

Decisive Humility

Romans 12:1-8

Lord's Day June 26th, Anno Domini 2022

Puritan Reformed Church - Pastor David Reece

Scripture Reading - John

Acceptable Sacrifice of Praise - Psalm 110, 133

REVIEW OF ROMANS

- 1) **1:1-15 - Apostleship - Authority (Sola Scriptura) and Mission (the Great Commission and the Doxological focus)**
1:16-17 - **Thesis** - "16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek. 17 For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, 'The just shall live by faith.'"
- 2) **Chapters 1-3 - The Righteousness of God in Himself & The Righteousness of God revealed in the law¹**
- 3) **Chapters 3-5 - The Righteousness of God imputed to the believer**
- 4) **Chapters 6-8 - The Righteousness of God imparted in sanctification**
- 5) **Chapter 9 - The Righteousness of God in His plan of the Predestination of all things for His ends by His means at His initiation.**
- 6) **Chapters 10-11 - The Righteousness of God in His treatment both of Israel and of the Nations.**
- 7) **Chapters 12-16 - The Righteousness of God on display in rational service by the saints.**

¹ Root sin is the sin of unbelief. Not seeking and therefore not understanding. Neglecting, Avoiding, Resisting, and Denying the knowledge of God. Root sin results in an increasing sense of meaninglessness which leads to an increase of fruit sins through boredom increasing guilt and the lust for excess as we seek to amuse ourselves into oblivion.

TEXT - ROMANS 12:1-8

12 I beseech[exhort] you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your [rational] reasonable service. 2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

- 1) By the mercies of God - recall the grace of God toward you, and do these things out of a motive of gratitude.
- 2) Presenting our bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, is our [rational] reasonable service.
 - a) Sacrifice - Offer
 - b) Holy - focused on the goal
 - c) Acceptable - using the appointed means
 - d) Rational Service - Content, Goal, Means, Self interest
- 3) 2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.
 - a) Therefore, do not be conformed to this world, but go through a metamorphosis - a transformation - by the power of God in the means that He has appointed: Word and Spirit. Your mind can be renewed - made new.
 - i) We are transformed - renewed after the image of Christ in knowledge, holiness, and righteousness by reading, hearing, studying, and meditating upon the Word of Christ.
 - ii) The Scriptures are the Word of Christ. They communicate the mind of Christ to our minds. They renew our minds by the power of the Spirit causing us to understand and believe the Words of Christ.
 - iii) This renewal of the mind is the dwelling of the word in our hearts not just as memorized, but as also understood and believed.
 - iv) When we know the word and believe it we can prove what is good. We can prove what is acceptable to God. We can prove what is the perfect / complete / mature / whole / full will of God.
- 4) Analogy of the game
- 5) The Great Commandment - Love God with all your being
- 6) The first 4 commandments
 - a) What/Who - God as the good - Not seeking an alternative

- b) Where/How - Regulative Principle - using the methods/means God has appointed
- c) Why - Integrity - using the means in an effort to get more of God
- d) When - time order - when should we do which actions

3 For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith. 4 For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function, 5 so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another. 6 Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them:

- 7) The Second Great commandment - Love your neighbor in the same way that you would love yourself - see what is your neighbor's good and your own good and what things would bring those about and work to seek both your own and your neighbor's good.
- 8) WLC - 5th commandment - duties by relationship - Questions 123-133.
- 9) WLC - 9th commandment - honesty, truth telling, forum decorum - Questions 143-145.
- 10) WLC - 10th commandment - mission focus, contentment, humility, compassion - Questions 146-148.
- 11) Through the grace given to me - this is said through the gift of prophecy
- 12) To everyone - not just officers - we are talking about gifts, not offices
 - a) Abuse of this text in history to justify additional offices
 - b) Failure to cause people to think of their own gifts
 - c) Danger of disregarding office or order - check yourself - Office is a gift - do not think of yourself too highly
- 13) Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought to think - Humility
 - a) The danger of thinking of oneself too highly
 - b) The danger of thinking of oneself too lowly
 - c) Thinking of oneself rightly necessary to be of service - initiative vs hanging back, careful observation and intentional body life
 - d) Evaluation of God - Where do you stack up? - Law and Gospel
 - i) Right view of God and His law helps you to see yourself rightly - in fact - you cannot know yourself apart from the knowledge of God.
 - e) Evaluation of self - Where do you stack up? - the Mirror of the law, Inward and outward, help from others
 - i) The Law is Spiritual - it from the Divine mind of the Spirit and

addresses the mind as well as the external

- ii) Knowledge - definitions, system thinking, use cases with expected results
- iii) Holiness - goal oriented thinking about the gift
- iv) Righteousness - law defined choices
- v) Usefulness - do you see produce from the gift? What are the signs of the use of the gift?
- vi) The testimony of others

