

- **Keep Loving; Be Ready For Jesus (Part 4)**  
**Pastor Rocklyn Clarke - Sunday March 25, 2012**  
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- **New Material**
  - **Answer some of last week's discussion questions**
  - **Preparation**
  - **Misc**
  - **Keep Loving; Be Ready For Jesus (Part 4)**
  - **Raw Material**
    - Teach the saints the power of partnering with teams to accomplish the most important goals in your lives.
    - Encourage the saints to MMT (make money together) - doing things that build their relationships. Make a statement about how network marketing fits into this paradigm.
    - The life of God has to be transferred in a community. You have to give yourself away.
    - Fellowship rhythms are part of living systems.
    - God sends a person.
    - Act like a son!
    - Daniel Pink @ TED Conference - what motivates people?  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rrkrvAUbU9Y>
      - Autonomy - the urge to direct our own lives
      - Mastery - the desire to get better and better at something that matters.
      - Purpose - the yearning to do what we do in the service of something larger than ourselves.
    - Children can be wrong about many things and still be right about the most important things - continuing to learn, obey parents, stay in school, etc.
    - All sermons and other Sunday activity should glorify Jesus and draw us closer to him.
    - Are we moving too fast to grieve properly?
    - Review “pay everyone what you owe them!”
    - Some questions:
      - Are you happy?
      - What's the longest period of time that you can recall being happy?
      - Are there other people who are happier than you are?
      - Are there other people who have been happier longer than you have?

- Who among the people you know has been happy the longest? How did they accomplish this?
- 
- Church modes:
  - Mothering mode (e.g. Vineyard)
  - Fathering mode (Jubilee?)
- Fundamental Issues:
  - Am I getting to know the Lord better or just doing Kingdom work?
  - Leaders must always help believers to experience the Lord more reply as they do Kingdom work.
  - In 2Cor 3 - 4 we see that the Law and works can obscure the glory of Christ.
  - The worship movement is an important stepping stone for people in knowing God. It helps to balance the non-relational aspects of the more works-oriented ministries.
- Clothe yourselves with Jesus - eat his flesh and drink his blood.
- Am I more motivated by knowing Jesus better or by enrolling more people in my ministry system.
- **Preparation - Romans 13:8-14**
- **Standing Issues**
  - From a word Bishop gave me:
    - Make sure people do something with God's message.
    - Make it plain:
      - Use accessible language.
      - Use modern day parables based on every day occurrences:
        - Sitting at a stop light
        - Driving through a green light
        - Approaching a yellow light
        - Being cut off in traffic
        - Going shopping
        - Going to a mall
        - Going to school; sitting in class
        - Going to work; sitting in your office;
    - Keep it simple.
    - Use illustrations of truth out of my own experience.
  - Impart faith to obey the Word and receive God's promises.

- **Introduction**

- Welcome to another service at the Hampton Inn & Suites.
- Welcome Cards -
  - “I want to call your attention to the Welcome Card that you were given on your way into the auditorium”
  - These cards do two things for us:
    - They help us get to know our new visitors better.
    - They also give anyone (visitors or members) a chance to express a need or to give us feedback.
    - By filling it out you will help us to better serve you.
  - We're going to provide time for you to complete the cards at the end of our service, but we encourage you to start filling them out now.
    - **Please use this card:**
      - if you're a **first time visitor** or if you've **never** filled one out before,
      - to tell us about a **decision you made** today,
      - to ask us for more information, or to give us **feedback**.
    - **Please include your contact information** unless we already have it. At the **end of service** we'll ask you to complete the card and then place it in the designated box or give it to someone from our staff on your way out.
- Transition
  - We're following up on our discussion of Romans 12:1-3.
  - We're going to skip ahead to dissension and jealousy.
  - After this message we will review orgies and drunkenness and talk about addiction.
  - We will cover sexual impurity and debauchery after that.
  -

- **Introductory Passage - Romans 12:1-3**

Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God — this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is — his good, pleasing and perfect will.

For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you.

- **Introductory Passage - Romans 13:8-10**

Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another, for he who loves his fellowman has fulfilled the law. The commandments, “Do not commit adultery,” “Do not murder,” “Do not steal,” “Do not covet,” and whatever other commandment there may be, are summed up in this one rule: “Love your neighbor as yourself.” Love does no harm to its neighbor. Therefore love is the fulfillment of the law.

- **Read the Passage - Romans 13:11-14**

And do this, understanding the present time. The hour has come for you to wake up from your slumber, because our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed. The night is nearly over; the day is almost here. So let us put aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light. Let us behave decently, as in the daytime, not in orgies and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and debauchery, not in dissension and jealousy. Rather, clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ, and do not think about how to gratify the desires of the sinful nature.

