

Mother's Day

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[0 : 00] If you would turn with me to Romans chapter 12. And my message this morning is going to be righteousness practiced.

And we'll read the first 20 verses there. Therefore, I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship.

And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.

For through the grace given to me, I say to everyone among you, not to think more highly of yourself than you ought to think, but to think so as to have sound judgment, as God has allowed it to each a measure of faith.

For just as we have many members in one body, and all the members do not have the same function, so we who are many are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another.

[1 : 14] Since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to each of us, each of us is to exercise that accordingly. If prophecy according to the proportion of his faith, if service in his serving, or he who teaches in his teaching, or he who exhorts in his exhortation, he who gives with liberality, he who leads with diligence, he who shows mercy with cheerfulness, Let love be without hypocrisy, adhor what is evil, cling to what is good, be devoted to one another in brotherly love, giving preface to one another in honor, not lagging behind indulgence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord, rejoicing in hope, persevering in tribulation, devoted to prayer, contributing to the needs of the saints, practicing hospitality, bless those who persecute you, bless, and do not curse, rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep, be of the same mind toward one another, do not be halty in mind, but associate with the lowly, do not be wise in your own estimation, never pay back evil, for evil to anyone, we expect what is right and slight of all men, if possible, so far as it depends upon you, be at peace with all men, never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of God, for it is written, vengeance is mine,

I will repay, says the Lord, but if your enemy is hungry, feed him, and if he is thirsty, give him drink, for in doing so, you will heap burning coals upon his head, do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good, Romans chapter 12, a great chapter, this chapter gives us the do's, you know, and if you go through the first 11 chapters of the book of Romans, this is God telling us what he's done for us, but when we get to chapter 12, and this is one of the differences in Paul's teaching, once he gives out the doctrine that he wants to give out, and the things that God has done for us, and God has done these things for us, because we didn't do it our own part, God had to do it for us, he says, now that you know, now that you know what God has done for you, now that you know you have this new life, start doing these type of things, and he's given practical suggestions, these are not commands that he's giving,

God is not, Paul is here, he's not giving us commands, he's giving us suggestions, because what does he say there, he says, I urge you brethren, he urges you, he's not commanding you to do these things, this is something that we want, we should want to do, so when we get into chapter 12, Paul exhorts, or he advises, and what he's doing is applying the teaching, he's already gave us, in the first 11 chapters, of the book of Romans, and some of the arguments he presents, in those first 11, verse 120, Romans chapter 1, verse 120, therefore you are without excuse, he's telling the whole nation of Israel, but he's also telling the Gentile population in Rome, you are without excuse, and we see that back in Romans 1, verse 120, and verse 320, therefore by the deeds of the law, there shall no flesh be justified, the deeds of the flesh is not going to get you anything, the works will not get you anything, there's no, the deeds of the flesh shall not be justified, verse 321, and this is what's great about 321, what's it say there, the very first word, but, it's a contrast, but now

righteousness is imputed, it's given to us, it's placed in our checking account, we can now draw checks upon this new righteousness, that God has imputed into our life, and what a blessing, what a blessing that is, verse 328, therefore we conclude, that a man is justified by faith, without the deeds of the law, so it's only through Jesus Christ, and what he did at the cross, that we are justified, we are studying also Romans, in our Sunday school class,

Les Feldick is going through it, and we've been going through chapter 1, and 2 and 3, here in the last several weeks, so we've been dealing with this quite a bit, there in Sunday school class, verse 5, chapter 5, verse 1, therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with our God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, did you get that, we have peace, we have peace with our Lord, and we know we can do that, because of what he's done for us, and we know that we're saved, we know that we have a new life, verse 8, therefore is now no condemnation, now no condemnation, to them who are in Christ Jesus, and these are the things, and many many other things, that he's been laying out, in his first 11 chapters, of the book of Romans, and now he's saying, now that you have this great information, now that you know, that you've been saved, now that you know, you have a new life, what are you going to do about it, are you going to stay the same, as you've always been, or is it going to change you, is it going to change the way you live, is it going to change the way you talk, is it going to change the way, you love your wife, your mother, your children, all these questions, have to come to mind, and we do change, don't we, when we accept the Lord Jesus Christ, into our life, it's the greatest thing, that happens, and hey, a new life starts, sometime we don't get, flashing in the fireworks, and we go out, and start evangelizing, on the street, but you know, we do start changing, and we start changing, the instant, that we accept Jesus Christ, into our life, that spirit starts to work, and it works through us, and to us, and we all grow, and we all grow, at different times, and different timing, but we do grow, in Jesus Christ, so now chapter 12, begins the practical section, of the book of Romans, 12, one says, therefore I urge you brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies, a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service, of worship, here Paul is speaking, and he's pleading, with the Roman believers, and we know this, and he's urging them, he says the laws,

