



Sermon Growth Guide

October 24, 2021

Belong - Move Closer

Romans 12:14-21

Key Verse: Romans 12:21 "Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good."

Big Idea: Move toward the brokenness around you with the redemptive love of Jesus.

Foundations

Pastor Tim reminds us how easy it is to hate from afar, but how hard it is to hate up close. God calls us to not allow sin to lead us into isolation, but rather move toward the brokenness around us with the redemptive love of Jesus.

We are the up-close-people-of-God. Even while we were dead in our sin, God sent His son to bring us close. Like a parent moving toward a child in a relationally difficult moment (to say the least), so God moves toward us when we didn't want it, weren't looking for it.

This week Pastor Tim shares these words by Eugene Peterson to encourage us and commission us: "God has given us one another so that we may have a shared life. None of us can live the abundant life as hermits. Nor can we live to the glory of God if we carefully pick whom we're willing to associate with. All who live are God's creation and parts of the body of Christ. We're members of one another. We exist in a family, together, not alone."

Throughout this series we have been challenged to cultivate a life that is willing to be vulnerable. We are called to share in each other's joys and be present and attentive and empathetic in one another's sorrows. Enter your time together this week by asking God to guide and guard your time around the Word.

Understanding God's Word

As a group, read through today's passage and then have each person articulate which imperative is most difficult for them right now. Dig into the Scripture and into one another's hearts.

Applying God's Word

This week we are called to move toward the brokenness around us with the redemptive love of Jesus. Where do you, individually and collectively, most need God's help to live a Kingdom life according to Romans 12:14-21?

Witnessing God's Word

Perhaps reflecting on Romans 12, Martin Luther King Jr. writes, "Returning hate for hate multiplies hate, adding deeper darkness to a night already devoid of stars. Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that."

We are called to walk as ambassadors of the reconciliation of God (2 Corinthians 5:16-21). When you forgive, you display the Kingdom of God. When you show mercy, you display the Kingdom of God. Pray for one another, that together we will reflect the Good News to those around us, that as we live lives of moving close to our neighbors with the reconciliation of Jesus they will see the Father, glorify Him, and, by faith, be saved.

ALONE IS NO GOOD. JESUS INVITES YOU TO BELONG.