

LENT SERIES
LISTEN: Hearing That Still, Small Voice and Finding Your Own
LENT 5: “Our Best and True Self”
Message by DD Adams
5th SUNDAY IN LENT
Troop 1023 Sunday
March 18, 2018

The New Testament lesson for today is from Romans chapter 12, verses 2 through 12. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect.

For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of yourself more highly than you ought to think, but think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. For as in one body we have many members, and not all the members have the same function, so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another.

We have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us: prophecy, in proportion to faith; ministry, in ministering; the teacher, in teaching; the exhorter, in exhortation; the giver, in generosity; the leader, in diligence; the compassionate, in cheerfulness.

Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good; love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honor. Do not lag in

zeal, be ardent in spirit, serve the Lord. Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer. This is God's word for God's people.

Please pray with me. Help us this morning God to hear your words and to understand them. Quiet our minds and slow down our thinking. Help us to focus. Reassure us that your presence is next to us, above and below, and that it surrounds and encircles us. Bless the hearing, the reading, and the understanding of your word. Amen. Peace be with you!

The scripture lesson that was just read is simply . . . God's will in a nutshell. It's much easier to read it however than perform it. God tells us, we're not walking through life's spiritual journey alone. We have the Holy Spirit's help within us to help. Hearing this passage, we're reminded. God calls us to be changed and to become many good things in this world, but the good news is this; life is a process.

Each of us is born and raised in a particular country. We have parents, who had parents, who had parents with different talents and gifts from God. Yet, we all share one responsibility as a child of God—to continue to be engaged with God to be transformed and to desire God's will and way.

Romans 12 in a nutshell *is* God's will for our lives. We don't start out this way, in fact, the character qualities listed go against our natural inclination. Let me paraphrase verse 2. Don't let yourself become so use to your culture that you allow everyone and everything squeeze you into a mold you don't like. Instead, become

who and what God says. Help others at all times, keep yourself morally straight. Become the best kind of person you can as you mature. Don't be pulled down by other's interaction with you, but help them to bring out the best in them self as God brings out the best in you. When we do these things, we prove to ourselves and others that God's way is the best.

So we have a choice. We can be squeezed by others into a mold OR we can be changed and transformed into who God has destined us to become. Some believe this is a time period when God is being put aside or pushed to the side.

For example, we might see someone in need. Maybe they're in trouble. They fell, need a friend, need a couple of bucks to pay their grocery bill, or change their tire. Do we help or do we ask, "What's in it for me?" God says to become the best person we can become as we help others to do the same.

Many people feel pressured to do what others do. It's a squeeze that forces us to conform, but God says this. As you mature, resolve in your heart and mind to continue to become the best you can become on the inside. To be kind, positive in your interaction, be generous, accept differences in others, be able to admit your wrong, be humble, have compassion, and on and on. *Refuse within your heart to stay at the same level of maturity and engage with God to be transformed.*

People can cruise and coast through life not really taking inventory of who they're becoming. Who do you want to become? Sometimes we have to be un-

conformed to what others are in order to become who God wants us to be. Some may call it odd, different, eccentric, or even peculiar simply because they've never seen or experienced something. As believers in God, we should strive to be positively conformed to doing what God says.

The goal is to find our best and true self. The apostle Paul the apostle in this passage provides us with some thoughts we might check ourselves. For example, Paul says to "Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good; love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honor." If you were to give me some examples in the living out of these character qualities what would you include?

Let's allow God to change us and engage with Him in *how* we grow. Let's conform ourselves to His way of thinking. God is able to lead you to become your best and true self. Will you work with God?

Please pray with me. God, encourage us to listen . . . for your still, small voice among the noise and busy activity of each day. Quiet our minds . . . reassure us of your presence. And then . . . help us to follow your call to become our best and true self. Amen.