

## Love One Another | Part 1 | Page 1

### **A New Commandment for the New Community**

John 13:34-35

What Did Jesus Say?"

Experiencing Life in a Supernatural Community

### **Introduction: Taking Jesus seriously**

*31 Jesus therefore was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, "If you abide in My word, (then) you are truly disciples of Mine; 32 and you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." John 8:31-32 (NAS)*

*21 "He who has My commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves Me: and he who loves Me shall be loved by My Father, and I will love him, and will disclose Myself to him." John 14:21 (NAS)*

*24 "Therefore everyone who hears these words of Mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. 26 But everyone who hears these words of Mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. Matthew 7:24, 26 (NIV)*

Taking Jesus seriously means we take His WORD seriously! So . . .

## Love One Another | Part 1 | Page 2

### **A New Commandment for the New Community**

John 13:34-35

#### W.D.J.S.?

*34 "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. 35 "By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."  
John 13:34-35*

- What is the New Commandment?
- When was the New Commandment given?
- Why was the New Commandment given?
- How seriously did the early Church take the New Commandment?

#### Our Challenge?

To take Jesus' words SERIOUSLY, "to LOVE one another."

- Why is this so critical?
- What Does this mean for **you**?

## Love One Another | Part 1 | Page 3

### **A New Commandment for the New Community**

John 13:34-35

#### Discussion Questions:

1. According to Jesus, how seriously did/does He expect His followers to take His Words? Explain.
2. What is the difference between the old commandments and this new command?
3. Why do you think Jesus only gave one new commandment? Why this one?
4. What would the church look like if we all took this new commandment as seriously as the early church did?
5. What will "taking seriously" John 13:34 look like in your personal life **this week**?

## Love One Another | Part 2 | Page 1

**How to Develop Authentic Relationships**      Romans 12:3-5

### Introduction:

Why are there so many people **desperately hurting** and in need of love, and so many others who are so willing and **wanting** to give love, yet **so few** who actually get loved?

What's the missing link?



6 Key Words:

YOU ARE MEMBERS OF ONE ANOTHER

**Thesis:** To fulfill Jesus' command to love one another, as He loved us ... .. demands that we understand our membership and function in

**"HIS SUPERNATURAL COMMUNITY."**

## Love One Another | Part 2 | Page 2

### How to Develop Authentic Relationships      Romans 12:3-5

#### You are members of a supernatural community:

##### What makes it supernatural?

- It has a **supernatural** ORIGIN.

*1 In my former book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus began to do and to teach 2 until the day He was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles He had chosen. 3 After His suffering, He showed Himself to these men and gave many convincing proofs that He was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the Kingdom of God.*

Acts 1:1-3

- It has a **supernatural** AGENDA.

*4On one occasion, while He was eating with them, He gave them this command: “Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift My Father promised, which you have heard Me speak about. 5For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.” 6So when they met together, they asked Him, “Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?” 7He said to them: “It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by His own authority. Acts 1:4-7*

- It has a **supernatural** POWER.

*8But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be My witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” Acts 1:8*

## Love One Another | Part 2 | Page 3

### How to Develop Authentic Relationships      Romans 12:3-5

#### What makes it authentic community?

- Possessing an accurate view of ourselves.

*For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you.*

Romans 12:3

Key word = VULNERABILITY

- Nurturing a healthy appreciation of others.

*Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we who are many form one body, ...* Romans 12:4-5a

Key word = THANKFULNESS

- Practicing a loyal allegiance to one another.

*... and each member belongs to all the others.*

Romans 12:5b

Key word = COMMITMENT

## Love One Another | Part 2 | Page 4

### **How to Develop Authentic Relationships**      Romans 12:3-5

#### **Application:**

1. No individual Christian can function effectively by himself/herself.
2. No member of the “supernatural community” is more or less important than anyone else.
3. We must “**get connected**” in real life relationships if we are to experience the reality that “we are members of one another.”

#### **Discussion Questions:**

1. Why do you think it is important to understand our unity/membership in God’s family in order to obey John 13:34?
2. What makes us a “supernatural” community? Why is this important?
3. What are the most common hindrances to us experiencing “real community” in our relationships?
4. Which of those hindrances are keeping you from receiving or giving love right now?
5. What are you going to ask God to do to help you with this hindrance?

## **Love One Another | Part 3 | Page 1**

### **How to Connect Deeply with Others**

Romans 12:10

#### **Introduction:**

Renowned psychotherapist concludes, “There must be a better way.”

