

Philadelphia Evangelical Lutheran Church
1910 Philadelphia Church Road, Dallas, North Carolina 28034
Lent 2010 - A 40 Day Spiritual Journey
Theme: *The Marks of A Christian - A Study of Romans Chapter 12*

Romans 12:1 I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, 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 renewing of your minds, so that 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 yourself more highly than you 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 not all the members have the same function, ⁵ so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another. ⁶ We have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us: prophecy, in proportion to faith; ⁷ ministry, in ministering; the teacher, in teaching; ⁸ the exhorter, in exhortation; the giver, in generosity; the leader, in diligence; the compassionate, in cheerfulness. ⁹ Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good; ¹⁰ love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honor. ¹¹ Do not lag in zeal, be ardent in spirit, serve the Lord. ¹² Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer. ¹³ Contribute to the needs of the saints; extend hospitality to strangers. ¹⁴ Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. ¹⁵ Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. ¹⁶ Live in harmony with one another; do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly; do not claim to be wiser than you are. ¹⁷ Do not repay anyone evil for evil, but take thought for what is noble in the sight of all. ¹⁸ If it is possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. ¹⁹ Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave room for the wrath of God; for it is written, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord." ²⁰ No, "if your enemies are hungry, feed them; if they are thirsty, give them something to drink; for by doing this you will heap burning coals on their heads." ²¹ Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

^{GNT} **Romans 12:1** Παρακαλώ οὖν ὑμᾶς, ἀδελφοί, διὰ τῶν οἰκτιρμῶν τοῦ θεοῦ παραστῆσαι τὰ σώματα ὑμῶν θυσίαν ζῶσαν ἁγίαν εὐάρεστον τῷ θεῷ, τὴν λογικὴν λατρείαν ὑμῶν. ² καὶ μὴ συσχηματίζεσθε τῷ αἵῳ τούτῳ, ἀλλὰ μεταμορφοῦσθε τῇ ἀνακαινώσει τοῦ νοῦς εἰς τὸ δοκιμάζειν ὑμᾶς τί τὸ θέλημα τοῦ θεοῦ, τὸ ἀγαθὸν καὶ εὐάρεστον καὶ τέλειον. ³ Λέγω γὰρ διὰ τῆς χάριτος τῆς δοθείσης μοι παντὶ τῷ ὄντι ἐν ὑμῖν μὴ ὑπερφρονεῖν παρ' ὃ δεῖ φρονεῖν ἀλλὰ φρονεῖν εἰς τὸ σωφρονεῖν, ἐκάστῳ ὡς ὁ θεὸς ἐμέρισε μέτρον πίστεως. καθάπερ γὰρ ἐν ἐνὶ σώματι πολλὰ μέλη ἔχομεν, τὰ δὲ μέλη πάντα οὐ τὴν αὐτὴν ἔχει πράξιν, ⁴ οὕτως οἱ πολλοὶ ἐν σώματι ἔσμεν ἐν Χριστῷ, τὸ δὲ καθ' εἰς ἀλλήλων μέλη. ⁶ ἔχοντες δὲ χαρίσματα κατὰ τὴν χάριν τὴν δοθείσαν ἡμῖν διάφορα, εἴτε προφητεῖαν κατὰ τὴν ἀναλογίαν τῆς πίστεως, ⁷ εἴτε διακονίαν ἐν τῇ διακονίᾳ, εἴτε ὁ διδάσκων ἐν τῇ διδασκαλίᾳ, ⁸ εἴτε ὁ παρακαλῶν ἐν τῇ παρακλήσει· ὁ μεταδιδούς ἐν ἀπλότητι, ὁ προϊστάμενος ἐν σπουδῇ, ὁ ἐλεῶν ἐν ἰλαρότητι. ⁹ Ἡ ἀγάπη ἀνυπόκριτος. ἀποστύγοντες τὸ πονηρόν, κολλώμενοι τῷ ἀγαθῷ, ¹⁰ τῇ φιλαδελφίᾳ εἰς ἀλλήλους φιλόστοργοι, τῇ τιμῇ ἀλλήλους προηγούμενοι, ¹¹ τῇ σπουδῇ μὴ ὀκνηροί, τῷ πνεύματι ζέοντες, τῷ κυρίῳ δουλεύοντες, ¹² τῇ ἐλπίδι χαίροντες, τῇ θλίψει ὑπομένοντες, τῇ προσευχῇ προσκαρτεροῦντες, ¹³ ταῖς χρείαις τῶν ἁγίων κοινωνοῦντες, τὴν φιλοξενίαν διώκοντες. ¹⁴ εὐλογεῖτε τοὺς διώκοντας [ὑμᾶς], εὐλογεῖτε καὶ μὴ καταρᾶσθε. ¹⁵ χαίρειν μετὰ χαιρόντων, κλαίειν μετὰ κλαιόντων. ¹⁶ τὸ αὐτὸ εἰς ἀλλήλους φρονοῦντες, μὴ τὰ ὑψηλὰ φρονοῦντες ἀλλὰ τοῖς ταπεινοῖς συναπαγόμενοι. μὴ γίνεσθε φρόνιμοι παρ' ἑαυτοῖς. ¹⁷ μηδεὶ κακὸν ἀντὶ κακοῦ ἀποδιδόντες, προνοούμενοι καλὰ ἐνώπιον πάντων ἀνθρώπων. ¹⁸ εἰ δυνατὸν τὸ ἐξ ὑμῶν, μετὰ πάντων ἀνθρώπων εἰρηνεύοντες. ¹⁹ μὴ ἑαυτοὺς ἐκδικοῦντες, ἀγαπητοί, ἀλλὰ δότε τόπον τῇ ὀργῇ, γέγραπται γάρ, Ἐμοὶ ἐκδίκησις, ἐγὼ ἀνταποδώσω, λέγει κύριος. ²⁰ ἀλλὰ ἐὰν πεινᾷ ὁ ἐχθρὸς σου, ψάμιζε αὐτόν· ἐὰν διψᾷ, πότιζε αὐτόν· τοῦτο γὰρ ποιῶν ἀνθρακας πυρὸς σωρεύσεις ἐπὶ τὴν κεφαλὴν αὐτοῦ. ²¹ μὴ νικῶ ὑπὸ τοῦ κακοῦ ἀλλὰ νικά ἐν τῷ ἀγαθῷ τὸ κακόν.

