

GLENKIRK CHURCH



WEEKLY DEVOTIONS

DEVO

SEPTEMBER 9 - 13, 2024

Romans 12-13

PECULIAR PEOPLE

Sermon Series 9/8 - 11/24



MONDAY

Read **Romans 12:3, 11:11-32**

Paul starts his letter to the Romans by saying, *“To all in Rome who are loved by God and called to be saints”* (1:7a). He is writing to a mixed community of Jews and Gentiles (non-Jews). One of his goals is for this group of Christians to think of themselves rightly in community. He exhorts them to think of themselves with sober judgment (12:3). But what does that mean for them?

If we look back to verses 18 and 20 of Romans 11, Paul tells the Gentiles, *“Do not consider yourself to be superior”* and *“do not be arrogant.”* Paul reminds them that the Jews are the natural branches of a cultivated olive tree while they (Gentiles) are the wild branches that have been grafted in. Some maintain that the Jews’ unbelief created room for Gentiles to *“now share in the nourishing sap of the olive root”* (11:17). The Bible states here, *“salvation has come to the Gentiles to make Israel envious”* (11:11).

Since the Gentiles don’t support the root, but the root supports them, they ought not to think of themselves as superior to the Jews. Instead, they ought to tremble. After all, it was not because of anything they had done that they were grafted in, but God was using them to make the Jews envious. If the Jews as the natural branches can be broken off, so too can the Gentiles who are the wild branches. Not only that, but the natural branches are able to be grafted back in if they do not persist in unbelief.

For these Christians to have a right estimation of themselves, they need to think rightly about their position and status among the people of God. Both Jews and Gentiles are objects of God’s mercy. Earlier in Romans 3:10-12, Paul reminds them of what is written in the Scriptures, that neither Jews nor Gentiles are righteous on their own. None of them does good. Not even one. Therefore, each one stands in need of God’s mercy. This is one way for them to think of themselves with sober judgment.

QUESTIONS

What did the Gentiles have to boast about? What would cause them to view themselves as superior to the Jews? Are there people in your life, at work or school, in your community, or on social media that you are tempted to feel superior to?

PRAYER

ZOE International

Pray for protection and strength for ZOE workers in Thailand, Japan, Mexico, Australia, and here in the U.S. as they share the Gospel and battle the sale of children for sex.

TUESDAY

Read **Romans 12:1-3, 3:9-30**

To think of yourself with sober judgment requires meditating on the mercy of God. If it were not for God being rich in mercy, we would still be dead in our trespasses and sins (Ephesians 2:1-5). All our righteous deeds would still be considered as filthy rags in the eyesight of God (Isaiah 64:6).

“But now a righteousness from God, apart from law, has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify. This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus to all who believe. There is no difference” (Romans 3:21, 22). Knowing that our righteousness comes from God and not from anything we have done eliminates any grounds for thinking of ourselves as superior to others or of being arrogant.

Romans 3:9 offers a sobering reality by saying, *“Jews and Gentiles alike are all under sin.”* We begin our lives *“under sin.”* When we acknowledge that we are included in the *“all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God,”* we are left to contemplate our pride. We have no grounds or justification to view ourselves as higher than another if we ourselves have not lived a perfect sinless life like our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

In Romans 12:1, Paul calls the believers in Rome *“brothers and sisters.”* This mixed community of Jews and Gentiles are now one family because of their common faith in Jesus Christ. They are all recipients of the righteousness that comes from God. The faith they now have comes from God (Romans 12:3; Ephesians 2:8, 9). If you have confessed with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and have believed in your heart that God raised Him from the dead (Romans 10:9), then you also belong to this international family of faith. This too is a sobering thought!

QUESTIONS

Take a few minutes to think about the question: What would it take for you to think of yourself and others with sober judgment? What would it look like for you to have a right estimation of yourself and others? What areas do you need growth in to do so?

PRAYER

ZOE International

Pray for God's leading to find the many children who have been captured or bought and are waiting in desperation to be rescued.

WEDNESDAY

Read **Romans 12:1-3; Philippians 2:1-8**

In Roman 12:1-2, Paul starts with the believer's relationship to God as the foundation for sober judgment. If your relationship with God does not take priority in your life, if it is not in right alignment, then it will be challenging for you to be in right relationship with the people around you. Your relationship with God impacts your relationship with others.

As believers, we must think rightly about God, about others, and about ourselves. One way we can make this happen is by doing as Paul urges—make a conscious choice to reject being conformed to the patterns of this world. Instead, intentionally choose these two things: to be transformed by a renewing of your mind and to have the mind of Christ (Philippians 2:5).

Many in our world are looking to be served. However, to be sober minded we must not conform to the world's ways. We must choose humility like Jesus. Though He was God, He humbled Himself by taking on human flesh and dwelling among us (John 1:1-3, 14). He took on the form of a servant (Philippians 2:7). Jesus did not come to be served but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many (Matthew 20:28; Mark 10:45; John 13:1-17).

