

# Brotherly Love In The Body Of Christ

## Focus Reference:

"I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. As I have loved you, you should also love one another. By this all shall know that you are My disciples, if you have love toward one another." (*John 13:34-35*)

## We Are One!

**We cannot neglect the needs of each other, without hurting ourselves!**

"For as the body is one, and has many members, and all the members of the body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ. For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether bond or free; and were all given to drink into one Spirit. For the body is not one member, but many. If the foot would say, "Because I'm not the hand, I'm not part of the body," it is not therefore not part of the body. If the ear would say, "Because I'm not the eye, I'm not part of the body," it's not therefore not part of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole were hearing, where would the smelling be? But now God has set the members, each one of them, in the body, just as he desired. If they were all one member, where would the body be? But now they are many members, but one body. The eye can't tell the hand, "I have no need for you," or again the head to the feet, "I have no need for you." No, much rather, those members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary. Those parts of the body which we think to be less honorable, on those we bestow more abundant honor; and our unrepresentable parts have more abundant propriety; whereas our presentable parts have no such need. But God composed the body together, giving more abundant honor to the inferior part, that there should be no division in the body, but that the members should have the same care for one another. When one member suffers, all the members suffer with it. Or when one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it. Now you are the body of Christ, and members individually." (1 Corinthians 12:12-27)

## **~ LOVE By Its Very Nature Is SACRIFICIAL ~**

The way of the world is to seek your own good and happiness. After fulfilling your own desires, if you have anything left, then give some of that- but only after self fulfillment. God's way is to seek the benefit of others first, and trust God to fulfill your needs and desires. To sacrificially give of your mental, emotional, and spiritual energies: sharing your time, your talents, your earthly goods, your wealth, and your wisdom for the benefits of the Body of Christ. THIS is Sacrificial Love!

## **THE HIT LIST**

**\*The Following is a "hit list" of verses to help us realign our thoughts and hearts to the will of God. We all must learn: "If anyone wants to become my follower, he must *DENY* himself, take up his cross daily, and follow me."  
(Luke 9:23)**

- ❖ "Do not seek your own good, but the good of the other person."  
(1 Corinthians 10:24)
- ❖ "... each counting others better than himself; each of you not just looking to his own things, but each of you also to the things of others." (Philippians 2:3<sup>b</sup>-4)
- ❖ "In love of the brothers be tenderly affectionate to one another; in honor preferring one another;" (Romans 12:10)
- ❖ "Bear one another's burdens, and so you will fulfill the Law of Christ."  
(Galatians 6:2)
- ❖ "See that no one repays anyone evil for evil, but always seek to do good to one another and to everyone." (1 Thessalonians 5:15)
- ❖ "and submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ." (Ephesians 5:21)
- ❖ "For you, brothers, were called for freedom. Only don't use your freedom for gain to the flesh, but through love be servants to one another." (Galatians 5:13)
- ❖ "But it is not this way among you. Instead whoever wants to be great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first among you must be the slave of all." (Mark 10:43-44)
- ❖ "By this we know love, that he laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers." (1 John 3:16)

**The world teaches us selfishness in everything. It tries to convince us that it's okay to have others do for us what we are unwilling to do for them. The "Consumption Corruption" of the world will lead anyone under its spell to devour themselves on the altar of self-gratification. This is not God's way. This is not the example given to us by Jesus. If you want to find peace, purpose, joy, happiness, meaning, defeat depression, hopelessness, and confusion- we must be outward focused. Jesus exemplified the sacrificial lifestyle for all Christians to follow. We cannot exalt ourselves without lowering everyone else down. We must lower ourselves down, so we can raise everyone else up. You will not find a single verse in scripture that teaches us to seek our own fulfillment over that of the people in our family, church, and friends. God wants to fulfill our dreams and desires, yet only after we seek first the Kingdom of God.**

***We start this by loving God and His people more than ourselves.***

**Our American mentality** is skewed by our own country's prosperity. The "American Dream" is based upon the American Lie: "You can have it all now, and you can get it on credit!" This "wage slave debt cycle" of getting all you can and then slaving to keep all you have, is the enemy of brotherly love and the spreading of the gospel. Jesus warned us in the following verse:

**"No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money." (Matthew 6:24)**

The love of money and what it can give us as a tool to fulfill our desires is a knife to our own necks. It is impossible to have a split heart for money and for the will of God, and still truly love the Body of Christ. We are not talking about meeting our basic needs. We are talking about the never-ending thirst for more: more fun, more things, more cars, more clothes, more - more - more. Then, the burden of trying to maintain and keep all we have gathered in our storehouses. It brings such burden, that most find it difficult to have enough emotional and spiritual energy to be outward-focused and sacrificially serve the Body of Christ. The American dream un-refrained becomes the America suicide, filled with torment and frustration. We all are experiencing different levels of the American poison.

