



alLeLoN

THE POWER OF
ONE ANOTHER



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Allelon: The Power of One Another

Groups Content Overview

Date	One Another Statement	Aligning Narrative Text	Notes
August 18/21	<i>Bear one another's burdens</i> (Galatians 6:2)	Acts 3:1-10 (Lame beggar healed)	The same word used for "bear" in Galatians is used in Acts to mean that the man was literally being carried. Our calling is to carry the physical or spiritual burdens of others so that they can experience the restoration that comes only through Jesus.
August 25/28	<i>Encourage one another</i> (1 Thessalonians 4:18/5:11)	Acts 11:19-26 (Barnabas encourages Antioch church)	The same Greek word for "encourage" is used in the passages here. It's the word "parakletos," which implies comforting like the Holy Spirit (Paraclete).
September 1/4	<i>Spur one another on</i> (Hebrews 10:24)	Acts 20:13-38 (Farewell to Ephesian elders)	The word for "spur" in Hebrews is almost always used in terms of negative conflict, so the author of Hebrews is almost being ironic. It's like saying, "Irritate one another to love and good deeds!" The story in Acts is Paul giving one final strong encouragement to his friends in Ephesus to remain faithful and to follow his example.
September 8/11	<i>Accept one another</i> (Romans 15:7)	Acts 15:1-21 (Jerusalem Council)	Both passages are about how we should accept people who are different than us (Jew/Gentile) because God has accepted them already.
September 15/18	<i>Admonish one another</i> (Colossians 3:16)	Acts 18:24-28 (Priscilla and Aquila correcting Apollos)	Priscilla and Aquila correct Apollos in a gentle, humble manner, but the text says they "explained to him the way of God more adequately." That's our goal in admonishing/calling out one another.
September 22/25	<i>Forgive one another</i> (Ephesians 4:32)	Acts 9:26-31 (Barnabas forgives Paul's past and invites him in)	Barnabas is able to forgive Paul for the way he persecuted believers in Christ. This story shows us the fruit of forgiveness. Think of all those who came to know Jesus through Paul because Barnabas was willing to forgive him and stick up for him.

Bear One Another's Burdens

"Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ."

Galatians 6:2 ESV

Paul calls followers of Jesus to "bear one another's burdens" in Galatians 6:2. It's a simple command, but what does it look like when it's lived out in Godly community? The word *bear* in that verse essentially means "to *pick up* or to *carry*." Here, Paul is using it in a metaphorical sense when the same word is often used to refer to literally carrying an object. So, you could say that this is a unique sighting of a "Paul-ar Bear." This week, we're going to explore a passage where this word appears in its literal sense.

In Acts 3:1-10, we meet a paralyzed man being *carried* to the temple where he would normally beg for money. However, on this particular day, instead of receiving some pocket change, his life would be forever changed. We witness a collision between the healing power of Jesus and the helpless position of the man. God's provision is on display through the miraculous healing, but also through the people who had been faithfully carrying the paralyzed man to a place where he could receive help and healing.

1. What is the heaviest or most awkward item you've ever attempted to carry?
2. Would you rather have to carry a grown person with you everywhere you went or be carried by someone everywhere you went?
3. Read Acts 3:1-10.
4. What sticks out to you in this passage? What's confusing? What's encouraging?
5. Who do you think was carrying this man to the temple? What would motivate them to carry him every day?
6. How did people respond to this miraculous healing in the text? How do you think you would've responded? Why?
7. Who are some people who have cared for you and helped you bear physical, emotional, or spiritual burdens?

Challenge:

Who do you know who might need some help carrying a burden in life right now? For whoever comes to mind, find a simple way to demonstrate the care of Christ for them this week. Babysit for them, cook them a meal, give them a hug, cry with them, or write them a check.

NOTES

Week 2

Encourage One Another

Donkey: "Look at that. Who'd wanna live in a place like that?"
Shrek: "That would be my home."
Donkey: "Oh and it is LOVELY. You know, you're really quite a decorator. It's amazing what you've done with such a modest budget. I like that boulder. That is a NICE boulder."

Encouragement can be awkward. This scene from the movie *Shrek* may be a fairly accurate reflection of our attempts to encourage other people in the body of Christ. We don't really know what to say, so we just make pleasant comments about superficial things. That sort of compliment isn't evil or sinful. It just lacks eternal significance. Paul seems to have in mind something deeper when he writes in 1 Thessalonians 5:11, "*Therefore encourage one another and build each other up...*" When Paul writes those words, perhaps his friend Barnabas came to mind. Barnabas was a notoriously encouraging person.

In this week's study, we're going to traverse a story in Acts that gives us a glimpse of Barnabas encouraging believers and building up the Church. Understanding the way God used

Barnabas to encourage others in an eternally significant way opens our eyes to see how He might use us to do the same.