- **Exegetical Idea**

Love one another; ignore your flesh and imitate Jesus instead.

- **What does this mean?**

- Romans is teaching us how to be the church.
  - How to be the church:
- Just as you pay your taxes, pay all of your debts.
- Keep loving one another - it's the one debt you can never pay off.
- Loving your neighbor as yourself fulfills the law.
- Wake up and get ready for Jesus by living a holy life.

- **Is it True? Do I believe it?**

- Yes: **Matthew 7:12** - . . . do to others . . .
- Yes: **Luke 12:32-48**

- **Homiletical Idea:**

Keep loving and get ready for Jesus

- **Purpose of the Sermon (what listeners should do)**

- Review
  - Be the church.
  - Keep loving one another.
  - Keep loving your neighbors
- Wake up!
- Put aside the deeds of darkness.

- Clothe yourselves with Jesus.
- **Review**
  - Be the church.
    - The church can be planted anywhere and bear fruit for God:
      - a workplace
      - a housing project
      - a prison
      - a street corner
      - a school
    - Love is the key component of our life together as the church.
    - If we don't love we cease to function as the church.
    - Don't be satisfied as a "Christian consumer" "paying" someone else to be the church for you. Learn how to "be" the church yourself by:
      - Embrace righteousness by faith in Jesus.
      - Embrace sanctification by listening to the Holy Spirit.
      - Offer yourselves completely to God.
      - Join with other believers in making your gifts available to one another.
      - Behave in ways that maintain body life.
      - Be good citizens.
      - Treat others the way you want to be treated.
      - Unify around Jesus rather than disputable points of doctrine.
      - Gain an apostolic perspective.
        - Jesus is invading this world. We are part of the invasion force.
      - Be transplantable.
  - Offer your bodies as living sacrifices
    - This is relational - you, a living being, offer your body to God, who is also a living being.
    - Offering is a conscious act that must be intelligently communicated - use your words!
  - Keep loving one another.
    - This is a key component of the Life Church Vision.
  - Keep loving your neighbors as you love yourselves
    - This sums up the law:
      - Do not commit adultery
      - Do not murder
      - Do not steal

- Do not covet
- This is a key component of the Life Church Vision.
- **Wake up!**
  - Get ready; those who don't will be punished. - **Luke 12:32-48**
  - Do you know what time it is?
    - Our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed!
    - Time flies - we need to make the most of it!
    - God saved you to do more than just pursue the American dream!
  - Are we really awake?
    - People who are asleep don't respond to important stimuli.
    - It's hard trying to function when you're sleepy.
    - Falling asleep late nights at my computer at MIT.
    - Some people are so busy they can't stay focused on spiritual things.
  - Do you have the right spiritually supportive relationships?
    - You already know what relationships God wants you to deepen.
- **Put aside the deeds of darkness**
  - Acts 15:13-31: Gentiles were told:
    - avoid food sacrificed to idols
    - avoid blood
    - avoid meat of strangled animals
    - avoid sexual immorality (*πορνεία* - Gk)  
fornication
  - 1Thessalonians 5:1-11 (similar list)
 

Now, brothers, about times and dates we do not need to write to you, for you know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. While people are saying, "Peace and safety," destruction will come on them suddenly, as labor pains on a pregnant woman, and they will not escape.

But you, brothers, are not in darkness so that this day should surprise you like a thief. **You are all sons of the light and sons of the day. We do not belong to the night or to the darkness. So then, let us not be like others, who are asleep, but let us be alert and self-controlled. For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk, get drunk at night. But since we belong to the day, let us be self-controlled, putting on faith and love as a breastplate, and the hope of salvation as a helmet.** For God did not appoint us to suffer wrath but to receive salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ. He died for us so that, whether we are awake or asleep, we may live together with him. Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.
  - Behave decently . . . not in "*night activities*"
    - Similar

