

# Being Devoted To One Another And Spurring One Another On

## Series on "One Another"

Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor. Romans 12:10 (Context Romans 12:1-13)

And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works . . . Hebrews 10:24 (Context Hebrews 10:1-25)

*Remember, God warned us back in the Garden that the price of our mistrust and disobedience would be death. Not just a physical death, but a spiritual death - to be separated from God and life and all the beauty, intimacy, and adventure forever. Through an act of our own free will, we became the hostages of the Kingdom of Darkness and death. The only way out is ransom. (Epic, 66-67)*

1) Love with Brotherly Affection and Honor (Rom: 12:10)

a) Brotherly Affection

The word used here (φιλοστοργοι`philostorgoi), occurs nowhere else in the New Testament. It means tender affection, like that which occurs between parents and children.

The idea is "Feel the tenderest affection towards each other and Delight In it"!!!

Parents, think about your children. Even though they can drive you nuts sometimes and you get frustrated and annoyed with them, you still DELIGHT in them.

We delight in our son, Troy for example. When he calls, we're focused on him and make sure we listen. We're intensely interested in what's going on in his life and desire to support and encourage him.

This is the kind of brother affection that we are meant to demonstrate with one another.

This "brotherly affection" is meant to be real and alive EVEN IN THE MIDST OF OUR DIFFERENCES!

And this is what sets us apart as Believers!

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

b) What does it mean to honor others?

In honor preferring one another. The verb (προηγούμενοι) occurs only here. It means to go before as a guide. Honor is the honor due from each to all. I.e., Phil 2:3; 1 Peter 2:17; 1 Peter 5:5. Leading the way in showing the honor that is due. The meaning appears to be, "Consider ALL your brethren as more worthy than yourself, in terms of giving honor".

What it DOESN'T MEAN - Seeking personal honor or preeminence; striving after respect.

We see this type of behavior especially in the workplace and, sadly, in the Church as well.

In 1 Cor. 3, Paul writes, "But I, brothers, could not address you as spiritual people, but as people of the flesh, as infants in Christ. . . For while there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not of the flesh and behaving only in a human way?

So how do we honor each other in our relationships? In the family – spouses, parents, siblings? Between other Christians? With non-believers? How do we show brotherly affection and honor to those who annoy us? To those who we don't like?

In his book, "Everybody's Normal Till You Get to Know Them", writes this:  
"When we violate oneness, when we contribute to spiritual brokenness, it doesn't just affect us. It doesn't just affect the other person. We are contributing to the destruction of that which is most prized by God and was purchased by Him at greatest cost – the oneness of the Trinitarian community."

WE ARE, IN A REAL SENSE, COMMITTING TREASON AGAINST THE TRINITY!  
Respecting others. Putting their interests before our own. Taking the time to truly listen. NOT listening to or participating in GOSSIP.  
An encouraging word. A meal. A phone call.

We have all experienced meeting someone and the usual greetings are exchanged  
. . . .

Hi! How are you doing? Oh, just fine. Okay. Great. See you later!  
Have you ever been asked the question and replied honestly? "Well, it's been a really crappy week". Then to have the other person respond, Hey, that's great! Good to see you!

Or as you're talking, their eyes are darting left and right. Obviously anxious to be on their way?

We're too busy. Gotta get the kids. Gotta take the dog out. Whatever. We're way too wrapped up in ourselves. Period.

We want too, we even try too. But at best it's a lame attempt to live a truth that we most often have no ability to carry out.

We're going to talk about the answer in just a bit.

c) What keeps me from obeying?

Phil 2:3 gives us a few clues - Do nothing from rivalry or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.

Rivalry, conceit, a lack of humility, looking to our own interests and ignoring the interests of others....

A Need to have things MY WAY. SELF – self centeredness.

I think one of the most tragic lies that the Enemy has laid on us is this idea that we can make life work our own way independent from God. And we have been only too happy to believe the lie. Remember the old Frank Sinatra song?

*For what is a man, what has he got?*

*If not himself, then he has naught*

*To say the things he truly feels and not the words of one who kneels*

*The record shows I took the blows and did it my way!*

2) Consider One Another (Heb 10:24)

a) The "Let Us" trilogy

It is necessary to understand the context of Hebrews 10:19-25. The "therefore" is referring to the section before, where the writer shows that Jesus is the ultimate High Priest, offering one sacrifice to take away sins for all time. In verse 14 we read

"For by one offering He has perfected for all time those who are sanctified"

So because of this truth, and since we have confidence to enter the Holy Place (the presence of God) and since we have Jesus as the Great Priest, LET US:

- **LET US** draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.

