

9. Helping Spiritual Young Men and Women Build Their Ministry to the Body

In our last topic, we talked about how we help spiritual young men and young women grow in knowledge and ministry. Today, we will be focusing on how to help them build their relationship with the body. We want to help growing Christians learn to build spiritual extended family relationships.

In some of our earlier topics, we shared ideas on how to help spiritual babes and toddlers learn to build relationships with spiritual parents. Then, we talked about helping the spiritual child learn to build relationships with a spiritual family (the small group). Today, we will be focusing on how to help the spiritual young man or young woman learn to build relationships with the entire body (the church). This is of key importance because the desire of the spiritual young man or young woman is to serve others. In order to be able to effectively serve others, the spiritual young woman or young man needs to know how to build healthy relationships with all Christians.

The Lord wanted to make certain that we learn how to build healthy relationships. As a result, the New Testament contains forty-three one anothers. Twelve are things that we are told to avoid, because they will destroy relationships rather than build them. If we depend on our own strength, we will act out of fear and do the things that destroy relationships. We will list these twelve first in order to show what Christians often do when they depend on their own strength to live the Christian life. The twelve things which Christ commands us to avoid are:

1. Let us not judge one another anymore - Romans 14:13
2. Do not go to law against one another - 1 Corinthians 6:7
3. Stop depriving one another (in marriage) - 1 Corinthians 7:5
4. Do not bite one another (to wound the soul) - Galatians 5:15
5. Do not devour one another (to make it a habit of wounding the soul) - Galatians 5:15
6. Do not consume one another (the last act of swallowing) - Galatians 5:15
“bite” – “devour” – “consume” speaks of the process which destroys a relationship because we wound one another with words
7. Do not challenge one another (to call forth as a contest - Why do you always ...? etc.) - Galatians 5:26
8. Do not envy one another - Galatians 5:26
9. Do not lie to one another - Colossians 3:9
10. See that no one repays another with evil for evil - 1 Thessalonians 5:15
11. Do not speak against one another (to slander) - James 4:11
12. Do not complain against one another - James 5:9

Many Christians have never learned to yield to the Lord moment by moment and the result is seen by the fact that they do the things which destroy relationships without even realizing that they are doing them. That is why it is so important to help new Christians and growing Christians learn to ask the Lord to act in His strength rather than their own in their relationships with others. In fact, many Christians nearly always act out of fear because they have never learned that yielding to the Lord is a moment-by-moment process. That is why Paul said, in 2 Corinthians 12:9-10, “And he

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said to me, ‘My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.’ Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. ...¹¹For when I am weak, then I am strong.’”

In contrast, each time we yield to the Holy Spirit and depend on His power, the love of Christ will flow through us and we will build healthy relationships with other Christians. The New Testament tells us thirty-one things to do in our relationships with one another in order to build healthy relationships:

1. Accept one another - Romans 15:7
2. Admonish one another - Romans 15:14; Colossians 3:16
3. Bear one another’s burdens - Galatians 6:2
4. Bear with one another - Ephesians 4:2; Colossians 3:13
5. Build up one another - Romans 14:19; 1 Thessalonians 5:11
6. Care for one another - 1 Corinthians 12:25
7. Comfort one another - 1 Thessalonians 4:18, 5:11; Hebrews 3:13, 10:25
8. Be comforted together through faith in one another - Romans 1:12
9. Have compassion one of another - 1 Peter. 3:8
10. Confess your sins to one another - James 5:16
11. Be devoted to one another - Romans 12:10
12. Fellowship with one another - 1 John 1:7
13. Forgive one another - Ephesians 4:32; Colossians 3:13
14. Seek what is good for one another and for all - 1 Thessalonians 5:15
15. Greet one another - Romans 16:16; 1 Corinthians 16:20; 2 Corinthians 13:12; 1 Peter 5:14
16. Be hospitable to one another - 1 Peter 4:9
17. Clothe yourselves with humility toward one another - 1 Peter 5:5
18. Be kind to one another - Ephesians 4:32
19. Be members one of another - Romans 12:5; Ephesians 4:25
20. Be of the same mind one to another - Romans 12:16, 15:5
21. Be at peace with one another - Mark 9:50; 1 Thessalonians 5:13
22. Pray for one another - James 5:16
23. Regard one another as more important than self - Philippians 2:3
24. Serve one another as a slave - Galatians 5:13
25. Employ your gift in serving one another - 1 Peter 4:10
26. Stimulate one another to love and good deeds - Hebrews 10:24-25
27. Submit to one another - Ephesians 5:21
28. Teach one another - Colossians 3:16
29. Wait for one another - 1 Corinthians 11:33
30. Wash one another's feet - John 13:14
31. Love one another - John 13:34-35, 15:12, 17; Romans 13:8; 1 Thessalonians 1:3, 4:9-10; 2 Thessalonians 1:3; 1 Peter 1:22, 4:8; 1 John 3:11 and 23, 4:7, 11-12; 2 John 5

I have found that a very practical way to help Christians begin to put these into practice is to have them place this list next to their calendar and then focus each day on doing the one that fits the day

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of the month. That way, over a period of a year, a person has focused on practicing each of the one another's twelve times. In order to practice these things on a daily basis, a person has to be in contact with at least one other Christian each day. Hebrews 10:24-25 says we stimulate one another to love and good works by getting together and encouraging one another. As Christians, we are a body and a body functions best when it is in regular contact with the other parts of the body.

In addition to practicing the one another's on a daily basis, one other very important responsibility of a spiritual young man or young woman is to become an example to others. This means that a spiritual young person is learning to show, by his life, that Christ is the one who changes and transforms a life. Because a spiritual young man or woman is becoming a leader to others, people are beginning to watch their example very closely. This is very important, because many things in the Christian life are caught rather than taught. People must be shown, by the example of others, how to grow in the Christian life.

In 1 Timothy 4:12, Paul shared six ways that Timothy should be an example to other Christians, "Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity." Spiritual young men and women are able to become an example for others to follow, because they are learning to follow Christ by being an example in:

- ◆ word - what they say
- ◆ conduct - what they do
- ◆ love - how they love
- ◆ spirit - by yielding to the Holy Spirit
- ◆ faith - what they believe
- ◆ purity - moral character

As growing Christians learn to become an example in these six areas, they will help younger Christians in their spiritual growth, because they are providing an example to follow. Christ and Paul both taught others by taking them with them, so they could provide an example and show others how to become an example. As we take younger Christians with us, we will be showing them by our example and training them to be an example. May the Lord richly bless you as you help growing Christians become more like Christ, because of the example you are providing for them.