- Orgies (ΚΩΜΟΣ - Gk)  
drinking parties involving unrestrained indulgence in alcoholic beverages and accompanying immoral behavior — ‘orgy, revelling, carousing.’
- Drunkenness (μέθη - Gk)
  - Direct application - alcohol intoxication
  - Indirect application - recreational drug use
- Sexual immorality (κοιτη - Gk) - Luke 11:7; Rom 9:10; Heb 13:4  
A piece of furniture used for bedding.
- Debauchery (ἀσέλγεια - Gk)  
“License,” mostly physical, figuratively spiritual. “Debauchery” or “licentiousness” is the sense in 2 Pet. 2:7 (Sodom and Gomorrah) and Eph. 4:19 (the pagan world). Sexual excess is probably meant in Gal. 5:19 and certainly so in Rom. 13:13; 2 Cor. 12:21; 2 Pet. 2:2, 18. [O. BAUERNFEIND, I, 490]
- Dissension (ἔρις - Gk)  
to express differences of opinion, with at least some measure of antagonism or hostility — ‘to argue, quarrel, dispute.’
  - 1Corinthians 1:11  
My brothers, some from Chloe’s household have informed me that there are **quarrels** among you.
  - 1Corinthians 3:1-3  
Brothers, I could not address you as spiritual but as worldly — mere infants in Christ. I gave you milk, not solid food, for you were not yet ready for it. Indeed, you are still not ready. You are still worldly. For since there is jealousy and **quarreling** among you, are you not worldly? Are you not acting like mere men?
  - 2Corinthians 12:20  
For I am afraid that when I come I may not find you as I want you to be, and you may not find me as you want me to be. I fear that there may be **quarreling**, jealousy, outbursts of anger, factions, slander, gossip, arrogance and disorder.
  - Galatians 5:19-21  
The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, **discord**, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.
  - 1Timothy 6:3-4  
If anyone teaches false doctrines and does not agree to the sound instruction of our Lord Jesus Christ and to godly teaching, he is conceited and understands nothing. He has an unhealthy interest in controversies and quarrels about words that result in envy, **strife**, malicious talk, evil suspicions

- Titus 3:9

But avoid foolish controversies and genealogies and **arguments** and quarrels about the law, because these are unprofitable and useless.

- Jealousy (ζήλος - Gk)

The usual translation of this term is “zeal”: a. as the capacity of state of passionate commitment; b. comprehensively for the forces that motivate personality (e.g., interest, taste, imitative zeal, rivalry, fame, enthusiasm); c. in the bad sense jealousy, envy, competition, contention.

- John 2:17

His disciples remembered that it is written: “**Zeal** for your house will consume me.”

- Acts 5:14-18

Nevertheless, more and more men and women believed in the Lord and were added to their number. As a result, people brought the sick into the streets and laid them on beds and mats so that at least Peter’s shadow might fall on some of them as he passed by. Crowds gathered also from the towns around Jerusalem, bringing their sick and those tormented by evil spirits, and all of them were healed.

Then the high priest and all his associates, who were members of the party of the Sadducees, were filled with **jealousy**. They arrested the apostles and put them in the public jail.

- Romans 10:1-2

Brothers, my heart’s desire and prayer to God for the Israelites is that they may be saved. For I can testify about them that they are **zealous** for God, but their zeal is not based on knowledge.

- 1Corinthians 3:1-3

Brothers, I could not address you as spiritual but as worldly — mere infants in Christ. I gave you milk, not solid food, for you were not yet ready for it. Indeed, you are still not ready. You are still worldly. For since there is **jealousy** and quarreling among you, are you not worldly? Are you not acting like mere men?

- 2Corinthians 9:1-2

There is no need for me to write to you about this service to the saints. For I know your eagerness to help, and I have been boasting about it to the Macedonians, telling them that since last year you in Achaia were ready to give; and your **enthusiasm** has stirred most of them to action.

- 2Corinthians 12:20

For I am afraid that when I come I may not find you as I want you to be, and you may not find me as you want me to be. I fear that there may be quarreling, **jealousy**, outbursts of anger, factions, slander, gossip, arrogance and disorder.

- Galatians 5:19-21

The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, **jealousy**, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and

the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.

- **James 3:13-16**

Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show it by his good life, by deeds done in the humility that comes from wisdom. But if you harbor bitter **envy** and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast about it or deny the truth. Such “wisdom” does not come down from heaven but is earthly, unspiritual, of the devil. For where you have **envy** and selfish ambition, there you find disorder and every evil practice.

- **Clothe yourselves with Jesus**

- Count yourselves dead to sin, but alive to God. - **Romans 6:1-14**

- Sanctification

- Erroneous sanctification theories

- Eradication Theory: (e.g. Wesley): You have a sinful nature and sanctification eradicates it.
- Counteraction Theory (e.g. Keswick): You have a sinful nature and sanctification causes it to be suppressed until Jesus returns.
- Pentecostals: You have a sinful nature and the baptism of the Holy Spirit removes it.

- Our old man (all of humanity in Adam) was crucified and we now put on the new man (all of saved humanity in Christ).

- We have a single human nature (not two natures) that is pulled downwards by sin and upwards by the Spirit of God.

- Sin is an infection co-extensive with your entire nature, not some malignancy that can be "surgically" removed.

- Salvation involves us receiving new life into our single nature - not a new nature. Think blood transfusion rather than surgery.

- Are you a shame magnet or a grace antenna?

- The flesh is about more than just “pet” bad behaviors.

- How can you count yourself "alive to God"?

- Only by talking to him.

