is giving, then give generously; if it is to lead, do it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully.

The necessity of life of worship: I must be a member of a local church  
What is my membership in a local church?

It is **my commitment to other believers.**

#### **4. What binds our unity: Love (9-10)**

<sup>9</sup> Don't just pretend to love others. **Really love them.** Hate what is wrong. Hold tightly to what is good.

<sup>10</sup> **Love each other with genuine affection,** and take delight in honoring each other.

- Understand others with reason (Mind)
- Have compassion on them with emotion (feeling)
- Be committed in sharing time and material things (will)

#### **5. Characteristics of Christian ministry**

##### **Zeal (enthusiasm, v11)**

<sup>11</sup> Never be lazy, but work hard and serve the Lord enthusiastically.

##### **Joy, patience, and prayer (v12)**

<sup>12</sup> Rejoice in our confident hope. Be patient in trouble, and keep on praying.

#### **6. Six specific implementations of life of worship**

##### **Share material things for other believers (v13, hospitality)**

<sup>13</sup> When God's people are in need, be ready to help them. Always be eager to practice hospitality.

**Embrace those normally we don't (v14)**

<sup>14</sup> Bless those who persecute you. Don't curse them; pray that God will bless them.

**Be compassionate (v15)**

<sup>15</sup> Be happy with those who are happy, and weep with those who weep.

**Go beyond social barriers in society (v16)**

<sup>16</sup> Live in harmony with each other. Don't be too proud to enjoy the company of ordinary people. And don't think you know it all!

**Do what is right in common sense (v17)**

<sup>17</sup> Never pay back evil with more evil. Do things in such a way that everyone can see you are honorable.

**Be peaceful with all (v18)**

<sup>18</sup> Do all that you can to live in peace with everyone.

**7. Life principle in Life of worship: Conquer evil by doing good (v21)**

<sup>21</sup> Don't let evil conquer you, but conquer evil by doing good.

(We do our part and let God do His part!)