**"A godly life brings huge profits to people who are content with what they have. We didn't bring anything into the world, and we can't take anything out of it. As long as we have food and clothes, we should be satisfied." (1 Timothy 6:6-8)**

With this Biblical mentality of being satisfied with our basic needs that our Father knows we need, it frees us up to focus on the needs of our fellow man and the spreading of the gospel. Love in its very core is sacrificial!

**"For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evils. It is through this craving that some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pangs."(1 Timothy 6:10)**

Now, most people are not greedy, slobbering fools breaking every law to get rich. What we will mostly find are evil roots spreading around the souls of everyone- ideas and thoughts that feed into a double mind, creating the environment internally of a struggle between self-gratification and self-sacrifice. Like two versions of self, battling out for control over what direction we will take: "Selfishness" or "Sacrifice."

**"He is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways. But let the brother in humble circumstances glory in his high position; and the rich, in that he is made humble, because like the flower in the grass, he will pass away. For the sun arises with the scorching wind, and withers the grass, and the flower in it falls, and the beauty of its**

**appearance perishes. So also will the rich man fade away in his pursuits. Blessed is a person who endures temptation, for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life, which the Lord promised to those who love him.” (James 1:8-12)**

The Self Sacrificing individual will be blessed in their self control, freeing them to fully love God and man. By being content first with our basic needs being met and then trusting God to fulfill our dreams and desires.

**“But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added to you.” (Matthew 6:33)**

The self seeking, selfish individual will become puke out of God’s mouth. The good news is we can right our ships if we fall into this category, or cut off any root in our hearts trying to spring up to prevent us from living the self sacrificing life. This is not only pleasing to God, but is also the calling of every Christian.

**“But since you are lukewarm and not hot or cold, I'm going to spit you out of my mouth. You say, 'I'm rich. I'm wealthy. I don't need anything.' Yet, you do not realize that you are miserable, pitiful, poor, blind, and naked. I advise you: Buy gold purified in fire from me so that you may be rich. Buy white clothes from me. Wear them so that you may keep your shameful, naked body from showing. Buy ointment to put on your eyes so that you may see. I correct and discipline everyone I love. Take this seriously, and change the way you think and act. (Repent)”  
(Revelation 3:16-19)**

**The reason** we have spent so much time focusing on this tragic spiritual trick of the devil, is because it is so prevalent in western culture. If we want to be able to truly fulfill the scriptures we are about to read, we must break the western mindset and all its subtle lies about life. We do this by realigning our thoughts and hearts to God’s way of seeing life and its true meaning. We must search out all roots of selfishness and let God pull them up by the roots!

**If we can only offer our leftovers to the Body of Christ, then how can we honestly tell God “we love Him and the family of God?”**

## **Remember: Together You Are The Church**

“And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.” (Ephesians 1:22-23)

“Again I say to you, if two of you agree on earth about anything they ask, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven. For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them.” (Matthew 18:19-20)

## **Encourage Each Other**

“And let us take thought of how to spur one another on to love and good works, not abandoning our own meetings, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging each other, and even more so because you see the day drawing near.” (Hebrews 10:24-25)

## **Remain In Unity So That Your Praise Will Have Power**

“Now may the God of endurance and comfort give you unity with one another in accordance with Christ Jesus, so that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Receive one another, then, just as Christ also received you, to God’s glory.” (Romans 15:5-7)

“For the one who serves Christ in this way is pleasing to God and approved by people. So then, let us pursue what makes for peace and for building up one another.” (Romans 14:18-19)

“If therefore there is any exhortation in Christ, if any consolation of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any tender mercies and compassion, make my joy full, by being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind; doing nothing through rivalry or through conceit, but in humility, each counting others better than himself; each of you not just looking to his own things, but each of you also to the things of others. Have this in your mind, which was also in Christ Jesus,” (Philippians 2:1-5)

## **Marks Of True Christian Unity**

“Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor that which is evil. Cling to that which is good. In love of the brothers be tenderly affectionate to one another; in honor preferring one another; not lagging in diligence; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord; rejoicing in hope; enduring in troubles; continuing steadfastly in prayer; contributing to the needs of the saints; given to hospitality. Bless those who persecute you; bless, and don’t curse. Rejoice with those who rejoice. Weep with those who weep. Be of the same mind one toward another. Don’t set your mind on high things, but associate with the humble.