(1) Words

- (a) General statements
- (b) Thanks
- (c) Specific statements
- (d) Chains of questions - 5, 6, 7 questions
- (e) Testimony to third parties
- (f) Recommendations and referrals

(2) Actions

- (a) Interest in your work - depth, breadth
- (b) Attention - quickness of attention, questions, posture
- (c) Time - time spent helping or talking
- (d) Money for your work - the market

f) Evaluation of others - Where do you stack up?

- i) Only the external
- ii) Criminal offenses vs. external sins unresolved vs. blamelessness
- iii) Public offenses vs. being thoughtful as seriousness increases
- iv) Stumbling blocks vs. limiting of self to avoid harm
- v) Conflict Resolution - Civil Debate - Rebellion vs. order, decency, and honor
- vi) Neglect of care vs. cultivation
- vii) Idleness in failure to use vs. positive evidence of use

14) Think soberly as God has given to you a measure of faith - evaluate with prudence based upon the level of knowledge that you possess. DO you know someone who has more knowledge and good character, then seek to absorb that knowledge and become more useful - serve and bless in order to receive - The duties of inferiors
WLC

15) Many members, One body, different functions/works/practices

- a) Many members - coordination of the parts (members) - 5th commandment
- b) One body - in legal unity (seeking unity of doctrine, purpose [one rule of

faith - confession], method, command [one rule of practice - covenanted uniformity in worship, government, and life]) - 5th commandment

- c) Different Roles - 5th commandment
 - i) Essential equality, legal differentiation of roles, differentiation of non-essential qualities and degrees
- 16) We are many, we are one body in Christ, we are each members of each other
 - a) Many members can lead to chaos - 5th commandment
 - b) Unity with Christ provides unity of command - 5th commandment
 - i) Logical order of war fighting - Objective, Offensive, Operational Security, Obedience
 - ii) Functional order of war fighting - Obedience, Operational Security, Offensive, Objective
 - c) Being members of each other is a motive to obedience in bringing about lawful order - 10th commandment
- 17) In recognition of the gifting that differs according to the grace given, let us use the gifts
 - a) Recognition of gifting and character - 9th commandment
 - b) Station according to gifting and character - 5th commandment
 - c) Contentment with gifting and station - 10th commandment

if prophecy, let us prophesy in proportion to our faith; 7 or ministry, let us use it in our ministering; he who teaches, in teaching; 8 he who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.

- 18) WSC - Q 25-27 - Prophetic, Priestly, Kingly Service to the Body
- 19) Prophecy, let us prophesying in accordance with the analogy of the faith (in logical coherence with the prior revelation).
 - a) Prophecy is the gift of being given words from God - inspired words.
 - b) The exhortation here is for prophets to be faithful and not be false prophets by contradicting the revealed truth given thus far.
 - c) Interpretation / Exposition / hermeneutics in a manner that is systematically coherent - not turning scripture against scripture
 - d) Lesser to greater - if true of prophets, then true of teachers giving uninspired teaching
- 20) Ministry - service in the board sense - Priestly Concern
 - a) Ministry is the general category of service - we are told that we are to use our ability to serve to actually serve.

