

INSIGHT

Wherever you go today, you cannot help but to see or hear advertisements for health clubs. These health clubs focus on one thing: Get your body in shape! In other words, for a certain price, they will help you lose weight and tone your body down to a healthy status! We understand that if we do not take care of our God-given bodies, we will grow tired, weak and fall prey to all kinds of diseases and sicknesses. Therefore, society understands (and we understand) how important it is to take care of our bodies--we only get one! So what do we do? We eat right (feed the body) and we exercise (strengthen its parts) by jogging, walking or any other aerobic exercise to make it strong and healthy.

In the same manner, since we are members of Christ's church, His body (*Ephesians 1:22,23*), we ought to spiritually take care of ourselves. *1 Cor 12:1-27* teaches that we individually make up the one body of Christ: whether we be a leg, hand or foot. No matter what part of the body you are, God places a strong emphasis on the care we ought to have for one another; *that its parts should have equal concern for each other (1 Cor 12:25)*. As Christians, it is our task to *spur one another on toward love and good deeds (Hebrews 10:24)* and to show genuine love for each other! Like food and exercise to the body, is fellowship, honor and love to the members of the Body of Jesus Christ. These can only make for a stronger, healthier spiritual body that can only produce spiritual goodness, encouragement and growth!

God summarizes all of our duties towards one another (the body) in one word: **LOVE**. *Romans 13:8* says, "*let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another, for he who loves his fellowman has fulfilled the law.*" We can be debt free, but one thing we must render at all times is love! *Romans 12:10-16* speaks of various kinds of love we must display to one another: an affectionate love (vs 10a), an honorable love (vs 10b), a sharing love (vs 13), a sympathizing love (vs 15), a uniting love (vs 16a), a condescending love (vs 16b) and a peace-seeking love (vs 18). So let's get in gear and let's keep the Body of Christ spiritually fit! Value one another!

The Royal Law: Loving Relationships Valuing One Another

Key Text: **Romans 12:10**

*"Be devoted to one another in brotherly love.
Honor one another above yourselves."*

Theme:

The Bible teaches that our love for God is displayed by the way we love and honor one another. Therefore our Christianity is directly affected by the way we treat one another. *1 John 2:8-11* says that anyone who hates his brother is still in darkness. Remember the Lord's command: "*...Love one another. As I have loved you...By this all men will know that you are my disciples...*" *John 13:34-35*

Application:

Here are some practical suggestions:

1. **Get to know one another.** Don't be satisfied with just knowing *about* your brother or sister; get to know them! Fellowship with them. Build a loving relationship with the saints by spending quality time with them!
2. **Watch what you say and how you say it.** You may not say anything that is discouraging or hurtful, but your body language could be saying something else. Be a positive spirit!
3. **Learn to listen!** When a brother or sister comes to you for advice or to talk, make sure you give them your full attention. Be ready to meet their spiritual needs!!
4. **Encourage.** If you see a brother or sister doing something that is praise worthy, let them know how encouraged you are by their example!

May the Lord richly bless you!

SERMON OUTLINE

Valuing One Another

“If you really keep the royal law found in Scripture, ‘Love your neighbor as yourself,’ you are doing right. But if you show favoritism, you sin and are convicted by the law as lawbreakers” James 2:8-9

Practical Ways To A Loving Relationship

I. Preliminaries Of Love: Action vs. Profession

1. Starts with honor (placing a high value)
 - a. A soul is very valuable (*Mt. 16:26*)
 - b. Honor: lowers self, raises others (*Rom 12:10*)
2. Find out facts about the person (know their needs)
 - a. *Eph. 4:29*--you can't meet their needs if you don't know their needs.
3. Learn the skills (how to fulfill their needs)
 - a. What must I do? How must I do?
 1. *Prov 24:3* By wisdom a house is built
-- so goes the building of loving relationships
 2. *Prov. 11:2* Wisdom is only found in humility
4. Illustration: The Plant
 - a. Know the facts: What does it need?
--Sunlight, water, soil, air
 - b. What does it take to keep it alive?
--how much of these things?

II. Elements Needed In A Loving Relationship

Romans 12:10--Built on honor!

1. Commitment--show your commitment to one another
 - a. Love needs to be proved: The Lord proved it
--Verbal and Non-verbal reminders
--If you won't do this, how can you do *1 Jn 3:16*?
2. Meaningful Conversation
 - verbal: Verbal interaction (*Col. 4:6*)
 - non-verbal: Cheerful look (*Pr. 15:30*)
3. Activities: Meaningful Fellowship (*Acts 2:42*)
 - Find out what they enjoy (remember: honor)
 - Get involved with what they like
4. Physical Needs: Meaningful touch
 - hugs (*aspazomai*=embrace) (*Romans 16:16*)
 - provisions (*James 2:16*)

Conclusion: Are you willing? *1 John 3:18*

1. Love not with words, but action!

SMALL GROUP STUDY

Warm-up:

What do you think is the most important element in building a great relationship with another person: whether they be a relative, friend, coworker, fellow Christian or stranger? What would draw you into a relationship?

See To It

Romans 12:9-21

1. What kind of love must be present in the hearts of Christ's people? Explain.
2. In order to have this kind of love, what is the first thing one must do? Why?
3. Read verses 10-16. What constitutes love according to these verses and give a specific modern day example of each attribute?
4. With whom should we build a loving relationship? Why?

Seeing It Closer

1. Why is love so emphasized in the Bible? Give some reasons for its importance in the kingdom?
2. **Read Ephesians 4:29.** How can we fulfill people's needs? Give some specific steps?
3. **Look at the person to your right.** Are you aware of his or her needs? How can you fulfill Ephesians 4:29 in their life?
4. On a scale of 1 to 5 (1 being the least and 5 the greatest), how would you measure the effort exerted on your part in getting to know your fellow brothers and sisters in the church?

Getting To It:

Romans 13:8 says, "Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another, for he who loves his fellowman has fulfilled the law." Love is a debt that must be always in the paying, for we always owe love to those around us! Never stop building relationships with

love. For it is by loving do we fulfill the royal law as quoted in James 2:8: "*Love your neighbor as yourself.*"