

Stand Transformed

[Rom 12:14-21 ESV] 14 Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. 15 Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. 16 Live in harmony with one another. Do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly. Never be wise in your own sight. 17 Repay no one evil for evil, but give thought to do what is honorable in the sight of all. 18 If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. 19 Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord." 20 To the contrary, "if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals on his head." 21 Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

I. Intro

- A. We have heard a lot about being transformed, and the results of that transformation seen in actions together with the body of Christ.
- B. The passage we will unpack today will be one of the most challenging things we have heard yet.
- C. Why?
 1. It seems that we are caught in a world that does not consider truth, but treats something that is false and calls it true.
 2. Last week Cities Church in St. Paul was overrun by protestors because of perceived support for immigration law enforcement
 3. Globally christians are under attack
 4. There was a case before the Supreme Court last week about biological males competing against female athletes...THE SUPREME COURT
 5. There seems to be a movement in our country to change anything and everything that is right and declare it to be wrong.
- D. Let me be clear:
 1. We can argue and yell at one another regarding things that matter, but seemingly have no effect.
 2. There are people that disagree on many important topics, but serve the same God
 3. This is a "And" rather than a "But" situation
 - a) We stand for truth, and we love people that disagree with us
 - b) We are called to do both
 4. Life
 - a) God creates life, it is sacred
 - b) I stand against abortion, because God is the creator of life and forms us in our mothers womb.
 - c) [Psa 139:13-14 ESV] 13 For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother's womb. 14 I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it very well.
 5. Homosexuality
 - a) [Rom 1:26-28 ESV] 26 For this reason God gave them up to dishonorable passions. For their women exchanged natural relations for those that are contrary to nature; 27 and the men likewise gave up natural relations with women and were consumed with passion for one another, men committing shameless acts with men and receiving in themselves the due penalty for their error. 28 And since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them up to a debased mind to do what ought not to be done.
 - b) Many other verses could go here as well
 6. Gender
 - a) There are two genders, Male and Female
 - b) [Gen 1:27-28 ESV] 27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. 28 And God blessed them. And God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and

- subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth."
7. Equality
 - a) We are all created in the image of God and bear His fingerprints
 - b) [Act 10:34-35 ESV] 34 So Peter opened his mouth and said: "Truly I understand that God shows no partiality, 35 but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him."
 8. Law Enforcement
 - a) In a civil society, laws and law enforcement are necessary
 - b) [Rom 13:1-4 ESV] 1 Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God. 2 Therefore whoever resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment. 3 For rulers are not a terror to good conduct, but to bad. Would you have no fear of the one who is in authority? Then do what is good, and you will receive his approval, 4 for he is God's servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword in vain. For he is the servant of God, an avenger who carries out God's wrath on the wrongdoer.
 9. We could go on and on, but that is not the point today
 10. We must ask the questions:
 - a) How do we stand for truth in a fallen world?
 - b) What do we do when things are against truth and are offensive to us?

II. Text

- A. Vv 13-17: The HIGH STANDARD we are to follow
- B. V 18: The Reality
 1. As far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all
 2. So, don't be the reason for the division:
 - a) If the word of truth causes division...and it will...recognize the result was told to us
 - b) [Jhn 16:32-33 ESV] 32 Behold, the hour is coming, indeed it has come, when you will be scattered, each to his own home, and will leave me alone. Yet I am not alone, for the Father is with me. 33 I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world."
 3. Verse 19:
 - a) Avenge, revenge, Vengeance: inflict harm in return for wrong doing
 - b) Defense: resisting an attack
 - c) These are two very different things
 4. Verse 20-21: overcome evil with good
 - a) This is our charge
 - b) This is challenge as we walk through this fallen world

III. Points

A. Respond in Love

1. [Eph 4:25-32 ESV] 25 Therefore, having put away falsehood, let each one of you speak the truth with his neighbor, for we are members one of another. 26 Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, 27 and give no opportunity to the devil. 28 Let the thief no longer steal, but rather let him labor, doing honest work with his own hands, so that he may have something to share with anyone in need. 29 Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear. 30 And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. 31 Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. 32 Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.

2. The best response to a philosophy that seems unreasonable and illogical is to listen to the person and not react in the flesh
 - a) The flesh will fail you, the Spirit will do its work
 - b) Listening does not imply agreement, but to deescalate the temperature and passion of the situation.
 - c) I have found success in then asking permission to share my perspective
 - d) I do know this, yelling true statements at someone that disagrees with me has had zero impact in changing their heart.
3. Things that don't impact change in another's different perspective:
 - a) Sarcastic or smart aleck comments will not bring about the intended results
 - b) We have tried this too often
 - c) Prayerful, Spirit filled responses must be our model
 - d) Examples:
 - (1) I hear you, but can I share with you what the Bible says about that?
 - (2) What has brought you to believe this way?
 - (3) As a believer, I disagree with you but I love you anyway.
4. The world is telling people that if we disagree with someone they are our enemy and they hate us, the Love of Christ is our only hope.

B. Respect Others

1. Our belief in the sanctity of life compels us to respect others
2. Our commitment to the truth of Christ causes us to stand for truth, and to do so in a way that communicates this truth.
3. So far as it depends on you...
 - a) You cannot control someone's response, but you can control how you communicate the message
 - b) If we communicate a message that is true but do so in a fashion that is disrespectful, we have just made a true statement into a false message.
 - c) We must defend the gospel, and stand for truth.
 - d) We also must do so in a way that will have impact
4. If your goal is to win an argument, you may just do that, and then it'll be over
5. If your goal is to win a soul, you have a higher calling than winning the argument.
6. Remember: Christ has already won the argument!
 - a) He took to pain and punishment for all mankind
 - b) He died in a horrible fashion and paid the price for our sin
 - c) He was raised from the dead and won the victory that only He could win.
 - d) [1Co 15:54-58 ESV] 54 When the perishable puts on the imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory." 55 "O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?" 56 The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. 57 But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. 58 Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.

C. Serve Christ

1. The church is called to serve Christ
2. The church is not promised ease of life or to be well liked in society
3. But, we are certainly in a battle that has already been won.
4. When you stand, remember this truth.
5. We stand transformed, that means we stand differently.
6. Stand on truth, communicate truth with love and grace
7. Stand on principle, communicating this with people that may need someone to walk the long walk of transformation with them.

IV. Close

- A. [1Co 13:1-3 ESV] 1 If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. 2 And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. 3 If I give away all I have, and if I deliver up my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing.
- B. We have to get over ourselves and serve Christ
- C. The Lord's Supper