**R12 Session # 6**

**Authentic Christ Follower/Leader**

**Pillar 5: Your Relationship to UNBELIEVERS…Supernaturally responding to evil with good (12:14-21)**

Welcome & Updates

* Prayer
  + Review the prayers we prayed for last week…
* Introductory conversation of “what’s next for us”
  + This week: finish Pillar 4, dig into pillar 5
  + Next week: wrap-up, and Brandon’s faith story.
  + After that? Ideas?
    - We want to launch two gender specific Covenant Discipleship Groups (define this) probably in August. Would LOVE for all you to be a part of it. The question is, what if anything can/should we do in the meantime…we have good momentum going here, and really would love to keep it if it helps you…but how/when? (Quick convo now, talk more deeply next week)
* (if time) Ice-Breaker--Question #5/6?
* Anything from last week still lingering?
  + Finish Session #7
    - John 17 -- In your reading, what did you discover? What was Jesus praying for when he prayed for himself, his disciples, and you and I?

Centering

* See if you can fill in the blanks…to review the pillars of chapter 12, which is based on the first 11 verses, on how we are to live as an authentic Christian/leader:

Pillar #1 \_\_\_Surrender\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_to God ***verse 12:1***

Pillar #2 \_\_\_Separate\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_from the world ***verse 12:2***

Pillar #3 \_\_Sober\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_in self-assessment ***verses 3-8***

Pillar #4 \_\_\_Serving\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in Love***verses 9-13***

* Mature disciples respond not react. As we read this verse, what STANDS OUT in light of supernaturally responding?

Pillar # 5 Supernaturally \_\_\_\_responding\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to Evil with Good *verses 14-21* 14 *Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. 15 Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn. 16 Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited. 17 Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everyone. 18 If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. 19 Do not take revenge, my dear friends, but leave room for God’s wrath, for it is written: “It is mine to avenge; I will repay,” says the Lord. 20 On the contrary: “If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head.” 21 Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.*

* Circle SUPER. Why is it called SUPER*naturally* respond? (it goes against our nature. If we react…we react in the natural; if we respond…we act in the supernatural. It takes a great power for us to respond.)
* Share a time, if you are comfortable, when you DID NOT respond supernaturally? (my softball game).
  + Bad dsiscisions make good stories ☺
  + Thank you Lord that God doesn’t react to me; but responds.

HOW about a time where you did respond supernaturally?

* (equip) How would you guide/teach someone to respond vs. react?

*Another way to formulate the message of Romans 12 is…*

1. Loving God through a surrendered life
2. Refusing to love the world’s false promises.
3. Loving ourselves for who God made us to be.
4. Loving fellow believers through sacrificial service.
5. Loving our enemies by supernaturally returning good for evil.

Take a look at these…what might all of these have in common (at their root)? What do you see?

* Discipleship is about “unraveling of self.” It takes a long time to learn to let go of our nature so that we can respond to God fully. Sin, at its root, is selfishness.

Revenge/Anger- How do you deal with Anger in your life? Is anger a bad thing? How would you help someone who is dealing with anger/rage?

* “verse 19”—leave room for God’s wrath. How does this guide our path to dealing with revenge/anger?
* When you feel hurt, rejected, we want to rush into the space with our own agenda. We want to fill the space. We want to be the instrument of vengenance (selfishness, sin).
* Remember, God keeps the books
* Remember, His repayment can be redemptive, ours is something else. Natural—make him pay. Supernatureal—leave room

Evil-Moral-I hurt you. Natural—earthquakes, typhones (not an act of God, we live in a fallen world). Systemeic-corruption, opperession.

* What examples do you have?
* How do/should you respond supernaturally to moral, natural, systemic evil?

I John 1:7-9 “Walking in the light”

* Another way to think about what we are talking about is “walking in the light.” We want to teach people to Walk in the Light (not in the natural flesh). What does this mean?
* Look at 1 John 1:7-9. Point out two words
  + Verse 7…Cleanse us—Greek here implies “continually” cleanse us…ongoing effect, need.
  + Verse 9…confess—Greek: homo lougeo-means, to agree with the same.
  + How does this help you understand the verse better?
  + When I confess my sin to God, I am AGREEING WITH God that this is NOT what’s best for me.
  + So, with this understanding…what does it mean to “walk in the light?”
    - We walk in a spirit of confession
* To summarize....

Characteristics of a Romans 12 Christian:

*It’s about a \_\_\_\_\_FAITH\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_response, not performance.*

* We all struggle with PBA (performance based acceptance). If I just do better, God will love me.
* Have you wrestled with this? How do you help someone see a different path?

*It’s about \_\_\_\_RELATIONSHIP\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, not rules or religious activity.*

* Discipleship is about growing in our relationship with God, not in our ability to keep the rules.
* How do you strike the balance?

*It’s about \_\_\_LOVE\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.*

* My response to God’s love for me, is my love for him. Obedience. John 15: If you love me, obey my commands. How can I love you better God
* How do you make the connection between Grace and obedience?

*Phileo Eros Storge Agape*

Brotherly Sexual/Romantic Family Unconditional

When I supernaturally respond to evil with Good, I am demonstrating Agape love and displaying it in a phileo, eros, and storge way.

***“ Love anything and your heart will be wrung and possibly broken. If you want to make sure of keeping it intact, you must give it to no one, not even an animal. Wrap it carefully round with hobbies and little luxuries; avoid all entanglements. Lock it up safe in the casket or coffin of your selfishness. But in that casket, safe, dark, motionless, airless, it will change. It will not be broken; it will become unbreakable, impenetrable, irredeemable. To love is to be vulnerable.” C.S. LEWIS***

*What’s next for you?*