- **LET US** hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful.
- And **LET US** consider how to stir up one another to love and good works.

What is required of us is obedience. The real work has already been done.

b) Consider One Another

(katanoéō) expresses real comprehending – "thinking decisively to a definite (clear) understanding."

John Piper writes "Literally this is God's call on us to consider one another, that is, to look at one another, think about one another, focus on one another, study one another, let your mind be occupied with one another. And the goal of this focus on others is to think of ways of stimulating them to love and good deeds."

c) Consider Jesus

The word "consider," ("Let us consider how to . . .") is used one other time in the book, namely, Hebrews 3:1, where the writer says, "Consider Jesus." That is, look at him; think about him, focus on him, study him, let your mind be occupied with him. Think of his rank, his dignity, his holiness, etc.

It is the same sentence structure that we find in Heb 10:24. . . we are to consider others in the same way that we are to consider Jesus!

And we are to provoke or stimulate one another to love and good deeds.

What immediately comes to mind is an American Football game where the players all get into this big huddle before the game and chant and jump around. Or in a soccer match, the craziness that occurs after a goal is scored.

The Greek is literally, "unto a paroxysm of love", meaning excitement or impulse.

And the idea is that we are to endeavor to arouse or excite each other to love and good deeds.

Imagine the life of the Church where this is actively live out?

3) This isn't an option!!!

What we need to grasp is that none of this IS OPTIONAL! We do not have the luxury of reading these passages and ignoring their impact.

Because living out these truths is what sets us apart from the world. Remember John 13:35 - By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.

But of vital importance is this: we reach out to others with GRACE instead of RULES and we follow Christ and obey out of DESIRE not out of duty...

We are not talking about just going through the motions. Living out these truths is based on the outflow of Christ's love in us.

I believe that's why Paul begins his addresses as he does; In light of God's mercies . . . Therefore, since we have confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus. . .

Philippians 2:1-8 – And we have to look at Jesus' example here.

So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. Do nothing from rivalry or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

#### 4) Making it Real

What does it look like?

The reality is, in ourselves, we CANNOT DO THIS. As someone said, "IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO LIVE THE CHRISTIAN LIFE OUT OF OUR OWN STRENGTH.

First and foremost, we must learn to walk in truth through the power of Christ indwelling us.

Bill and Anabel Gillham are authors and speakers. Anabel shares a personal story. As young marrieds, Annabelle is trying to make breakfast for Bill and the kids. He is critical. Nothing Annabelle does is right – the eggs are runny; they're over cooked; the biscuits are too light or too hard. No matter what she does, she can't please Bill. Of course, this only feeds her own sense of worthlessness and inadequacy.

Not exactly thrilled by his response, she vows to do better next time, to try harder. She'd learned that. She was capable. She could DO IT!

And isn't that the way we often live out our version of the Christian life? When we attempt to do anything Spiritual out of our own strength, we are doomed to failure and frustration!

Anabel relates how at one point in her life, she begins to learn how to live out of truth, out of the life of Christ in her. As she is preparing the eggs, she begins to feel anxious about doing them right so that she can please Bill. But she stops that line of thinking and instead begins to pray: "Lord, I know I'm not a very good egg cooker, but you are. And so, I surrender my need to do this perfectly and ask you to cook these eggs through me"

And she adds, "and if Bill isn't pleased with the way they turn out, he'll just have to take up the matter with you!!"

When we live in surrender, we tap into God's power source, that same power that brought Jesus back to life from the dead!

Friends, I am here to tell you that unless, and ONLY if, we are surrendered to allowing Jesus Christ to live His life in us and through us, no matter how much we DESIRE to live like this, no matter how much we TRY to live like this, we will not succeed.

Brotherly Affection.

Honoring One Another.

Considering how to provoke one another to a paroxysm of Love.

Now take a moment in the quiet of your heart – who are the people in your life -- even in this room tonight – for whom you DON'T delight in taking the tenderest affection toward.

Your prayer could be as David's: Search me, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my anxious thoughts! And see if there by any hurtful way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting!

This isn't a prayer for help. It's a prayer of surrender; of saying to God, "God, I can't love this person that way you want me to. Be merciful to me and love them through me.

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