



transformed

studies in Romans 9-16

SCPC term 4 2007

sunday 4th november 2007

study 3 transformed relationships Romans 12:3-8

Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will. **Romans 12:1-2**

Last week we arrived at the great turning point of Romans as hit chapter 12. After 11 chapters viewing God's mercy, Paul now sets out how to respond to such a breath-taking (breath-giving!) view. It's all about TRANSFORMATION. God loved us in Christ just as we are (Romans 5:8), but also loves us so much that he won't leave us as we are. His mercy TRANSFORMS our lives. And the first place that transformation will be seen is in... transformed RELATIONSHIPS.

some notes on questions

Q1. The bigger a view we get of God's mercy, the smaller an obsession we'll have with our own importance! One of the first casualties of the sinful nature when we see God's mercy is pride. We are transformed to humility. A right view of God will lead to a right view of our self.

Q2. In our individualistic society we don't like the idea of belonging to anyone. We can possibly stomach the idea that we belong to God. But Paul is saying that we are belong to each other. Now there's a thought if it's going to be real that will mean not conforming to the world, but being transformed by God's mercy (which is the source of our 'belonging').

Q3-4. Paul's point in this particular passage is not so much the different gifts we each may have (and the search for 'my gift') but the same call to "get on with it!", whatever your gift. i.e. your gift is for ministering to others, so get on with ministering to them. The flow of thought is: don't think of yourself too highly... think of others instead—get on with serving them!

Q5. Just as sin is seen in godlessness leading to destructive relationships... so forgiveness of sins through Jesus will be seen in God-focused serving relationships. That's transformation!

Q6-8. We all look down on someone. But if we 'view God's mercy' the view from down on our knees... God's mercy towering us... the only reasonable, spiritual response is to serve others not look down on anyone.

digging deeper: notice in the Ephesians passage—just as here in Romans—the first place Paul applies the gospel (another huge 'turning point' verse in Eph 4:1) is the church family—even before he talks about household families. Makes you think the church must be important to God?

putting it into practice: ... now we're getting into some specifics. Let's pray for honesty before God and each other to be real and not just give safe 'out there' discussion.



remember that once the talk goes up on the website you can always post a question/observation by leaving a comment—it's easy to do and then others will also be able to see the response when it goes up and leave their thoughts too.

coming events

marriage course: wed 7 nov
men's breakfast : sat 10 nov
carols at lismore high: sun 16 dec

small group bible study leaders' notes