



## **"Community: Interdependence Not Independence"**

Various Texts

Sunday | September 15th, 2019 | Pastor Patrick Bowler

### **CONSULT THE SCRIPTURES**

**Genesis 2:15-25**

**1 Peter 2:4-6** (See also Eph. 2:19-22)

**Romans 12:4-6** (See also 1 Cor. 12:12-15)

**Ephesians 1:4-6** (See also Rom. 8:23-24, Gal. 6:10, Heb. 12:5-6)

**Acts 2:42-47**

### **DISCUSS**

1. Pastor Patrick said that while we as a culture value independence as a personal trait, we were actually not created for it in that sense. Talk about the differences between interdependence and independence. Read the following quotes and respond: What stands out to you? Do you agree or disagree?

**Randy Frazee—**

*"... Our focus on the 'individual' goes beyond issues of human dignity, rights, or even the celebration of human uniqueness and diversity. All of these are valued in healthy communities. Individualism, however, is a way of life that makes the individual and his or her wants, needs, and desires supreme or sovereign over everything else..."* (Randy Frazee, *The Connecting Church 2.0*, [Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2013], p. 36)

**Randy Frazee—**

*"Most Americans tend to see individualism as a positive trait that reflects their right to exercise liberty and freedom. Individualism is seen to promote free will, free choices, free markets, and good self-esteem. Yet, after more than sixty years of trumpeting the virtues of unrestricted individualism, we are coming face-to-face with the dark side of individualism, particularly as we find ourselves increasingly lonely and isolated from one another..."* (Randy Frazee, *The Connecting Church 2.0*, [Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2013], p. 37)

2. Read *Genesis 2:15-25* and discuss. What was the one thing that was "not good" in the Garden prior to the fall in Gen. 3? Talk about the benefits of interdependence. What does it tell us about ourselves as well as the God who created us?
3. Scripture describes the church as a building (1 Pet. 2:4-6, Eph. 2:19-22), a body (Rom. 12:4-6, 1 Cor. 12:12-15), and a family (Eph. 1:4-6, Rom. 8:23-24, Gal. 6:10, Heb.

12:5-6). What do we learn about the church from each of those descriptions? Which description speaks to you most and why?

4. Read the following quote and respond: What stands out to you? Do you agree or disagree?

**Colin Marshall & Tony Payne (The Trellis and the Vine)—**

*"Sunday sermons are necessary but not sufficient... Sermons are needed, yes, but they are not all that is needed."*

*"The preaching of powerful, faithful, compelling biblical expositions is absolutely vital and necessary to the life and growth of our congregations. Weak and inadequate preaching weakens our churches. As the saying goes, 'Sermonettes produce Christianettes'. Conversely, clear, strong, powerful public preaching is the bedrock and foundation upon which all other ministry in the congregation is built. The sermon is a rallying cry... We do not want to see less emphasis on preaching or less effort go into preaching! On the contrary, we long for more godly, gifted Bible teachers who will set congregations on fire with the power of the preaching of the word." (Trellis and the Vine; p. 102)*

*"... Sunday is not the only place where the action is." (p. 104)*

5. Randy Frazee identifies five characteristics of community: (1) Spontaneity, (2) availability, (3) Frequency, (4) sharing meals, (5) geography. Which compels you the most? What is your biggest hindrance?
6. Pastor Patrick quoted a mentor of his, Rich Plass, who said, "All reality is relational."<sup>1</sup> What do you think that means? Do you agree or disagree and why?
7. What's your next move in light of this sermon?

---

<sup>1</sup>Rich Plass, Jim Cofield, *The Relational Soul* (Downer's Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2014), p. 15.