

**Pastor Paul Bawden  
Grace Evangelical Church  
Sunday, June 21, 2009, Father's Day  
"The Mind We Need"  
Romans 15:1-6**

The little girl was sitting on her father's lap as he read her a goodnight story. From time to time, she would take her eye's off the book and reach up to touch his wrinkled cheek. By and by she was alternately stroking her own cheek, then his again. Finally she spoke, "daddy, did God make you?" "Yes, sweetheart" he answered, "God made me a long time ago." "Oh she said," then "daddy, did God make me too?" "Yes, indeed honey" he assured her. "God made you just a little while ago." "Oh" she said. Feeling their respective faces again, she observed, "God's getting better at it now isn't he?"

**Yes, as we all know our children grow up, and soon are off to college.**

**A father received this letter from his son in college.**

Dear Dad,  
School is really great. I am making lots of friends and studying very hard. With all my stuff, I simply can't think of anything I need, so if you would like, you can just send me a card, as I would love to hear from you.

Love, Your son

**The Dad gave this reply**

Dear Son,  
I know that astronomy, economics, and oceanography are enough to keep even an honor student busy. Do not forget that the pursuit of knowledge is a noble task, and you can never study enough.

Love, Your Dad

Being a father brings all kinds of experiences, some rewarding and some really challenging. On this day when we honor fathers our text in Romans 15:1-6 speaks to us who are Dads as well as to each of us.

What's this text telling Dads and each of us today?

**I. In all matters of life and death there is only one who rises above all the others who have lived on planet earth (Romans 15:3, 5).**

Note the words in Romans 15:3 – "For even Christ did not please Himself." Then in Romans 15:5, "Be of the same mind with one another according to Jesus Christ."

Paul didn't talk about Abraham, or Moses, or Joshua, or Joseph, or Isaiah, Jeremiah, or Daniel, or Matthew, Mark, Luke, or John, nor did Paul even talk about himself. And we could add that neither would Paul have talked about Buddha or Mohammad, or any other religious leader who has lived on planet earth. Why?

Because there is only ONE, Jesus Christ, who came as the God-man, the eternal Son of God and Son of man, to show us how God would act on earth, and to do for us what we can't do for ourselves. Namely, to be our sin bearer, our payment for our sin of breaking God's law which is

death.

He suffered like no one else has suffered as He was crucified on that old rugged cross, being made sin for us who knew no sin that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. He was buried, and rose again the third day to let us know that God's righteousness and holiness have been satisfied, and redemption, forgiveness of sin and eternal life are available to all who will accept Christ as personal Savior.

**That's why Jesus said that He came not to be served, but to serve and to give His life a ransom for many. That's why Jesus said that He was the Way, the Truth, and the Life, and no one could come to the Father but through Him.**

Who is the one within the many today in our politically correct society, where truth is in the eye of the beholder, found in man himself, which of course is not truth for man and his ideas are here today and gone tomorrow.

The only answer is: The Lord Jesus Christ. Who is truly the Savior of the world, and especially those who believe in Him as personal Savior.

But He is not only our personally Savior through faith in Him. Jesus Christ will in His time put down all the rebellion against Him, and bring peace to our world that is rocking and reeling with those who want to flex their dictatorial muscles and would like to rule the world. Read Psalm 2 this week sometime, and see how God responds to those who depreciate and desecrate His Anointed One Jesus Christ.

**If Jesus Christ is not the God-man who has won eternal salvation for us through faith in Him, then what Paul writes about in these verses are just words with no eternal value and not applicable to us today.**

**But, since Jesus Christ is the God-man, our Savior through faith in Him, than what Paul writes about here concerning Jesus Christ in how He lived His life on planet earth and how that applies to us today is eternally relevant for Dads and each of us today.**

**Which means secondly,**

**II. In life there is the true ultimate example of how relationships are to be lived on planet earth (Romans 12:2-3).**

Note our text – Romans 15:2-3 - "Each of us is to please his neighbor for his good, to his edification. For even Christ did not please Himself; but as it is written, "The reproaches of those who reproached you fell on Me." (also see Psalm 69:9).

The Old Testament, then, in Psalm 69:9 foretold that Christ would experience the ultimate in suffering unjustly and unfairly.

