

SERMON RECAP: "LOVING YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF" – ROMANS 13:8-14

The thirteenth chapter of Romans calls us to make the church a place of love and safety that reflects how the Lord treats us. Jesus sets the standard: love your neighbor as you love yourself.

For reflection:

1. Have only one debt
 - a. Have no outstanding debts (v. 8; John 8:34-36; 2 Peter 2:19; Matthew 5:23-24; Mark 11:25)
 - b. Become debt free (Hebrews 12:1-3)
 - c. The debt of love
2. The second greatest commandment
 - a. The greatest commandment (Matthew 22:34-40)
 - b. The second greatest commandment (v. 9-10)
 - c. Paul's admonitions in Romans 12-13
 - d. A theme in Scripture (Ephesians 4:23; Colossians 3:13; Hebrews 13:3; James 1:27; 2 Peter 1:5-11)
3. Hurry up, the time is near (v.11)
 - a. Put your house in order
 - b. Put aside the deeds of darkness (v. 12-14)
 - c. A transformed church is a church that's a loving, safe place

THIS WEEK

THIS SUNDAY – LORD'S SUPPER AND FAITH FAMILY BRUNCH:

This week we will come to the Lord's Supper during worship, and then following worship we'll resume our monthly brunch! If you are able, please bring a main dish, or salad/fruit, or dessert item.

Our offering of thanks after the Lord's Supper will go to support the work of Karl Dortzbach. Karl and Debbie are long-time friends of Faith Church serving with MTW. From their base in Baltimore, Karl teaches African and Asian church leaders through pastoral and doctoral programs in biblical peace studies.

In coming to His table, it's worth considering some of the things that we have heard from Romans 12 and 13. The Lord Jesus Christ came and established peace for us. First and most important – that God Himself is at peace with us. We no longer stand under any condemnation or justice, because Christ suffered every last bit of it for you. But also, in Him we are at peace with God. Not that God had wronged us in any way, but that in Christ we have His righteousness credited to us, and therefore the Father's smile upon us. Because of all the mercies that Jesus obtained for us, we should live that way – which means we should strive fully to be at peace with others. How are you doing, for example, with Romans 12:18 – "If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all"? Or Romans 13:8 – "Owe no one anything, except to love one another, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law"? Yes, it's easy to say, and sometimes so hard to do. But because of the grace poured out on you in Christ, see if there are any of the easy ones you might take care of between now and Sunday. And for the hard ones – we need our hearts softened and transformed. Confess that and pray that the Lord would cause you to see His grace even deeper - then come to the table and ask that the Holy Spirit would strengthen you in Christ, by His grace, to begin to take the steps on the hard ones.

2019 OFFERING ENVELOPES:

If you don't have offering envelopes and would like them, please contact the church office. Likewise, if you give online and no longer need them, please call the office. Envelopes will be available on Sunday, January 6th (or you can pick them up at the church office after January 1st).

CONGREGATION MEETING – FEBRUARY 3RD:

Please mark your calendar for our congregation meeting on February 3rd, immediately following brunch. We will elect Ruling Elders and Deacons, as well as women to serve on the Women's Council. We will also have reports available from the various ministries and committees on what the Lord is doing and hear from the Session.

The Session has met with those who have been nominated by you to serve as ordained Officers and also for the Women's Council. We are thankful to God for each person, and are pleased to present the following candidates:

For Ruling Elder – Henry DeLong

For Deacon – Chris Sharp (second term), Dave Denning, and Bob Rineer.

For Women's Council – Lisa Lehman, Joann Rineer (both second terms), Wanda Aument, Bev Holt, Elizabeth Mindemann, and Kathy Pickens.

We will have short biographies for everyone available in two weeks. There are no set numbers of seats to fill – so please pray for the Lord's discernment for our vote.

LADIES BIBLE STUDY:

Our next Ladies Bible study will resume on January 14th, at 6:30 PM at Gladys Thompson's home. This will be a DVD study by Anne Graham Lotz titled "I Saw The Lord". Please see Donna Shirk (or call 717.333.2692) if you are interested so we can order books.

NEW SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASS:

A new adult Sunday School class will begin on January 20. Len Brown will lead a class studying Ken Sande's book "The Peacemaker". Grab some coffee and learn what the Bible says about conflict resolution and how to apply the principles of peacemaking at home, at your job and in the church!

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS:

While we're working on getting the door updated, please note that the church office is open from 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM, Monday - Friday.

REFRESHMENT VOLUNTEERS:

We need some additional people who would like to join the rotation on Sunday mornings to help set up refreshments for after worship. Please contact Cindy Criswell (717.529.6268) if you can help!