“Imagine what could happen if God were to place within his people intangible nutrients that had the power to both prevent and reverse soul disease and then told us to share those nutrients with each other in a special kind of intimate relating called connection. Imagine what could happen if that were true, if we believed it, and if we devoted ourselves to understanding what those nutrients were and how we could give them away.

I envision a community of people who intentionally mingle in settings where these nutrients are passed back and forth, where I pour into you the healing resources within me and you pour into me what God has put in you. Like spiritual gifts, these nutrients only nourish our own souls as we give them away for the blessing of others.

In recent days, I have made a shift. I am now working toward the day when communities of God’s people, ordinary Christians whose lives regularly intersect, will accomplish most of the good that we now depend on mental health professionals to provide. And they will do it by connecting with each other in ways that only the gospel makes possible.”                      Dr. Larry Crabb

**Question: What is this “better way” and how does it work?**

## Love One Another | Part 3 | Page 2

### How to Connect Deeply with Others

Romans 12:10

**God's Answer:** *"Be devoted to one another in brotherly love."*

12:10

Romans

- What does it mean to be "devoted to one another?"
  
- What does it look like to be "devoted to one another?"
  
- What keeps us from experiencing this authentic devotion one to another?
  1. It doesn't happen AUTOMATICALLY.
    - 1 Thessalonians 4:9-10
    - 1 Peter 1:22-23
    - 2 Peter 1:5-7
  
  2. It takes time, effort, and INTENTIONALLY.
  
  3. It is especially difficult for some of us to share at the "feeling" level because:
    - o We fear REJECTION.
    - o We come from poor FAMILY BACKGROUNDS.
    - o We've had negative CHURCH EXPERIENCES.
  
  4. Personal unresolved ANGER and BITTERNESS.
  
  5. Excessive preoccupation with OURSELVES.
  
  6. Failure to recognize our LIMITATIONS and personal CAPACITIES in relationships.
  
  7. Idealistic / Unrealistic EXPECTATIONS.

## Love One Another | Part 3 | Page 3

### How to Connect Deeply with Others

Romans 12:10

#### How can you develop deeper “family relationships”?

1. Honestly evaluate your level of “connectedness” and family devotion.
2. Identify the top two factors that are keeping you from building warmer, deeper relationships in God’s family.  
  
Factor # 1 =  
  
Factor # 2 =
3. Prayerfully determine which **SUB-GROUP** you would be most comfortable with.
4. Prayerfully decide on a specific time, event, or activity that would allow you to “take the next step” toward devotion and connection. (If possible, ask someone to go with you.)
5. Join a Growth Group or Ministry Team for a specified, limited time.
6. Be friendly – even if it doesn’t come naturally.
7. Ask God to let you find someone who feels “less connected” than you this week and love them.

## Love One Another | Part 3 | Page 4

### How to Connect Deeply with Others

Romans 12:10

#### Discussion Questions:

1. Why do you think it is important to understand our unity/membership in God's family in order to obey John 13:34?
2. How might "authentic devotion to one another" change how unbelievers view God's people and the Gospel?
3. What are the top two factors that are keeping you from building warmer, deeper relationships in God's family?
4. Discuss when and how you can develop deeper relationships. What most concerns you about taking the "next step?" Why? Pray for each other.

Introduction: To love each other the way Jesus loved His disciples means we must ...

... ACCEPT ONE ANOTHER,

JUST AS CHRIST ACCEPTED US,

IN ORDER TO BRING GLORY TO GOD!

“Connecting is a kind of relating that happens when the powerful life of Christ in one person meets the good life of Christ in another. What every Christian can pour into another is **the powerful passion of acceptance**, a passion that flows out of the center of the gospel, a passion that fills the heart of God.”  
Dr. Larry Crabb – *Connecting*, page 66

## Love One Another | Part 4 | Page 2

### How to Love Those Who are “Different”

Romans 15:7

#### What does it mean to “accept one another?”

- Meaning of the word “Accept”
- Meaning from the context Romans 15:1-6
- Meaning from the New Testament
- Meaning from the text Romans 15:7

#### What keeps us from “accepting one another?”

1. **LEGALISM** Romans 14  
Judging others’ faith by extra-Biblical standards.
2. **FAVORITISM** 2 Corinthians 5:16 James 2:1-5  
Judging other by external appearance or possessions.
3. **PRE-JUDGING** Luke 6:37  
Judging others based on preconceived notions about them.
4. **MIND-READING** 1 Corinthians 4:1-5 2  
Judging others in areas that are impossible for us to assess.



