

The Facilitator

Community Groups @ Trinity Presbyterian Church

10/21/18

Text: Romans 14:1-12 (ESV)

Title: Loving the Weak

Teacher: Tim Rice

Surrender through Prayer:

Surrender through prayers for Illumination and Transformation, asking that Jesus would meet with you in this time.

Ice Breaker: When have you felt like you were being “sized up” and the person’s conclusions about you we unmistakably negative?

Engage with the Sermon

Read the passage together

Today we looked at Romans 14 and the Apostle Paul’s urging of the Roman church to love the weaker brothers in their midst. Often in our daily lives we live by conditions as a gauge to evaluate our responsibility to love someone. Whether we measure our circumstances (our internal battle), or we measure someone’s performance (our external battle), we are constantly sizing up people and situations and deciding whether we will love someone. The problem with that kind of living is that it inevitably leads to death and despair when we start to measure ourselves against God. The amazing reality of the gospel is that Jesus himself saw the brokenness of our circumstances and the sinfulness in our hearts, and did not use them as reasons not to love us. He loved us without conditions, and not only that, he took our brokenness and sinfulness upon himself on the cross, and gave us his own righteousness so that when the Father looks at us he has nothing but delight. Because of Jesus’ spirit living in us we are able to live secure in him, honest about our weaknesses, and fully able to love without conditions because that is the kind of love we have received from him.

Reflection Questions:

1. *Tim said we live “sizing up” people and situations and evaluating our willingness and ability to love.*
 - **Internal Conditions: What conditions do you set on your circumstances as prerequisites for being able to love people?** (i.e. When are you unable to love?)
 - **External Conditions: What conditions do you set on other people for them to live up to in order to be “lovable”?** (i.e. Who are you unable to love?)
2. *Tim said that Jesus didn’t only come to free us from the penalty of our sin, he came so that he could marry us and “own” us. We no longer belong to ourselves, we are His.*
 - **How have you lived as if Jesus freed you so you could have things your way?**
 - **What does it mean that Jesus sees our utter failure and sin, and loves us?**
3. *Like the captain of the sailboat who was completely free and secure no matter where the wind came from, we are fully “upheld” by Christ, and we can live secure in any condition. In Christ, we’re no longer bound and weakened by conditions, we’re free to love.*
 - **How have you considered your preferences or conditions to be a strength, rather than a weakness?**

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- *What would it look like to love freely, completely secure in Christ?*

WORSHIP AND PRAYER:

A.C.T.S.

(Spend time in prayer and worship as you consider Adoring God the Father, Confessing your sin and weakness, giving thanks to Jesus, and asking Holy Spirit to transform you. Use this as a time to talk to God about what's been revealed in your heart from this sermon.)

1. ADORATION *(The Father)*

Adore and Worship God for His attributes and actions

2. CONFESSION *(Me)*

Spend time Confessing sin and ways in which you are finite and limited

3. THANKSGIVING *(Jesus)*

Give thanks to Jesus for his salvation (past, present, future)

4. SUPPLICATION *(Holy Spirit)*

Ask Holy Spirit to transform you in specific ways

5. Prepare for Gospel Community *(My Neighbor)*

Pray for those who are on your heart, that God would use you to impact them with His gospel message.

Prayer Items

1. Worship the LORD for how He has welcomed even sinners like us into His household as His own sons and daughters. Praise Him, Father, Son and Holy Spirit for His merciful embrace in the gospel.
2. How have you despised someone for their differences (socially, racially, class, etc.) and thought of yourself as superior? Confess your pride to Jesus, asking Him to cleanse you and change your heart to be genuinely humble and kind.
3. Give thanks to Jesus for His work to love us without condition. Who loves you at your absolute worst?! Thank Him for His power and His graciousness to own us, even in the depths of our guilt and ruin.
4. Who do you know that is not yet a Christian? Pray for them asking the Spirit to use you to encourage them with kindness and love, and to change their heart, enabling them to trust Jesus as their God and Savior.
5. Ask the Holy Spirit to grow your perspective because of His grace. Pray for insight into God's Word, especially into what it means to love as you have been loved, and to show mercy as you've been shown mercy.