**John 15:25 adds these words from Christ Himself, "but now they have both seen and hated Me and My Father as well . . . but they have done this to fulfill the word that is written in their Law, 'They hated Me without a cause.'" (Psalm 69:4; 35:19).**

Paul is telling the Romans in their day and us today that if we think that we are experiencing life in our relationships that seems unfair, or some kind of suffering that seems unjust or unfair, before we get too far afield in our thinking, we need to stop short in our thinking, and come and take a look at Jesus Christ and what He experienced in His life on planet earth.

**1. Jesus was sinless in His person – in attitude, thought, and deed.**

Peter realized this when the Holy Spirit directed him to pen,

"For you have been called for this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to follow in His steps, 'who committed no sin, nor was any deceit found in His mouth.'" (I Peter 2:22).

The writer of Hebrews concurs, "For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin" (Hebrews 4:15). Again in Hebrews 7:26, "For it was fitting for us to have such a high priest, holy, innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners and exalted above the heavens."

Jesus Christ demonstrated that He was the sinless Lamb of God as He healed the sick and blind, raised the dead, exposing the hypocrisy of the Pharisees, offering forgiveness of sin to those who responded to Him in faith.

Jesus demonstrated on earth that He was sinless, even while He exercised His righteousness in driving out the money changers from the temple, and exposing the hypocrisy of the Pharisees.

How was Jesus received by the religious leaders of His day?

## **2. Jesus was not received in the popular arena as sinless.**

You see this ultimately at the time of His crucifixion. For what was the charge that was brought against Christ by the religious leaders of His day? John records it for us in his Gospel chapter 19 verses 6-7.

When Pilate brought out Jesus wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe, he told them, "Behold the man."

The chief priests and officers cried out, "Crucify, crucify!" Pilate told them to take Jesus and crucify Him for he found no guilt in Him. Then the Jews answered Pilate, "We have a law, and by that law He ought to die because He made Himself out to be the Son of God."

**Yes, Leviticus 24:16 says that the "one who blasphemes the name of the LORD shall surely be put to death."**

So the religious leaders and Jewish people were saying that Jesus was blaspheming the name of Jehovah God because He claimed to be God. And Jesus claimed to be God in John 8:58 and John 10:30, for He was GOD. And if you read those verses you will discover that they knew what Jesus said and they wanted to stone Him.

What the Jewish religious leaders were saying was that Jesus was lying. He was a deceiver. He was a sinner and deserved what the law said, death.

Of course, Jesus Christ did not come to destroy or abolish the law but to fulfill the Law (Matthew 5:17). He did that in each part of it, so that as the perfect Savior, He could pay the penalty for breaking the Law, which is death, by going to the cross to be our sin bearer, and dying in our place, being buried and rising from the dead bodily.

## **3. The sinless Christ responds to the accusations of the sinful religious leaders and crowd (Romans 15:3).**

"For even Christ did not please Himself; but as it is written, 'The reproaches (insults) of those who reproached (insulted) you fell on ME.'"

What's happening here? The text is saying that Christ acted selflessly when accused falsely, and suffered beyond human description as He hung on the cross and was made sin for us.

Don't miss what is happening here. The very people accusing Christ of being a liar, He was going to give His life for in order to provide them forgiveness and eternal life if they would accept Him as personal Savior. That's why Jesus told His heavenly Father while on the cross, "Forgive them for they know not what they do."

**To think that even during all of His suffering before His crucifixion, and while hanging in agony on the cross, Christ did not have an attitude in His mind of thinking this was unfair and unjustified. He did not have the attitude of "well I'll get back at you. You'll have to pay for this." Or saying to His heavenly Father, "Why did I get into this awful situation? Let's just deal with these rebellious people now."**

**Of course, that wasn't His attitude, His mind set, at all. Christ was the supreme and ultimate example of selflessness. He pleased not Himself.**

**That can only cause us to be in worship of our Christ for being such a Savior and example as that to us who know Him personally and love Him.**

Peter put it this way, when he wrote his first letter, "And while being reviled, He did not revile in return; while suffering, He uttered no threats, but kept entrusting Himself to Him who judges righteously, and bore our sin in His body on the cross. . ." (I Peter 2:23-24).

