



Home Group Discussion Guide *February 13-19, 2022 – Live in Harmony with One Another*

Devotion: One of my favorite movies is *You've Got Mail*. It is a story about two unnamed pen pals that fall in love over email. Ironically, they are mortal business enemies in real life. They both were in attendance at a book party and had a combative exchange in regard to business practices. The next morning, they swap emails trying to come to grips with words and lack of words that had been exchanged. Incognizant that their pen pal is actually the one they challenged at the book party.

- Joe Fox: “Do you ever think you've become the worst version of yourself? Pandora’s box of the secret hateful parts-- your arrogance, your spite, your condescension-- has sprung open. Someone provokes you and instead of just moving on you zing them. *Helllo it's Mr. Nasty...*”
- Kathleen Kelly: “I know what you mean. I'm completely jealous when I get provoked my mind gets blank --my tongue tied. Then I spend all night tossing and turning trying to figure out what I should have said...”
- Joe Fox: I must warn you when you have the pleasure of saying the thing you mean to say, the moment you want to say it, **remorse** inevitably follows.

The exchange in the movie is a perfect illustration of dealing with others we don't agree with. But the key question is how should Christ followers react and why does it happen? Pride is a nasty invisible cancer, which is the source of being unable to live in harmony with one another. The root of pride can be seen in various ways such as: being too self-centered, feeling that you are above everyone else, extreme analytical thinking, and jealousy. Pride removes the ability to emotionally connect with others. It also hinders an individual to understand that issues are complex and never one sided. Christ calls us to be a different person than you are by nature. It's a heart issue. Our response to others should start through the heart of Christ and not through our fleshy selves. When confronted by another you might have the willpower to be kind. On the other hand, you can't through willpower have a heart that wants someone to be blessed when they have wronged you, that is a gift from God. A gift in which the Lord needs us to grasp and employ daily. For having a heart that is able to bless others when there is indifference is the heart of Christianity. It is what makes us different from all others, the ability to love others even when we are faced with adversity.

Adversarial account ⇒ Rising above in a gracious response ⇒ Pure heart to pray blessings on prosecutor = Christs true Character



Scripture – Read Romans 12:14-18

- How many times does the author mention ‘do not?’ What are we supposed to be doing?
- Read aloud verse 14 again. What does it mean to bless and not curse? What does that look like, act like, and feel like? Where are you struggling with this now?
- How do you acknowledge if you are successfully living in peace with everyone? Whom helps you with this achievement? Is it by manpower?
- How does this passage connect within your home group and the community you have built? Has rejoicing and mourning with your group members helped you become a stronger and more committed follower of Jesus?

How is it with your soul? (*Go around and share as you look back to the “good and the bad” of this week and then look forward to what you can do or where you want to see God move this week.*)

- Where have you seen God this week?
- Where have you struggled this week?
- How can you be open to God/the Holy Spirit this week?

Prayers