

Be Devoted to One Another (Romans 12)

I. Introduction

- a. Still in Romans. Before that..lay a little ground work and actually begin in John 17

II. Original Design

- a. Context: this is what Jesus prayed to the Father shortly before He was betrayed.
- b. John 17: ²⁰ "I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who ^lwill believe in Me through their word; ²¹ that they all may be one, as You, Father, *are* in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me.
 - i. Today I want to talk about an aspect of our original design.
It's this little line where Jesus prays *that they all may be one*, and again *that they also may be one in Us*
- c. God designed us for oneness with Him, but He also designed us for oneness w/ each other.
 - i. After the fall came brokenness between man and God and man with man. And then Jesus comes on to the scene. And when Jesus died and rose again He brought restoration to BOTH of those areas of brokenness.
 - ii. Why. Because before sin entered you were *designed* to have both.
- d. Genesis 1: ²⁶ Then God said, "Let Us make mankind in Our image, according to Our likeness;
- e. Let US make mankind in OUR image, according to OUR likeness. If you're going to be made into the likeness of God..then you are going to be an incredibly relational being.
 - i. Father, Son and Holy Spirit are in continuous unity and oneness.
 1. And you may think its just indicating our design for oneness with God...
 2. But As you read on in Genesis you read that God made Adam, placed him in a garden, He gives him a job. Tells Him what not to eat. Adam is clearly in relationship with God.

3. AND YET. God says, in Genesis 2:18 "It is not good for man to be alone"

- ii. Alone? But Adam is with God! And at that point there wasn't even SIN to hinder that relationship. How could God say that?
- iii. As we now know there was more to God's design for man than just God with man. And God let Adam feel the weight of what was missing as he named animals and realized there was no one for him.
- iv. If you've ever lived w/ the attitude of "I don't really NEED to do life with other believers- I have God."
- v. I'm telling you that EVEN IF YOU HAD NO SIN and you were in perfect fellowship with God, like Adam before the fall...the Bible doesn't change. God's design for man to live in fellowship with God and one ANOTHER does not change. It's GOOD for us.
- vi. And thankfully- praise God, according to the Word of God, there is an event that is going to happen that will be the fulfillment of this

III. Marriage Supper of the Lamb

- a. Revelation 19:6 And I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude, as the sound of many waters and as the sound of mighty thunderings, saying, "Hallelujah! For the Lord God Omnipotent reigns! ⁷ Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready." ... ⁹ Then he said to me, "Write: 'Blessed *are* those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb!'"
 - i. There's a wedding of the Bride (the church) and Jesus our Savior, and Then we enter into the marriage supper of the Lamb and all of this marks the eternal union of Jesus Christ and His Bride the Church) at the end of the age.

IV. Let's look at a prophesy from Isaiah that gives quite a bit more detail.

- a. Isaiah 25:6 Now the LORD of armies will prepare a lavish banquet for all peoples on this mountain (Mount Zion); A banquet of aged wine, choice pieces with marrow, *And* refined, aged wine. ⁷ And on this mountain He will destroy the covering which is over all peoples, The veil which is stretched over all nations. ⁸ He will swallow up death for all time, And the Lord GOD will wipe tears away from all faces, And He will remove the disgrace of His people from all the earth; For the LORD has spoken. ⁹ And it will be said on that day, "Behold, this is our God for whom we

have waited that He might save us. This is the LORD for whom we have waited; Let's rejoice and be glad in His salvation."

- i. At that feast there are no lingering bills to pay. No arguments to mend. No shame of the past. All disgrace has been removed. You won't feel an ounce of insecurity.
 1. Whatever job titles, achievements, you made will not matter. Number of properties you owned, will not be discussed. How big your house was, nobody cares.
 2. **It won't matter because you will be at a table, feasting in the Lord's presence, with other believers. Our meal and salvation provided by our Messiah, Jesus.**

V. Waiting/Groaning Signifies the Design

- a. And for now There is a waiting stored in our hearts. Romans 8:23 says that we groan w/in ourselves as we eagerly await our adoption as sons and daughters. There is a full permanent adoption AND oneness with God and one another is coming. And you are built w/ a groan for it.
 - i. If before you knew Christ you felt lonely even if you were surrounded by people, that's a sign of the groan to be one with Christ.
 - ii. If after knowing Christ you fell into a period of isolation and felt a longing to do life w/ other believers, that signals the longing to be one w/ one another as brothers and sisters in Christ
- b. Christ's death and resurrection restored both aspects.
 - i. Do you see the story written for us? In the beginning God designed man to live in unity w/ God and w/ mankind, that gets broken, Jesus comes to earth to pay for that restoration in full which we will experience at the marriage supper of the Lamb.
 - ii. We are living in that pocket of time where Jesus has paid the price for our unity to be restored, but we are not yet at the marriage supper of the Lamb

VI. The Assault

- a. So what do we do with the time that we have? Or another question could be- what does the enemy want you to do with the time that we have?

