

Sermon for Sunday, Sept. 6, 2020-Romans 13:8-14

Rev. James C. Covert

I see you! This is a little game I used to play with my daughters when they smaller.

I'd find them when they were really focusing on something; playing, reading, or something else and I'd point to them and say, "I see you!". They'd look up, smile, probably wondering what I was doing, but sometimes they'd point back and say "I see you" to me. Basically, I was trying to let them know, "I'm here", "You're there", so let's connect.

Really seeing somebody is trying to see who a person really is. How do we see others? When we're out at a store or in our churches or just taking a walk, we may see a lot of different people, some we may know or have never seen before. People who we think are acting strangely or many times we just pass by without acknowledging them.

We might remember the story where Jesus was asked what the greatest commandment is. Jesus simply took all the commandments and boiled them down to two: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, strength and mind" and the second was "Love your neighbor as you love yourself. With this in mind, let's turn to our Romans text for today, because the Apostle Paul is letting us know why it is important to see others for who they really are.

Paul does so by emphasizing what Jesus said concerning the greatest commandment: Love one another and love your neighbor as yourself, for to do so is to fulfill the law.

God gave us the commandments to help us live out our faith lives, but many people become so rigid in obeying them, that they forget that they mean nothing if we do not have love for others. This is why seeing one another is so important for it leads us to treating one another as people to be loved. To do so is to see ourselves and others as God sees us: as human beings and God's creations. This is what we all have in common.

We need to humanize one another, look at one another and see ourselves in those we see and hope that they see themselves in us.

It is true that sometimes people do things that hurt one another and disappoints God, but we still must love; especially, if we say we are following Jesus the Christ and wish to use the faith the Holy Spirit has given us. One

biblical writer put it this way, that the love we have been given by God we must give to others "to lead to a restoration of genuine relationships."

This is why Jesus was sent to this world, who through the greatest act of love, went to the cross and restored our broken relationships with God that had been broken through sin. God now points to all of us and says, "I see you!" Now go and see others with the love that you have been given. Amen.