1. What's the best compliment you *have* ever received? What's the best compliment you *could* ever receive?
2. Read Acts 11:19-26.
3. What sticks out to you in this text?
4. What prompted the encouragement of Barnabas? What exactly caused him to affirm the church in Antioch?
5. How did Barnabas encourage the church in Antioch? What sorts of things did he do to build them up?
6. What makes encouragement the most helpful? How can we encourage others in a way that is eternally significant?
7. What should the result of encouragement be? What should it accomplish in the person receiving it?

Challenge:

Identify someone in your circle of influence who needs encouragement this week. Write them a note or a letter, or even give them a phone call, explicitly stating the ways you see God working in their life. Keep in mind, despite our natural tendency to encourage from a distance, the people we're closest to *relationally* (spouse, children, close friends) should be the people we encourage the most *regularly*.

NOTES

Spur One Another On

"And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds."

Hebrews 10:24

It's possible that Paul uttered those words while wearing a cowboy hat and chewing on a stalk of wheat, but not likely. The word translated there as "spur" is almost always used to describe a negative form of conflict. It's like the author of Hebrews is almost being ironic, saying, "Let's irritate one another to love and good deeds!"

Sometimes, what we need most to press on in our faith are strong words of conviction and challenge from a Godly friend. Reading Acts 20:13-38, we take a front row seat as Paul gives one final strong encouragement to his friends in Ephesus to remain faithful and to follow his example. Paul gives us, as a community of believers, a helpful model of how to spur others on with love and boldness.

1. If you could create any Olympic sport/activity, what would you almost be guaranteed to win and what would you be guaranteed to lose? (For example, watermelon eating competition and algebra equation-solving competition.)
2. Read Acts 20:13-38.
3. Which sentence in Paul's speech do you think would be best described as "spurring" others on?
4. Where in this passage do you see Paul's boldness most on display? Where do you see his love for these people most on display?
5. What is Paul spurring the Ephesian elders toward? What does Paul want for them?
6. When or how do you think spurring others on is necessary in the Church?
7. Have you personally received this sort of strong encouragement or challenge from another follower of Jesus? How did that impact you?

Challenge:

Take a few moments to envision where some of the followers of Jesus closest to you relationally will be in 10 years. Based on their current life trajectory, do you envision them still walking faithfully with Christ, or do you see them drifting further away? Consider what Godly attributes and patterns you see in their life and what potential threats to their faith you see. Affirm the former and draw attention to the latter. Pray with that person about those things—whether you pray in person, through a note, or with an audio message.

NOTES

WEEK 4

Accept One Another

"Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God."

Romans 15:7

When Paul writes this letter to the Roman Christians, he addresses a racial and religious divide between Jews and Gentiles by laying out the basic message of the Gospel: It doesn't matter who you are, you're sinful and unworthy of God's mercy. But God is more merciful than we are sinful, so He has made salvation possible to *all* people through Jesus.

Because of the mercy God has shown us, our lives should look different. One major shift that takes place in our lives in light of God's mercy is that we accept others who are undeserving of acceptance into God's family because that is precisely what God has done for us. In Acts 15, we get a behind-the-scenes look at the early church wrestling with the very same topic and coming to the same conclusion: God accepted us, so we should accept one another.

1. Discuss these controversial issues:
Is cereal a soup? Do you floss before or after brushing your teeth?
Does pineapple belong on pizza?
2. Read Acts 15:1-21.

3. What seems to be the major conflict in this passage of Scripture?
4. Why do you think it was difficult for the Jewish believers to accept the idea that God also wanted to include the Gentiles?
5. What are some of the reasons Peter and James advocate for accepting and including the Gentiles?
6. What exactly do you think it means to "accept" someone in the context of Christian community?
7. What sort of things make it difficult to accept a person? What issues do you sense create the most division between you and other believers?

Challenge:

Have a completely genuine conversation with another believer who has a background or personality that is foreign to you. Be curious. Let your only agenda be to get to know them as a human being. Don't attempt to change their mind. Just listen and figure out what is lovable about them.

NOTES

WEEK 5

Admonish One Another

"Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts."

Colossians 3:16

The word translated as "admonish" in this verse can also be translated as "warn." It's a word with a connotation of correction.

How do we approach the tricky task of correcting the cracks in character or doctrine that become evident in a Christian context? In Colossians, Paul reminds us to correct and admonish with *wisdom*. Jesus, in Matthew 7, reminds us to correct and warn with *humility* and *self-awareness*. Priscilla and Aquila in Acts 18 remind us to correct and warn with *gentleness* and *clarity*. This week's text says they "explained to him (Apollos) the way of God more adequately." Our goal in correcting and admonishing is to help others know God more adequately and show God more accurately.