I commanded you, he's not commanding, but he's urging, he says I beseech you, I urge you, I beseech you, legal obedience, is on fear, if we depend on, the law, or for somebody, telling us what to do, or commands, we do it out of fear, but what he's saying here, is read these words, take them into your heart, and I urge you, to live them out, in your life, so it's one thing, to do things, because somebody tells you, it's another thing, to live it, out in your life, and that's what he's talking about, he also talks about, a living sacrifice, and that living part, is us, in our daily living, that we do, so Paul here, is pleading with the Romans, and he's also pleading with us, Paul is addressing believers, because that's, that's why he went to Rome, he went to Rome, to talk to those, that have accepted Jesus Christ, and their life, and, you know, it's interesting, Paul, when most of the letters, that Paul wrote, he wrote to letters, that, places that he'd already been, well, he'd never been to Rome, he kept telling, in some of the other letters, he says,

[9 : 55] I want to come to Rome, and my intention, is to get there, but he never got there, he could never get there, to Rome, to teach these people, this new way of life, and he always wanted to do that, and of course, he got to do that, but not the way, that he intended to do it, he got to do it, as a prisoner, instead of, a missionary, which is what he wanted to do, but, so he's talking to fellow believers, those who know Jesus Christ, as our personal Savior, how did that, how did these people in Rome, get that information, and we know how, Galatia, Ephesians, Ephesus, and some of these places, Paul went there, the 12 apostles, they were going there, to these places, giving out the message, but it appears here in Rome, that they got this information, but they got it, from who?

Well, they got it from other believers, you know, at Pentecost, the Jewish population, came in from all over the world, that world, at that point, and there was many people, from many parts of the country, there, during Pentecost, and when they give this message, out, and the Jews there, finally realized that, Jesus Christ, we did put Jesus Christ, on that cross, and he is our Messiah, and they knew the word, at that point, and they went home, they told others, and it's just like it is today, if we want other people, to know about Jesus Christ, we have to be the ones, to give out the information, it goes from one person, to another, and that's what happened, there in Rome, the people got there, they preached, what they had heard, churches got started, and when Paul got there, he was able to talk, to fellow believers, and that's who he's addressing, when he's talking, to the Romans here, he says, to present your bodies, to present yourself, when we talk about, presenting this body, we're

talking about, mind, soul, and physical self here, and he's saying, present your bodies, present yourself, to God, it, when God gave you your body, you are giving him, all that you are, and all that you have, so when we do that, you say,

Lord, you saved me, by your wonderful grace, and mercy, and though I have sinned, and failed, I give myself to you, to do with, what you want me to do, and that should be, one of our, our prayers, that when we talk to the Lord, is to give ourselves, to the Lord, a living, and holy sacrifice, again, I mentioned the living part, that's, that's us, in our daily life, what are we doing, what are we doing, with the things, that God has given us, of course, this stands in contrast, to the slain sacrifices, required for the nation, of Israel, you know, they did this, on a daily basis, they did it, on a weekly basis, once a year, the high priest, went in, and, did a sacrifice, for all the nations, of Israel, once a year, and that was a place, that nobody else, could go to, and it was designated, just for the high priest, to go in, and sacrifice, for the nation of Israel, for their sins, and I think, one interesting thing, about that is, when the high priest, went in, they stood, there was nothing, there was nothing, in that, that holy place, and no place to sit, he had to stand, and I think, in contrast, when Christ sacrificed, and he gave for us, and he took that sacrifice, the only sacrifice, that we could give him, or give our father, when he went to heaven, he is now seated, at the foot, of the father, he doesn't have to get up, and do this again, and again, and again, but what we're talking about here, is our living sacrifice, so we are to do that, on a daily basis, and we can do that, by just the way we live, it's not something, that we do to be saved, by any stretch of the means, we're saved, by only one way, and that's by accepting,

