

Your Ministry

Lesson #11

Witness to the World

Scripture: Romans 12:14-21

Juniata Baptist Sunday School

Look again at the layout of Romans 12. Verse 1 exhorts us to dedicate our lives to the service of God. This exhortation comes after eleven chapters that explain “*the mercies of God*” extended to us in salvation. Because of these mercies, we should live unconditionally for Him. Verse 2 says that such a dedication of our lives will produce a transformation that comes as a result of a new way of thinking. No more do we ask ourselves, “What do I want to do?” Now the question is “*Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?*” (Acts 9:6) This transformation will lead us to God’s will for our lives. So in order to find God’s will, we must commit ourselves to doing whatever He wants. Verse 3 begins the section that tells us about our gifts (ministries) in the Body of Christ (the church). These gifts come by God’s grace and are recognized and exercised by faith. Members of the church have varying gifts, all given to meet the needs of the whole church (verses 4-8). Seven such ministries are listed. Then five principles are given in verses 9 through 13 regarding how the members of the Body work together to meet each other’s needs. Our gifts relate to our ministries to the other members of our church. But then verses 14 through 21 remind us that not only do we have a ministry to perform to the church, but also we have a witness to give to the unsaved world around us. Before going back to Heaven, Jesus said,

“Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.” (Acts 1:8)

Our proper ministry to other Christians will vary from believer to believer, but our witness to the world involves the same duty for all of us! God has made each one of us unique and different, and our styles of testifying for Christ may be different, but we are *all* commanded to evangelize! Witnessing is not a matter

of gifts, but rather a matter of obedience,

“...repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things.” (Luke 24:47-48)

Look carefully at 5 things that Romans 12:14-21 tells us about our witness to the world.

1. “**Bless them...**” (verse 14).

Christians in the early days (and even in our day) were often persecuted by the unsaved. Here we are admonished not to become angry and “*curse*” them for their mistreatment of us. Remember what Jesus said in Matthew 5:44.

“Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you. . .”

Persecutors have come to Christ through the kindness of those they have persecuted. See the grace of Stephen in Acts 7:57-60 and then see its impact upon young Saul (later called Paul) in Acts 9:1-6. The persecutor was converted, and the kindness of a martyr had a lot to do with it. This former persecutor became the human writer of Romans 12:14! He knew well the power of blessing those who curse and hurt you. The word “*bless*” here is translated from a Greek word that means to speak well of somebody. Actually it is *eulogeo*, from which we get the word “*eulogy*”! We are supposed to speak well of unsaved people who persecute us. It is part of our witness to the world.

2. **Sympathize with them (v. 15).**

We can open hearts if we we’ll feel what they feel. Notice what Jude 22-23 says.

“And of some have compassion, making a difference: And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh.”

Compassion (sympathy) makes a difference when it comes to saving sinners. It’s part of our witness to the world!

3. Humility (v. 16).

This verse admonishes us to keep the unity of the church. It reminds us of Philippians 2.

“. . . be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.” (verses 2-3)

Humility is the key to unity. It is also a key to the hearts of the unsaved. When they see true love and humility among us, they are impressed that something real, and something very good, has happened in our hearts. Also humility will eliminate the “I’m better than you” attitude they see in some Christians. Be humble. It’s part of our witness to the world!

Pay your bills. Pay your employees. Pay your rent. Pay your taxes. Keep your word. Do your duty. *“Provide*

things honest in the sight of all men.” Titus 2:9-12 (Read it) tells workers to please their bosses and to be faithful to their responsibilities at work so that the Gospel will be more attractive to lost sinners. Be honest in your dealings with people. It is part of your witness to the world.

Don’t wage war against a lost man. If he has wronged you, don’t seek revenge. Follow the teaching of this passage, and let God mete out justice. Don’t hold anything against anybody. If they ask forgiveness, grant it. If they don’t, let God deal with them. Don’t let malice take root in your heart! Feel free to do your enemy good (Remember principle #1 and Matthew 5:44). *“Overcome evil with good.”* It’s part of your witness to the world.

God has given every Christian plenty to do. There is never an excuse for us to be idle. We have been gifted to minister to the church, and we have been commanded to witness to the world. In His strength and power, and in His holy and loving way, let us get to work!