

Feb 5th Sermon notes

Your Role in God's Big Picture

Text: Romans 1:1-7

Main Idea: Love your character, embrace your role with thanksgiving.

Love your character not in an egotistical way but in a God-honoring way, in a Psalm 139 "I am fearfully and wonderfully made" way.

Embrace your role with thanksgiving. In a "in everything give thanks" kind of way.

- "I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for good and not calamity to give you a future and a hope." Jeremiah 29:11

Four things from our text to keep in mind regarding your role in God's Big Picture that will help you love your character and embrace your role.

1. You are part of something larger than yourself.

Vss. 1-2 "set apart for the gospel of God-- the gospel He promised beforehand through His prophets in the Holy Scriptures"

- Paul recognized he was part of a larger story, a story that began before Paul was even born.
- There are no minor characters in this eternal story.

Re-read of text with Paul's testimonial inserts.

- Romans 1:1-7 (NIV) 1 Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus,(but formerly a hater of Christ) called to be an apostle (but formerly a dedicated Pharisee) and set apart for the gospel of God (which I was once determined to exterminate)—2 the gospel he promised beforehand through his prophets in the Holy Scriptures (which, now I plainly see but totally did not see before) 3 regarding his Son, (who appeared to me from heaven in a blinding light brighter than the sun and called me by name) who as to his human nature was a descendant of David, 4 and who through the Spirit of holiness was declared with power to be the Son of God by his resurrection from the dead: Jesus Christ our Lord...

2. The something you are a part of is for real and forever.

Vs. 4 says He was "declared with power to be the Son of God by His resurrection from the dead"

- The Star of our show is not a Hollywood actor.
- Jesus declared Himself to be the Son of God. But true to Jesus' earlier words, the greatest testimony of His authenticity would be His resurrection from the dead. That declaration was made with power.
- 2 Peter 1:16 (NASB77) 16 For we did not follow cleverly devised tales when we made known

to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of His majesty.
• Rev. 1:18 I am the living one who was dead and behold I am alive forever and ever.

3. To belong is to be blessed, not oppressed

Vs. 6 Called to belong to Jesus Christ.

What is God's heart and His intentions behind us belonging to Him?

- John 13:12-17 (NIV) – Jesus washes His disciples feet.
- 15 I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you.
- 17 Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them.

This is an example of heaven's culture.

- Heaven is a place where serving one another is the norm.
- The Holy Spirit who lives inside of you to serve You. There is no instruction on what we are to do for Him. He lives in us totally to serve us. Comforter. Teacher. Guide. Helper. A servant!
- The angels, according to Hebrews 1 are ministering spirits sent to serve those of us who will inherit salvation. There isn't any instruction at all about what we are to do for them.
- In heaven we will worship the Lord and serve Him as He serves us. But the same heart that caused him to stoop down and wash the disciples' feet is the same heart He will have in heaven.

4. The greatest calling of all is being called to be loved by God.

Vs. 7 – Loved by God.

- There is nothing better God can give us than the true knowledge of His love.
- All earthly love is but echoes from the heart expressing our longing for the greatest love.
- God is love.
- He bought us to love us, not to exploit us.
- Deuteronomy 5:29 *Oh that they had such a heart in them that they would fear me and keep my commandments always, that it may be well with them and their sons forever.*

Jesus could have called the whole thing about going to the cross off without losing anything or compromising His character in any way. He would have returned to the glory He had before the world began. He would not have in any way compromised His character. There would have been no tension in His relationship with His Father. **The only thing he would have lost is a relationship with us.** And that is why He went through with it, because He wanted to be in relationship with you and me.

You are not just a cog in the production. You are a beloved family member. **We are not loved because we are “significant;” we are significant because we are loved.**