Jesus Christ, and when he did it to cross, and once we, once we realize, all the things that come to us, all the blessings, that come to us, then we need to, let those out, and go to other people, as well, acceptable to God, well pleasing, God is delighted, by our sacrifices, and that, you know, the sacrifices, that we're talking about today, are nothing like the sacrifices, back there in the Old Testament, but we do sacrifice, and we can do different things, that would be a sacrifice to God, acceptable to God, which is our reasonable service, in other words, it's something that's logical, it's a logical thing to do, if God has done this for us, then we should, reasonably and logically, say we're going to do this for God, may Romans 12, well be a constant reminder, every believer, that we are not our own, because we have been bought, with a price, we don't have the right, to use our body, as we please, we are bought by blood, and bound by love, we are to present ourselves, to God, as to those who are alive, from the dead, and the death, we're talking about, is our spiritual death, Galatians 1, 4 says, we read that our Lord, gave himself for our sins, that we might deliver us, from the present evil world, that we live, I this world, and I are ever prone, to adapt ourselves, to the environment, that we live in, so even though, we're dead to this world, we still have that, propensity to, go to the world, and that's what we have, we have that propensity, just to follow into our environment, that we're in, and we see that, on a daily basis, and it's hard not to, that we, that's, hence Paul's exhortation, in verse 2, says, do not be conformed, and do not be conformed, to this world, but be transformed, by the renewing, of your mind, so that you may prove, what the will of God is, that which is good, and acceptable, and perfect, notice here, that there's two commands, the first is a negative command, what we should not do, and then the second, is a positive command, these are the things, that we should do, second Corinthians chapter 4, says we learn, that Satan is the God, of this world, and when we were unsaved, we're a part of this world, the satanic world, and we are, we were all a part of that,

[16:38] Demas, who was considered, to be a loyal believer, in Colossians chapter 4, and was later described, by Paul in these tragic words, now this is one of the apostles, and people that was following, Paul around, he was his friend, he was out there teaching, he was out there, doing the things, that Paul was doing, but these are the things, he said about Demas, for Demas has forsaken me, having loved, this present world, so at first, you know, he gave up, he gave the signs, of this new Christian faith, and he was out there, doing the things, that he should be doing, but down deep, he was still of this world, he had not given this world up, and he let the world's temptations, come to him, and this is what Paul, is talking about, finally in Titus chapter 2, verse 12, it says, believers are taught by grace, to live godly, in this present age, we are in the world, but we are not to live, as those who are, of this world, or who are part, of this world system, which is in opposition, to the true, and living God, we're of this world, but we're not to be, a part of this world, so be conformed, not to this world, this verb means, to be formed like, to be formed to, to be molded, don't be molded, don't be fashioned, don't be shaped,

Paul is saying, don't let the world, squeeze you into its mold, don't be molded, by the mannerisms, speech, expressions, styles, and habits, of this world, and that's not easy either, with all the temptations, that comes before us today, with the internet, the TV, and all the things, that's out there, many Christians, suppose that they can better, win the loss to Christ, if they adapt themselves, to the worldly environment, that they live in, but this is a false assumption, God says, be different, if we're different, that's what's going to make, somebody look at us, they're going to say, what is different, about this man, what is different, about this woman, why when I talk to her, do I have a sense, that there's, something going on here, that's spiritual, well, they're not living, the same lifestyle, you are, if I'm living, the same lifestyle, that you're living, how can I be, a good witness to you, so there's many, that say, well, if you're going to witness, to somebody, you need to be, where they're at, so go out there, to the bars, go out there, to the places, that these people are at, and do your witnessing, that's not the way,

God wanted it, God wants us, to live our life, for him, and then the people, is going to come, and they're going to know, the difference, they're going to know, the difference, you just act, any child, people, they look at mom and dad, they know what's going on, look at your co-workers, they know what's going on, in your life also, they see what's going on, in your life, and if you, let them know, that what you stand for, and they see it, in your walk, they're going to see it, they're going to know, a difference, and there's going to be, a difference between you, and the other group, of people that they work with, so don't be part, of this world, don't join up, with the other part, of the world, just so that you can, be a witness to them, there should be, we be a witness, yeah we should be a witness, but let them see it, in you first, and then you can go to them, and you won't have any trouble, when you go to them, because they're going to, know you, and how you walk, being transformed, is a process, it takes time, in Christian life, as a believer, it's more being, conformed to your image, on a day to day basis,

