

Henley-in-Arden Baptist Church

“Staying Connected” 17 – Sunday 12th July 2020

Staying connected to God and each other while not meeting as church in the normal way

We knew we would be in this for the long-haul. Our restrictions will be carrying on for a bit longer; but do use this season to continue ‘walking closely’ with Him: He who loves you with a perfect love. And keep in touch as a fellowship by ‘phone and other means too as you are able...

This week we begin our series on Romans 12-16

Romans is a densely theological letter, written by Paul to the Christians in Rome: “called to belong to Jesus Christ.” (Rom.1:6). It deals with the gospel (‘good news’): “the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes” (Rom.1:16)

We pick it up at chapter 12 where he goes on to spell out some practical out-workings...

“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. 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.” (Romans 12:1-2)

First, we offer ourselves to God, and then we let Him change us – to understand His will better...

Challenge:

- when did you last change your mind about something?

He then goes on to explain that the church is like a body: with each part interconnected – working together in service, each person having a gift to be used (vv 3-8)

And then a section on love and some good advice (but not always easy!) – live in harmony; don’t take revenge, and so forth... (vv 9-21)

“Be devoted to one another in love.” (Romans 12:10)

Challenge:

- How can I be (even more) loving...?

This is actually a tremendous chapter on church life. Why not read the whole chapter prayerfully. What might God be saying to *you*?

Lord God, our heavenly Father, we thank you for the good news of God’s love for us and for the world in Jesus. Help us to live for you, to be renewed and go on being renewed, in our love for you and others.

We pray for our brothers and sisters in the local church and the wider church. One body, working together for your glory.

We pray for wisdom, protection and help as we negotiate the current phase of the pandemic... We ask for your close presence with those in financial difficulty; those losing jobs; those carrying significant anxiety; those who have been unable to properly grieve.... Be especially close to those who need Your comfort and care...

We pray this week for those in the following occupations: quantity surveyors, quality control inspectors, qualitative analysts... RE teachers, retail workers, radiologists...

And a prayer attributed to Richard of Chichester:

Thanks be to Thee, my Lord Jesus Christ
For all the benefits Thou hast given me,
For all the pains and insults Thou hast borne for me.
O most merciful Redeemer, friend and brother,
May I know Thee more clearly,
Love Thee more dearly,
Follow Thee more nearly,
Day by day.
Amen

Quiz question:

Where was Paul intending to travel to, stopping off in Rome on his way?

[Answer next week]

Joke of the week:

What did Adam say the day before Christmas?

It's Christmas, Eve!

[don't think about it for too long(!)]

For those not online, especially:

Worship services on radio and TV this Sunday include:

- Radio 4 8:10am Sunday Worship (from South Wales Baptist College)
- BBC1 1:15pm Songs of Praise

And finally, please do get in touch with me at any time

May God bless you with His peace.

Mike

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