



APPNOTES

Date: September 09-September 13,2019

Series: This Is Us

1 John 1:7 In nature, when one creature depends on another, this is called symbiosis. In the spiritual realm, this is called community. Our salvation is based entirely on our belief in Christ – as individuals. But our continued growth is dependent on each other. Do you walk in the light, as a child of God? Well, yes, yes I do. Then you will have fellowship with others. Not “it’s a benefit” or “do it if you want to”. You will. I will. We will. Like the little oxpecker birds on the backs of African mammals, we will help each other as we walk through this life. We will pray for each other, support each other, sit in hospital rooms with each other, decorate Christmas trees together, watch our kids grow in their faith together. God wants us to walk in the light, but He never intended us to walk in the light alone.

Proverbs 27:17 Any professional chef will tell you that a dull knife is a dangerous knife. Keep your knives sharp, or your dull knife will slip off that carrot and cut you. Sharpeners have two blades inside to hone the edge of the knife as you pull it through. You may also have a rod, that wicked looking thing that you use right before cutting Thanksgiving dinner. I learned only recently that the rod is used to straighten the blade, not hone it. As you use a knife it becomes dull; it also becomes warped, not straight. Community with other believers performs both of these functions in our spiritual lives. Other believers sharpen our understanding of Scripture and what it means to be a follower of God. They also keep us from following a path that looks almost right but will actually lead us astray. Keep your knives and your faith sharp.

Romans 12:4-16 The hip bone is connected to the back bone and the back bone is connected to the neck bone. Or so the song goes. Song or no song, we know it’s true, especially if we’re wearing uncomfortable shoes for days on end. Wear unsupportive shoes, and you’ll soon feel it in your hips, neck, and shoulders, because other joints and muscles are compensating for your poor feet. And when you soak those poor feet, your whole body relaxes. The body of Christ is like this: we’re all connected, and we suffer when others suffer and rejoice when they rejoice. These verses talk about the different ways we can serve the body of believers and the larger community, but verse 10 is the key: be devoted to one another in love. Let everything we do spring from sincere love for each other.

1 Peter 2:9-10 What is the worst part of any school day? I think for many of us, the memory of being chosen last on the playground still hurts. We all want to be accepted and included. Worse than being left out of games on the playground is the thought of being left out of God's presence because we have chosen our own way. If you are a follower of God, that fear has been taken away by the death and resurrection of Christ. Now we are part of God's family. As these verses tell us, we are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, the people of God. Notice God has also given us a purpose: to declare God's praises. Let us come together as often as we can to share the amazing things God is doing in our lives. Knowing God and sharing God's love with others is the ultimate purpose of life.

Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 Being lost in the tundra of Alaska or the high country of Arizona is a scary place to be. Aron Ralston is an avid hiker who had to cut off his own arm after being pinned by a boulder. I can't imagine the ordeal. He survived, and now he is a motivational speaker. Other people who have been lost in the wilds have not been as lucky. Hikers and adventure-seekers have a much better chance of survival when they go with others. Whether climbing a mountain or camping in the frozen wilderness, having a companion eases the journey. Day-to-day life isn't as extreme as climbing Mt. Everest, but that doesn't mean life is easy. We need each other for support and companionship. Don't try to climb life's mountains alone.

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