

Scripture Text

Romans 12:1-8

Context

Paul has just concluded the first 11 chapters of Romans where he has explained the gospel in a rich way, and ended with a doxology of praise to God. He now is going to flesh out the practical implications of God's merciful salvation for the believers in Rome.

Observation and Meaning

- On what basis is Paul appealing to the saints in vs1? How is the mercy of God shown to us in the first 11 chapters of Romans?
- What does Paul want the Roman Christians to do with their bodies in the light of God's mercy? Why do you think he uses the word 'bodies'?
- Paul indicates in v2-4 that there is a new way for the Romans to think. What are the various ways that he encourages them to think? How is the mercy of God (gospel) supposed to affect their thinking?
- How do v4-5 show us how Paul wants us to now think about regarding our bodies? What are our bodies now part of?
- The list of gifts in v6-8 covers a very broad range of activities. What does this teach us about how God provides for all the needs we have in the body?
- How does Paul want us to use our gifts?

Big Idea

Because Jesus mercifully gave up his body for us to be saved, we now have been included in this body, and so use our physical bodies with humility to serve the body of Christ that we have been put into. This service is done with humility, and faith, in accordance with the gifts God has given us.

Connecting to Bible Storyline

Jesus is building a new humanity who serve each other with love in response to his sacrificial love for us.

Sermon Outline

1. The logic of grace: Jesus gave his body for us, let's offer up ours to God (12.1)
2. The renewal of grace: Think God's thoughts (v2-5)
3. The gifts of grace: Serve the body with the gifts God has given you (v6-8)
4. How this practically works out at RHC

Application

- How is this passage urging you to think about how you use your entire life (body)?
- In what ways are you currently using your body / gifts in a way that is "conformed to this world"?
- How is God calling you to build up other members of RHC in their faith?
- How is God calling you to use your body for the sake of Jesus' body here on earth?

Guide for Study Leaders

Use the C.O.M.A. (Context, Observation, Meaning, Application) method to work through the biblical text.

Context

Pay attention to the surrounding verses, paragraphs, chapters, events, etc. to see how this passage fits within the context of this particular book of the Bible.

Note how this passage fits within the larger storyline of the whole Bible, i.e. how God is saving a people through Jesus Christ to live under his rule in his place.

Observation & Meaning

Make careful observations of the biblical text. Notice details such as linking words (eg. "for", "if", "therefore"), repetition, dialogue, narrative, OT quotations, etc.

To understand the meaning of the biblical text, we need to discern the author's purpose or intent: Why is the biblical author writing this?

Helpful questions to ask include:

Who is writing and to whom?
What is the situation of the author and of the readers?
Are we made aware of any problems that need to be addressed?
Are there any repeated themes, or a single idea that holds everything together?

Application

Apply God's word to the heart. Move beyond merely addressing circumstances and behaviour by asking good "heart" questions. For example: Why do we do what we do? What do we really desire?

Always connect the gospel to application. For example, what difference does knowing Christ make to our obedience to God?

Ask what the passage teaches us about God, ourselves, salvation in Christ, the church, the world, etc.