**DESIRE CARD**

*“I would like to view others in light of their  
eternity and need,  
instead of by their outward appearance,  
possessions, status, or abilities.”*

**Memorize: 2 Corinthians 5:16**

**Discussion Questions:**

1. Who has shown real acceptance of you that made a difference in your life? How did they do that?
2. Summarize what it means to accept one another biblically.
3. With which of the four “enemies of acceptance” do you most identify? What is behind our “improper judging” of others?
4. Why is it important for us to realize that not all judging is wrong?
5. What steps would God have you take in deepening your **acceptance** of others? How will you know if you are making progress?

## Love One Another | Part 5 | Page 1

### How to “Lift Up” Those Who are Down

Hebrews 10:19-25

**Introduction:** Life is hard! God is good! I am weak!

Sometimes the only difference between success and failure... .. is a simple word of **ENCOURAGEMENT!**

#### **What is encouragement?**

- Meaning of the word:
  
- Use in the New Testament:
  
- Use in the Old Testament:

#### **Summary:**

We are to aid, help, support, and intercede for each other by means of comforting in affliction, strengthening in faith, and motivating toward righteousness. In short, encouragement (building up others) is taking the **truth of Scripture** by life and word in the context of meaningful and caring relationships, to **restore perspective** and, thereby, provide hope which carries us through affliction and above complacency.

## Love One Another | Part 5 | Page 2

### How to “Lift Up” Those Who are Down

Hebrews 10:19-25

#### Why is encouragement so important?

- Because God commands it            1 Thessalonians 5:11
  
- Because sin is deceitful                    Hebrews 3:13
  
- Because spiritual growth requires it    1 Thessalonians 3:2
  
- Because we lose perspective so easily    Corinthians 7:3-7

#### What does Biblical encouragement look like?

##### The Hebrews 10 Model of Encouragement:

*19 **Since** therefore, brethren, we have confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus, 20 by a new and living way which He inaugurated for us through the veil, that is, His flesh ... 21 and **since** {we have} a great priest over the house of God ... 22 **let us draw** near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled {clean} from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. 23 **Let us hold fast** the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful... 24 and **let us consider how to stimulate one another** to love and good deeds, 25 not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging {one another} and all the more, as you see the day drawing near.*

## Love One Another | Part 5 | Page 3

### How to “Lift Up” Those Who are Down

Hebrews 10:19-25

#### Examining the structure of Hebrews 10:19-25

##### 1. Two facts – Two eternal truths

❖ Since we have access into God’s presence.  
Hebrews 10:19

❖ Since we never go into God’s presence alone.  
Hebrews 10:21

##### 2. Three exhortations – Three timeless principles

➤ “Let us draw near ...” Hebrews 10:22  
**Biblical encouragement restores perspective**

➤ “Let us hold fast ...” Hebrews 10:23  
**Biblical encouragement promotes endurance**

➤ “Let us stimulate one another ...” Hebrews 10:24  
**Biblical encouragement inspires spiritual growth**

## Love One Another | Part 5 | Page 4

### How to “Lift Up” Those Who are Down

Hebrews 10:19-25

#### How?

1. By stimulating one another to Christ-like attitudes and actions in relationships.
2. By refusing to allow one another to “drift” from regular attendance at worship or small group times.
3. By reminding one another of the certainty and accountability involved in Christ’s return.

#### Discussion Questions:

1. Who do you know who needs some encouragement?
2. What **truth** (Biblical passage) would help restore their perspective? Endure their adversity? Be stimulated to spiritual growth?
4. What would be the best way to communicate your encouragement to them?
  - ~ In person            ~ In a group
  - ~ By phone            ~ Through some act of kindness
  - ~ By letter            ~ By meeting a need
4. When, this week, will you become God’s agent of blessing in this person’s life?
5. Pray for those you have determined to encourage this week.

## Love One Another | Part 6 | Page 1

### How to Speak the Truth in Love

Romans 15:14

#### Introduction:

"The best, the deepest, and the closest friends I have, or have ever had, all have **one thing in common** ... they have each loved me enough to tell me some things about my life that no one else cared enough to tell me."

#### **A critical command:**

*"And concerning you, my brethren, I myself also am convinced that you yourselves are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, and able also to admonish one another."* Romans 15:14

#### Admonition – What is it?

I. **Definition:** To exert influence upon another (by life and word) to guide him/her into obedience of God's will as revealed in Scripture. "It consists of reminding, warning, counseling, correcting, reproving, and rebuking a person with the intention that he/she will carry it out."

