

SERMON-BASED STUDY: THE MISSION IS TO BELONG

Hebrews 10:24-25, ESV – 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.

Acts 2:44-47, ESV – ⁴⁴ And all who believed were together and had all things in common. ⁴⁵ And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need. ⁴⁶ And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, ⁴⁷ praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.

Notes:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

QUICK REVIEW

Looking back at your notes from this week's teaching, was there anything you heard for the first time or that caught your attention, challenged, or confused you?

ENGAGE WITH THE MESSAGE

- 1 This week, we were reminded that we must strive to be the church. What does it mean to be the church?
- 2 What does it mean to belong to each other? Why is it God's desire for followers of Christ to be in community with each other?

- 3 How can those who already “belong” in the church, bring others into the community of believers?

DIGGING DEEPER

A **Hebrews 3:12-14, ESV** – ¹² Take care, brothers, lest there be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart, leading you to fall away from the living God. ¹³ But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called “today,” that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. ¹⁴ For we have come to share in Christ, if indeed we hold our original confidence firm to the end.

1 Thessalonians 5:14-22, ESV – ¹⁴ And we urge you, brothers, admonish the idle, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with them all. ¹⁵ See that no one repays anyone evil for evil, but always seek to do good to one another and to everyone. ¹⁶ Rejoice always, ¹⁷ pray without ceasing, ¹⁸ give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. ¹⁹ Do not quench the Spirit. ²⁰ Do not despise prophecies, ²¹ but test everything; hold fast what is good. ²² Abstain from every form of evil.

- 4 Looking at the passages above, we read that believers are to exhort, admonish, encourage, help and to do good to one another in the faith. Why are these things best done in a “close knit” community?

- 5 In Hebrews 3:14, what does the author mean by, “we have come to share in Christ”? Why is this important when belonging in a community?

- 6 In 1 Thessalonians 5:15, Paul concludes his exhortation with the phrase, “and to everyone.” Who is everyone? Why does he add this statement to his exhortation? How can we avoid becoming so inwardly focus on our community that we forget about the “everyone’s” in our lives?

B **Acts 4:32-35, ESV** – ³² Now the full number of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one said that any of the things that belonged to him was his own, but they had everything in common. ³³ And with great power the apostles were giving their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all. ³⁴ There was not a needy person among them, for as many as were owners of lands or houses sold them and brought the proceeds of what was sold ³⁵ and laid it at the apostles’ feet, and it was distributed to each as any had need.

1 Corinthians 12:24b-27, ESV – But God has so composed the body, giving greater honor to the part that lacked it, ²⁵ that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another. ²⁶ If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together. ²⁷ Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it.

7 Looking at the passages above, we see that the church is to be a generous church, taking care of one another. When have you experienced or seen a radical act of generosity? How did it impact you?

8 In 1 Corinthians, Paul uses the analogy of a body to describe the church. What does he mean with this analogy? How is it a good description of what the church should look like? When functioning correctly, how does everyone within the church have all from God?

9 How has your relationship with Jesus impacted and changed the way you view your money and possessions? What are the things that prevent you from being generous? What are the things that inspire you to be generous?

TAKING IT HOME

Scripture is clear, we are meant to be in community with other believers. Within that community we are able to grow, to encourage others, and to be encouraged ourselves. What about your community (i.e., life group)? How has your life group exemplified these characteristics? Are there things your life group can improve upon? Share with your group what God is showing you. Pray for one another as you look to be a community of believers that pleases God.

PRAISES AND PRAYER REQUEST

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FOR FURTHER STUDY

Ecclesiastes 4:9-12

Acts 15

Galatians 6:1-5