I want to be more like you today, than I was yesterday, so it's a day to day thing, we just grow, and grow, however, we do not change, ourselves do we, who does the changing, that's that Holy Spirit, that's working in us, if it was left to me, I probably wouldn't do it, but I'm glad, the Spirit is there, and it's working into my heart, and telling me, edging me, the way I should go, and of course, how else is that done, it's also done by, being here this morning, going to church, fellowship, with fellow believers, all these type things, give us the, input that we need, to be able to do, the things that we're talking about, being transformed, it's also in the present tense, and that means that, we're to be constantly, transformed, transformed, so it's just not today, or tomorrow, it's continuous, and it's going to be continuous, until the Lord comes, it's just that, that type process, so it's not a process, that it will not end, until Jesus Christ returns, how is this transformation, to take place, when you read the word, what there's, what is it saying, by the renewing, of your mind, now folks, that's, that's something, that we have to do, as believers, we have to renew, the mind, because,

I'm saturated, with my present, my, my other life, everything that's up here, is saturated, from what I did before, how I thought before, how I lived before, so the only, the only way, I'm going to change, is to renewing, of the things, that's up there, the things, that I used to do, I know now, are not right, that's being renewed, so it's renewing, of your mind, on a day-to-day basis, and you change, it may take you years, for some of the things, in your life, to change, but you're going to be, reading your word, and eventually, you're going to see, that word, and it's going to say, I've read that, a hundred times, and I didn't know, what it meant, I was confused by it, but you know, all of a sudden, just boom, now I know, what that means, I've renewed, my mind, and now I can start, acting upon that renewal, and that's what, that's what renewing, our mind, is all about, all about, so the believer, who's being transformed, is constantly, proving, testing, and discovering, what will, what God's will, is in our life, and when we find out, when we read God's word, and we find out, what his word means, then we live it, and we test it out, so the heart cry, of the believer, should be,

[23 : 24] I want what God wants, no more, no less, I want nothing, but God's best, not my will be done, not my will be done, but thine Lord, and that's what, our prayer should be, verse three, in verse two, we learn that, we must follow, the spirit of God, to be transformed, unto his image, and likeness of Christ, if we are going, to be like Christ, then we must, must also be humble, and this is what, Paul's point is, in verse three, I say this, not to think, more highly, than you ought to think, this is Paul's way, of giving us, a little gentle, command, or reminder, through the grace, given unto me, Paul has received grace, God's grace, to be an apostle, and his apostle, is now writing, to these Roman believers, and giving them, gentle, loving, concerning, humility, giving us, information, about humility, humility, we must think, correctly, about ourselves, and not be puffed up, with an

exaggerated, and realistic, unrealistic idea, of the importance, of ourselves, or superiority, against other people, we must not have, high, lofty, proud view, of ourselves, but we need to have, God's view, of ourselves, but think, is to have sound judgment, in other words, having a sound mind, mental health, think sensibly, and seriously, and to have it balanced, in a correct estimate, of yourself, you know, sometimes we think, that we're the only ones, out there, you know, I'm a real good person, but that's probably, not the best way, to be thinking, about ourselves, we need to be humble, we need to be there, to serve other people, and not just to be, thinking about ourselves, so a believer, who thinks too highly, of himself, compares himself, with others, so we find ourselves, comparing ourselves, to other people, and it's going to be, hard to be humble, we just need to live that, in our lives, and people is going to know about, Paul wants us to understand, that every believer, has a special place, in the body of Christ, and has a special gift, and we need to treat people, that way, Romans chapter 12, verses 4 and 5, just as it is in the human body, so it is with the body of Christ, there is one body, but many members, and with this many members, come many gifts, and the gifts, that we have, come from God, and each one of us, the moment, we accept Jesus Christ, in our life, he also gives us a gift, have you ever wondered, what your gift is, I know I wondered, and I even still wonder, sometimes, if I actually know, what my gift is, but God has given us, the gift, and it's our job, to find out, what that gift is, and when we find out, what that gift is, to start doing that gift, and it could be many, many, many things, and we're going to be talking, about some of those, but if you have a gift, and you know what it is, shame on you, if you're not using it, you got to use your gifts, that's why God gives them to you, and he gives every believer, a different gift, so we need to find out, what that gift is, and you know sometimes, other people may tell you, what your gift is, because they're sitting back, watching you, so if somebody comes up to you, and says, hey Ron, you know what your gift should be, you know what your gift is, and I say, no I really don't know what it is, well your gift is this, pay attention, because that person, has been witnessing you, and been watching you, and he said, you have these characteristics, you ought to be doing, these things that, that the Lord has already, given you a gift to do, why aren't you out there doing it, so find out what your gifts are, and when you have that gift, start using it, so Paul now starts talking, about spiritual gift, and he's giving us all gifts, gifts differing, all the members have different gifts, and different abilities, with different, which complement each other, and this is illustrated, by the human body, of course, we have many members, and one member, can't do something, without the other member, doing something else, and it's just amazing, how this body is designed, that God has put all this stuff, into active service, but it happens, and when you have something wrong, when you get a boo-boo, something goes, you know, you have a reflex, don't you, so this body is just amazing, and this is exactly, what the gifts, that God gives to us is, it's amazing too, the number of gifts, that's out there, for people to use, things, so when we find out, what these gifts are, we're to exercise, these gifts, all spiritual gifts, should be exercised, in faith, looking to God, looking to his word, looking to maintain, a healthy relationship, with Christ, and one of the gifts, is the gift of prophecy, as we see in, in chapter four and five, in the Old Testament, the prophets were spokesmen, or mouthpiece for God, and they spoke as a prophet, and they had inspired speech, and what do I mean by, inspired speech, well God put it there, they got there no other way,