- Clothe yourselves with Jesus - Romans 13:14

- How can you clothe yourself with Jesus?

- Jesus is alive; clothing isn't! Putting him on involves talking to him.

- Getting the conversation started:

- Talk to God!

- What should I talk to God about?

- What you just read in the Bible and how to apply it to your life.

- Come boldly to Jesus - Hebrews 4:12-16

- Let God break you!
  - This is one of the implications of **Romans 12:1-3**.
  - God needs to free us from our reliance on our own analysis, planning, and abilities.
  - This looks different for different temperaments.
  
- **Small Group Discussion**
  - Dissension (ἔρις - Gk)
    - to express differences of opinion, with at least some measure of antagonism or hostility — ‘to argue, quarrel, dispute.’
  - Have you ever been involved in dissension? Discuss.
  - What things tempt you to engage in this behavior?
  - Jealousy (ζήλος - Gk)
    - The usual translation of this term is “zeal”: a. as the capacity of state of passionate commitment; b. comprehensively for the forces that motivate personality (e.g., interest, taste, imitative zeal, rivalry, fame, enthusiasm); c. in the bad sense jealousy, envy, competition, contention.
  - Are you jealous now? Have you ever been jealous? Discuss.
  - Have you ever been jealous of others at church? Discuss.
  
- **Conclusion**
  - Keep the conversation going.
  - Wake up and stay awake!
  - Drop the deeds of darkness!
  - Keep clothing yourselves with Jesus Christ.
  
- **Altar Call / Welcome Cards / Communion ?**
  - Welcome Cards - refer to script
  - We're almost ready to close this portion of our service, but first we want to give you a chance to respond to what you've heard.
  - Earlier in the service we mentioned the welcome cards and we encouraged you to begin filling them out.
  - Right now we want you to complete your welcome card. We especially want you to use this card if:
    - if you're a first time visitor
    - if you've never filled one out before,
    - if you want to tell us about a decision you made today,
    - if you want to ask us for more information, or to give us feedback.

- Please be sure to include your up to date contact information unless we already have it.
- **MC & Worship Team continue with tithes, offerings, and worship**
- **Benediction - Numbers 6:24-26**  
 ““The LORD bless you and keep you; the LORD make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you; the LORD turn his face toward you and give you peace.””
- **Men's Prayer**
- **Life Group Material**
- **Life Group Word Material**  
 These are sample discussion questions / topics. Your life group leaders may choose to adjust these questions, substitute new ones, or spend the Word section of the meeting in a different way altogether.

Scripture taken from the [HOLY BIBLE, NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION \(NIV\)](#)  
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- **Romans 12:1-3**  
 Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God — this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is — his good, pleasing and perfect will.  
 For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you.
- **Discussion Questions / Topics:**
  - Are you offering your body as a living sacrifice to the living God? Do you talk to him about what you're offering him? Discuss.
- **Romans 13:11-14**  
 And do this, understanding the present time. The hour has come for you to wake up from your slumber, because our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed. The night is nearly over; the day is almost here. So let us put aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light. Let us behave decently, as in the daytime, not in orgies and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and debauchery, not in dissension and jealousy. Rather, clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ, and do not think about how to gratify the desires of the sinful nature.
- **Discussion Questions / Topics:**
  - From the standpoint of this passage are you awake or still asleep?

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### **Small Group Discussion**

- Dissension (ἔρις - Gk)  
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- Have you ever been involved in dissension? Discuss.
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- Are you jealous now? Have you ever been jealous? Discuss.
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## Life Church Mission Statement

- Our mission is to teach people:
  - to enjoy knowing Jesus without fear, inadequacy, guilt, or shame,
  - to follow him together as his family,
  - to function together as his body,
  - and to work together to expand his kingdom.

### Understanding The Bible

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Here, for your convenience, are the Bible passages for today's sermon at Life Church. We use mostly the New International Version (NIV) of the Bible so that you can read it in modern English. You may have been accustomed to reading or hearing the King James Version of the Bible, which uses older English (with words like "thee" , "thou", "thine", "believeth", etc.). Don't be alarmed - the passages are really from the Bible!

The Bible was originally written in three ancient languages: Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek. None of the people in the Bible, and none of the people who God used to write it spoke English. In fact, English did not even exist as a language when the Bible was written. The King James Version, first published in 1611, was a translation of the Bible from it's original languages into the every day English that people used back then - almost 400 years ago! They didn't just speak that way in church - they spoke that way with everyone. The King James Version was "modernized" in 1769, but, even so, English has certainly changed a lot since then! **We believe that if you're reading an English translation of the Bible it ought to be up to date - written in the English you speak every day. God wants you to understand his Word so that you can put it into practice!**

Life Church Web Site: <http://www.lifechurchboston.org/>