To be transformed by a renewing of your mind requires submission of the flesh as modeled by Jesus. He did nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. He valued others above Himself. He did not look out only for His own interest but for the interest of others. This was proven by His becoming obedient to death on a cross. Jesus endured the cross because of the joy that was set before Him (Hebrews 12:2).

Having the mind of Christ will lead you to do as Paul exhorted the believers in Rome to do—offer your body as a living sacrifice to God (Romans 12:1). Give your life in totality to God the way Jesus did. He did not seek to please Himself but the Father who sent Him (John 5:30). He made Himself nothing so that God might be all. He refused to conform to the world's ways but chose God's will and ways.

QUESTIONS

What would it look like in your daily life to reject being conformed to the patterns of this world and instead choose to have the mind of Christ? To humble yourself and serve others? To value others above yourself?

PRAYER

ZOE International

Pray for complete healing and restoration from trauma—spiritual, physical, and psychological—for the children and young teens God has placed in ZOE's care.

THURSDAY

Read **Romans 12:3; Ephesians 1:1-14, 2:8-22; 1 Peter 2:4-7**

To think of yourself with sober judgment means having an accurate view of your identity in Christ and knowing your self-worth. When you placed your faith in Jesus, you were included in Christ and sealed with the Holy Spirit. You have been adopted into God's family. He chose you before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless in His sight.

It was God's will and good pleasure to adopt you as His child and to reconcile you to Himself. Though there was nothing good in you, it was God's predetermined plan to bring about redemption for humanity (Genesis 3:15). God's grace has been lavished on you, His adopted child. You are His handiwork. His workmanship. His masterpiece. How humbling to be chosen by the God of the universe.

You are a part of God's international family. At one time you were not part of God's family; you were separated from Christ. But once you placed your faith in Jesus, you were included in the covenant promises made to the citizens of Israel and were brought near by the blood of Christ. Now, together with the family of God, you have access to the Father by one Spirit and are being built together with His family to become the dwelling place of God by His Spirit.

The physical temple as God's dwelling place among His people no longer exists. Instead, God has chosen a living temple, which incorporates all believers. Like living stones, you as a believer are being built into God's spiritual house, with Jesus Christ as its key foundation, the precious cornerstone. You have been chosen by God, along with the rest of God's family, to be a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession. This is who you are in Christ. This is where your value and worth come from.

You have been chosen for greatness, to do good works which God prepared in advance for you to do. You were chosen to bear much fruit and to use the spiritual gifts given to you (John 15:5; Galatians 5:22-23; Romans 12:6-8). Offering your body as a living sacrifice is one way the Spirit of God produces this fruit in you. As you offer your life to Him, God goes to work in you to bring about His will and good purpose (Philippians 2:13).

QUESTIONS

Do you know who you are in Christ? Will you offer your whole life to Him?

PRAYER

ZOE International

Pray for unity and cooperation as ZOE works collaboratively with and provides vital assistance to government entities, law enforcement, and other organizations.

FRIDAY

Read **Romans 12:3-8**

To think of yourself with sober judgment requires that you have an honest estimation of your gifts and abilities. As I have been studying Romans 12:3, God has taught me that I should neither overestimate nor underestimate the value of my God-given gifts. Each gift is valuable to Him. They have been given to us, not for our personal success or gain, but for the purpose of building up His church and serving others.

As I was praying and asking God what He wanted me to do once I was no longer a full-time caregiver for my father, God impressed upon my spirit to apply to a graduate school in my area. After completing the program, no one was more surprised than I was when He also impressed upon my spirit to apply for my current position. It didn't make sense to pay all that money for a master's degree and then accept a job offer making less than what I made prior to getting the degree. But God reminded me that all that I have belongs to Him. It was His money that paid for my degree. And the skills and abilities I acquired from going through the program came from Him. Obtaining the degree was not for my personal benefit but for the benefit of those He has called me to serve.

God had to remind me that at one point I was separated from Him, but because of His grace I was brought near to Him. I was reconciled to Him and it is no longer I who lives but it is Christ who lives in me (Galatians 2:20). My life is not my own; it belongs to Him. When I confessed Jesus as my Savior and asked Him to be Lord of my life, in return He asked me to pick up my cross and follow Him (Matthew 16:24). He asked me to die to self and to serve Him and Him alone. As such, I asked God to renew my mind, to change the way I think. I wanted to have the mind of Christ. I also offered my body to Him as a living sacrifice (Romans 12:1). I gave Him permission to use me for His glory.

QUESTIONS

What gifts or abilities has God given you? Have you overestimated or underestimated their value? What led you to do so? What are some practical ways you can use those gifts for God's glory?

PRAYER

ZOE International

Pray for provision of all the human and financial resources needed for ZOE to grow its outreach, as well as to care for its current team members and their families.



These devotionals are written by a team of Glenkirk volunteers who represent a range of beliefs within the evangelical spectrum. As such, some of the expressed views may not necessarily represent those of pastoral leadership. If you find yourself challenged by a devo, explore why that might be and, should you have questions or concerns, please reach out to Pastor Kate Wallace Nunneley at KNunneley@GlenkirkChurch.org. If you are interested in joining those who pen Glenkirk devotionals, please contact Pastor Kate.

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