God spoke to these, Old Testament prophets, and as you read through, the Old Testament, you're going to see, time and time again, where God spoke, he spoke to Abraham, he spoke to Jacob, when Jacob had done, all the deceitful things, that he had done, and he was going to his, brother-in-law, or his mother's brother Laban, he was asleep, and God came down, and talked to him, and told him, that he would also be, a part of this new nation, so the prophets, had God speaking to him, and it was inspired words, the prophets, were men who spoke, under the immediate influence, of the spirit of God, and delivered divine communication, relative to doctrinal truths, to duty, and to future events, and one of the ways, that the Old Testament people, when they knew, that they had a prophet, is when the prophet, said something, it actually happened, you can just bet, on it happening, and that was one of the, characteristics of the,

Old Testament prophets, in the early church now, there was a great need, for prophecy also, because the early churches, did not have a complete, New Testament, it took decades, for these books, to be written, so, if I'm starting, a new church, or God is starting, this new church, and they got people, scattered all over, the countryside, how's he going, to get his message out, well we had the 12 apostles, we know that, and of course, their job was prophecy, part of their job, was

prophecy, but they could not, have got it done, if it had just been, the 12 apostles, there was other prophets also, and they got their word, from these 12 apostles, and then they went out, and prophesied, to other places, as it's going to these, other towns, and villages, and that's how the word, got spread about, so prophecy, was getting God's word, out to other people, and during that early, period of the church, it had to be people, that was getting God's word, from the apostles, because now we have, a brand new message, and God is not doing it, the same way now, and this message, is coming from the apostle Paul, from Peter, from all these apostles, and then, these prophets, are going out, and prophesizing, giving out,

[31 : 05] Jesus's words, to these, to these places, as they go, now a lot of people, would say, well, we have prophets today, and we need to think, about that seriously, do we actually, have prophets today, there's a lot of prophets, people on television, would probably say, they're prophets, they can tell you, the future, well, don't give them, any of your money folks, but we don't need, prophecy today, do we, why don't we need, prophecy today, it's all been given, it's all right here, all the New Testament, books have been written, so we don't need, prophecy anymore, because it's already, been given out, to us in detail, so if we're saying now, that we need, prophets to come in, and tell us the thing, that's going to happen, in the future, we can tell them, we already know, what's going to happen, in the future, we already know, the end of the story, don't we, it's all been given to us, so I think prophecy, had its reason, in the Old Testament, it also had its reason, in the New Testament, but I think also, like a lot of other things, the gifts, that were given out, for this early church, as the church grew, and as it became, started growing, some of these gifts, started vanishing away, and I think, that's probably, one of the things, with prophecy, we don't need prophecy, today, because it's already, been given, and a lot of the other, spiritual gifts, are in the same category, and, we definitely believe that, that a lot of the, spiritual gifts, were given for a purpose, and a purpose was there, when that early church, was starting, so, the gift of prophecy, it was a temporary gift, it's a strong, it's strongly suggested, and I believe, that is the case, 12-7, the gift of ministry, this is the gift, of serving, humble service, and,

