

Remnant Life Church  
June 30, 2024  
**Habits of a Healthy Church**  
Romans 15:1-7

- There are as many different types of churches as there are buildings that house them.
- The largest church in the world is in Seoul, S. Korea – 850,000
  - Yodio Full Gospel Church - Pastor David Yonggi Cho
    - Multiple campuses
    - 526 associate pastors
  - The largest church in the US is Life Church, HQ in Edmond, OK
    - Average total weekly attendance is about 85,000
    - 24 separate locations
  - Closer to home is LCBC
    - 22 separate campuses
    - Approx. 20,000 total attendance
- Large, small, elaborate, simple, program-missionary-outreach driven
  - Churches can be active in many ways
    - They can be strong or weak
    - They can edify and build up or they can discourage
    - They are healthy or unhealthy
    - They are alive or dead

How can a church start and STAY healthy?

- No church or ministry ever began by saying their goal was to get weaker, become ineffective, and eventually fail.
- For instance: Jim and Tammy Faye Bakker started at Pat Robertson's CBN in 1966
  - Hosted a children's program called *Come On Over*, utilizing puppets to tell stories of the Bible
  - Because of the success of that program, Bakker became the first host of a new program called *The 700 Club*
  - They left CBN in 1973 and joined Paul Crouch to launch the new Trinity Broadcasting Network in California
  - In less than 8 months, they left to start PTL just south of Charlotte in Fort Mill, SC
  - At one point, the PTL park was the 3<sup>rd</sup> most successful theme park in the nation at the height of its function
- Yet greed, lying, and adultery all led them to a catastrophic, very public downfall

But must all churches, at some point, fail?

- Must they struggle with maintaining a loving, positive, godly and biblical perspective?
- How does it happen?
  - (Story of the local pastor when people rose up against him)
  - (Pastoring a rural church by a suburban pastor)
    - Not many could do that

What can we do to guard this house?

- Whose responsibility is it?
  - The pastor?
  - The board?
  - The elders?
  - Do we just pray and hope for the best?
- I firmly believe that it is the responsibility of each and every person who calls Remnant Life their home church to care for and protect the loving integrity of God's work here

Where does it begin?

- Right here
- I believe it is the pastor's responsibility to be on guard and protect the church
  - (Those who have come over the years that God removed)
  - The role of the undershepherd
    - An understudy on Broadway in case the star cannot be there
    - Jesus is the shepherd of RLC
      - But He is not here physically
      - I am the undershepherd guarding His flock until He returns

But I also believe that our minds and hearts must be guided and focused in order to make that happen.

Paul gives the church in Rome (not one of the churches he personally founded but certainly influenced) instructions on how to maintain their proper focus, grow, and remain united in their relationships with one another.

**READ – Romans 15:1-7**

**Rom 12:2** - *Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.*

Following this verse, Paul is then teaching in the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> chapters how the one who is being transformed by the renewing of their mind should demonstrate this by a change in attitude toward those with whom they disagree or hold different values.

- Let's face it, while we would like to think that people in church are of one mind and heart that is simply not the case.
  - We all have a way of looking at something
  - Sometimes, we feel very strongly about a particular subject or topic
  - The question then becomes how do you handle those times when things may not be going exactly the way you think they should?
    - First, you always have a choice on how you will respond
    - You are NEVER made to feel, think, or react a certain way
      - You and you alone determine that
      - What it then comes down to is the condition of your heart

- I can tell you that if you have the heart of a servant, you will never take offence or become angry if things don't go your way
- And Paul's words of instructions in Romans 15 can be applied both to the individual as well as to the corporate body
  - They are words that we should not only understand but embrace
  - The church as a whole is going to be persecuted more and more for what we stand for
  - Jesus told His disciples that they would suffer many things because of Him
    - They did
    - All died a martyr's death with the exception of one – John
- To embrace and live these things will likely not require your life, but they will not always be easy

### 1. **Consideration for each other** (v 1)

- a. That consideration is for the edifying or building up of others
- b. This means that I may (or often) need to defer to someone else
- c. It also means we should not put what we want as the most important thing
  - i. Paul says in vs 1 that it is not about pleasing ourselves
  - ii. Not only that, but the word *ought* in the original language means our actions are not about something we should do, but something that is a moral obligation
    1. It is translated in the same way as a debt owed
    2. Because of the transformation done in our lives by the forgiveness of our sins, we have a debt to pay, with our understanding of that evident by how we treat each other
  - iii. Again, Jesus said to His disciples that the world would know we follow Him, have been changed by Him, by the fact that we love one another (**John 13:35**)
    1. Those are not just words, they are action

### 2. **Please your neighbor** (v 2)

- a. What does that mean?
  - i. ITOL – it means to behave properly to those who you are related
    1. Let me ask you this: How do we often refer to one another in the church?
      - a. As brother and sister
    2. We are related through the common ground of being sinners saved by grace
    3. Welcomed into the family of God by His grace and mercy
- b. That is the what, but why?
  - i. Paul answers that by saying for his good and to build him up
    1. That means for the benefit of their character and well-being
    2. To build up is to edify

- a. It refers literally to the building of a house, but here refers to that which results in someone else's spiritual profit or advancement.
  - b. For example, pastors and teachers are charged with the duty of equipping the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ. **Eph 4:12**
- ii. Our desire, as children of God within the same family, should be to please one another to benefit and build up one another