

Paul's letter to the church at Rome

Romans

Sunday, March 2nd, 2009

Attitude and conduct expected by Christians at Rome (12:1-15:13)

- 12:1...our bodies are to be consecrated
 - “Therefore”: based on everything in chapters 1-11
 - Note that Christians are urged to live upright “because of God’s mercy”, and NOT because of God’s wrath (see Rom. 1:18)
 - “Present”: Greek is *paristemi* meaning used for offering...see also Rom 6:13 and Luke 2:22
 - “Your bodies”: see Rom 6:19
 - “Living”: not dead animal sacrifice (rather praise)
 - “Reasonable (Gr: *logikos*) “service” (Gr: *lat-ri'-ah*) meaning sacred service by priests (worship!)
- 12:2...our mind is to be consecrated
 - “Conformed”: Greek is *'soos-khay-mat-id'-zo'* meaning to fashion after a pattern...sentence structure means “stop patterning after the world”
 - “Transformed”: Greek is *'met-am-or-fo'-o'* (our word ‘metamorphosis’ literally meaning to change form (like a butterfly)...how is this done??
 - By “renewing” our mind. It always comes down to this...we will become what we think and believe
 - AFTER the mind has been renewed, then we will be able to “prove” the will of God...Greek is *dok-im-ad'-zo*, a term for testing/examining precious metals to determine their authenticity and value
- 12:3-8...humility in using God’s gifts
 - V.3: thinking too highly of ourselves is a type of ‘insanity’ (not being sober minded). Make a sober self-assessment of the measure of faith and gifts God has given you.
 - Grace is *'charis'* which is the root word for *charis-matos* which is where we get the word ‘charismatic’. The charismatic gifts are “gifts of grace”...they are not gifts of judgment.
 - Some believers have more gifts than others. It’s important that we understand the “measure” God has given us individually for the whole church
- 12:4-5...The human body is similar to the ‘body of Christ’ (the church) in that we have many organs that are inter-dependent, but form only 1 body
- V.6-7...gifts listed (other list are in other books):
 - Prophecy...most powerful gift
 - Serving...Greek is *Diakonia*, same for ‘deacon’
 - Teaching...required for elders and some leaders
 - Encouraging...Greek is *par-ak-al-eh'-o*, same as Helper
 - Contributing...gift of giving
 - Leading...elders
 - Showing mercy...gift of compassion
- 12:9-21...character traits of Christians
 - V.9...love is to be sincere and without hypocrisy
 - V.10...be affectionate and show honor: compound word *'philo'* and *'storgio'* meaning love for parents and children.
 - V.11...don’t be lazy in serving God (see also Heb. 6:10-12), but rather be fervent, Greek is *dzeh'-o* which literally means to boil water (TOFFOG)
 - V.12... be joyful (when things are good), patient (when things aren’t good), and prayerful (always)
 - V.13...literally to become a partner with the needy
- 12:9-21...character traits of Christians
 - V.14...Bless your enemies (e.g., Jesus and Stephen)
 - What testimony did Stephen give Paul in Acts 7:54-8:1?
 - V.15...be aligned with the experiences of others
 - V.16...Christians need to generally think the same way meaning don’t be conceited but rather think more of others and less of ourselves

- V.17...don't retaliate, but do good always
- V.18...our part is to be at peace, but we can't always control what others do
- V.19...give room for God to act on your behalf
- V.21...overcome evil with good
- 13:1-14...submit to authority and be led by love. This chapter should be read from Paul's world view; a Jew governed by Jewish law along with Roman law.
 - V.1-4...God is opposed to lawlessness and disorder. Christians (especially those in democracies) have a responsibility to live within the legal system and to act for change within the law (not in anarchy)
 - V.5...obey rulers to avoid punishment and ALSO because God says it's the right thing to do
 - V.6-7...pay your taxes because our leaders are established by God and deserved to be paid for their services, and show honor and respect
 - V.8..."owe no man anything"
 - Does NOT mean Christians cannot have debt, but rather the debt must be paid (along with taxes, fees, etc)
 - The judicious use of borrowing (debt) is a critical function of commerce, and must be done with caution.
 - America's current financial credit problem is a direct result of government being lax with regulations, bankers being greedy, and people borrowing what they could not repay
 - V.8...always be "in debt" of love to others
 - V.9-10...all the commandments regarding other people can be summed up with "love your neighbor as yourself"
 - Read Luke 18:18-23 and Exodus 20:12-16
 - Which commandments did the man NOT follow? (the ones pertaining to God). It's difficult to love people without loving God.
 - V.11-14
 - The night is over; it's time to get out of bed, take off your pajamas, and put on the armor of God!
 - Live like everyone can see you (in the daylight) all the time