

Truly The Community



2023 Lenten Journey – Week 6

Based on Marva J. Dawn

Romans 12 – How to Be the Church

TO BE COMMUNITY IS TO LOVE

Romans 12: 9-21 “Love must be sincere....Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.”

The value of being in community is based on the needs of the community rather than the benefit for the individual. This in turn benefits the entire community instead of creating segregation and division among God’s people. This value is driven by love. One of the effects of love is the ability to think about other people and not always self. It is this measurement of life being good by what we have offered rather than what we have gained. It is a fulfillment that is beyond material gains, but self-rendering or offering.

- Describe the feeling you had when someone made life meaningful for you?
- How have you felt after making life meaningful for someone else?
- Who are the people to whom you can offer your time and resources in ensuring their lives become meaningful?

Seemingly helping others is a choice we must make. Without making this choice, focusing on self becomes the only way of doing life. In the process we unwittingly contribute to the suffering in the world. It is like turning a blind eye, minding your own business or sweeping in front of your own door, kind of mentality. It is a life that is detached from others. It makes life look orderly until we step out of our own neatly packaged world and see the chaos all around us. Love for others can help us take this leap into the clumsiness, filth, and brokenness of the world. And sure, this sounds costly and there is no love without a cost. The best way to spell love is RISK. We risk leaving our own comfort. We risk rejection, manipulation, loss and all the things we think of when we choose not to love to protect ourselves.

- What are the risks others have taken for your life to be better?
- What risks are you scared to take for others and why?
- What clumsiness, filth and brokenness have you noticed in the world around you?
- Any practical steps you can take to show love in those situations?

A strong call by Paul in this week’s passage above is being made for us not to be part of evil. Once again, this is not only about doing evil, but ignoring evil is equally playing your part in allowing it to thrive. The harm may be greater by not stopping evil when it first began. Methodists are called by John and Charles Wesley to uphold the Rule of Life: “Do all the good you can, by all the means you can, in all the ways you can, in all the places you can, to all the people you can, as long as ever you can!”

- How can you best practice this Methodist Rule of Life in your life and discipleship?
- Why would it be difficult for you to uphold this Rule of Life?
- Ask God to help you find the courage to be loving as God loves you.

Prayer:

Make me an instrument of enabling life by giving me the courage to love sincerely and resist doing evil.

Amen



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