

Like-Minded People Romans 12:15-16

The church of Jesus Christ is characterized by those things that we have in common. We have a “*common faith*,” a “*common Lord*,” a “*common purpose*” and a “*common mind*.” This “*common mind*” is mentioned over and over again throughout the Word of God. “*May God grant you to be like-minded one toward another in Jesus Christ*” (Rom. 15:5). Paul prays that the church “*be perfectly joined together in the same mind*” (I Cor. 1:10). We are called to be “*like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord*” (Phil. 2:2).

I. A Description of Like-Minded People . . . (v.15).

Romans 12 is describing what we do in light of who we are. It must be reiterated that God’s people are like-minded because God has made us this way. Sometimes we need to be reminded of who **we are** simply to get us back on track on how we are to live.

(A). Like-minded people empathize with each other . . .

There is a difference between sympathy and empathy. Sympathy is an inclination to support or to agree. Empathy is an understanding of, and entering into, the other person’s feelings. One may be sympathetic while not empathetic.

(1). We are to be happy with those who are happy.

When Elizabeth heard she was with child “*her friends rejoiced*” (Lk. 1:58).

When Barnabas saw growth at Antioch “*he was glad*” (Acts 11:23).

(2). We are to be sad with those who are sad.

“*Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them*” (Hebrews 13:3).

“*If one member suffers, all the members suffer with it*” (I Cor. 12:26).

(B). Like-minded people accept one another . . .

“*Be of the same mind one toward another*” (v.15). One of the translations uses the word “*harmony*” (be in harmony with each other). It’s interesting that the word *harmony* means “*different notes that unite into common song*.” It is essential that we as the people of God celebrate and embrace our differences.

II. Some Difficulties for Like-Minded People . . . (v.16).

We are to be on guard against those things that suffocate our empathy for each other.

(A). Highmindedness . . . this is aspiration or ambition to be part of an elite group.

“*Do not set your mind on high things*” (NKJV).

(B). Earthly Honors . . . be willing to “*condescend to men of low estate*” (v.16).

Sometimes when God’s people are blessed abundantly we can lose sight of the little man. Our hearts and minds are to always be willing to identify with them.

(C). Haughtiness . . . “*Be not wise in your own conceits*” (v.16).

These three problems --- prideful ambition, personal acclaim, and a proud attitude are all hindrances to being a person who can empathize with others.

“*Pride is such a choking weed that nothing can prosper near it*” Joseph Alleine.

“*It is certainly true that our faith is not to be based on our feelings – but equally true that if our faith is not accompanied by feelings it is suspect*” Dr. Blanchard.