**Yes, Christ was selfless in His mind.**

**So how does this apply to Dads on this Father's Day and all of us?**

**III. Our challenge as followers of Christ is to use the selfless mind of Christ God has given us (Romans 15:5).**

**1. Realize as a believer in Christ you possess the selfless mind of Christ (I Corinthians 2:16).**

To believers in Christ, Paul pens, "Be of the same mind with one another according to Christ Jesus." "For who has known the mind of the LORD, that we may instruct Him? (Isaiah 40:13). But we have the mind of Christ."

The mind of Christ is part of the new nature that that the believer receives when he or she accepts Christ as personal Savior, for Peter tells us that we are partakers of the divine nature (II Peter 1:4). This means that the believer in Christ along with having the mind of Christ, one also has the emotion of Christ, the Love of God in one's life (Romans 5:5) and the will of Christ (Romans 6:18, 22), the potential to obey the Lord.

Each believer in Jesus Christ, has the supernatural capacity, the mind of Christ to think like Christ, to love like Christ, and to act like Christ.

**Paul's emphasis here is on the mind of Christ, for as a person thinks so is he in his emotion and will.**

Amazing what God does for us who accept Jesus Christ as personal Savior. We receive His very nature, His very mind, emotion, and will.

**2. As a believer in Christ, make use of the selfless mind of Christ He has given you (Romans 15:5).**

**(1) Understand that the old mind you have from Adam is filled with selfishness, wanting to do what it wants regardless of what others may feel or think, the desire to retaliate, to feel one is treated unfair, or is suffering unjustly (Romans 15:20-21).**

This is what Paul was dealing with as he wrote to the church at Rome. In the body of believers at Rome there were Jews who became Christians but still felt they should follow the restrictions of the law regarding some foods. Gentile believers knew that now under grace these restrictions did not apply. They had the freedom to eat what they desired. Some of the Jewish brothers were having trouble with this freedom, and Paul is telling the believers who have no trouble eating certain foods to restrict themselves in order to help the so-called weaker brother. The issue at hand was not a moral issue but rather an issue regarding debatable things.

The old mind in Adam would not care a bit about how one's life-style as a believer would affect another brother or sister in Christ. It would act selfishly and feel put upon if one had to curtail one's behavior over some debatable issue.

**(2) Put into practice the selfless mind of Christ you possess (Romans 6:11; Galatians 5:16).**

How does that happen?

Paul in Romans 6:11 tells us to consider ourselves dead to sin, the old Adamic mind (has been rendered inoperative) and now one is alive to God in Christ Jesus - that is use the new selfless mind of Christ.

And how is that done? By obeying the indwelling Holy Spirit of God who lives in the believer. Through identification with Christ in His death, burial and bodily resurrection, the believer by obeying the Holy Spirit can display the selfless mind of Christ in all relationships whether one refrains from doing something which may offend another believer, or one reaches out in serving someone else by offering a word of encouragement, or refrains from trying to push one's own agenda, or one thinks one is suffering unfairly, whatever the circumstance the believer seeks in the power of the Holy Spirit to display the selfless mind of Christ.

For Dads, having the selfless mind of Christ means several things.

**\*\*The Dad knows that his daily relationship with Jesus Christ is the most important relationship that he has.**

The apostle Paul said that He might know Christ, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His suffering, being conformed to His death, in order that I may attain to the resurrection from the dead, not that I have already obtained or have already become perfect. . . . Forgetting what is behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 3:10-14).

Dads, I trust that you have time in the Word of God each day, yes, all of us should. Pick up a "Daily Bread" in the foyer if you need something to get you into the Word of God. Have a time of prayer each day for various needs, for your wife and family.

Being in the Word of God each day keeps you fresh as to what the selfless mind of Christ is all about and what Christ wants to do through you.

**Note what our text says here, "For whatever was written in earlier times for our instruction, so that through perseverance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope" (Romans 15:4).**

**Perservance is endurance, the ability to keep going regardless of the opposition. Encouragement is the word used to describe the Holy Spirit, who comes along side to cheer us on to victory in Jesus Christ.**

**\*\*The Dad realizes that God the Father has given him His title as father, and the awesome privilege and responsibility to represent the heavenly Father to his family**

**(Romans 15:6).**

One writer has said that the Dad has three offices in the home, that as king, prophet, and priest.

