

Family Dinner Discussion

Abounding in Hope - Week 25: “Living Sacrifices, Loving Service”

INTRO

(Question:) What do you think about the claim that Jesus lived the most satisfying life humanly possible? What about that do you find confusing or disagree with?

(Transition:) We are back in Paul’s letter to the Romans. This final section is extremely practical, focusing on the ethics of the new community formed by the gospel. Here we will look at the practical implications of the hope that we have in Christ--for ourselves, our communities, and the world around us. As we read our text be thinking about this question: Do I really want Jesus to take the wheel of my life?

READ the text from Romans aloud.

DISCUSS

- What does Paul mean by the phrase “living sacrifice”? How does this relate to the sacrifices of the Old Testament?
- What is the role of our bodies and our minds in the first two verses? What does it mean to offer our bodies? What does it mean to renew our minds? Is one more important than the other?
- Paul is calling us to give up control in our lives, and instead let them be directed by God and submit to his take on things. Why do we struggle with this? Why do we not want to give up control?
- Still looking at vv. 1-2, what does Paul say should motivate us to give up control? What mercies is Paul referring to? What does the phrase “your spiritual worship” mean?
- Is the sacrifice we offer an atoning sacrifice--meaning, that which makes us right with God? Why or why not? What in the passage would support your view?
- The beginning of the passage says we need to renew our minds. What issues does the rest of the passage focus on? How are we to renew our minds about ourselves?
- What does it mean to have a sober view of yourself? How do we tend to have an inflated view of ourselves? Why should we not have a negative view of ourselves?
- How does Paul’s discussion of our gifts relate to a sober view of ourselves? How does Paul’s discussion of our gifts relate to offering our bodies as a living sacrifice?
- What is the problem of trying to do the Christian life all on your own? What would be the problem if everyone had the same set of gifts?
- How do we discover our spiritual gifts? Do you feel like you have an idea what yours are? What are you called to do with your gifts?

CONCLUDE & PRAY

In light of the gospel truths that Paul has presented in Romans thus far, we are called to give up control and serve the community. Jesus Christ provides for us the model. He took on flesh and gave up comfort and control to do the will of the Father for our salvation. He now invites us to trust Him with our lives and follow in His footsteps by learning about God’s will for us and serving the community around us. Let us use our gifts for the good of others and celebrate the various gifts in others.

Romans 12:1-8

English Standard Version (ESV)

12:1 I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. 2 Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

3 For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. 4 For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, 5 so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. 6 Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; 7 if service, in our serving; the one who teaches, in his teaching; 8 the one who exhorts, in his exhortation; the one who contributes, in generosity; the one who leads, with zeal; the one who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness.