



THIS IS US, PART 2: BETTER TOGETHER

January 27, 2019

Pastor Keith Jenkins

BIBLICAL TEXT(S)

"A woman came to me and asked me to pray for her child. I may not have been able to feel her pain the way she did, but it fueled my prayers."

–Pastor Keith

Main:

"Therefore, remember that formerly you who are Gentiles by birth and called "uncircumcised" by those who call themselves "the circumcision" (which is done in the body by human hands)— remember that at that time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For he himself is our peace, who has made the two groups one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, by setting aside in his flesh the law with its commands and regulations. His purpose was to create in himself one new humanity out of the two, thus making peace, and in one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility. He came and preached peace to you who were far away and peace to those who were near."

Ephesians 2:11-17

"For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If it is serving, then serve; if it is teaching, then teach; if it is to encourage, then give encouragement; if it is giving, then give generously; if it is to lead, do it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully." **Romans 12:4-8**

"Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing."
I Thessalonians 5:11

"Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ."
Galatians 6:2

"While our presentable parts need no special treatment. But God has put the body together, giving greater honor to the parts that lacked it, so that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other. If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it."
I Corinthians 12:24-26

"Finally, all of you, be like-minded, be sympathetic, love one another, be compassionate and humble." **I Peter 3:8**

MESSAGE SUMMARY

The Church is to be a light of love, grace, and unity to the world. Our love for one another demonstrates we are uniquely different in the way we live. We are interdependent on each other, upheld by the love, fellowship, and encouragement of other believers. Without each other we are insufficient. The world shouts independence and Jesus speaks "oneness" in the body of Christ. God's Spirit calls us to community. He moves us toward relationship with other brothers and sisters in Christ.

Through being interdependent on each other, we encourage each other, we look out for one another, share each other's burdens and live out the mission of God together. Living in community with other believers gives us all an opportunity to experience the joy and growth that it brings. The mission of God is too big to be done alone. God's work involves other people and a partnership with each other. The world will know us by our love for one another.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

These questions are designed to help you lead your group through a progression of engagement with the Bible passage and the speaker's message, helping them understand and apply the teaching.

LEAN IN

These are icebreaker/warm up questions, mostly just to get the group talking and start the flow of conversation. Choose one question and talk it over for 5-10 minutes.

1. Describe a time you had more fun doing something with other people.
2. What example or story stood out to you in Sunday's sermon? Why was it significant?
3. What is one thing that you're looking forward to this week?

LOOK DOWN

These are questions on the passage and observations about what's been read.

Spend about 15-20 minutes on three questions max

1. What does it mean to be part of the body of Christ?
2. Go through the passages and identify which phrases/verses talk about our interdependence on each other. Interdependence: the dependence of two or more people on each other.
3. How is the Church described in Romans 12:4-8?
4. In I Corinthians 12:24-26, what does the phrase, "its parts should have equal concern for each other," mean? Explain
5. What stands out to you through these passages, surprises you, or challenges you?

LOOK OUT

These questions help connect the world of the Bible to today.

Spend about 15-20 minutes on three questions max

1. Romans 12:4-8 describes a group of people working together using their gifts to form a loving community. What are examples where we see community or a group of people change lives? (Examples: Neighborhoods working together, school partnerships within the community, Grief support, Global partnerships to protect children.)
2. Where do we see communities needing more support or a helping hand? (Examples: School systems, people living in poverty)
3. Describe what a body of Christ would look like where there are no divisions and people are interdependent on each other. What's unique? What is different?

LOOK IN

These are questions that help you consider personal application.

Spend about 15-20 minutes on three questions max

1. What does it mean for those in the church to be interdependent on each other? How have you experienced interdependence in the body of Christ?
2. Jesus calls us to encourage and build each other up. How have you benefited from the encouragement of others? How can someone encourage you best?
3. What are some ways people in the body of Christ have carried your burdens?
4. Where in your life has the Church community helped you grow?
5. Do you know what your spiritual gifts are? How could you use your gifts in our group, church family or community? If you are not sure of your gifts, ask group members the gifts they see in your life. (Romans 12:4-8)
6. Is it easy or hard to believe that God wants to use you uniquely to love others? Why?

CONT.,

**DISCUSSION
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CONT.**

LIVE IT OUT

These action steps help apply this week's message to day to day life.

Choose one question and talk it over for 5-10 minutes.

1. Can you identify specific ways you could live more interdependent instead of independent in your relationships?
2. Is there someone the Holy Spirit is calling you to encourage or walk with through a hardship?