Sunday, February 21, 2010 – Session 1

1. Written by the Apostle Paul. It is one of the earlier books included in the New Testament. Most scholars estimate that Paul wrote the letter to the Christians at Rome sometime between 54 to 58 AD.
2. Martin Luther called Romans “the chief book of the New Testament, the purest Gospel.” No doubt this is largely due to the fact that in the book of Romans, Luther discovered the message of God’s amazing grace and a clear answer to the question that had tormented his heart and soul for many years, namely, “How can I meet God’s standards of righteousness?”
3. To this tormenting question, Romans announces that we are made righteous by faith. We cannot accomplish it by doing good; righteousness can be ours only as the free gift of God. This is the central theme that is clearly developed and articulated throughout the entire book of Romans.
4. No book in the Bible speaks more persuasively regarding the radicality of Sin and the sheer wonder and awesomeness of God’s grace than the book of Romans.
5. These themes are examined, explored and applied to both Baptism, our New Life in Christ and our life together in the covenant community created by God’s Spirit, namely, The Church - The Body of Christ.

Sunday, February 21, 2010 – Session 2

1. Verse 1– Paul make his appeal based on (1) our connection as brothers and sisters in Christ and (2) on the basis of God’s mercy.
2. Verse 1- Paul invites us to present our bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, and to understand this way of living as our spiritual calling and worship.
 - (a) We are not our own, we are not “free” to do as we please. Ironically, because our wills are corrupted, doing what we “will or want to do” is the most enslaving form of bondage of all from a biblical perspective. Paradoxically, we are truly free when we are enslaved to Christ.
3. Verse 2 – Paul lifts up our calling and challenge: Not to be conformed to this world but to be transformed by the renewing of our minds.
 - (a) We are called to be **in, but not of** the world. We are not called out of the world. We are not called to be totally against the world. We are not called to be of the world. And we are not called to make the world over or transform the world into our own image. Rather our calling is a more difficult and paradoxical one which is: To be **in, but not of** the world. For a more detailed biblical example of this calling see John 17:1-26.
 - (b) Through God’s Word and the work of The Holy Spirit we may be renewed in our minds in order that we may more accurately and faithfully discern the will of God.
4. Verse 3 – Here Paul challenges and reminds us of Jesus’ teaching and the second great commandment that we are to struggle to love our neighbor as we love our self. (Our struggle is to avoid the twin demons of arrogance (pride) and self loathing (despair).
5. Verse 4 – Paul points out that we are members of the one body of Christ. The Church is the Body of Christ in today’s world.
 - (a) This is one of the key Biblical teachings that is least accepted in the modern world. The modern world scoffs at such a claim, seeing the Church as merely a collection of human beings who make claims that are completely incomprehensible and unverifiable.