**As king**, he has the tremendous responsibility and privilege to be the protector and loving leader of his home, as head of the wife and family. It's a position given to him by God the Father.

**One evening a little girl and her parents were sitting around the table eating supper. The little girl said, "Daddy, you're the boss, aren't you?" Her Daddy smiled, pleased, and said yes. The little girl continued "That's because Mummy put you in charge, right?"**

God gives the father in the family the responsibility and privilege to provide the leadership for his family, to represent the living God to His family.

**As prophet**, the father in the family seeks to guide and direct his family into God's truth by His example and His words of encouragement and grace. The way the father talks to his children is so important, especially when disciplining them. That's why Paul tells the Colossians believers that Dads should not "exasperate your children," or do not sand paper them down, is the idea, "so that they will not lose heart" (Colossians 4:21).

Remember, dads, how we treat our children, is the picture they will get of God the Father. Yes, there are absolutes, and standards, and their must be discipline at times. But we need to remember that kids are going to do childish things at times, for which there needs to be reminders, but when there is direct disobedience to what was suppose to be done, that is when discipline needs to be applied in a spirit of love.

It's interesting what the Psalmist says that "Just as a father has compassion for his children, so the LORD has compassion on those who fear Him." Dad, have a compassionate heart when seeking to cause your children to learn even through times of discipline, remembering that you were young once too.

**As priest**, the father seeks to serve his family in whatever way he can, by spending time with his wife and children. The father using the selfless mind of Christ realizes the importance of building relationships with his wife and children.

**A father who disciplines his children without building a relationship with them, may discover that his children resent his authority.** And if you have grandchildren, the grandfather loves to spend time with his grandchildren.

As priest, the father also comes to the throne of grace on behalf of his wife and his children. Praying for one's family is the best one can do for one's family. Even when there are challenges in the family, prayer is the best that one can do for the situation. Dads, stand between God and your family as their priest, representing them before God. There is no greater privilege and no higher calling. Grand dads do the same for your grand children, and great grand children.

**\*\*The Dad carries out his privileges and responsibilities so that through using the selfless mind of Christ God will bring about unity in the family and God will be glorified (Romans 15:5-6).**

When the selfless mind is at work in the body of Christ (each member seeking Christ's will), there will be unity in the local church and the God and Father of the Lord Jesus Christ will be glorified – given first place in the assembly and be given praise above all others and all else.

It's the same principle for the family unit. The Dad who uses the selfless mind of Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit will have the opportunity to create unity in the family.

That doesn't mean there won't be challenges, and the need to discipline. Satan's desire is to bring

disunity. Each child has a different bent, and sometimes the end result is not what one wanted. That doesn't mean that God has left or is punishing anyone. It means that God will need more time to work in the heart of the one who will not continue following Him.

**I understand that the overwhelming majority of Americans remain quite clear that being a dad is serious business. Three-out-of-four (75%) American adults say being a father is the most important role a man can fill in today's world. A new Rasmussen Reports national telephone survey finds that just 14% disagree and 12% are not sure.**

**Regardless of what Americans think, according to the biblical God, being a father is the most important role a man can fill today, because that role has been given by God Himself.**

**I thank the Lord today for my father,** who is now with the Lord. In fact he went into the presence of the Lord the day I graduated from Seminary, which is over 40 years ago now. My what a wonderful time he has been having in heaven with the Lord and loved ones gone on before. But his godly heritage he has left for me will never be taken away, and his example of the selfless mind of Christ will always be something for me to emulate.

**I also thank the Lord, for Ferra's father,** who left her that same eternal heritage and example of the Christ's selfless mind of ministering to his family and to people in ministry. He was truly a man who lived by faith and acted out that faith in the Lord in developing the Inspiration Ministries located in Walworth, WI. I just read again his book, "Undefeated," and was challenged anew to take God at His word and act upon it.

I also know on Father's Day as well as Mother's Day, memories can be stirred that are not easy to entertain. I encourage each of us to find that the Lord is gracious and forgiving, urging us to do the same to each other, if need be in our family relationships, and to pray for each other in our families, waiting on Him for His will to be done.

**Dads, yes, all of us this week, let's in the power of the Holy Spirit, using the selfless mind of Christ, please Him in everything we think, say, and do, to the glory of God!**