Colin Brown, *Dictionary of the New Testament*

#### II. **Clarification:** What admonition is not!

- It is not JUDGING another's life that does not conform to your standards.
- It is not a SUPERIOR or more spiritual person speaking down to an inferior or unspiritual person.
- It is not allowing things to remain the way they are for fear of REJECTION.
- It is not making GENERAL / VEILED STATEMENTS to a group, hoping that the one you want to hear it will catch it.
- It is not a ONE-TIME shot and if they don't respond, then I have done my duty.

Love One Another | Part 6 | Page 2  
Love Romans 15:14

**How to Speak the Truth in**

#### Why must we admonish one another?

- It is a COMMAND.  
Colossians 3:16  
1 Thessalonians 5:14
- Because we all have “BLIND SPOTS.”  
Psalm 19:12  
Psalm 139:23-24
- To become godly, holy, MATURE CHRISTIANS.  
Colossians 1:28-29
- It cultivates deep, LOVING RELATIONSHIPS.  
1 Thessalonians 2:8
- Because sin DESTROYS a believer’s life.  
Romans 6:23
- Because we are MEMBERS of one another.      Unchecked sin impacts the whole body  
Romans 12:4-5

**Why we don’t admonish one another:**

## Love One Another | Part 6 | Page 3

### How to Speak the Truth in Love

Romans 15:14

### Who is competent to admonish?

#### 1. It requires a life “full of goodness” Romans 15:14

- In general terms, we are living a holy, righteous life.  
Matthew 7:3-5
- We must “clean up our own act” before we can help others clean up theirs.

#### 2. It requires a life “filled with knowledge” Romans 15:14

- ...of God’s Word  
Colossians 3:16
- We must be careful to admonish with regard to the absolutes of Scripture, not in areas that are extra-Biblical.

#### 3. It requires a “heart filled with love”

- “not to shame, but as beloved children...”  
1 Corinthians 4:14
- “night and day with tears ...”  
Acts 20:31
- “as a brother ...”  
2 Thessalonians 3:15
- “as a father with his children ...”  
Ephesians 6:4

## Love One Another | Part 6 | Page 4

### **How to Speak the Truth in Love**

Romans 15:14

### How to admonish – “the process”

Step #1: Examine your own life.                      Matthew 7:3-5

Step #2: Examine the Word.                              2 Timothy 2:15

Step #3: Examine your motives.                      1 Corinthians 4:14

Step #4: Set a time to meet privately.              Matthew 18:15

Step #5: Ask specific questions to confirm data, and disarm the situation.

Step #6: Tenderly point out the sin; show them the Scripture that applies to them.

Step #7: If possible, develop a game-plan, timetable, and follow-up meeting for support and follow-through.

### Conclusion:

Admonition is God’s antibiotic for the church; done Biblically, it is the most loving thing you can do ... for all concerned.

### Discussion Questions:

1. Is there a relationship or situation that needs my attention?
2. Do you love this person enough to “speak the truth in love?”
3. With God’s help, I will ...
  - pray
  - examine my life
  - act \_\_\_\_\_ (day of this week)

## Love One Another | Part 7 | Page 1

### **How to Resolve Conflict In Relationships**

Romans 12:16

#### Introduction:

#### How important is living in harmony?

Jesus prayed for it - John 17:20-23

Scripture commands it - Romans 12:16  
Romans 14:19  
Romans 15:5-6  
Philippians 1:27  
Philippians 2:1-2

The Church practiced it - Acts 2:46  
Acts 4:32-35

The world was transformed by it - Acts 2:47  
Acts 6:7

#### What causes disharmony or conflict?

Growth / Unmet Needs - Acts 6:1-7

Theological Differences - Acts 15:1-15

Philosophical Differences - Acts 15:16-41

Personality Differences - Philippians 4:2-3

## Love One Another | Part 7 | Page 2

### How to Resolve Conflict In Relationships

Romans 12:16

Carnality -

1 Corinthians 1:10-13

1 Corinthians 3:1-23

- Critic
- Martyr
- Wet blanket
- Steam roller
- Gossip
- Control freak
- Back stabber
- Cold shoulder
- Volcano
- Sponge
- Workhorse
- Chameleon

### How can we restore harmony in relationships?

1. Refuse to **TOLERATE** disunity.

Romans 12:18

“...as far as it depends on you...”

