



SERMON RECAP: WHAT DID THE TEXT MEAN? WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

Group life is beneficial for the believer. Scripture is filled with encouragements to live in community with others. But how? How does a person successfully manage to live their life with others without things going haywire? We learned from Paul's letter to the church in Corinth that love matters most. Love is the action that sets apart Christ-followers from the rest of the world. Love matters most of all.

THE TEXT: WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR ME?

SOMEONE READ:

Romans 12:4-5

Paul reveals some interesting things in these verses. First, he states that members do not serve the same function within the body of Christ. In other words, Paul does not view the body of Christ segregated into groups i.e. Pastors and everyone else

Rather, Paul teaches that each member of the body has a substantive role to play in building up the body in order to pursue the will of God.

- Think back to various roles you have filled and service opportunities you have taken on within the body of Christ. Have you ever struggled with jealousy that what you're doing for the body of Christ is not important? If yes, share with the group your experience.
- How might your jealousy slowly evolve into contentment and fulfillment?
- In your view, if you and everyone whom you serve alongside of stopped serving the body today, what would happen to the body?

Second, while we are diverse in how we operate within the body, we are all one body in Christ, **AND** individually members of one another. Each member depends on the other for the function and success of the whole.

- Describe a time when you were a part of something positive that required your involvement or else the goal would not be reached. Was there a sense of camaraderie or togetherness that you could identify?
- In the experience you shared with the group, how would your fellow teammates have reacted if you had simply not participated and done your share? Why would they have been upset?

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- Read verse 5 again. In your worldview, what does “we are all one body in Christ” and “individually members one of another” mean to you?

In this text Paul is making his case for Christ-followers in Rome to view themselves as not individuals roaming around seeking to be better than their fellow man all the while doing good and spreading the name of Jesus. Instead, he is imploring them to understand that each believer is a member of the body of Christ. They are all mission-critical to the will of God in Rome. There is no room for comparisons and jealousy. As such, God has given each member of His body gifts that will build up the His church and further His will. But what of the will of God? What unites them? How do they unite? What are they uniting for in Rome?

SOMEONE READ:

Romans 12:2

The context of Paul’s teaching in verses 4-5 is verse 2. The renewing of the mind is the work of the Spirit.

- Why do you think the Spirit renews your mind?

It is by the renewing of your mind that the believer has the capacity to know the will of God. The will of God is what motivates the believer to build up the body of Christ.

Look at the progression of thought considering verses 2,4,5:

As the Christ-follower takes up his cross daily and submits his will to God, the work of the Holy Spirit renews his mind to view the world as Jesus does, namely, follow the will of the Father by using the gifts they have been equipped with to edify the body of Christ. With each member working together to build up the body, Christ’s love is demonstrated and spreads to a watching world (see John 17:20-21) and this demonstration moves people towards the Father thus following and advancing the will of God...redeeming mankind to Himself by grace through faith in Jesus Christ.

- How is yielding to the Spirit each day a struggle?
- What do you believe is the source of the struggle?
- How can understanding Paul’s teaching to the church at Rome help in removing obstacles in your way of fully investing in community?
- Speaking for yourself, what is an obstacle in getting along with others in the body of Christ? What are your pet peeves?
- Is the intensity of your pet peeve(s) greater than the Spirit’s ability to renew your mind daily?
- If a person truly believed life is better together than on their own, what would their life look like?
- Do you believe this group resembles a Christ-centered community seeking to show the world Jesus by the way they love one another?
- What could your group work on in order to better demonstrate God’s love to the world?

Perhaps you attend church, attend life group faithfully, tithe, go on mission trips, or volunteer on Sunday.

- Would you say you are unashamedly committed to pursuing life in community? If not, why? If so, how would you encourage those who are not ready yet?

DIGGING DEEPER

Athiesm (Christianity) has been specially advanced through the loving service rendered to strangers, and through their care for the burial of the dead. It is a scandal that there is not a single Jew who is a beggar, and that the godless Galileans care not only for their own poor but for ours as well; while those who belong to us look in vain for the help that we should render them.

Roman Emperor Julian the Apostate, 4th Century A.D.

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- A thousand years from now what will be this generation's legacy?
 - How would you describe your life group's attempts at furthering the name of Jesus?

CLOSING THOUGHT

I do not ask on behalf of these alone, but for those also who believe in Me through their word; that they may all be one; even as You, Father, are in Me and I in You, that they also may be in Us, so that the world may believe that You sent Me.

-Jesus, praying for His church (John 17:20-21)