



## LIFE GROUP SERMON NOTES

### “Be1: Join1”

Ps. James Lowe- Mar. 15, 2015

#### WARM-UP (10-15 minutes)

Choose a question below to answer, or ask another. *No right or wrong answers.*

- What have you enjoyed doing as a volunteer for others? (It can be any setting or organization.)
- Has a volunteer of some organization (church or otherwise) ever had an impact on your life? If so, how? If not, what could have been done to have had an impact on your life?
- What chores were you usually assigned to do when you were growing up? How did you feel about doing them then? How do you view them now?

#### WORD (10-15 minutes)

Sermons can be heard online at <http://www.bethelworld.org>

We are the sum total of all the relationships we have. Our relationships have reciprocal influence. We impact others, and others impact our lives. Furthermore, everyone needs encouragement, exhortation, comfort, correction, guidance, counsel, and more. We all go through tough times. We all battle in many ways. But we can not get the help we need if we are alone. Discipleship is vital.

Even more fundamental is our need for being joined to God through Christ. Through Christ we are given the gift of God's Holy Spirit. He plays the most important role in our Christian walk. Yet as essential as our relationship with God is, he has made us so that it is not good for us to be alone from other people.

Paul wrote, "*(S)peaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love*" (Ephesians 4:15-16 ESV).

We must be joined and aligned with others in order for all of us to grow and mature.

Paul also addresses this theme in his letter to the Corinthians, especially in chapter 12 of 1 Corinthians.

#### **Designed**

Paul wrote the Corinthian believers, "*For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit. For the body does not consist of one member but of many*" (1 Corinthians 12:12-14 ESV).

The human body has 37 trillion cells. Astounding! In a similar way the church, which is the body of Christ, is made of all the different people who believe in Jesus. All of them have value. All of them are designed to be connected, not apart. God has made us so that we need one another. We are made in his image, and God is triune, one essence eternally manifested in three persons. In a similar way, we are not designed to be alone.

## **Assigned**

Paul also wrote, *"If the whole body were an eye, where would be the sense of hearing? If the whole body were an ear, where would be the sense of smell? But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. If all were a single member, where would the body be? As it is, there are many parts, yet one body"* (1 Corinthians 12:17-20 ESV).

Every person has a role to fulfill. Our roles are often quite diverse, but all are needed. The needs and the mission of the church are vast and great, and thus cannot be fulfilled by any one person or even a subset of the church community. Every single person is needed to contribute their abilities and gifts to serving the church's needs and mission. Everyone is important.

We can never reach our full potential as long as any single member is not healthy and functioning well. Therefore, we need to establish people in Christ and minister his deliverance and healing to them. We also need to teach them how to stay healthy by seeking and serving God, and by feeding upon his Word in Scripture.

Together the church can be powerful. Thus, we must not only be joined together, we must also be activated by being equipped and empowered to do the ministry God has called us to do. Ministry is simply service, and God has already purposed and prepared good works for us to do (Ephesians 2:10).

## **Aligned**

Paul furthermore wrote, *"The eye cannot say to the hand, 'I have no need of you,' nor again the head to the feet, 'I have no need of you.' ...But God has so composed the body, giving greater honor to the part that lacked it, that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another. If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together"* (1 Corinthians 12:21-26 ESV).

Each of us needs to be properly aligned so that we might both grow and contribute to the growth of God's church and its mission. By being connected with the right people we maximize our synergy. It is important, however, not to think we know best to whom we should be connected. God knows what is best for each of us. As Paul wrote, *"God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose."* We need to pray and seek God for his guidance to know where and with whom he wants us to be aligned to serve. Then we can serve God's purposes well.

Furthermore, we must choose to align ourselves with God's purpose and plan for our lives. God has designed us for connection to his body, which is the church. And he has assigned us important, valuable deeds of service to do. But God doesn't force us to align with his will. Instead, he encourages and exhorts us to make the right choice. We must choose, each of us.

## **PERSONAL APPLICATION (10-15 minutes)**

**Choose an item below to discuss, or introduce another related topic for discussion.**

- How are you personally joined to other people in the context of the church?
- How are you involved in serving the needs and mission of the church?
- How are you proactively getting others joined to the life of the church and involved in serving the needs and mission of the church?

## **PRAYER (10-15 minutes)**

**Pray for any of the following, as well as any other requests you may have.**

- Pray that God will build up our Life Group through our mutual encouragement and service.
- Pray that God will give us the opportunity to invite people to our Life Group and that he would open their hearts to join.
- Pray that God would help us be mindful of the importance and value of our service to the church, so that like him we would be givers and not merely receivers.