

Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost

Sermon Road Map
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Romans 14:5-9
October 4, 2020

Respect for our Lord leads to healthy respect for others.

- Common notion: *Being a good Christian means you never judge anyone*
 - ◆ Isn't that Paul's point here? Believers don't judge each other over *adiaphora*.
- Not surprised when unbelievers or poorly instructed Christians take a Bible teaching out of context - treat as if it is a chief teaching - *tail wagging the dog*.
 - ◆ Knowing it is a common notion - we need to be clear, to clarify for others
- The closing words: ***whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord.***
 - ◆ Realize: your fellow believer **is a servant of the Lord**
 - ◆ Disrespect for a fellow believer is disrespect for their Lord - our Lord.
 - ◆ ***Who are you to pass judgment on someone else's servant?*** Rom. 14:4
 - ◆ ***...by the mercies of God, ...offer your bodies as a living sacrifice — holy and pleasing to God — which is your appropriate worship. ²Also, do not continue to conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, so that you test and approve what is the will of God — what is good, pleasing, and perfect.*** Rom. 12:1-2
 - The world respects their own, their kind. It looks down on outsiders/different.
 - Or the world embraces and respects others, without discernment.
- The Holy Spirit teaches us how to have **healthy respect** for others.

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- ❖ God's regard for all people is the source of healthy respect
 - Our perverse love of sin + God's justice = ***shame & contempt*** (Dan. 12:2)
 - ◆ There is **nothing respectable** in us. Any good from God we pervert it.
 - God's mercy shows undeserved respect or regard for us.
 - ◆ In mercy God sees our utterly pitiful, helpless, foolish, blind condition.
 - Blaming God for our problem - buying the Devil's lies - fast-track to the pits.
 - ◆ God's mercy also sees a soul - a person - created to be his child & servant
 - Created for a life without sin, living in wisdom and truth, loved by God, loving him, loving one another.
 - God's regard for us values what he made - what he can remake us into.
 - We who know his mercy, forgiveness, renewal, and delight to be his servants and children - are transformed by mercy, to look at **all people** through his mercy.
 - ◆ When we see the sin and foolishness of others - we see ourselves.
 - ◆ When we see the humanity - see God's creation, redeemed by Jesus' blood
 - ◆ Our holy faith - God's word of truth - teaches us to see this in each one.
 - ◆ Contempt for any human being, no matter how wicked, disrespects our God.
 - ◆ **Healthy respect** for others sees a valuable person in a pitiful condition.
 - Notice the honest view of sin as well as the value God's mercy ascribes.

- ❖ This healthy respect reigns in a healthy church.
 - Jim and Beth noticed the number of small churches where their son lives.
 - ◆ *A church grows, then they fight over some dumb issue and split.*
 - That's what Paul addresses: matters God neither commands or forbids
 - ◆ Respect each other's pious conviction and ways of giving thanks to God.
 - ◆ Show gentleness to the weak so they don't act against their conscience.
 - ◆ Don't let the weak bind the conscience of others, putting people under law.
 - This applies what Paul wrote earlier: ¹⁰ ***Be devoted to one another with brotherly love. Think of others as deserving more honor than yourselves.***
 - ◆ That's a healthy respect flowing from seeing others through God's mercy.
 - ◆ Viewed through God's mercy **never ignores**, tolerates, or promotes sin.
 - When you know that sin is the source of our pitiful condition, makes it worse
 - Sin separates from God and works contrary to the reclaiming work of mercy
 - Mercy respectfully points out sin to reclaim and rescue from flesh's reign
 - Go, forgiving in your heart, so resentment and disrespect are expelled.
 - When there's repentance, rush in to pronounce God's mercy, affirm regard
 - Value the impenitent - God's mercy wants them to **see their pitiful** state
 - The church is healthy when Christians know and live God's mission of mercy
 - ◆ Caring enough about each other to:
 - not judge where God doesn't judge, but respect & learn from each other.
 - in mercy bring God's word to rescue those who falsely call sin freedom.
 - ◆ In short: a place where God's mercy produces his kind of love and respect.

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- ❖ God's mercy also leads to respect for all people.
 - Christian values influence our view of what his best for our country & world.
 - ◆ Danger: consider my Christian rooted view of government & policy RIGHT
 - ◆ Such strong convictions can lead to contempt and labeling of *enemies*.
 - Who will listen to you when you treat them with contempt & disrespect?
 - ◆ Let God's mercy make you different, reflecting real Christianity.
 - ◆ Listen to others to see what insights or problems you've missed.
 - ◆ God can use this to lead others to inquire about God's mercy.
 - When others strongly disagree with you do you feel attacked, judged, or guilty?
 - ◆ Don't take delivery of guilt - intended or not. You live in God's forgiveness.
 - ◆ Examine yourself in view of God's mercy. Always willing to grow and be changed by God's word. - Spotting falsehood. - Recognizing what God neither commands or condemns, a matter of personal judgment and conviction.
 - ◆ See how liberating that is! What a witness we give to life under God's mercy.

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