1. Tell a story about a time that you ignored a warning. How did it work out for you?
2. Read Acts 18:24-28.
3. What sticks out to you in this passage?

4. In what way did Apollos need correction or admonishment?
5. How did Aquila and Priscilla correct Apollos? Read over verse 26 until you notice at least two characteristics of their approach.
6. What was the result of the admonishment? What did it lead to in Apollos' life?
7. Have you ever been corrected in your faith? How did you respond?
8. What makes giving and receiving admonishment or correction *difficult*?
9. What makes giving and receiving admonishment or correction *necessary*?

Challenge:

Set up a time to meet with a trusted Godly friend or mentor. When setting up the meeting, ask them to prepare an answer to the question, "In what ways does my character reflect and not reflect Christ?" You can also ask a broader question like, "What's it like to be on the other side of me?" When receiving the feedback, resist the urge to defend yourself. Just listen and take notes. Thank them for loving you enough to give you difficult feedback. Rest knowing that whatever they reveal to you is already known and forgiven by Jesus, or it's simply not true. Allow the feedback to drive you toward repentance and deeper dependence on the grace of God.

NOTES

WEEK 6

Forgive One Another

"To forgive is to set a prisoner free and discover that the prisoner was you."

Lewis Smedes

Of all the "one another" statements in the New Testament, "forgive one another" in Ephesians 4:32 might be the most painful. In Ephesians, we see that a guiding principle for Godly community is forgiveness for one another because we are a community of people who have already been forgiven by God.

In Acts, we examine this guiding principle of forgiveness as it's played out between Barnabas and Saul, who would later become known as Paul. Saul was responsible for, or at least approving of, the murders of believers in Jerusalem. It's likely that Saul was, in some way, behind the murder of people who Barnabas knew personally. Despite his past, Saul was forgiven by Jesus. But would the followers of Jesus forgive Saul as freely? In this week's study, we see that the pain of the past can lead to the fruit of forgiveness.

1. What is the most frustrating minor inconvenience for you? (For example, spotty internet connection, not being able to find the end of a roll of tape, overly-aggressive autocorrect, etc.)

2. Read Acts 9:26-31.
3. Which words in this passage stick out to you? Why?
4. If you were one of the disciples, how would you feel if Saul tried to join you? Do you think you would've responded the same way Barnabas did? Why?
5. How important of a role do you think this moment played in Saul's/ Paul's life?
6. What sorts of things are the most difficult for you to forgive?
7. Why is forgiveness so essential in Christian community?

Challenge:

Take a moment to ask yourself: "Who do I need to forgive?" and "Who do I need to ask for forgiveness?" If a name comes to mind for either of those questions, write the name down. If you need to ask for forgiveness, do it this week. If you need to forgive someone and they haven't asked for forgiveness, write on a sheet of paper the words "I forgive you for..." and list exactly what you're forgiving. Then toss the paper in the trash. If the person has asked for your forgiveness, consider telling them verbally that you forgive them. If you're unsure of whether you should talk to the person you're forgiving, invite a Godly friend or mentor into the process to help you discern.

NOTES

BONUS WEEK

Pray for One Another

As we study this word *allegeon* (each other) in the New Testament, we discover some guiding principles for Godly community. In James 5:16, the brother of Jesus offers a guiding principle that is often overlooked and underpracticed: Pray for one another. We hear or say things like “I’ll be praying for that” or “Thoughts and prayers” so frequently that prayer becomes just a passing word we offer to a person and not a set of powerful words we offer to God. This week, a story in the book of Acts reminds us of the power and responsibility of prayer along with the role it plays in strengthening Godly community.

1. If you had one wish and could guarantee one thing in your life (other than money), what would it be?
2. What do you pray for most often?
3. Read Acts 4:23-31.
4. Consider the context. What’s going on in the passage before this? How does that impact the way you see the prayer of these believers?
5. What sorts of things do these believers pray for? How inclined would you be to pray for the same things, given the situation?
6. How did God answer the prayer of these believers?
7. How natural is it for you to trust that God listens to your prayers and, because of that, your prayers are

powerful? Is that easy or difficult for you to believe? Why?

8. Share prayer requests, big and small, and pray genuinely for them as a group.

Challenge:

Find a way to pray specifically for another person who is outside of your usual rhythm. Pray through your social media feed as you notice spiritual needs and struggles in the lives of those you follow. Pray for your spouse out loud before bed. Send an audio message to someone, praying specifically for them. Reword a passage of Scripture to be a prayer for someone you love.

PRAY

NOTES



Video Curriculum Links

WEEK 1: secc.org/week1-video-teaching

WEEK 2: secc.org/week2-video-teaching

WEEK 3: secc.org/week3-video-teaching

WEEK 4: secc.org/week4-video-teaching

WEEK 5: secc.org/week5-video-teaching

WEEK 6: secc.org/week6-video-teaching