I know, there's a lot of people, in this congregation, today, that has that gift, of serving, that's just a simple, gift, that you have, to serve other people, to give your heart, to give your time, to other people, and, and, that's what the gift of serving, is all about, all believers, ought to have this gift, but, I know from experience, by just watching people, here at Grace Even, that some people, have this gift, and they can use it, to the max, and that's what churches, are all about, we have people, that can do that, and we have people, that can do other things, the gift of teaching, this involves, indoctrination, putting doctrine of God's truth, into the hearts, and minds of the people, and, we have, a lot of people today, who have that gift, of teaching, and of course, we have the greatest, teacher of all, I think, with our pastor, Marv, I don't think anybody, has any better information, and knowledge, than Marv does, as far as getting up here, and teaching, I don't know, that he's ever gotten up here, and preached,

Marv is a teacher, we call him a preacher, but I think Marv, is a teacher, and, that's been his goal, ever since he started, over 50 years ago, is to teach God's word, and he does that, every Sunday, that he's up here, so, if you have the gift, of teaching, be open to it, a lot of people say, whoa, there is no way, you're going to get me up there, and do any teaching, that's not my gift, well, you may see somebody, in a different light, and say, you know, I think that, I think that guy's gift, is teaching, well, if you, if that's your case, just get alongside of him, and talk to him, and eventually, you may get him, to where he would want, to do some teaching, and the best way, to learn how to teach, is to do it, a little bit at a time, start in Sunday school, someplace, go someplace else, and all of a sudden, you'll find that, you do have the gift, of teaching, and if that's your gift, that's what you should be doing, you should be teaching, so the gift of teaching, the wonderful gift, teachers get their, information, a little bit different, than what the prophets did, we get it by studying, God's word, the prophets, they got it from God himself, so there's a big difference there, so the teachers, we're talking about today, if any of them, say that the Lord, spoke to them, and this is what the Lord, wants me to say today, I want you to go out there, and sell your car, and all this type stuff, we probably better not, believe them, but the gift of teaching, is they get it from the God's word, and when they study God's word, that's what they give out, the gift of exhortation, this is a gift, of being able to comfort, to encourage, to help others, when they need comfort, and again, we have, lots of people, that do that, on a daily basis, and these are the type, people that we need, in a church, with many members, to be able to do, the gift of giving, the word means, to give a part of, to

impart, to contribute, to share, to contribute, to the needs of others, in some way, and what the word, says here, is do it, simplicity, in other words, generously, liberally, we are to give, and be good givers, some people, are especially gifted, at that also, so be good givers, it's not, always just the money, part of it, it's also, other different ways, that we can give, to our church, and to our community, and we should be, thinking about that, the gift of ruling, this word means, to stand before, hence to be at the head, and I guess, when we're talking, about churches, when we think about, about rulers, we're talking about, our pastors, we're also talking, about our board of elders, we're talking about deacons, these are the people, who lead, and if you are the leader, and again, a lot of people say, oh,

I couldn't do that job, yeah, you can, and if you see somebody, that you think, ought to be a leader, come to one of the elders, and tell them, because, well, the way we choose, our leadership here, at grace, is once a year, we have our annual, business meeting, and, an elder, is only allowed, to be an elder, for three years, and after that three years, he has a three year, grace period, which he can continue, being an elder, but after that six years, he cannot be, an elder, for at least one year, so every six years, we have, have to sit down, and say, whoa, we're not, we're going to be, missing an elder this year, who are we going to choose, as an elder, well, we look to our congregation, and we know, that there's leaders, out there, and, so if you know, of a leader out there, come to one of the elders, and tell them about it, and we'll be sure, to get that, presented, to the board of elders, so be an elder, if you're going to do it, do it, with a good heart, with cheerfulness, the gift of showing mercy, this refers to those, having compassion, someone afflicted, somebody that's sick, needy, or souring, and these are the people, that can go to them, and show them compassion, and we have a lot of people, that can do that, so if you're doing, if you're one of those type people, do it with cheerfulness, there's nothing better, than having a cheery, face come to you, and talk to you, and help to cheer you up, it's hard to do that, if you're not cheerful yourself, love,

[38 : 48] Romans 12, 9 talks about love, and of course, that's the, and it talks about, doing without hypocrisy, and of course, that's agape love, and agape love, is the love that, you know, we just give of ourselves, to somebody else, give, give, and give, and that's what marriage, is all about, that's what agape love, is all about, it's when you love, somebody else more, than you love yourself, and your whole thought process, is on that person, and not yourself, if your thought process, is on yourself, all the time, that's not agape love, that's not even real love, at all, that's love, with hypocrisy, because you're trying to, to tell somebody, that you love them, and really, you don't mean it, you mean something else, so, don't be that way, God tells us to love, but do it, without hypocrisy, do it, because it's a feeling, that's inside your heart, and you wouldn't have it, any other way, no other way, and, we've got a lot of people here,

