

VBCC Feb 7th – Sermon Notes

Introduction

- **Superbowl Sunday!** I would really like to see the *losing* Super Bowl coach or quarterback give a “shout out” to the Lord, because God is always faithful. Win or lose.
- Michael Yeakey: “I’ve lived a full life.” He is aware of the blessings of the Lord, despite the losses.
- No one *wants* to lose, but in the Lord, even when there are setbacks, we are never losers.
- The unfolding of my life story has revealed and confirmed God’s faithfulness.
- Psalm 106 asks this question: “*Who can proclaim the mighty acts of the LORD or fully declare His praise?*” (Psalm 106:2).
- Charles Wesley, “O for a thousand tongues to sing my great Redeemer’s praise, the glories of my God and King the triumphs of His grace.”
- **We cannot fully express it, but the more we are in touch with our Great Redeemer’s praise, the more our lives will reflect His glory.**

Text: “*Therefore, my brethren, you also were made to die to the Law through the body of Christ, that you might be joined to another, to Him who was raised from the dead, that we might bear fruit for God*” (Romans 7:4 (NASB77))

I. Through faith in Christ, we “*die to*” the performance code required by the Law.

- The Law has no jurisdiction over a dead person.
- This includes the Ten Commandments as well as the ceremonial laws.
- God still wants us to love Him and love our neighbor. It is His *approach* that has changed. His methodology. Hence the NEW covenant. Now, we are “joined to Christ.”
- From Psalm 26, we see David recalling his righteous deeds before the Lord. David’s heart was right with the Lord but the righteousness he relied upon was inferior to what has been revealed to us. His was based on his adherence to the Law. We *died* to the Law. Our righteousness is based on trusting in Christ as the fulfillment of the Law on our behalf.

II. We are now “*joined to another*”

- To **Him** who was raised from the dead. To Christ.
- Relationship! Relationship! Relationship!
- A growing awareness of how awesome our Lord is, is one of the blessings of belonging to Him.
- *Romans 6:13 (NIV)* “*Do not offer the parts of your body to sin, as instruments of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God, as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer the parts of your body to Him as instruments of righteousness.*”
- Can you think of a better thing to do with your body than to present it to your Creator?
- My Praise: Thank You, Lord for establishing, expanding and enriching my trust in **You** as the life I most desire to *enjoy, explore and express*.

III. To “bear fruit for God.”

- The *relationship* produces the fruit. Trying to produce fruit without the relationship is like trying to grow grapes without a vine.
- It’s *His* fruit to share as He pleases. Our job is to bear it by growing in our relationship with Christ. It is His job to determine where to share it.
- Praying for Valley Brook, that our faith would be both *affective and effective*. Usually something *affects* something to produce an *effect*. For example, the warmth of the sun *affects* the snow in a way that results in the *effect* of melting. So, I am praying that the awareness of God’s character would *affect* our hearts and create a wide array of Like anthesis in service, anthesis in love, and anthesis in helping one another experience the fullness of Christ.
- What does being blindfolded mean? It depends on the context. Faith in Christ gives us context. The Lord is the only One who can see the future. He is with us, His arms firmly on our shoulders, guiding us as He whispers in our ears daily encouragement to trust Him for what we cannot see. He is leading us to the future and the plans He has prepared for us.
- *”For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the FUTURE (emphasis mine)... will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Romans 8:38-39 NIV)*. The context of faith reassures us no matter what the future may be, it does not hold anything for us that is more powerful than the love of God.
- **The more we appreciate our belongingness. The more fruit we will bear for the One to whom we belong!**