



Holy and Set Apart to Love your Enemies



September 27, 2003 – Coulter's Community Church of God (Seventh Day)

Today, we will start with Romans 12:1-2, one of my favorite set of verses. These verses pit us against Satan, the world and the holy living we are to try to obtain within our human body. We always have that little tug, that so called human nature.

ROMANS 12:1 *Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship.*



2 *And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.*

~Book of Romans~

In the book of Romans, Paul is writing to some small groups or a large group of believers. They are converts, saints and believers, listening to the Apostle Paul's teachings. Romans 1:6-8 tells us of these saints.

ROMANS 1:6 *among whom you also are the called of Jesus Christ;*

7 *to all who are beloved of God in Rome, called as saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.*

8 *First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, because your faith is being proclaimed throughout the whole world. [NAS]*

It's important that we know who Paul is writing to so we can see the context of the letter in the book of Romans. What he has to say to us in the book of Romans may not have been understood by a non-believer or so called pagan since it was written to believers.

Let us break down Romans 12:1-2 to see what they mean to us as believers.

~Living and holy sacrifice~

Romans 12:1 tells us to..... *“present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice.”*
In the Old Testament when an animal was sacrificed, it gave its life. But we, under grace, do not have to shed our blood. God shed His blood for us. Hebrews 9:12 *“and not through the blood of goats and calves, but through His own blood, He entered the holy place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption.”* [HEB 9:12] [NAS] But here in Romans 12:1 God is calling us to give our all to Him; we certainly are to be dead to sin and alive in Him.

Are we called to be holy? Yes we are! – What is the definition of Holy? It’s to be set apart. Let’s go to the Old Testament to see what God said about being holy.

LEVITICUS 19:1 *Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying:*

2 *“Speak to all the congregation of the sons of Israel and say to them, ‘You shall be holy, for I the LORD your God am holy.*

LEVITICUS 20:7 *‘You shall consecrate yourselves therefore and be holy, for I am the LORD your God.*

8 *‘You shall keep My statutes and practice them; I am the LORD who sanctifies you.*

~Do Not Love the World~ I John 2:15-17

15 *Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.*

16 *The world is passing away, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God lives forever.*

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We are not of this world, but aliens to this world. As believers, our home is in Heaven! The present world system is what? Evil – Controlled by who? The devil, Satan. We are to be in the World, but not of the world.



As Christians we don't fit into this world system. I see some Christians that get upset because they don't fit-in. We are not commanded to fit-in, we are different. I think the King James Bible says that we are a peculiar people. Titus and I Peter gives us a little more detail. Titus 2:14 says, *Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.* [TIT 2:14] [KJV] A little better know verse may be I Peter 2:9 in the King James; *But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light;* [I PETER 2:9] [KJV]

~Acceptable to God~

Romans 12:1 also tells us..... *acceptable to God.* The only way to be acceptable to God as Romans tells us is to “*present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice.*”

1. Present your bodies a living sacrifice. (totally committed to Jesus Christ)
2. Living a Holy Life. (Set apart from the rest of the world, set apart for God – not of the world, just in it.)
3. Acceptable to God by submitting our holy life to Him.

~Conformed or Transformed~

Now look at Romans 12:2*do not be conformed to this world.* I'm here to tell you



that it is easy to conform to this world, to do what everyone else is doing. By not obeying and honoring God's commandments and precepts you are of this world. Jesus said you are either for me or against me, there is no in between. (Matthew 12:30) Let me continue in verse 2 of Romans 12: *but be transformed by the renewing of*

your mind. Be transformed by the renewing of your mind, the opposite of conforming. What does transformed mean? We must have our mind transformed (or be more like God) to God's way of thinking. How do we do that as believers?

I believe we are to read and meditate on God's Word, the Bible, and then have a prayer life so that we can communicate with God.

That is the way we communicate with God, by talking to him at prayer time and reading His Word so we can understand His ways and precepts. We must have our plans and ambitions determined by heavenly and eternal truths, not by the world's standard. There are two standards; and there is a difference in these two standards. The Word of God is always a TRUE standard and the world has a false standard created and controlled by Satan himself.

As one commentary said, "the progress of sanctification, dying to sin more and more, and living to righteousness more and more, is carrying on the renewing work, till it is perfected in glory." The great enemy to this renewal is conformity to this world. Thus, to be godly, is to give ourselves to God; not partly to God or sometimes to God, but all the time. We are to be fully committed to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Sacrifice is important, but even in the Old Testament God made it clear that obedience from the heart was much more important. (I Samuel 15:22; Psalm 40:6)

1 SAMUEL 15:22. *Samuel said, "Has the LORD as much delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices As in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, And to heed than the fat of rams*



How do we tie in these two verses? In verse 1 of Romans 12 it tells us "to present our bodies a living and holy sacrifice" and then in I Samuel 15:22 we are told "to obey is better than sacrifice." Are these two verses a contradiction of each other? I don't think so. We are to present our body as a living and holy sacrifice, total committed to God before we are able to obey him. They both go hand in hand; sacrifice and obey.

PSALM 40:6 *Sacrifice and meal offering You have not desired; My ears You have opened; Burnt offering and sin offering You have not required.*

7 *Then I said, "Behold, I come; In the scroll of the book it is written of me.*

8 *I delight to do Your will, O my God; Your Law is within my heart."*

This brings us to Romans 8:28, " *And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to*

His purpose.” This ties into Romans 12: 1-2, we are to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, and be transformed into the image of God, then and only then will we prove what the will of God is, called according to His purpose, that which is good and acceptable.

