

Series - We are the Family of God

Learning Together Who we are in the Family of God **Romans 12:1-8**

The Family is like fudge – mostly sweet but with a few nuts. Every family has a few members that either embarrass or shame the family – if you cannot think of anyone in your family – you might be that one.

We are the Family of God

Now all of us can come to the Father through the same Holy Spirit because of what Christ has done for us. So now you Gentiles are no longer strangers and foreigners. You are citizens along with all of God's holy people. You are members of God's family. Ephesians 2:18-19

Serving Christ is not a solo endeavor – We need others to live out the commands of Christ
“One another” is two words in English, but it's only one word in Greek: ἀλλήλων. It's used 100 times in 94 New Testament verses. 47 of those verses give instructions to the church, most are positive like love, encourage, consider, bear with, exhort, accept, honor, and be devoted to one another.

One third of the one-another commands deal with the **unity of the church**.

One third of them instruct Christians to **love one another**.

About 15% stress an attitude of **humility and deference** among believers.

Only 5 are negative commands and they all deal with that which would destroy the unity and effectiveness of the church – Don't lie to one another, slander one another, judge one another, back bite and devour one another, grumble against each other, or provoke and envy one another.

I. We are the family of God – created for His purpose.

1 Peter 1:3 All praise to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is by his great mercy that we have been born again, because God raised Jesus Christ from the dead. Now we live with great expectation,

Paul tells Timothy the church is **“the household of God. This is the church of the living God, which is the pillar and foundation of the truth. 1 Timothy 3:15**

Jesus identified His family as those who kept the commands of God

Matthew 12:49-50 Then he pointed to his disciples and said, “Look, these are my mother and brothers. Anyone who does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother!”

Rick Warren summarizes the purpose of the Church in his book “The Purpose Driven Life” as follows

We were planned for God's pleasure - so your first purpose is to offer real worship.

We were formed for God's family - so your second purpose is to enjoy real fellowship.

We were created to become like Christ - so your third purpose is to learn real discipleship.

We were shaped for serving God - so your fourth purpose is to practice real ministry.

We were made for a mission - so your fifth purpose is to live out real evangelism.

Hellen Keller once said – *Alone we can do so little, but together we can do so much!*

II. Everyone has a vital part in the family of God

Then we will no longer be immature like children. We won't be tossed and blown about by every wind of new teaching. We will not be influenced when people try to trick us with lies so clever they sound like the truth. ¹⁵ Instead, we will speak the truth in love, growing in every way more and more like Christ, who is the head of his body, the church. ¹⁶ He makes the whole body fit together perfectly. As each part does its own special work, it helps the other parts grow, so that the whole body is healthy and growing and full of love. Ephesians 4:14-16

Romans 12: 1-8 - God's Plan for the Family (note “Dear brothers and sisters”)

A. Starts with total commitment to God 1-2

Our body as a living sacrifice

As Abraham offered up his son Isaac – but God provided a ram instead

As Christ offered up His body for us – God raise Him from the dead and glorified Him

Acceptable to God as a way to worship Him

Our minds completely transformed

Not conformed to the world but transformed (word from which we get metamorphosis)

Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. Colossians 3:2

Our will yielded to His will

Learned as we choose to yield daily

We receive the will of Christ who prayed *“Father, if you are willing, please take this cup of suffering away from me. Yet I want your will to be done, not mine.” Luke 22:42*

B. Set in our attitude toward others

Honest evaluation 3

Not in pride that I can do everything

Not in negative pride that I can do nothing
But in humility recognizing my place and the place of others
In faith recognizing God made me – good – and good for something

Faithful cooperation 4-5

We are many parts of one body – the body of Christ
All are different but together there can be unity
We belong to each other

Diligent service 6-8

We are all gifted by His grace and as He wills
We are called to us our gifting for the good of all
Speak out with as much faith as God has given you
Serve well and teach well to encourage each other
Give generously, lead responsibly and be kind gladly

Peter admonishes us **God has given each of you a gift from his great variety of spiritual gifts. Use them well to serve one another.** ¹¹ **Do you have the gift of speaking? Then speak as though God himself were speaking through you. Do you have the gift of helping others? Do it with all the strength and energy that God supplies. Then everything you do will bring glory to God through Jesus Christ. All glory and power to him forever and ever! Amen. 1 Peter 4:10-11**

III. We find our place by helping others find their place of service

ill. Church with differences – Pastor calls on farmer to pray – “Lord, I hate buttermilk, I hate lard, I hate flour, I hate salt, but Lord I sure do love biscuits!

You can only find your place of service by working together with others

What is your passion -what would you do for free?

What are your spiritual gifts – what really works as you serve others?
(Fun, fruit, and fellowship)

What does the world need – what makes your heart sad?

Where these three come together is where God wants to use you.

To find you place in the body – help others find theirs

This is what the one another passages are all about

Honor one another above yourselves – **Romans 12:10**

Build up one another – **Romans 14:19**

Care for one another – **1 Corinthians 12:25**

Teach one another – **Colossians 3:16**

Encourage one another – **1 Thessalonians 5:11**

Pray for one another – **James 5:16**

My favorite – **Hebrews 10:24-25** *Let us think of ways to motivate one another to acts of love and good works. And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage one another, especially now that the day of his return is drawing near.* – (motivate means literally poke each other)

Wonderful things we discover as part of the Family

I am not alone

I need others

I can do something

Once there were four people named **Everybody**, **Somebody**, **Anybody** and **Nobody**

Everybody said “I want change”. **Somebody** said if **Anybody** would start change, I will join
But **Nobody** said “I will change” but did not. Finally **Everybody** stayed the same blaming **Somebody** for waiting for **Anybody** to start changing. So, **Nobody** changed.

Steps to take

Recognize who God made you – Be honest in your evaluation of yourself

– measuring yourself by the faith God has given

- Be satisfied and rejoice in who you are

Realize that others need you and you need others - Work for the best of others

- Preserve unity in the family

- Think of the Kingdom – not your comfort

Receive the task God has given you – Start making a difference today

Revel in God’s Grace and Plan for your life **Ephesians 2:10** *For we are God’s masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago.* Do all to the glory of God!