- Don't avoid it!
- Don't procrastinate!
- Don't delegate it!
- Don't rationalize it!

## Love One Another | Part 7 | Page 3

### How to Resolve Conflict In Relationships

Romans 12:16

2. Embrace **CONFLICT** as normal and unavoidable.

John 16:33

3. Be the **INITIATOR** in conflict resolution.

➤ When it is perceived to be your fault. Matthew 5:24

➤ When you perceive it to be their fault. Matthew 18:15

4. Deal with **YOU** before you deal with them. Luke 6:41-42

5. **Meet together ASAP and outline the issue!**

- The **WHAT** - Calmly describe what you perceive the other person is doing to cause the issue.
- The **HOW** - Tell how this makes you feel.
- The **WHY** - Tell why this is important to you.
- The **QUESTION** - What are we going to do to fix it?
  - o **ENCOURAGE** their response and feedback.
  - o **WRITE** down the desired action to be taken.
  - o **SET** a specific time to revisit the issue.
  - o **COMMITMENT** by both sides to put the issue in the past once solved.

## **Love One Another | Part 7 | Page 4**

### **How to Resolve Conflict In Relationships**

Romans 12:16

6. If resolution does not occur, follow the Biblical guidelines of Matthew 18

*15 "If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault, just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have won your brother over. 16 But if he will not listen, take one or two others along, so that 'every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses. 17 If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen to even to the church, treat him as you would a pagan or a tax collector. Matthew 18:15-17*

### **Conclusion:**

"How good and how pleasant it is for brothers to dwell together in unity."  
133:1

Psalm

### **Discussion Questions:**

1. Is there a relationship in your life that is out of harmony?
2. Why is it so important we guard the unity of Christ's Body, the Church? What is at stake?
3. Why do you think following God's pattern of conflict resolution is so difficult for us?
4. What would trusting God in obedience look like in your life in response to this message?  
See: "Making Peace At Home" <http://www.psychologytoday.com/articles/200404/making-peace-home>

Love One Another | Part 8 | Page 1  
**Moral Failure** Galatians 6:12

**How to Restore Others After**

## **Introduction: Two extremes!**

❖ Exhibit A: Passive Indifference

❖ Exhibit B: Painful Insensitivity

**Review: The teaching of Jesus**                      Matthew 18:15-17

**Step 1: Private conference**                      Matthew 18:15

*"If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault, just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have won your brother over.*

**Step 2: Small group confrontation**                      Matthew 18:16

But if he will not listen, take one or two others along, so that 'every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses'.

**Step 3: Public disclosure**                      Matthew 18:17a

*If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; ...*

**Step 4: Public exclusion**                      Matthew 18:17b

*... and if he refuses to listen even to the church, treat him as you would a pagan or a tax collector.*

## Love One Another | Part 8 | Page 2

**How to Restore Others After Moral Failure**

Galatians 6:12

THE GOOD NEWS –  
GOD'S WAY WORKS!

### **The Question:**

How do we restore those who have fallen?

### **The Answer:**

*1 Brothers, if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently. But watch yourself, or you also may be tempted. 2 Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.*

*Galatians 6:1-2*

## Love One Another | Part 8 | Page 3

### How to Restore Others After Moral Failure

Galatians 6:12

#### What does Galatians 6:1-2 mean?

**The Situation:** A fellow Christian is “caught” (overcome) by a sin.

**The Command:** The spiritually mature are to restore this believer.

**The Method:** Gentleness is to characterize our attitude and the process.

**The Warning:** Restoration is a dangerous process even for the mature.

**The Summary:** *“Bearing one another’s burdens” involves the arduous task of confrontation, forgiveness, comfort, and loving fallen believers back to a position of fellowship and former fruitfulness.*

(see 2 Corinthians 2:5-11 & Luke 15:11-32)

## Love One Another | Part 8 | Page 3

### **How to Restore Others After Moral Failure**

Galatians 6:12

**Conclusion: We serve the God of “second chances.”**

We will all “fall” to some degree at some time.

We must resist our fears and insecurities that lead to **passive indifference**.

We must resist our desire for justice and self-righteous tendencies that lead to **painful insensitivity**.

We must **restore**, not “shoot our wounded.”

**How can we fail to do for another what Christ has done for us?**

**Discussion Questions:**

What information in this message was new to you?

Where have you seen Church discipline done well with the right attitude and motive?

Is there a “fallen” Christian in your relational network? Might God be asking you to begin or help the restoration process?

