Sermon: **‘Because of God’s great mercy to us’** (Romans 12.1)

We inherit more than genes from our parents. Who knew how we would turn out when babies, but we are influenced by special people, and by God.

TEXT reminds us of what we owe God. Our passage fills this idea out.

TEXT leads to an inner transformation (v2), which in turn leads to -

[1] True Citizenship (**do not conform yourselves to the standards of this world**)

The purpose of a ruler – both sorts is to set standards. What standards should we use? Paul suggests they should be those of God (**then you will know the will of God**).

Naturally all Christians think their standards are those of God, but are they necessarily so? How would we know? When they conflict with love, or God’s values then they probably are not.

[2] True Assessment (**do not think of yourself more highly than you should**)

Exam results in UK have improved by 10%. Why? No exams were taken because of Covid-19 so results were based on Teacher Assessments. Presumably either teachers have assessed wrongly or students in exams normally do not live up to expectations.

When it comes to assessing yourself it is easy to get it wrong, either exaggerating, or down-playing.

TEXT. For Paul, both exaggerating and down-playing are wrong. We are to try and see ourselves as we truly are, which is difficult.

Eg for the up-coming referenda, don’t think your view is the only view, or even necessarily God’s.

[3] True Community (**we have many parts in the one body, and all these parts have different functions**)

Covid-19 Team of 5 million – all have a part to play; those who don’t may ruin everything for everyone else.

In a church the same is true. What matters is less ‘who has the right opinion’ and more ‘how can we work on this together’, ‘how can we live together’. And this means not refusing to take your share, though what that share means, is something to work on with God.

I have been nominated as Vice President of the Methodist Church: I do not really want to do this (it will mean lost sleep, much travel, exhausting meetings, etc), but realise that others might know better, or maybe they are in touch with what God wants for his Church. I trust that my standards of self-comfort, my self-assessment, and my part in the national Church Community might not be as I thought, and that God is speaking through all this. TEXT. If God wants this why should I resist?