- i. The enemy wants you to live in habitual isolation from other believers. Which sounds extreme and you may be thinking well I'm not like *that*.
- b. So here's the question: how much do you do life with other believers in the rhythms outlined from the early church in Acts: 1) Getting into the Word of God 2) communion 3) breaking bread 4) praying together.
 - i. Do you see how habitual isolation from other believers can slip in?
 - ii. We're not talking about adding another activity to your life, we're talking about re-prioritizing our lives around how God designed us and NOT how the world or the enemy wants us to live.
 - iii. I'm just saying- you are living outside of your design.
- c. And my question is: what has taken you out of your design?
 - i. Are you overworked and out of capacity
 - ii. Or just kind of fell into the lone ranger I'm okay with just Jesus philosophy or something else
 - iii. There's a direct pushback an aggressive pushback that we have to be willing to step into

VII. Rat Park

- a. There was a famous study done called Rat Park...
- b. **These are rats ya'll.** Even rats fall into addiction in isolation. **How much greater has the enemy designed the temptation for God's children, to fall unto addiction.** Even if its simply the addiction to comfort that's found in isolation. That's good enough for him. Because he hates us for being made in the image of God, a God who is a relational being. Satan doesn't care about rats, he cares about you. In the worst way

VIII. PUSH BACK!!

- a. And bc you live in the NW, you're going to have to push back a little harder...
- b. We live in an incredibly competitive area.
- c. You LIVE amongst the top 1% of the world's population by income.
 - i. You live amongst people who from across the globe gave up everything to pursue career, wealth, comfort, independence
 - ii. You also live amongst the some of the highest rates in the United States for anxiety, depression and psychological distress
 - iii. The Goal in our area is NOT to pursue oneness with God and one another. Our area is actively living outside of our God-given design and suffering for it

- d. Millenials- you are some of the worst offenders! ☺
- e. I was the worst offender
 - i. My story of isolation and coming back into family
- IX. Hebrews 10: ²⁴ And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, ²⁵ not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.
 - a. All the more as you see the Day (capital D) drawing near. We are about 1,900 years closer to the Day than when this was written.
 - b. Why more as the day draws near? Could it be because our ability to put love for God and one another on display is under greater assault as the Day draws near?
 - i. I don't think This verse isn't a nice thought. I think it's exposing the habits we fall into that impact the entire purpose of being alive.
 - ii. The danger for the Bride is thinking there's nothing more we need to do bc we have our secret place with God but we hold no regard for the scriptural call to cultivate deep unity with one another.
- X. Romans 12: ¹⁰ ¹⁰ Be devoted to one another in brotherly love; in honor giving preference to one another... ¹⁵ Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep. (SHARE YOUR JOYS AND SORROWS) ¹⁶ Be of the same mind toward one another.
 - a. As we read these scriptures they reveal how are designed for deepest joy and fulfillment with your life. Living in alignment with God's design.

XI. Joy

- a. Studies on joy- conclusion (eating around a table)
- b. Doesn't that make sense? If God designed us for oneness with God and one another then doesn't it make sense that eating around a table w/ believers in God's presence would bring greatest joy. Because we are emulating the eternal.
- c. We are to regularly break bread, regularly share our joys and our sorrows, regularly confess our sins, and grow in Christ together. Play together.
It's our design from the beginning, it was paid for by Christ, and it's what we will do in eternity.

XII. AND HERE'S THE KICKER

- a. As we draw closer to one another and prioritize being DEVOTED to one another- not only will it be to our greatest joy, **it will be what ushers non-believers to the Kingdom. Our unity in Christ preaches the gospel.**
 - b. John 17:²¹ that they all may be one, as You, Father, *are* in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, **that the world may believe that You sent Me.**
 - c. We get into alignment and we start seeing these outcomes
 - d. Acts 2:46 So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart, ⁴⁷ praising God and having favor with all the people. **And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.**
- XIII. The Revive church body has really grasped going after intimacy with Jesus. Unlike any other place I've been. You spend time with Him in the secret place, you're in the Word, but a really important fruit that should be coming out of that, is that we would be devoted to one another.
 - a. This isn't something you retire from and busyness holds no weight as an excuse.
 - b. Jesus had the mission to save the world and YET He found it worth His time to do life continually with others
- XIV. If the government pulls a fast one again and forces churches to close.. the Church moves seamlessly underground. Just keep meeting in the homes we've been meeting in
 - a. Home groups: will you take this baby step with us to participate in the eternal as brothers and sisters in Christ.
 - b. And if I may be so bold to say...**Don't miss a meeting.**
 - i. That will be the first thing the enemy wants you to take off your plate- Cultivating intimacy and being devoted to one another in Christ.
 - ii. But I'm telling you it's what you're made for. It's your joy. It preaches the gospel. It honors the price Jesus paid on the cross. CHOOSE it. whole heartedly.
- XV. Communion