

Truly Community

ROOTS | ACTS 2:42, 46; 4:32; ROMANS 12:3-21; REVELATION 7:9-10 | SEPTEMBER 14/15, 2019 | PASTOR MATT ERICKSON

"They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer." (Acts 2:42)

Devoted Community (Acts 2:42, 46; 4:32)

Apostolic Teaching

Fellowship

- Breaking of bread
- Prayer

Living Community (Romans 12:3-21)

Humble

Gifted

Loving

Joyful

Peaceful

Final Community (Revelation 7:9-10)

Gathered from all ethnic groups, tribes, people groups, and languages

Cleansed and victorious through the Lamb

Worshiping the eternal God

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. What have been some of your best experiences of Christian community? What have been some of your worst? What has made the difference?
2. We continue our series "Roots" this week by explore what it means to be God's community, the church, by looking at various Scriptures. Begin your study in prayer, asking God to speak to you through His word.
3. Acts 2:42-47 and 4:32-37 describes the life of the early church in Jerusalem. Read those passages aloud. In your own words, how would you describe some of the defining characteristics of this early church?
4. One word that leaps off the page in Acts 2:42 is "devoted." That word conveys the idea of continuous, steadfast activity. What do you think it look like to have steadfast, continuous devotion to fellowship as God's people?
5. Now, let's turn to Paul's description of the life of the church in Romans 12:3-21. Read that passage aloud. Verses 3-8 speak to the gifts of the Holy Spirit in the Christian community, and the way in which believers use those gifts. What stands out to you most within this passage?
6. What gifts do you think God gave you in your Christian life and ministry? How have you used them? (If you're not familiar with the concept of spiritual gifts, talk about that with someone in your small group or reach out to a church staff member.)
7. In Romans 12:9-21, Paul writes about the nature of love within the community of God. He provides a cascading list of different aspects of love. Which of these capture your attention? How do you think these things all relate to the life of God's people, the church?
8. From Paul's list in verses 9-21, which characteristics do you find easiest to live out and which do you find most difficult to live out?
9. In Revelation 7:9-10, we encounter one of the most beautiful pictures of the church at the end of human history. Read that text aloud. Why do you think it is significant that the great multitude gathered around the throne of God is "from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and tongues"?
10. The white robes and palm branches are symbols of cleansing and victory. Why do you think the members of this multitude bear these symbols?
11. What is the song they sing and what does that tell us about the nature of the church?
12. How is God speaking to you about living out your calling as part of God's community, the church? What is one specific thing that God is drawing your attention to right now? How might your life look different as a result of what you are considering with God? If you are with a small group, discuss that with one another and pray for one another. If you are studying on your own, write it down and share it with someone this week.