- b) Use your gift of service to serve others in the household and in the body before giving your service to others without just cause.
 - c) Not narrowly service in the sense of office or in the more narrow sense of diaconal work.
- 21) Teaching - Doctrine (Prophetic Speech)
- a) Use your gift of didactic teaching to edify others in the body with didactic teaching (organization and systematization)
- 22) Exhortation - Strength (Kingly Speech)
- a) Speaking in such a manner as to give strength
 - b) Mission oriented speech - Let's do this
 - c) Power oriented speech - We can do this
 - d) Honor oriented speech - praise, gratitude, satisfaction - shame, regret, displeasure
 - e) Reward oriented speech - if .. then, focus on the horrors to be avoided, focus on the good thing to be gotten
 - f) Put off - Rebuke w/ Chastisement - identify w/ penalty, shame, weakness, mission undermine
 - g) Put on - Correction w/ Encouragement - identify w/ reward, honor, strength, mission help
 - h) Instruction in Righteousness - Discipline and training
- 23) Liberality - willingness to give - Priestliness
- a) All trades are the giving of one thing for the sake of getting something that you think is better - working toward the goal - 4th Commandment
 - b) Liberality depends upon the doctrine of stewardship - 8th Commandment
 - c) Holding onto things loosely and desiring to see things deployed wisely
 - d) Self sacrificial service
- 24) He who rules/leads, with Diligence/zeal - willingness to lead
- a) Ruling/leading with zeal/diligence - Adam, Sampson, Christ
 - b) Citations:
 - i) **Manage, Managing:**
 - (1) 1 Timothy 3:4: "one who **rules** his own house well, having his children in submission with all reverence"
 - (2) 1 Timothy 3:5: "(for if a man does not know how to **rule** his own house, how will he take care of the church of God?)"
 - (3) 1 Timothy 3:12: "Let deacons be the husbands of one wife, **ruling** their children and their own houses well."

ii) Maintain (or, “be devoted to”)

(1) Titus 3:8: “This is a faithful saying, and these things I want you to affirm constantly, that those who have believed in God should be careful to **maintain** good works. These things are good and profitable to men.”

(2) Titus 3:14: “And let our people also learn to **maintain** good works, to meet urgent needs, that they may not be unfruitful.”

iii) Leads

(1) Romans 12:8: “he who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who **leads**, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.”

iv) Over

(1) 1 Thessalonians 5:12: “And we urge you, brethren, to recognize those who labor among you, and are **over** you in the Lord and admonish you,”

v) Rule

(1) 1 Timothy 5:17: “Let the elders who **rule** well be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in the word and doctrine.”

25) Acts of Mercy with Cheerfulness - willingness to forgive and help

- a) Why do people need help?
- b) Normally it is because they did things that were foolish and they are in a time of discipline from God.
- c) Sometimes it is because they just had a bunch of things happen as a test.
- d) Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.
 - i) self righteousness or integrity?
 - ii) 1 year for good reputation - not a forever probation

DOCTRINE

WCF Chapter 26: Of the Communion of Saints

1. All saints that are united to Jesus Christ their head, by his Spirit and by faith, have fellowship with him in his graces, sufferings, death, resurrection, and glory:[a] and being united to one another in love, they have communion in each other's gifts and graces,[b] and are obliged to the performance of such duties, public and private, as do conduce to their mutual good, both in the inward and outward man.[c]

a. John 1:16; Rom 6:5-6; Eph 2:5-6; 3:16-19; Phil 3:10; 2 Tim 2:12; 1 John 1:3. • b. 1 Cor 3:21-23; 12:7; Eph 4:15-16; Col 2:19. • c. Rom 1:11-12, 14; Gal 6:10; 1 Thes 5:11, 14; 1 John 3:16-18.

2. Saints, by profession, are bound to maintain an holy fellowship and communion in the worship of God, and in performing such other spiritual services as tend to their mutual edification;[a] as also in relieving each other in outward things, according to their several abilities and necessities. Which communion, as God offereth opportunity, is to be extended unto all those who, in every place, call upon the name of the Lord Jesus.[b]

a. Isa 2:3; Acts 2:42, 46; 1 Cor 11:20; Heb 10:24-25. • b. Acts 2:44-45; 11:29-30; 2 Cor 8-9 throughout; 1 John 3:17.

3. This communion which the saints have with Christ, doth not make them in any wise partakers of the substance of his Godhead, or to be equal with Christ in any respect: either of which to affirm is impious and blasphemous.[a] Nor doth their communion one with another, as saints, take away or infringe the title or propriety which each man hath in his goods and possessions.[b]

a. Psa 45:7 with Heb 1:8-9; Isa 42:8; 1 Cor 8:6; Col 1:18-19; 1 Tim 6:15-16. • b. Exod 20:15; Acts 5:4; Eph 4:28.