

The Main Point: (1) Each Christian is to join his body (his life in this world) to the body of Christ (the church community). (2) Each Christian has been given ability by the Holy Spirit to do something helpful in the church and with the church to be helpful in the world. (3) The Spirit-imparted abilities are released and work out in an atmosphere of love. What love is in practice is laid out in the Scripture of this teaching.

Overview

1-V9 _____ is the atmosphere in which Spirit-imparted abilities operate. So we are exhorted to ask ourselves: Do I just _____ to love others or do I _____ love them. We want to be sure that our love for God and man is big enough in us that we really get upset about what is _____ and make a stubborn _____ for what is good.

2-V10 "Love each other with _____ affection, and take delight in _____ each other."

3-V11 The Scripture typically says that we work for more than the employer. We work for the _____. Therefore, we have an additional reason not to be _____ but to work hard.

4V12 We believe that when we became Christians and sincerely yielded ourselves and our life to the Lord, that God is in control of what happens to us. So when troubles come we are to be _____ and be glad because God is _____ good for us in it.

5-V13 We are tempted to look the other way or pretend we didn't hear or make up reasons why we can't respond to one of God's _____ being in need. We are exhorted to be the one that _____ them. Part of that is being hospitable – on a regular basis inviting guests home for _____ or giving _____ for the night.

6-V14 Not everyone likes God and the godly lifestyle. Jesus said that if they persecuted him they would persecute his followers. John 15:18-21 What do we do when we are persecuted? We don't _____ them, wishing evil on them, but instead pray for God to _____ them.

7-V15 We are not allowed to be cool with people but instead are exhorted to get emotionally involved with them. When they are _____, we are happy with them. When they are in a time of _____, we share it with them.

8-V16 What destroys harmony in communities of people is some people thinking that they are more _____ than others and have a right to lord it over them and mistreat them. So we are exhorted to enjoy the company of _____ people and don't get to thinking that we _____ it all.

9-V17-18 Someone has to stop fighting back and feuding with those who have hurt them. It's us. We don't get to _____ back evil for _____. We are forced to _____ -- that is, place high value on those who harm us. We are to create _____ as much as it is _____ for us in the situation.

10-V19 Someone will _____. People who sow evil will reap evil someday. But it is not us who gets to do it. The _____ says, "I will take _____. I will repay those who _____ it unless these people come to their senses and repent in time.

11-V20 We get to kill them with kindness. If they are _____, we feed them. If they are _____, we share our water with them. Father God's hope in this is that they may become _____ of what they have done to us and come to Christ.

12-V21 The biggest loser when people do terrible things may be the victim – if the victim gets eaten up with resentment, anger, and vengeance. The hurter may be going along as happy

as a clam. So Paul, by the Spirit, warns us, "Don't let evil get the _____ of you, but conquer evil by doing _____."

Word Study

• BLESS • HONOR • VENGEANCE • LOVE • WORK • GLAD - GENUINE

1. V9 _____ The Greek word here is *AGAPE*. This is the kind of love God has. The greatest example of this kind of love is the voluntary sacrifice of God the son on the cross. It is the self-sacrificing kind of love which likes people and shows kindness to them, even though they abuse and use you. They do not return your affection and kindness. They may, in fact, treat you as an enemy. Jesus illustrated this kind of love on the cross when He said, "*Father forgive them for they know not what they do.*" This kind of love is possible only for the born again person in whom the Holy Spirit is imparting this love. Romans 5:5

2.V10 _____ "Genuine love" is actually "brotherly love" in the original language. *PHILADELPHIA*. The word describes the happy friendship of brothers (or sisters) for each other. This is liking another person--enjoying them--being happy to spend time with them--seeking them out--doing things together. Ideally a relationship comes to this. The Lord himself wants to move from being someone to whom we are indebted to for his unselfish love for us to someone we enjoy hanging out with. Jesus told his disciples that they had become his friends. John 15:13-14 Moses and David were called the friends of God.

3. V10 _____ This means to place high value on someone. This results in treating them very thoughtfully and kindly. Gary Smalley's family worked up some family life rules- about 20. They worked them down to 5. But he said that the rule to honor would summarize all they were trying to accomplish with the rules. Another way of speaking of honoring is "affirming" the other person. Saying and doing only things that would make the other person feel good about himself or herself and feel secure in the relationship. Marriage problems could be quickly solved by even one of the couple determining to honor—and better yet delighting in honoring— and displaying a merry heart and quickness to serve and affirm.

4. V11 _____ Christians work for the Lord first of all. Whether it is their employer or their customer or a homemaker, they say to themselves, "Lord, I'm doing my best in this because you deserve my best ...and Lord everything I do, I do in partnership with you. I do not exclude you from any day or activity of my life." "*Work hard and cheerfully at whatever you do, as though you were working for the Lord rather than for people.*" Colossians 3:23

5. V 12 _____ Jesus is Lord and King. He is greater than the evil ruler of this present age. He will force everything to "*work together for our good.*" Romans 8:28 So we can be happy and sing with thankful hearts to God in the worst of circumstances and relationships.

6. V14 _____ This is sometimes called, "answering in the opposite spirit." Jesus talks about carrying someone's load 2 miles rather than one. Giving them not only your coat but the shirt off your back too. Turning the other cheek. Matthew 5:38-42 We are to break the cycle of cursing and revenge in this world. "*Don't repay evil for evil. Don't retaliate when people say unkind things about you. Instead, pay them back with a blessing. That is what God wants you to do, and He will bless you for it.*" I Peter 3:9

7. V. 19 _____ God is the judge. We are the forgiven ones. So all we are allowed to do is show kindness to people who hurt us. God may let us down (from an old sin nature point of view) and show mercy and save our enemies but we get blessings out of it. (1) Our spiritual person will be glad they are saved. (2) God will recompense us richly in this life. (3) We will avoid getting bitter, suspicious, mean and unhappy. Negative thoughts and emotions poison our soul.

What does this Scripture say to you?
