

Romans 12 (1-21) – This is How to be Healthy

Without a foundation a building will collapse. Pizza without a crust may taste good but it really isn't pizza. In building your health, no matter what the particular issues are, it all basically boils down to three unavoidable prescriptions (right diet / regular exercise / resting well). Miss out on any of these elements, and you may feel fit, you may have a lot of endurance and be as strong as an ox, but your health will eventually suffer as a result of neglect.

Paul speaks of how to build spiritual health into your life, the life of your family, and the life of your local church. In chapters 1-11 he laid the foundation for all we see in chapters 12-16. There are many aspects regarding spiritual health that the NT exhorts us to, but here Paul gives us three "prescriptions" for spiritual health that are the unavoidable parts. Without them you will not have a fully orb'd spiritual life, you will be lacking in some important dimension of your spiritual growth. Many are lacking and don't realize it, they are as happy as they want to be but not as healthy as they ought to be. They may love God and do a lot of good things, but they are not as healthy as they could be. This framework grounds us and guides us on our way to be healthy; these are the imperatives, the vital necessities of spiritual health.

Daily commitment to God (vs.1-2) – involves prayer, bible study, desire, discipline

- Decision to start – a total commitment – many haven't done this (willing / personal)
- Determination to stay – an ongoing commitment to change (intentional / practical) – You can be building your personal and your church's corporate health as long as you live (2 Corinthians 3:18, 4:16) – You can teach an old dog new tricks. A commitment to God is a commitment to growth. You must be fully invested for the process to fully work.
- This first point parallels Ephesians 4:22-24 (put off / renew mind / put on)

Doing your job well (vs.3-8) – a commitment to ministry which includes a commitment to a local church; these "one another's" point to that fact – live it here, go out there

- Don't overestimate yourself (3)
- You don't do it all (4)
- Everyone important – All belong to Body (5a), to each other (5b), have things to do (6a)
- Dedication – Give it all you've got (6b-8) – this is a commitment to quality

Devotion to one another (vs.9-21) – involves sacrifice, commitment to love

- Loving, genuine, good, affectionate, honoring each other (9-10) – honest respect
- Doing your share with passion, joy, patience, prayer, sharing with others (11-13) – Don't fret over their responsibilities, focus on yours, pick up the slack
- Humble yourself (14,16b), empathize (15,16a), remember your testimony, restrain your ego and resolve to do good, let God be God (17-21) – be a person of peace

These 3 points parallel the 2 Great Commandments of Christ (Matthew 22:37-40) – Love God (Daily commitment) / All your heart mind soul strength (everything you are, anything you do) (Doing job well) / Neighbor as yourself (Devotion to others)

This gives us a blueprint for a healthy church, full of healthy individuals acting together and growing together as a healthy unit, for God's glory. By doing these 3 things – daily commitment to God, doing our jobs well, and being devoted to one another – the members of a congregation will build into health, and most of a church's problems will disappear. If you are committed to personal growth, to ministry with quality, and to love, the leaders will lead well. This church will become a leading light in this community. You will know it, the people of this community will know it, other churches will know it, and God will know it. Romans 15:14 – we can do it; will we do it, it will take all of us, but it starts with you. Do you want to be healthy?