I was talking to somebody, the other day, celebrated 55 years, of wedding bliss, now that's, that's just something, that's unheard of today, and why is that, because people have problems, loving somebody, to that extent, that they're willing, to live their whole life, with them, nowadays, it seems, well, if they think I'm bad, or if they think this about me, well, the heck with that, that's not agape love, that's just, the love that we have, in this world today, that you see every day, on the front page, and on TV, that is not agape love, agape love, is when we love, where we're continually giving, sin, and of course, the only experience, or the best example, of that, is what Jesus Christ, did for us, you talk about, agape love, he gave his life, when we get to the place, where we would give our life, for our loved one, that's agape love, and that's what he's, talking about here, he also says there, adore hate, adhor, or hate, what is evil, that we can do, are we supposed to hate, is that a sin to hate, some people probably say, yeah, it is, that's one of the sins, well,

I think we found out today, that sin is not the problem, it's the old nature, that's the problem, it's what's in his heart, and, the word says, we're to adore, what is evil, or adhor, what is evil, or hate, what is evil, so if there's something evil, going out there, yeah, hate it, hate it to the place, where you try to change it, that's what God wants us to do, so again, cleave to what is good, okay, if we hate what's evil, then cling to what's good, stand up for it, be ready to defend it, every day, if something is right, then cleave to it, be there, make it whole, rejoicing in hope, Romans 12, 12, what can I say about that, as believers, we are constantly rejoicing, in the hope that we have, and what better hope, that we have, to know that, one day, we're going to have eternal life, with our Lord, and one day, this is all going to be over with, that one day, he will return, for his believers, and that righteousness, that we have today, which is a growing process, will be complete, at that point, that he returns, by righteousness, is complete, what a great blessing, that will be, what a hope, that we

have, so hope, rejoicing in hope, that's what we should be doing, preserving in tribulation, well that's not a very good one,

I don't like to preserve in tribulation, I don't like it, when things go wrong, I don't like it, when people hurt me, but he says, preserving tribulation, carries the idea, of staying under, the trials of life, preserving, bearing up, staying with it, hanging in there, and that's what we ought, to be doing as Christians, because we're going to have, people hurt us, but stand up to it, stand up under it, and we'll be better off for it, and so, preserve in tribulation, be devoted to prayer, prayer is so important, in our life, and, how do we pray, there's a hundred different ways, we can pray, but we need to be prayer warriors, and we can do that, while we're driving the car, we can do it, while we're on the job, we can do it any place, we can offer a prayer up, for somebody, and of course, we can always do it, in our daily prayers, but prayer, is essential, for the Christian believer, and we should be about, praying every day, we ought to be, contributing to the needs, of the saints, this is one of the things, he's talking about sharing, so we ought to be willing, to share, for the saints, and who's the saints, all of us, we're all saints, there's Mr. Saint, right down there, if you ever talk to Elmo, he'll say hello saint, so he knows, we're saints, we are saints, a lot of people, would want to contradict that, and say, well you're calling yourself, a saint, how dare you, to call yourself a saint, well, we know some information, that other people, may not know, and that is, when we accept Christ, into our life, we, have everything, that Jesus Christ has, it's all been given to us, and we are saints, we're fellow believers, so we need to be, contributing to our saints, which means, we should be, contributing to our churches, back in when this church, was started, we've seen how, the fellow believers, treated each other, matter of fact, even went to almost, where it was a, communal type living, where they sold everything, they had, to give to their, their own people, and of course, we see as that unfolded, and God, stopped dealing, with the nation of Israel, for a while, that that changed, but we're still, to be giving to the saints, in the different ways, that we do today, giving, continuously giving, in Romans 12, 14, bless those, who persecute you, bless and do not curse, now that's a, difficult one too,

