

Members One of Another

Sermon by Andy Sochor

Text: Romans 12:3-5

Paul told the saints in Rome they were “members one of another” as part of the same body. Therefore, they were to act in a certain way toward one another. The same is true for us today. As members of the church – and of a local congregation in particular – we have certain responsibilities. To help us learn how to treat our brethren, we are going to consider what Paul told the Romans about their treatment of “one another.”

Love One Another (Romans 12:10; 13:8)

“Be devoted” – describes the love of parents and children, husbands and wives (Thayer); not based on what others do for us, but on our commitment to one another; we are to be devoted to our brethren as we would to our closest family; sometimes even more (cf. Matthew 12:46-50; 10:37)

To “give preference to one another” is the basic definition of love – agape; sacrificial; puts others first; this is the attitude we need to possess (Philippians 2:3-4)

We are to owe nothing to others except love – no substitute for this (1 Corinthians 13:1-3)

As members of the same body, we are to show love for one another and put their needs ahead of our own

Be of the Same Mind toward One Another (Romans 12:16; 15:5)

Phrases in these two verses are nearly identical – the difference is a preposition; eis (toward, Romans 12:16) and en (with, Romans 15:5)

Paul explained that we are not to be arrogant TOWARD our brethren – act with humility; not to think of ourselves more highly than we ought to think (Romans 12:3)

This is so we can maintain unity WITH our brethren – this is what Jesus prayed for before His death (John 17:20-21)

As members of the same body, we must have the same mind toward one another and strive for unity

Do Not Judge One Another (Romans 14:13)

Important to understand the context – the chapter is about dealing with matters of opinion (Romans 14:1), not about matters that pertain to “the faith” (Jude 3); we know this because regardless of the differing opinions on these matters, “God has accepted” both (Romans 14:3)

There is only one Judge (James 4:12) – so we are not to judge the Lord’s servants (Romans 14:4); we can judge with “righteous judgment” (John 7:24), but we must not

go beyond the Lord's standard; otherwise, God judges us (Matthew 15:9; Revelation 22:18)

As members of the same body, we are not to judge/condemn our brethren based upon a human standard

Build Up One Another (Romans 14:19)

Rather than judging others in the sense of condemning them over a matter of opinion (Romans 14:13), we need to build up our brethren – “edify” (KJV); strengthen one another

We are to grow in the faith – just as we grow in our physical lives (1 Peter 2:2); if we are not growing, we are slipping (Hebrews 2:1); we are each responsible for ourselves. However, because we love one another, we must help build up one another (Hebrews 3:12-13) – we do not want our brethren to fall away; therefore, we need to encourage them in the faith

As members of the same body, we are to help one another to be strong in the Lord and continue to grow in the faith

Accept One Another (Romans 15:7)

“Receive ye one another” (KJV) – this is the idea of fellowship; in context, Paul talked about the acceptance of the Gentiles (Romans 15:8-12); they were accepted by Christ; therefore, they were to be welcomed by those who were also in Christ

In Christ, we can accept those we may not have otherwise accepted (Galatians 3:28) – regardless of one's background, he is an equal member of the Lord's body; the church is not a social club built around shared interests, experiences, or demographics; the church is made up of the saved, individuals from every walk of life

As members of the same body, we are to accept one another as Christ has accepted each one of us

Admonish One Another (Romans 15:14)

“Admonish” means to warn or reprove – done in preaching (2 Timothy 4:2), but is not limited to that; we do this to “one another”; in fact, it may often be more effective when the admonition comes from another brother or sister in Christ, rather than from “the preacher”

We need to be watchful for our brethren (1 Thessalonians 5:14) – we need to warn them when they are in danger of sin or put themselves in dangerous situations (missing worship services, keeping the wrong company, etc.); admonishment from one or more of their brethren could help get them back on track

As members of the same body, we are to admonish one another to stay on the right path

Greet One Another (Romans 16:16)

This was a cultural practice – must be done in a holy manner; whatever the standard practice is in our culture, we are to “greet one another”

The church is not to be divided (1 Corinthians 12:25) – yet it can happen that “cliques” form in the church; this often happens naturally as we gravitate toward those with common interests, life experiences, etc.; but we must be intentional about not doing this with our brethren in Christ

As members of the same body, we are to greet one another and not segregate ourselves as the world does

Conclusion

As Christians, especially in the local church, we are “members one of another” (Romans 12:5)

We need to be mindful of how we treat each other so we can function as God wants us to