

Committed to His church

The Point - Commitment to Christ includes a commitment to His body, the church

Passages - Romans 12: 3-16

The setting - in Romans chapters 1-11 Paul laid out the doctrinal foundation of the good news of Jesus Christ. He gave the Christians in Rome an explanation of the key doctrinal truths associated with God's gift of salvation. Beginning in Romans 12, Paul applied the truths to the lives of believers so they could grow as healthy disciples. One of the primary points involved the need for believers to express their devotion to Christ by their commitment to the church.

Romans 12: 3-5

Paul directed us to pay close attention to the connection between believers in the church. God graciously distributed to believers what they needed so they could serve Him. We can only function well when we are working in sync with other Christians in the church. When we ignore others in the body of Christ, we weaken the potential of the church to be effective. When we consider ourselves more important to the church than other members, we prove that we have lost sight of the priority of humility and mutual dependence. Churches can be frustrated by conflicts between members. We need each other to grow as a healthy part of the body of Christ. Practicing humility in our relationships with other believers in the church enables us to affirm the value of others who serve with us. We are unique and uniquely gifted by God without degrees of importance and superiority.

Romans 12: 6-8

The Holy Spirit graces the church with spiritual gifts, and it is our responsibility to use these gifts to serve God and support His church. He intends for us to appreciate the gifts of others who share the ministry of the church with us. Paul noted that the gifts were different even though all of them came from the same gracious God.

Romans 12: 9-16

In these verses we learn how to bring unity to the church. God desires believers to love each other as they serve Him together. God wants us to use His kind of love (agape) to identify the kind of genuine love we have for each other. Also, we are to love the church by serving her with our hearts and lives. Sincere love requires concentration and effort. It means helping others become better people. It demands our time, money, and personal involvement. We place our complete trust in the Lord to give us His wisdom and refuse to depend on our proud self.

Paul encourages us to allow brotherly love to bind us together in the church. Brotherly love helps to nourish family affection for one another as spiritual siblings in Christ. This love grows in our hearts for each other, finding ways of honoring one another. We look forward to being together and encouraging one another.

In verses 11-16, keywords explained:

V 11: Zeal - no room for laziness. Stay busy with the work of the gospel.

Fervent - rely on the power of the Holy Spirit to set a fire in our hearts.

V 12: Rejoice - keep our mind and our heart on what we know is to be real, joy and eternal life.

Patience - we will have difficulties, but we will not be alone.

Prayer - seek His direction.

V 13: Hospitality - share with others some of our bounty.

V 14: Persecution - ask God to bless, not curse, those who persecute you.

V 15: Weep - weep with others when their hearts have been broken.

V 16: Harmony - practice humility.

Prayer: Thank you Lord for the spiritual gifts you have given us. Help us use these gifts to glorify you. In the precious name of Jesus, I pray, Amen.

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