

Living Water Fellowship

7th Sunday in Pentecost – 24th July 2022

COME TO JESUS

PRE-SERVICE MEDITATION *A MIGHTY FORTRESS IS OUR GOD (MATT BOSWELL)*

SONG: *Let's Praise the Lord (AT 486)*

WELCOME & PRAYER:

GROW IN HIS GRACE

BIBLE READING: Romans 12:1-8

¹ So, dear brothers & sisters, I plead with you to give your bodies to God because of all he has done for you. Let them be a living & holy sacrifice—the kind he will find acceptable. This is truly the way to worship him. ² Don't copy the behaviour & customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good & pleasing & perfect.

³ Because of the privilege & authority God has given me, I give each of you this warning: Don't think you are better than you really are. Be honest in your evaluation of yourselves, measuring yourselves by the faith God has given us. ⁴ Just as our bodies have many parts & each part has a special function, ⁵ so it is with Christ's body. We are many parts of one body, & we all belong to each other.

⁶ In his grace, God has given us different gifts for doing certain things well. So if God has given you the ability to prophesy, speak out with as much faith as God has given you. ⁷ If your gift is serving others, serve them well. If you are a teacher, teach well. ⁸ If your gift is to encourage others, be encouraging. If it is giving, give generously. If God has given you leadership ability, take the responsibility seriously. And if you have a gift for showing kindness to others, do it gladly.

CHILDREN'S TIME:

BIBLE READING: Romans 12:9-21

⁹ Don't just pretend to love others. Really love them. Hate what is wrong. Hold tightly to what is good. ¹⁰ Love each other with genuine affection, & take delight in honoring each other.

¹¹ Never be lazy, but work hard & serve the Lord enthusiastically. ¹² Rejoice in our confident hope. Be patient in trouble, & keep on praying. ¹³ When God's people are in need, be ready to help them. Always be eager to practice hospitality.

¹⁴ Bless those who persecute you. Don't curse them; pray that God will bless them. ¹⁵ Be happy with those who are happy, & weep with those who weep. ¹⁶ Live in harmony with each other. Don't be too proud to enjoy the company of ordinary people. Don't think you know it all!

¹⁷ Never pay back evil with more evil. Do things in such a way that everyone can see you are honourable. ¹⁸ Do all that you can to live in peace with everyone. ¹⁹ Dear friends, never take revenge. Leave that to the righteous anger of God. For the Scriptures say, "I will take revenge; I will pay them back," says the Lord. ²⁰ Instead, "If your enemies are hungry, feed them. If they are thirsty, give them something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals of shame on their heads." ²¹ Don't let evil conquer you, but conquer evil by doing good.

FAITH CHAT:

1. When have you felt most alone or disconnected from other people? Why was that?
2. Share a time when the Christian community was absolutely essential to your life.
3. If Living Water Fellowship ceased to exist, do you think the people of Wagga Wagga would notice? Would they care? What would be different or lost?

THE MESSAGE: *OPERATION GOSPEL: GOSPEL COMMUNITY*

OFFERING SONG: *One Family (LHS 802)*

PRAYERS:

THE COMMUNION:

Words of Institution & The Lord's Prayer:

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, & the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.

Worship Video during Communion: ALL BECAUSE OF THE CROSS (PAUL BALOCHE)

GO IN HIS POWER

THE BLESSING:

(Name), † child of God,

The love of Christ is at work through you. Amen

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

SONG: *When this Earth was Created [Pentecost Prayer] (LHS 860)*

SHOW HIS LOVE

Group Bible Study/Discussion:

1. Read Romans 12:1-21. What questions immediately come to mind? What do you find most challenging? Why?
2. What does Paul mean by us giving our bodies as a *living sacrifice*? What does this look like in practice? Do you find this challenging? Why is the renewal of the mind essential to a transformed life?
3. What is supposed to be the pattern or guide for the way we live our lives? How does that work for you? How would actively intentionally doing this transform you & the people who are closest to you? How would you feel about them holding you accountable for that?
4. What is the difference in the way Paul talks about our view toward ourselves (12:3-5) & the way the world or friends understand "self-esteem"?
5. In your own words, explain the comparison Paul makes between the church as the "body of Christ" & our human bodies. How do your gifts enrich the life of the church & its ministry here? How might you use them more fully?
6. How would you define the word "love"? How do you think the world defines "love"? Verses 9-18 describe "genuine" love. What does that call you to do? or Not do? What attitude of the heart is essential? What keeps us from loving others this way?
7. In the list of practical commands given in verses 9-21, which do you find most difficult to obey? Why? How does Paul use the Old Testament to undergird his teaching here?
8. Do you feel Paul is being unrealistic in his teaching here, or is he simply pointing to the higher call of the Spirit & the greater capacity & power to obey that the Spirit provides to followers of Jesus? Share how you come to your conclusion.
9. What would happen if more of us actually carried out the commands in verses 14-21? What happens already when evil is repaid by evil & curses returned for mistreatment? We often say, "Two wrongs don't make a right," but what greater power is Paul actually calling on us to live from? How does that ultimately prove victorious?
10. What does this chapter call you to do from now on?