Are you willing to “enter the fray” to attempt to restore someone Christ died to save?

## Love One Another | Part 9 | Page 1

### **How to Deal with Difficult People in Your Life**

Ephesians 4:2

#### **Thesis:**

Sometimes the person we most want God to **REMOVE** from our lives is the person we **NEED** the most.

#### **Why? because ...**

... the way we treat difficult people reveals the true condition of our heart.

... difficult people cause us to grow in ways we couldn't on our own.

... the most distinguishing mark of Jesus' followers is their love for those they would not and could not love on their own.

#### **How can we love the un-loveable?**

#### **We are to "bear with" difficult people**

*2 Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. 3 Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.*

Ephesians 4:2-3

## Love One Another | Part 9 | Page 2

### How to Deal with Difficult People in Your Life

Ephesians 4:2

#### The meaning of “bearing with one another”:

#### What does “bearing with” others look like?

- **With humility** – See them and treat them as people of equal or superior value than yourself.
  
- **With gentleness** – Extend undeserved acts of kindness and acceptance that are foreign to you with this person.
  
- **With patience** – Refuse to allow your irritation and frustration to erupt into negative thoughts, feelings, and comments to or about them.
  
- **With forgiveness** – Release them from your internal desire to pay them back for the frustration, difficulty, and wounds they inflicted upon you.

*12 Therefore, as God’s chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. 13 Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. 14 And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.*

Colossians 3:12-14

## **Love One Another | Part 9 | Page 3**

### **How to Deal with Difficult People in Your Life**

Ephesians 4:2

#### **Why is “bearing with” difficult people so important?**

1. It increases my appreciation of God’s love toward me.
2. It demonstrates God’s love toward them.
3. It changes me where I need it most.
4. It communicates the reality and authenticity of Christ to the world.

#### **Conclusion:**

Sometimes the person I most want God to remove from my life is the very person I need the most!

#### **Action Steps:**

1. Identify the most difficult person in your life right now.
2. Begin praying everyday for this person for the next two weeks.
3. Stop consciously avoiding them and start seeing them like Christ does. (see Colossians 3:12)
4. Serve them in some specific way this week.
5. Discuss these action steps with your friends, family, growth group, Bible study, and/or ministry team.

**Introduction:** “There is no limit to what God will do if we don’t care who gets the credit!”

**I. Honoring others above ourselves is the “acid test” of how much we really love one another:**

*1It was just before the Passover Feast, Jesus knew that the time had come for Him to leave this world and go to the Father. Having loved His own who were in the world, He now showed them the full extent of His love. 2 The evening meal was being served, and the devil had already prompted Judas Iscariot, son of Simon, to betray Jesus. 3 Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under His power, and that He had come from God and was returning to God; 4 so He got up from the meal, took off His outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around His waist. 5 After that, He poured water into a basin and began to wash His disciples’ feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around Him.*

John 13:1-5

*12 When He had finished washing their feet, He put on his clothes and returned to his place. “Do you understand what I have done for you?” he asked them. 13 “You call me ‘Teacher’ and ‘Lord,’ and rightly so, for that is what I am. 14 Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another’s feet. 15 I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. 16I tell you the truth, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. 17 Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them.*

John 13:12-17

**Key observations:**

1. Honoring others is motivated by **LOVE**.
2. Security in God’s plan allows us to choose **DOWNWARD MOBILITY**.
3. Honoring others begins with **HUMILITY**.
4. Position and power are stewardships for **SERVICE**.
5. Real happiness comes when we make others **SHINE**, not hog the limelight.

**Summary:** Honoring others is enjoying and celebrating the worth, success, and accomplishments of others **more than** my own.

**II. What does “honoring others” look like in your life?**

**Step 1: Evaluate**

- When was the last time you honored someone above yourself?

## Step 2: Questions to ponder

- Do you compliment others sincerely?
- Do you enjoy the success of others?
- Can you let others be the center of attention?
- Can you allow others to get credit even when you had a major role?
- Do you feel bad, slighted, hurt, or angry when your work or service goes unnoticed?

## Love One Another | Part 10 | Page 2

### How to Build Friendships that Last a Lifetime

Romans 12:10

#### II. What happens when we honor others above ourselves?

- The Great paradox                      Philippians 2:9-11
  
- The Awesome promise                      Matthew 23:5-12
  
- The Timeless prayer                      St Francis of Assisi

#### Conclusion:

Many relationships start well, but few end well. Those who habitually honor others build friendships that last a lifetime.