Paul is referring, to those, who chase after, and pursue believers, with a hostile intent, and you may have, that happening to you, once in a while too, that there's always, somebody out there, that wants to persecute you, and today, it seems like, the Christians, are being persecuted, here in the United States even, it's a lot more, available, over in the other, parts of the countries, and the world, but here in the United States today, the persecution, is becoming a real thing, for the Christian church, and I think it's going to happen, more and more, and more, so, when this happens to you, bless, do not curse, bless, do not curse, when people, persecute you, rejoice with those, who rejoice, and weep with those, who weep, this is a Christian, sympathy, and sharing, and understanding, with other people, I don't think that's, should be hard for us to do, and I think when, somebody has something, that's going on in life, it's very easy for us, to have sympathy for that, but we also, should have that, and also rejoicing, when they rejoice, being in the same mind, verse 16, toward one another, we are Christians, and we should live in harmony, and when we do, we'll have that same mind, as the others, in our Christian life, do not be wise, in your own estimation, again, that's going back, to what we talked about earlier, this is a warning, against being conceited, and having a very high, opinion of yourself, think about what, how God sees you, and don't think about, what other people, see you as, don't try to be better, than other people, so, see that,

[47 : 11] I think, I'm not going to get done, so I'm going to go on down, to some, this is one, Romans 12, 18, if possible, as far as it depends upon you, be at peace, with all men, do you get that, connotation there, if possible, be at peace, with all men, so does that mean, it's not possible, yeah, it is, it's possible, that I cannot, keep peace with you, because I want to, keep peace with you, but you won't have, anything to do with it, I cannot keep peace, with you, if you don't want, peace with me, there's no way, I can change that, so, unless I say, I can give you, new information, that's going to change, your mind, you're not going to be, at peace with me, no matter what I say, so what he's saying, here is, be, if it's, if it's, as long as it's, well, what's it say, if possible, is it depends upon you, be at peace, with all men, so our, main objective, is to be at peace, with all men, and if that can't happen, then you just have to, walk away, and move on, because if you can't change, a person's mind, then there's no, setting there, and trying to change, his mind, and worrying about it, so, if that possible, be at peace, with all men, never take your own, revenge beloved, but leave room, for the wrath of God, that's very, difficult for us too, we want to get, our own revenge, don't we, if somebody hurts me,

I want to go get them, and that's just, that old man instinct, I want to get that person, God says, if you do that, then you're not leaving me, the room for the wrath, and I will repay, these people, the wrath will come, but we say, well when's it going to come, God will repay, God's wrath will come, upon these people, don't take it, and try to make it your wrath, because it's not yours to give, for it is written, vengeance is mine, I will pay, says the Lord, it is natural, with most of us, to resist wrath, and to resist the person, who is doing us the wrong, but this would only come, this would come, personally close, to displaying the very attitude, and the adversarial, displays that would be wrong, so in other words, if we're going out there, and trying to take care, of the wrath ourselves, it's against God's principles, let him take care, of the wrath, and the last says, verse 20, here we have love, of our enemies, set forth in practical, terms, true love, for one's enemy, involves choosing, to give that person, what he needs, in spite of how he feels, towards that person, so if I've got somebody, that done me wrong,

I know, what he deserves, that I need to give him, what he doesn't deserve, and if I do that, then he says, I'll be, heaping coals, of fire upon his head, and what does that mean, I guess, I guess that means, if I do the right thing, then he's going to see, how bad he was, because I'm just putting the coals, back on top of him, I had the opportunity, to jump on him, like everything, but I don't take that opportunity, I treat him in the right way, and that's what forgiveness, is all about, forgiveness, is probably the most difficult, one of the most difficult, things that we do, in our life, and that's, when somebody wrongs us, is to be able, just turn that over, and give it to the Lord, but, I think Ephesians chapter 4, tells us, we don't have a choice, Christ, forgave us, when he died on that cross, how can we do any more, than what he did, we have to forgive people, if I can't, if he can forgive me, with his death, then how can I sit here, and say,

I can't forgive you, because, you took my car, and drove it further, and you should have, or anything else like that, it just doesn't add up, Christ died on that cross, that I might live again, and he forgave me, of all my sins, and I'm to stand here, and say, I can't forgive you, may it never be, may it never be, well we've run out of time, so, thank you for the opportunity, to be here this morning, let's close in a word of prayer, Father, Father, guide us as a congregation today, help us in not being, of this world, even though the temptations, are so great, but to give us the willingness, to be transformed, by your holy word, help us to not, only love, our brothers, and sisters in Christ, thanks, but also, those who do not, and do us evil,

Father, we just thank you, for your word this morning, we thank you, for the saving grace, that you would, die on the cross for me, we thank you, for the new life, that you've given us, help us to live in, in a way, that would be pleasing to you, help us to know, the things in the first, 11 chapters of Romans, all the many blessings, you give to us, and then be willing, to turn our life over, to renew our life, and conform it, to your word, Father, we thank you this morning, and we praise you, and we ask it, all in Christ's precious name, Amen.