

BODY SERVICE

Above All Things

(Where is this placed in the importance of things Christian?)

*But the end of all things is at hand; therefore be serious and watchful in your prayers. And **above all things** have fervent love for one another, for “love will cover a multitude of sins.” Be hospitable to one another without grumbling. As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. **1 Peter 4:7-10***

TO ONE ANOTHER (used appx 50 times in the NT)

All of the New Testament speaks of *service* to the body - to one another. Ministry may include outsiders, since Jesus healed all who came to Him, etc. but *service* is toward believers.

We are called to serve those who are of the fellowship of the saints, the body of Christ.

As Peter says, love, fervent love, is for one another, for the body.

Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. (1 John 2:15)

We are called to serve each other, to focus our service on one another, on the body of Christ, for the benefit of God’s children!

*Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray. Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing psalms. Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven. Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much. **James 5:13-16***

*Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another; not lagging in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing steadfastly in prayer; distributing to the needs of the saints, given to hospitality. Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep. Be of the same mind toward one another. Do not set your mind on high things, but associate with the humble. Do not be wise in your own opinion. **Romans 12:6-16***

*Yet if your brother is grieved because of your food, you are no longer walking in love. Do not destroy with your food the one for whom Christ died...Do not destroy the work of God for the sake of food. All things indeed are pure, but it is evil for the man who eats with offense. It is good neither to eat meat nor drink wine nor do anything by which your brother stumbles or is offended or is made weak...Now may the God of patience and comfort grant you to be like-minded toward one another, according to Christ Jesus, that you may with one mind and one mouth glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore receive (welcome) one another, just as Christ also received us, to the glory of God. Now I say that Jesus Christ has become a servant to the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made to the fathers. **Romans 14:15 - 15:8***

*Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. **Col 3:16***

Therefore comfort each other and edify one another, just as you also are doing.

1 Thess 5:11

Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God; but exhort one another daily, while it is called "Today," lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. For we have become partakers of Christ... **Heb 3:12-13**

I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. **Eph 4:1-3**

And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ...from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love. **Eph 4:11-12**

THIS IS THE NEW MAN, CREATED ACCORDING TO GOD

That is, one who serves the body of Christ.

"...if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught by Him, as the truth is in Jesus: that you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness...

Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you. (**Eph 4:21-32**)

The new man is created to serve God by serving the body of Christ.

*And the King will answer and say to them, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these **My brethren**, you did it to Me.' **Matthew 25:40***

THIS IS THE BEST EVANGELISTIC TOOL WE HAVE

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

Quoted from an article written by Scott Hubbard of desiringGod.org

We live in a world with its own set of one-anothers: one-another brokenness, one-another enmity, one-another manipulation, one-another selfishness. And local churches exist to show a different way of life — a different Lord of life. This Lord reconciles us not only to himself, but to each other, creating one-another love out of one-another pain.

As such communities move out into the world — into parks and coffee shops and sports teams and neighborhoods — and as they invite outsiders in, such relational glory will not go unnoticed. “By this all people will know . . .” And therefore, Christians walking in the one-anothers not only have Christ’s mind, offer his welcome, speak his words, show his love, and give his grace. They also advance his mission.

A quick list of the one-another’s - body service

- Have fervent love for
- Be hospitable to
- minister your gift to
- Pray for
- Be kindly affectionate to

- Give preference to
- Distribute to the needs of
- Be of the same mind toward
- Be like-minded toward
- Receive (welcome)
- Teach and admonish
- Comfort
- Edify
- Exhort
- Bear with
- Endeavor to keep unity with
- Equip
- Be kind to
- Be tenderhearted to
- Forgive

These are all based in truth, founded in reality, real efforts.

OT Precedent

If there is among you a poor man of your brethren, within any of the gates in your land which the LORD your God is giving you, you shall not harden your heart nor shut your hand from your poor brother, but you shall open your hand wide to him and willingly lend him sufficient for his need, whatever he needs...For the poor will never cease from the land; therefore I command you, saying, 'You shall open your hand wide to your brother, to your poor and your needy, in your land.' Deut 15:7, 11

WHEN TO HELP UNBELIEVERS

Scripture teaches us to build relationships with unbelievers. Jesus met them where they lived, fed them, taught them and healed them.

So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith. Gal 6:10

But if they are not worthy of the goodness you show them:

If the household is worthy, let your peace come upon it. But if it is not worthy, let your peace return to you. And whoever will not receive you nor hear your words, when you depart from that house or city, shake the dust off your feet. (Wash your hands of them) Assuredly, I say to you, it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for that city! Mat 10:13-15