Sunday, March 7, 2010 – Session 3

1. In verse 6, Paul reminds us that we have different gifts that are given to us as an expression of God’s grace.
 - (a) It is significant to note that in the Greek New Testament, the word for grace is χάρις (Charis) and the word for gift is χαρίσματα (Charismata) from which we get the word “charismatic.”

- (1) χάρις charis {khar'-ece} **Meaning:** 1) grace 1a) that which affords joy, pleasure, delight, sweetness, charm, loveliness: grace of speech 2) good will, loving-kindness, favour 2a) of the merciful kindness by which God, exerting his holy influence upon souls, turns them to Christ, keeps, strengthens, increases them in Christian faith, knowledge, affection, and kindles them to the exercise of the Christian virtues 3) what is due to grace 3a) the spiritual condition of one governed by the power of divine grace 3b) the token or proof of grace, benefit 3b1) a gift of grace 3b2) benefit, bounty 4) thanks, (for benefits, services, favors), recompense, reward
- (2) χάρισμα charisma {khar'-is-mah} **Meaning:** 1) a favor with which one receives without any merit of his own 2) the gift of divine grace 3) the gift of faith, knowledge, holiness, virtue 4) the economy of divine grace, by which the pardon of sin and eternal salvation is appointed to sinners in consideration of the merits of Christ laid hold of by faith 5) grace or gifts denoting extraordinary powers, distinguishing certain Christians and enabling them to serve the church of Christ, the reception of which is due to the power of divine grace operating on their souls by the Holy Spirit
- (b) For the New Testament and especially for St. Paul, all gifts are an expression of God's grace.
2. In verses 6 & 7, Paul lists some of the gifts of grace that are also marks of the Christian:
- (a) prophecy, in proportion to faith πίστις pistis {pis'-tis} "faith". **Meaning:** 1) conviction of the truth of anything, belief; in the NT of a conviction or belief respecting man's relationship to God and divine things, generally with the included **idea of trust** and holy fervor born of faith and joined with it 1a) relating to God 1a1) the conviction that God exists and is the creator and ruler of all things, the provider and bestower of eternal salvation through Christ 1b) relating to Christ 1b1) a strong and welcome conviction or belief that Jesus is the Messiah, through whom we obtain eternal salvation in the kingdom of God 1c) the religious beliefs of Christians 1d) belief with **the predominate idea of trust** (or confidence) whether in God or in Christ, springing from faith in the same 2) fidelity, faithfulness 2a) the character of one who can be relied on
- (b) ministry, in ministering
- (c) teacher, in teaching
- (d) exhorter, exhortation
- (e) giver, in generosity
- (f) leader, in diligence
- (g) the compassionate, in cheerfulness. It is significant to note that the Greek New Testament word used in this verse is ἡλαρότης hilarotes {hil-ar-ot'-ace} from which we get the English word, "hilarious." **Meaning:** 1) cheerfulness, readiness of mind.
3. In verse 9, we are called to let love be genuine, hate what is evil and hold fast to what is good.
- (a) ἀγάπη agape {ag-ah'-pay} **Meaning:** 1) brotherly love, affection, good will, love, benevolence 2) love feasts
4. In verse 10, Paul challenges us to love one another, however the Greek word used here for love is not agape but φιλαδέλφια philadelphia {fil-ad-el-fee'-ah} **Meaning:** 1) love of brothers or sisters, brotherly love 2) in the NT the love which Christians cherish for each other as brethren.
5. We are called to love one another knowing that our love of one another (philadelphia) is good but not perfect.