



Being a “One Another” Christian

By Pastor Bill Alderson – 07/26/2026

[CALL TO HEAR]

John 13:34-35.

³⁴ A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. ³⁵ By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.

Pastor - “People of God, this is the Word of God.”
People - “Thanks be to God.”

Pray

Introduction: God Tells Us How to Live with One Another

Since January, our youth group has been working through a series called *Being a One-Another Christian* (note the book inspiration). Each week, we have studied one of the New Testament’s commands concerning how believers are to treat one another. We have talked about honoring one another, welcoming one another, bearing one another’s burdens, encouraging one another, serving one another, speaking truth to one another, and confessing our sins to one another.

Although that series was prepared for our students, these commands are not “youth-group” commands. They are Christian commands. They belong to every person who has been united to Christ and joined to His church.

Human beings were created in the image of God, and we were created to live in relationship. From the opening chapters of Genesis, we see that God did not design people to live as isolated individuals. We were made to know God and to share life with one another.

Sin has damaged both of those relationships.

When Adam and Eve sinned, they hid from God, blamed one another, and began protecting themselves. That same pattern continues today. Sin does not remain contained within us. It enters our homes, friendships, workplaces, marriages, and churches. It produces pride, resentment, envy, criticism, dishonesty, bitterness, isolation, and conflict.

But God has not left us to determine for ourselves what healthy relationships should look like.



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The word *relationship* may not appear frequently in our English Bibles, but the subject fills the Bible from beginning to end. In the New Testament, the expression “one another” appears repeatedly as God gives clear and direct instruction concerning how His people are to live together. The unmistakable message is this:

God is deeply concerned with how His people treat one another!

He doesn’t simply command us to love and then allow us to define love for ourselves. He tells us what love does.

Love honors one another, welcomes one another, serves one another, bears with one another, speaks truth to one another, confesses sin to one another, forgives one another.

God is explicit and directive about life within His church.

That should sound familiar to us after spending these past 12 weeks in Zephaniah.

Zephaniah exposes what happens when people turn away from God and live for themselves. Pride, spiritual complacency, deception, violence, and injustice don’t remain private matters. Rebellion against God inevitably damages the way people treat one another.

But Zephaniah does not end with a scattered, selfish, and rebellious people. It ends with God purifying a people, gathering them together, dwelling among them, and rejoicing over them.

Zephaniah shows us not only what God saves His people from, but what He saves them into: a humble, purified, gathered people among whom He dwells.

The New Testament’s “one another” commands help us understand what life within that redeemed community is supposed to look like.

Loving God and Loving One Another

Matthew 22:36-40. ³⁶“Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?”³⁷ And he said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.”³⁸ This is the great and first commandment. ³⁹ And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. ⁴⁰ On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets.”



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Jesus did not separate devotion to God from love for people.

Our relationship with God and our relationships with others are not identical, but they are inseparably connected. A person can't claim to be growing in love for God while remaining unconcerned about how he or she treats God's people.

The apostle John states this plainly (1 John 4:20):

“²⁰ If anyone says, “I love God,” and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love God whom he has not seen.”

Our obedience to the “one another” commands is therefore not just a strategy for having happier relationships. ***It's an expression of our love for God!***

And that love begins with the gospel.

We do not naturally possess the kind of love these commands require.

Sin turns us inward.

It makes us defensive, demanding, suspicious, self-protective, and self-justifying.

But through repentance and faith, we are given new life in Christ. We are brought into fellowship with God, filled with His Spirit, and joined to His people. Christ does not simply forgive us and leave us alone. He places us in a body and teaches us to love others as He has loved us.

The Foundational Command

Let's look at John 13:34-35.

³⁴ A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. ³⁵ By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”

Jesus gives us:

1. **The command:** “Love one another.”
2. **The standard:** “Just as I have loved you.”
3. **The witness:** “By this all people will know that you are my disciples.”



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Every other “one another” command helps us understand what the love of Christ looks like when it enters real relationships.

The “one anothers” are the gospel made visible in the space between Christians.

They show us what happens when people stop living only to protect themselves and begin **living in light** of what Christ has done for them.

You see, sin turns us inward — *Christ turns us outward!*

And so our main point this morning is this:

**Because Christ has loved, justified, and united us,
we must seek one another’s good with humility, truth, service, and grace.**

1. Receive One Another with Humble Love

Key Scripture: Romans 12:10, 16 and Romans 15:7.

The first group of “one another” commands concerns how we receive and regard each other within the body of Christ.

Scripture commands us to:

- Live at peace with one another. (Mark 9:50)
- Be devoted to one another. (Romans 12:10)
- Honor one another. (Romans 12:10)
- Live in harmony with one another. (Romans 12:16)
- Welcome one another. (Romans 15:7)
- Clothe yourselves with humility toward one another. (1 Peter 5:5)

Together, these commands teach us that the church is not simply a place we attend. It’s a people to whom we belong.

