

Live in Harmony

Riverside Youth Devotional

May 17th, 2020

Romans 12:9-16

⁹ Don't just pretend to love others. Really love them. Hate what is wrong. Hold tightly to what is good. ¹⁰ Love each other with genuine affection, and take delight in honoring each other. ¹¹ Never be lazy, but work hard and serve the Lord enthusiastically. ¹² Rejoice in our confident hope. Be patient in trouble, and keep on praying. ¹³ When God's people are in need, be ready to help them. Always be eager to practice hospitality.

¹⁴ Bless those who persecute you. Don't curse them; pray that God will bless them. ¹⁵ Be happy with those who are happy, and weep with those who weep. ¹⁶ Live in harmony with each other. Don't be too proud to enjoy the company of ordinary people. And don't think you know it all!

¹⁷ Never pay back evil with more evil. Do things in such a way that everyone can see you are honorable. ¹⁸ Do all that you can to live in peace with everyone.

This is a portion of Paul's letter to the Romans talking about what sacrificial living looks like. When scripture tells us to take up our cross, to die to ourselves, I believe this is a picture of what that looks like. It looks like putting the needs and well-being of others in front of our own comfort and not only loving others, but honoring them as well. It looks like being the kind of person who never wishes evil on another, but prays that all would know God and be blessed.

Take a look at that phrase in verse 10- "take delight in honoring each other". I know a lot of us have had to miss out on the big parties and celebrations we're used to at this time of year, what are some of the creative ways you've seen others take delight in honoring others?

Verse 12 tells us to rejoice in our confident hope, be patient in trouble, and keep on praying. Paul is encouraging the church in Rome to focus on the good news, which is always good advice but seems especially relevant now. We can rejoice that we have hope in a God who is greater than the troubles of this world, and we have direct access to God through prayer. We certainly have had plenty of practice (and will continue to have practice) in patience.

What are you rejoicing about today? And what are you missing most that requires your patience?

Verse 13 reminds us to always be ready to help others in need and practice hospitality. What's a way you can help this week—big or small?

What jumps out to you most from verses 14-18? For me I love how it points out the importance of living in harmony with one another. I also enjoy the reminder to “don't think you know it all!”. Our unique experiences will change the way we approach life, and it's important to listen to others. While we may not always be able to find harmony, we should always be striving to bring God's peace to a situation.

My prayer for you today comes from Romans 15:5-6

⁵ May God, who gives this patience and encouragement, help you live in complete harmony with each other, as is fitting for followers of Christ Jesus. ⁶ Then all of you can join together with one voice, giving praise and glory to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.