

PLANTED IN COMMUNITY

God has made each and every one of us, for community.

Context of Hebrews: Addressed to Christians in Rome who, because of the pressure and persecution around them, were being tempted to abandon the church and go back to their old Jewish practices.

Hebrews 10:24-25 (nlt) “Let us think of ways to motivate one another to acts of love and good works. 25 And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage one another, especially now that the day of his return is drawing near.”

Let us think of: *κατανοῶμεν (katanōōmen)*

Meaning: *to observe, consider, perceive, or understand*

To be planted in community means we need to be thoughtful, intentional and consistent. We should be continually seeking God in how we are to serve and love those around us.

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To motivate: *εἰς παροξυσμὸν (paroxysmon)*

Meaning: *A sharp provocation, stimulation, incitement.*

When we are in community we need to be willing to provoke and motivate each other in a way that brings out the best in each other.

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Love: ἀγάπη (agapē)

Meaning: Selfless, sacrificial, God-like love

We can provoke a selfless, sacrificial and God-like love in others by FIRST GIVING a selfless, sacrificial and God-like love to others.

To provoke each other is more than just feeling an emotion but to move someone to good and noble and praiseworthy deeds.

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The original word used here for neglect is egataleypo, which means to abandon, forsake, desert or leave behind.

And the original word used for meeting together is episynagogue.

Which is referring to the unique gathering or assembly of Christians.

Neglect: ἐγκαταλείπω (*egataleypo*)

Meaning: *To abandon, forsake, desert, leave behind*

Meeting Together: ἐπισυναγωγή (*episynagogue*)

Meaning: *The unique gathering or assembly of Christians*

To be planted in community means we need to put the effort to come together where we sow into each other in a way that our relationships continue to grow and mature and bear fruit.

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As some people do: ἔθος (*ethos*)

Meaning: *Custom, habit, usual practice.*

The writer of Hebrews is referring to Christians who, under the pressure or influence of this world, have made it a habit of detaching from fellowship.

Christ did not come to love, care or teach from a distance. He established the foundations, set the boundaries and became our example of what it means to be in community.

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Encourage one another: παρακαλοῦντες
(parakalountes)

Meaning: To call alongside, to comfort, exhort, encourage, strengthen

When we are in community, we are to allow the Holy Spirit to empower us to encourage, comfort and strengthen others.

*James 2:15-16 (nlt) Suppose you see a brother or sister who has no food or clothing, **16** and you say, “Good-bye and have a good day; stay warm and eat well”—but then you don’t give that person any food or clothing. What good does that do?*

If we are to encourage and comfort like the Holy Spirit encourages and comforts us, our words should move us to action.

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What we do today matters, and as we witness the unfolding of history and its alignment with God’s word, we can look forward in confidence to Christ’s return, and because Christ is coming back, we should have an urgency to be planted in community.

Jesus is our example:

- Jesus was thoughtful, considerate and intentional
- Jesus motivated those around him to good works
- Jesus did not abandon anyone, instead, he cared for everyone
- Jesus was empowered by the Holy Spirit to comfort and encourage

We are not designed to do life alone, we are meant to be **planted in community.**