



Romans Part 12—Becoming More Beautiful
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USING THIS SERMON DISCUSSION GUIDE

We have provided all the Scriptures references in the sermon and some discussion questions for you to use to discuss the weekend message.

This Sermon Discussion Guide is only a tool to aid you in meeting the needs of your group. For most groups, there are too many questions to answer in one session together. Give priority to the needs and pace of your group members.

While the questions are important, remember your group's goal is to create an atmosphere that will foster true friendships. Use the discussion questions as you see fit but emphasize the relationships.

***The deep cry of everyone's heart is to see Jesus, to know Him.
He's irresistible to the thirsty heart.***

[Matthew 5:14 & 16, NLT]

"You are the light of the world—like a city on a hilltop that cannot be hidden. In the same way, let your good deeds shine out for all to see, so that everyone will praise your heavenly Father.

You are a city on a hill. We are longing that we would so reflect the beauty of Jesus, that people would step into our gatherings, and that they would say, "There He is!"

It's enough to be with Him. He is enough.

[Romans 14:1-4]

Accept the one whose faith is weak, without quarreling over disputable matters. One person's faith allows them to eat anything, but another, whose faith is weak, eats only vegetables. The one who eats everything must not treat with contempt the one who does not, and the one who does not eat everything must not judge the one who does, for God has accepted them. Who are you to judge someone else's servant? To their own master, servants stand or fall. And they will stand, for the Lord is able to make them stand.

[Romans 14:5-6, 10-12]

In the same way, some think one day is more holy than another day, while others think every day is alike. **You should each be fully convinced that whichever day you choose is acceptable.** Those who worship the Lord on a special day do it to honor him. So why do you condemn another believer? Why do you look down on another believer? Remember, we will all stand before the judgment seat of God. For the Scriptures say,
“‘As surely as I live,’ says the Lord,
‘every knee will bow before me;
every tongue will confess to God.’
Yes, each of us will give a personal account to God. **So let's stop condemning each other.**

[Colossians 2:16-17]

So don't let anyone condemn you for what you eat or drink, or for not celebrating certain holy days or new moon ceremonies or Sabbaths. For these rules are only shadows of the reality yet to come. And Christ himself is that reality.

God has a better version of you than you even realize.

Becoming More Beautiful and Reflecting God's Glory—

1. Identify and eliminate legalism = *man-made rules that are enforced in order to achieve Godliness*

[1 Corinthians 14:29]

Let two or three prophets speak, and let the others judge (***weigh carefully and evaluate***).

[John 7:24]

Stop judging by mere appearances, but instead **judge correctly**.

[1 Thessalonians 5:21, AMP]

But test, **examine and judge all things carefully** so you can recognize what is good.

You can make judgments without being judgmental. You can assess things without deeming everything sinful and sitting on your throne of holiness.

[1 Corinthians 5:12]

It is not my responsibility to judge outsiders (non-believers), but it certainly is our responsibility to judge those inside the church who are sinning. God will judge those on the outside.

When we judge other believers, it's for the purpose of healing not condemnation. Be careful not to judge people who might be living in a greater level of freedom in an area than you.

2. Establish personal convictions as guardrails against sin

You can actually put out the fire of the Holy Spirit in your life when you resist conviction.

[Romans 14:23, NLT]

But if you have doubts about whether or not you should eat something, you are sinning if you go ahead and do it. For you are **not following your convictions**. If you do anything you believe is not right, you are sinning.

[1 Thessalonians 5:19, AMP]

Do not quench, subdue, or **be unresponsive to the working and guidance** of the Holy Spirit.

Wherever you're at today, God can create in you a clean heart.

3. Aim for Harmony (the absence of judgement and division)

[Romans 14:18-19, NLT]

If you serve Christ with this attitude, you will please God, and others will approve of you, too. So then, **let us aim for harmony** in the church and try to build each other up.

aim = **deoko'**; to seek after, to run after, to earnestly endeavor, to exert energy to acquire

harmony = **i-ray'-nay**

a state of peace with others, the antithesis of disunity, the absence of division and chaos

“Run after and exert energy to live in a state of peace with all believers, dealing with division and eliminating chaos.”

The beauty is revealed in unity. Where there is unity, there is a commanded blessing.

[Romans 14:13 & 22, NLT]

So let's stop condemning each other. Decide instead to **live in such a way that you will not cause another believer to stumble and fall**. You may believe there's nothing wrong with what you are doing, but **keep it between yourself and God**.

Unredeemed people have a measure of discernment, as well. You can feel in the room whether there is division or unity in the community.

[Matthew 5:23-24]

"So if you are presenting a sacrifice at the altar in the Temple and you suddenly remember that someone has something against you, leave your sacrifice there at the altar. Go and be reconciled to that person. Then come and offer your sacrifice to God"

God has called us to live in beauty, to go after it, to grow in it.

There's room for the Church to open up it's arms.

Some liberties need to be kept privately to keep people from stumbling or developing an offense.

FOR MONDAY—

1. Behold God and reflect His image. Ask Him to use you to show those around you the beauty of his holiness. Open your heart to any adjustment He might speak to you.
2. Review the boundaries and "guardrails" that God has spoken to you about and intentionally stoke the fire of the Holy Spirit in your life by responding to His voice in those areas.
3. Deal with any offenses (preemptively and counteractively) that might be creating stumbling blocks for you or others.

TALK IT THROUGH

1. When have you or your family made a diet change, and what was the motivation? Did that produce the results you were hoping for?
2. How do we live a non-offensive or non-judgmental life as a believer? Is that possible, and to what measure?
3. Consider Romans 14:1-12. What do these verses say about becoming more beautiful? Why do you think he uses the examples of diet and Sabbath?
4. What is your view of Sabbath, and how do you personally practice this principle?
5. What are some examples of legalism that you experienced or witnessed? What are some traps we must avoid when keeping others on target, most especially other believers? What kind of position does judgment put the church in?
6. What are some personal convictions or guardrails that help you to live a life of godliness? Why do people sometimes take personal conviction into legalism?
7. What are some areas in which we do need to take responsibility for fellow believers? Why is personal relationship a big deal to delivery? [Refer to Galatians 6:1]
8. What does aiming for harmony practically look like? Why do we need to aim for it, and what are we trying to counter in our culture today?