The “**Love of God**” is the common denominator in the Bible, the first and greatest commandment. MATTHEW 22:37 And He said to him, “**YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND.**” Jesus quoting the Old Testament, Deuteronomy 6:5.

38 “**This is the great and foremost commandment.**

This leads us into the next verse: MAT 22:39 “The second is like it, ‘**YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.**’

40 “**On these two commandments depend the whole Law and the Prophets.**”



ROMANS 12:1 *Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a **living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship.***

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~Self-righteous, we need God’s Mercies~

We have the parable of the Pharisee and the tax collector which shows the Pharisee who trusted in himself and was self-righteous and viewed the tax collector with contempt. ‘Luke 18: 9-17’

LUKE 18:9 *And He also told this parable to some people who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and viewed others with contempt:*

10 “**Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector.**

11 *“The Pharisee stood and was praying this to himself: ‘God, I thank You that I am not like other people: swindlers, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector.*

12 *‘I fast twice a week; I pay tithes of all that I get.’*

13 *“But the tax collector, standing some distance away, was even unwilling to lift up his eyes to heaven, but was beating his breast, saying, ‘God, be merciful to me, the sinner!’*

14 *“I tell you, this man went to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but he who humbles himself will be exalted.”*

15 *And they were bringing even their babies to Him so that He would touch them, but when the disciples saw it, they began rebuking them.*

16 *But Jesus called for them, saying, “Permit the children to come to Me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these.*

17 *“Truly I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child will not enter it at all.”*

Here we have a Pharisee that was doing good deeds, but not with a humble heart. The tax collector could not even lift his eyes to heaven he had such a humbled heart. The tax collector asked God to be merciful to him, a sinner. We have to be careful that we don't get to self-righteous and look upon others.

~The Early Church~



Acts 2:37-47 – the early church in Acts is a great example where LOVE was shown for the church and God. They had their priorities in order.

Turn to Acts 2:37-47 and listen or follow along.

Acts 2:37 *Now when they heard this, they were pierced to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, “Brethren, what shall we do?”*

38 *Peter said to them, “Repent and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.*

39 *“For the promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off, as many as the Lord our God will call to Himself.”*

40 *And with many other words he solemnly testified and kept on exhorting them, saying, “Be saved from this perverse generation!”*

41 *So then, those who had received his word were baptized; and that day there were added about three thousand souls.*

42 *They were continually devoting themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.*

43 *Everyone kept feeling a sense of awe; and many wonders and signs were taking place through the apostles.*

44 *And all those who had believed were together and had all things in common;*

45 *And they began selling their property and possessions and were sharing them with all, as anyone might have need.*

46 *Day by day continuing with one mind in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they were taking their meals together with gladness and sincerity of heart,*

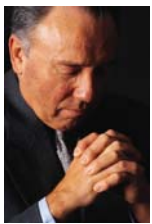
47 *praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord was adding to their number day by day those who were being saved.*

They were continually devoting themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship. They were even selling their property and possessions and were sharing them with all, as anyone might have need. They had all things in common. They had Love.

This brings us to the last point of this article or sermon.

~Love your enemies~

Matthew 5: 44-48



MAT 5:44 *“But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you,*

45 *so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for He causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous.*

46 *“For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same?”*

47 *“If you greet only your brothers, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same?”*

48 *“Therefore you are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.”*

LEVITICUS 19:18 *‘You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the sons of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself; I am the LORD.’*

The first question you may ask is “who is my neighbor?” One definition in the dictionary says that a neighbor is a “fellow human being.” I believe that covers everyone we know or come into contact with. The whole world are our neighbors. What did Jesus have to say on the question of who is your neighbor?

~The Good Samaritan~

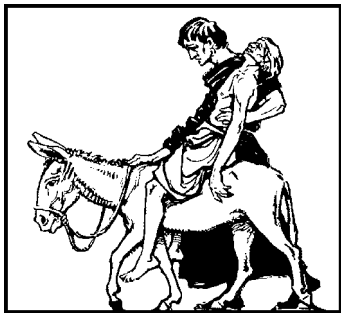
LUKE 10:29 But wishing to justify himself, he said to Jesus, “ And who is my neighbor?”



30 *Jesus replied and said, “A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among robbers, and they stripped him and beat him, and went away leaving him half dead.*

31 *“And by chance a priest was going down on that road, and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side.*

32 *“Likewise a Levite also, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side.*



33 *“But a Samaritan, who was on a journey, came upon him; and when he saw him, he felt compassion.*

34 *and came to him and bandaged up his wounds, pouring oil and wine on them; and he put him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn and took care of him.*

35 *“On the next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper and said, ‘Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, when I return I will repay you.’”*

36 *“Which of these three do you think proved to be a neighbor to the man who fell into the robbers’ hands?”*

37 *And he said, “The one who showed mercy toward him. “Then Jesus said to him, “Go and do the same.”*

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Yes, it is easy to love someone who loves you. But I have to admit to you and myself



that I have a problem loving someone that does not love me back or has wronged me in some way. But according to scripture we don't have any other choice but to love that person. *Above all, keep fervent in your love*

for one another, because love covers a multitude of sins. [I PETER 4:8] [NAS]

- Let me ask you a question! How much do you love God? Jesus said, you love me as much as you love the one you love the least.
- Look around in the church. Jesus said, the one you love the least is how much you love me.
- Look around at where you work. Jesus said, the one you love the least is how much you love me.
- Look around at your family, friends, and in-laws. Jesus said, the one you love the least is how much you love me.
- Look around at your enemies and the people you don't particularly care for. Jesus said, the one you love the least is how much you love me.



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