Don't be wise in your own conceits. Repay no one evil for evil. Respect what is honorable in the sight of all men. If it is possible, as much as it is up to you, be at peace with all men. Don't seek revenge yourselves, beloved, but give place to God's wrath. For it is written, "Vengeance belongs to me; I will repay, says the Lord." Therefore "If your enemy is hungry, feed him. If he is thirsty, give him a drink; for in doing so, you will heap coals of fire on his head." Don't be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good." (Romans 12:9-21)

## **Restore Each Other In The Faith**

"Brothers, even if a man is caught in some fault, you who are spiritual must restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; looking to yourself so that you also aren't tempted. Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. For if a man thinks himself to be something when he is nothing, he deceives himself. But let each man examine his own work, and then he will have reason to boast in himself, and not in someone else. For each man will bear his own burden. But let him who is taught in the word share all good things with him who teaches." (Galatians 6:1-6)

"Therefore putting away falsehood, speak truth each one with his neighbor. For we are members of one another. "Be angry, and don't sin." Don't let the sun go down on your wrath, and don't give place to the devil." (Ephesians 4:25-27)

## **Bless & Be Endearing**

"Finally, all of you be harmonious, sympathetic, affectionate, compassionate, and humble. Do not return evil for evil or insult for insult, but instead bless others because you were called to inherit a blessing." (1 Peter 3:8-9)

"So confess your sins to one another and pray for one another so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great effectiveness." (James 5:16)

## **Advice - Admonish - Correct**

"But exhort one another each day, as long as it is called "Today," that none of you may become hardened by sin's deception." (Hebrews 3:13)

"We exhort you, brothers, admonish the disorderly, encourage the faint-hearted, support the weak, be patient toward all. See that no one returns evil for evil to anyone, but always follow after that which is good, for one another, and for all. Rejoice always. Pray without ceasing. In everything give thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus toward you. Don't quench the Spirit. Don't despise prophecies. Test all things, and hold firmly that which is good. Abstain from every form of evil. May the God of peace himself sanctify you completely. May your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."

(1 Thessalonians 5:14-23)



## **Become A Servant To Each Other**

“For the culmination of all things is near. So be self-controlled and sober-minded for the sake of prayer. Above all keep your love for one another fervent, because love covers a multitude of sins. Show hospitality to one another without complaining. Just as each one has received a gift, use it to serve one another as good stewards of the varied grace of God.” (1 Peter 4:7-10)

“For you, brothers, were called for freedom. Only don’t use your freedom for gain to the flesh, but through love be servants to one another. For the whole law is fulfilled in one word, in this: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” (Galatians 5:13-14)

## **Submit To Each Other In The Fear Of God**

“Therefore consider carefully how you live – not as unwise but as wise, taking advantage of every opportunity, because the days are evil. For this reason do not be foolish, but be wise by understanding what the Lord’s will is. And do not get drunk with wine, which is debauchery, but be filled by the Spirit, speaking to one another in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, singing and making music in your hearts to the Lord, always giving thanks to God the Father for each other in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, and submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ.” (Ephesians 5:15-21)

## **Be Kind & Long Suffering With Each Other**

“Don’t grieve the Holy Spirit of God, in whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, outcry, and slander, be put away from you, with all malice. And be kind to one another, tender hearted, forgiving each other, just as God also in Christ forgave you.” (Ephesians 4:30-32)

## **Share The Necessary Provisions To Those In Need**

“By this we know love, because he laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers. But whoever has the world’s goods, and sees his brother in need, and closes his heart of compassion against him, how does God’s love remain in him? My little children, let’s not love in word only, or with the tongue only, but in deed and truth.” (1 John 3:16-18)

“What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if someone claims to have faith but does not have works? Can this kind of faith save him? If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacks daily food, and one of you says to them, “Go in peace, keep warm and eat well,” but you do not give them what the body needs, what good is it? So also faith, if it does not have works, is dead being by itself. But someone will say, “You have faith and I have works.” Show me your faith without works and I will show you faith by my works.” (James 2:14-18)

## **The Grand Summation Of Applying Love**

“Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends.”  
(John 15:13)

“So whoever knows the right thing to do and fails to do it, for him it is sin.”  
(James 4:17)

### **Recap:**

We must all live a self denial lifestyle as we follow the example of Jesus. By seeking first the kingdom of heaven, and allowing God to fulfill our desires on His time table. We do this by being obedient to God in love. Then, we fulfill the calling of all Christians to love the body of Christ more than ourselves. This can only be done by sacrificing ourselves for the benefits of others. Nothing short of a sacrificial lifestyle for the kingdom of God can produce the fruit of brotherly love. Therefore, we all must search out every root of self gratification and place it at the feet of God. We must not try to retain for ourselves any pleasure that God Himself is unwilling to give back to us—trusting God to fulfill our desires, dreams, and hopes. As we smash the idol of selfishness and exalt the wellbeing of others over ourselves, we will create the environment ready to receive the best blessings the Lord can provide. The evil trick of the devil is to try to convince us that this type of sacrifice will lead to want, lack, and not being happy. But this is not true! Just like in any good marriage, when all parties are solely concerned for the well being of the other. Then, instead of being one person trying to meet your own needs, you will have an army of people looking out for you and meeting your needs. This power in numbers is what the devil wants to hide from you and prevent you from accessing. The only problem is that it has to start with someone. Are you willing to be the one who will continue to take it to the next level and lead by example?