

Discovery Group - Gospel Living

Eternal Investments 1: Church

Accountability

Share how your obedience commitment from last week went, and who you shared with.

Bible: Romans 12:3-16

Read *passage* aloud & someone retell in their own words

- What do we learn from this passage about God?
- What do we learn from this passage about people?

Read the *article* on the next page.

- Why is it so important for us to give ourselves with intentionality and intensity to the local church?
- How can the local church be part of your everyday life? How can that help to make this part of your ministry?
- Take a few minutes to consider what gifts you have to offer this local fellowship. What are ways you may be able to practically be devoted to one another?

Commit

What is Jesus calling you to do in *obedience* this week?

Who can you *share* this with? Who can you reach out to in order to make disciples?

Abide: Read and meditate on the following passages this week. Also, take time to consider what gifts you have to offer this local fellowship:

1 Corinthians 12 Ephesians 2:11 - 3:13

Eternal Investments 1: Church

In a previous study, we discussed “taking hold of life that is truly life.” Contrary to what our culture says, this is not about the pursuit of money, worldly success, experiences, self-fulfillment, etc. True life is in Jesus. We invest in this life by living for eternal treasures. This includes giving ourselves to the local church and to the expansion of the Gospel. In Ephesians 3, we see that the church is central in God’s universal plan.

“God’s purpose in all this was to use the church to display his wisdom in its rich variety to all the unseen rulers and authorities in the heavenly places. This was his eternal plan, which he carried out through Christ Jesus our Lord.” — Eph 3:10-11

In the passage today, we are given two broad ideas of how we are to invest in the local church. In 12:3-8, the focus is on contributing to the body of believers through using our gifts for the sake of our church, where “each member belongs to all the others” (12:5). The crucial thing is not what gift you have or if you are able to use that gift in a way that is fulfilling to you. The point is to use whatever you have to offer for the good of others in your church. Whatever gifts God has given to *you* are really for *us*. We are also told to utilize these gifts with intensity, not in a half-hearted way. Paul urges us towards generosity, diligence, and cheerfulness in the exercise of our gifts.

In 12:9-16, the focus shifts to contributing to our local fellowship through *one another* ministry. Consider just a few of these: *be devoted to* one another; *honor* one another; *live in harmony with* one another. Rejoice with those who rejoice. Mourn with those who mourn. This passage describes an intensity of life together and caring for one another that is as unusual as it is essential. It describes family. We are called to an extremely high level of caring for one another and giving ourselves to one another and for one another. “Never be lacking in zeal” (12:11). How do we live this out?

How do we offer our gifts to the local fellowship without holding back? Even more challenging, how do we devote ourselves to one another with zealous intentionality? Our worlds are already so crowded. We pour out our gifts at work and our compassion to our family and friends. This leaves us exhausted and short on time and resources. How do we not merely give the church the crumbs we have left over? A few thoughts:

- (1) Meditate on God’s purposes for the (local) church. Commit to doing your part.
- (2) Allow the church to commission you to the “scattered” work of the Gospel in your daily life, so that you see your work as ministry in Jesus’ Name.
- (3) Consider what gifts you have to offer to the body, and look for opportunities.
- (4) Pray for an opportunity to engage in “one another” church ministry each week.
- (5) Pray through how to prioritize church. Be intentional and practical. Consider other time uses that could be eliminated or made a lower priority.