

Is God's Way Worth It?

(Insights from Romans 12:1-2)

Pastor Bob Johnson, Grace Point Church, February 11th, 2018

I. Initial Insights

- **4 Therefore's ...** (summary of Romans so far)
- **Maturity is measured by ...**

II. Paul's Dedication Descriptions:

- **is ...** **v1a**
- **is ...** **v1b**
- **is ...** **v1c**
(Galatians 2:20, Colossians 3:17)
- **is ...** **v1d**
(Romans 8:4-8)

III. Paul's Dedication Developers:

- **is ...** **v2a**
- **is ...** **v2b**
- **is ...** **v2c**
(John 8:31-32)
- **is ...** **v2d**

IV. Practical Next Steps:

- 1) **Discernment & Development starts with ...**
(Joshua 24:15)
- 2) **Input determines ...**
(Proverbs 13:20, 1 Corinthians 15:33)
- 3) **F_____ what's harmful, F_____ what's helpful**
(2 Timothy 2:22, Psalm 1:1)

This Week's Discussion Guide:

Welcome to "Week 5" of our small group session!

We are glad that you have taken this journey with us digging into God's Word with others. We pray this is a time of growth, encouragement, and fun as you deepen friendships and make new friends along the way!

Looking Back:

Each week we'll look back and have an opportunity to share with each other how the week went and also share a few things to help us get to know each other better.

What is something encouraging that happened since our last meeting?

Looking back on last week's discussion and application ideas, what is a way you attempted to apply a Biblical truth to your daily life?

Looking back at your notes from this week's teaching, was there anything you heard for the first time or that caught your attention or raised a question for you, encouraged you or challenged you?

LOOKING UP: (DIGGING DEEPER)

1. When the topic of 'experiencing God's will' comes up, there can be a variety of impressions and responses. How would you rate, from 1-5 with 1 being the lowest and 5 the highest, the following words as your personal descriptors of what it is like to experience God's will?

- ___ challenging
- ___ freeing
- ___ frightening
- ___ confusing
- ___ fulfilling
- ___ other

2. Re-Read Romans 12:1-2 which was the passage Bob taught on last Sunday. When we trust and obey God, Paul says that we will one day be able to look back and see that God's way was the best way. Can you think of a time you struggled to trust God with a certain decision, but after you did go God's way, you later saw that it was the right path to take?

3. Bob mentioned the value of 'personal fences' that can help us avoid conforming to the world. The fences we feel God prompts us to have might not be the same fences those around us are prompted to have. Can you think of any fences you have added to your life that have helped you? If so, explain. Can you think of some fences others feel strongly about and have tried to put on you? What was your response?

Are there any 'fences' you need to be careful of projecting onto others?

4. The great news as followers of Jesus is that God is at work in our lives, engaging with us, wanting to help us develop and helping us have a lasting impact through our lives. Yet praying a 'prayer of permission', as Bob talked about last week, could be a challenge and even frightening to do.

Read Psalm 34:8-10. What positive motivations to pray this type of prayer catch your attention the most in this passage?

Have you ever prayed a 'prayer of permission' before? If so, what happened?

At the end of last Sunday's service, we had an opportunity to present something to the Lord. By doing so, we were offering God our trust for what we presented. We were no longer going to demand a certain outcome or attempt to control something or someone.

What or who did you offer to the Lord?

After sharing, let's spend some time praying that God would help us trust him more for what God prompted us to offer to him.

5. When we choose to conform to the ways of the world, it is because the payoff seems worth making! Poor choices are fueled by poor thinking. Read Genesis 3:1-13 and identify both the strategy of the serpent and the steps that led to Adam and Eve's sin.

What lessons can you learn from their experience of temptation and conforming to their own desires (even in a perfect environment!) ?

6. Last week, we looked at Ephesians 4:29-32 and asked questions to help surface insights we can apply to our lives. Let's do a similar study this week and see how insights from Ephesians 4:16-24 can provide more wisdom pertaining not being conformed to this world.

What is this passage about?

What don't you understand or have questions about?

What does this passage tell us about people and how to treat them?

How could this passage change how we live?

What principle or word from this passage would you like to continue to think about?

Looking Forward:

This last section is based on passages like the one below.

But don't just listen to God's word. You must do what it says. Otherwise, you are only fooling yourselves. 23 For if you listen to the word and don't obey, it is like glancing at your face in a mirror. 24 You see yourself, walk away, and forget what you look like. 25 But if you look carefully into the perfect law that sets you free, and if you do what it says and don't forget what you heard, then God will bless you for doing it. James 1:22-25 (NLT)

Let's all take a few minutes to silently pray and reflect back on last week's message and what we discussed in our group. As we reflect, let's all pray and ask God for a specific application that He might prompt us to live out this week.

Here are some possible applications to get us thinking ...

Before we wrap up, let's share some prayer requests and pray for each other.