

“A ROMANS TWELVE-LIKE CHURCH”

I. Romans 12:1-21

A. We begin today where we began last Sunday--in Romans 12...

- 1) Nobody seemed to be listening last Sunday so I thought I would preach the same sermon over again... Just kidding... ;-)
- 2) Our Vision Statement says what we want to become: *"To be a growing family of believers characterized by a deep and genuine love for God and one another."*
- 3) Romans 12 epitomizes what our vision statement should look like...

B. Romans 12 is what the great doctrines of our faith should look like applied...

- 1) A people whose fully surrendered lives are their style of worship...
- 2) A people whose minds are being renewed and their hearts transformed...
- 3) A people who relish finding and doing God's will in increasing measure...
- 4) A people who do not think of themselves more highly than they ought...
- 5) A people who are unified, exercising their diverse gifts faithfully...
- 6) A people whose love is genuine, authentic, unpretentious, and real...
- 7) A people who hate what is evil but cling to what is good...
- 8) People devoted to one another, who love honoring one another, who are faithful and fervent in serving one another, who are joyful, hopeful, patient, and prayerful.
- 9) A generous people who eager share what they have, who are hospitable.
- 10) A people who bless their persecutors instead of cursing them...
- 11) A people who rejoice with those who rejoice and mourn with those who mourn, who live in Christlike harmony and humility with one another, and who are not ashamed to associate with people who others look down upon...
- 11) A people who seek peace, who leave vengeance up to God, who aren't overcome by evil but who endeavor to overcome evil with good...

C. The thing about a Romans Twelve-like Church is, they will have an excellent platform for proclaiming the Gospel... Being reputable people is better than being people of disrepute or ill repute....

- 1) A legalistic church can preach the Gospel but legalism is the antithesis of the Gospel. The Gospel says our righteousness (right standing) is not earned by our works but by Jesus' works. Legalism says something like: Jesus plus beards & black; or Jesus plus long skirts and buns; Jesus plus something else... Read Romans 1:17...
- 2) A licentious church can also preach the Gospel but it betrays the transformational power of the Gospel to change our hearts, betrays the truth of God's law being inscribed on the tablets of our hearts. Licentiousness says something like: Jesus not only loves and accepts me the way I am, He's just fine with my ongoing life of thievery, immorality, idolatry, addictions, vengeance, or whatever... Read Romans 6:1-2...
- 3) Jesus saved us to give us life & freedom... Jesus saved us to deliver us from evil... I believe a Romans Twelve-like Church is both free and transformational...

D. But if people get to see a Romans Twelve Church and then hear the Amazing Grace embodied in the Gospel proclaimed, I cannot help but think the Holy Spirit will move powerfully to apprehend those in our midst whom He is calling to Himself! Let's keep praying to those ends while remaining expectant...

E. Just who are the occupants of the building at 11544 Summerland Beach Road? How do they look to outsiders? How will they increasingly look going forward?

- 1) Like those in Acts 2:42-47?
- 2) Like those described by Justin Martyr in the second century?
- 3) With God's grace helping us, let's be a Romans Twelve-Like Church...

* Close with Prayer...

Scriptures, Videos, & Bonus Stuff

Romans 12:1-21 (NIV)

1 Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. 2 Do not conform 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. 3 For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly

than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the faith God has distributed to each of you. **4** For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, **5** so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. **6** We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your faith; **7** if it is serving, then serve; if it is teaching, then teach; **8** if it is to encourage, then give encouragement; if it is giving, then give generously; if it is to lead, do it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully. **9** Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. **10** Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves. **11** Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. **12** Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. **13** Share with the Lord's people who are in need. Practice hospitality. **14** Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. **15** Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn. **16** Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited. **17** Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everyone. **18** If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. **19** Do not take revenge, my dear friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," says the Lord. **20** On the contrary: "If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head." **21** Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

John 13:35 (NIV)

35 By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.

Romans 1:17 (NIV)

17 For in the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed—a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: "The righteous will live by faith."

Romans 6:1-2 (NLT)

1 Well then, should we keep on sinning so that God can show us more and more of his wonderful grace? **2** Of course not! Since we have died to sin, how can we continue to live in it?

Acts 2:42-47 (NIV)

42 They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. **43** Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. **44** All the believers were together and had everything in common. **45** They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. **46** Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, **47** praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

Justin Martyr (100-165) on the Church in His Day...

And what kind of lives did they lead? Justin Martyr, a noted early Christian theologian, wrote to Emperor Antoninus Pius and described the believers: *"We formerly rejoiced in uncleanness of life, but now love only chastity; before we used the magic arts, but now dedicate ourselves to the true and unbegotten God; before we loved money and possessions more than anything, but now we share what we have and to everyone who is in need; before we hated one another and killed one another and would not eat with those of another race, but now since the manifestation of Christ, we have come to a common life and pray for our enemies and try to win over those who hate us without just cause."*