Romans 12:5 says that although we are many, we are one body in Christ and individually members of one another. God has not simply saved a collection of isolated individuals. He has joined us to Christ, and in Christ He has joined us to one another.

There are a few high-level themes from this group of verses that I want to walk through:



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a. We Are to Receive One Another as Family

Romans 12:10 says: “Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor.”

The language is that of family affection and commitment.

That does not mean we will be equally close to everyone in the church. Personalities will not always match. Relationships will sometimes require patience. But our commitment to one another can't depend entirely upon preference, convenience, or natural compatibility.

We belong to the same family because we have been brought to the same Father through the same Savior.

Paul then tells us to “outdo one another in showing honor.”

The world teaches us to compete for recognition. We want to be noticed, appreciated, and respected. But Christians are called to compete in the opposite direction.

Instead of asking, “Why did no one notice me?”

we ask, “Who can I notice?”

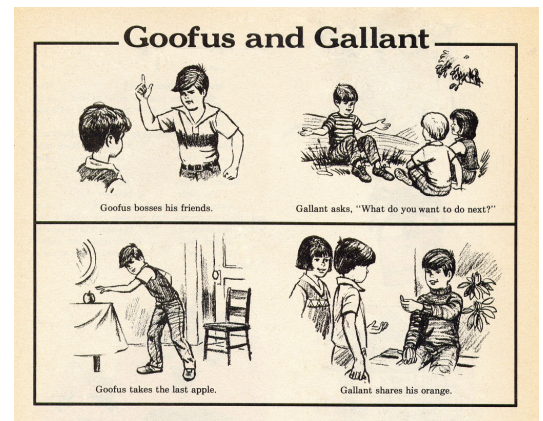
Instead of asking, “Why was I not appreciated?”

we ask, “Who have I failed to appreciate?”

(Goofus and Gallant, Highlights Magazine)

Self-focused behavior wants to be seen.

Christ-focused love looks for someone else to see.





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b. We Are to Receive One Another with Humility

Romans 12:16 says:

“Live in harmony with one another. Do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly. Never be wise in your own sight.”

Harmony does not mean uniformity. We have different personalities, experiences, gifts, preferences, and levels of maturity. Yet we share one Lord, one faith, one Spirit, and one hope.

One of the greatest threats to that harmony is pride.

Pride assumes that my perspective is obvious, my preference is superior, and my motives are pure. It convinces me that peace would exist if everyone else would simply become more like me.

But humility remembers that I may not understand the whole situation. I may have misread someone’s motives. I may even be correct about the issue while being sinful in how I handle it.

Harmony requires more than being right. It requires patience, gentleness, and a willingness to listen.

This connects naturally to Zephaniah. In **Zephaniah 3:12**, God promises:

“I will leave in your midst a people humble and lowly.
They shall seek refuge in the name of the Lord.”

God gathers a people who no longer trust in their own strength, position, or righteousness. They take refuge in Him.

If Christ is our refuge, we don’t need to secure our importance by competing with one another. If we all stand before God as people who need mercy, none of us has reason to treat another believer as beneath us.



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c. We Are to Receive One Another as Christ Received Us

Romans 15:7 brings this entire group of commands together:

“Therefore welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God.”

Paul does not say, “Welcome one another because you naturally connect.”

He says, “As Christ has welcomed you.”

Christ did not receive us because we were pleasant, mature, or easy to love.
He did not wait until we had corrected all our faults and made ourselves presentable.

He welcomed us **by grace**.

We came to Him guilty, needy, and undeserving,
and He brought us near through His blood.

Therefore, we cannot receive grace from Christ while treating the church as though it belongs only to people **who meet our personal standards**.

Self-focused Christianity asks:

- Do these people make me comfortable?
- Do they appreciate me?
- Do they agree with me?
- What am I receiving from this relationship?

Christ-focused love asks:

- How can I honor this person?
- How can I make room for them?
- How can I pursue peace?
- How can I show them the patience Christ has shown me?



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Putting This into Practice (Receive One Another with Humble Love)

Welcoming one another requires movement. Someone must cross the room, initiate the conversation, make space at the table, or take the first step toward peace.

Ask yourself:

Do I make room for Christians who are not naturally easy or convenient for me?

We receive one another *because Christ has received us.*

2. Serve One Another by Seeking Their Good

Key Scripture: Galatians 5:13, Galatians 6:2, and 1 Thessalonians 5:15.

The second group of “one another” commands concerns the way Christians are to actively care for and serve each other. Scripture commands us to:

- Serve one another. (Galatians 5:13)
- Care for one another. (1 Corinthians 12:25)
- Bear one another’s burdens. (Galatians 6:2)
- Be kind to one another. (Ephesians 4:32)
- Seek good for one another. (1 Thessalonians 5:15)
- Pray for one another. (James 5:16)
- Show hospitality to one another. (1 Peter 4:9)

These commands teach us that Christian love is more than feeling affection toward someone. Love notices needs, moves toward burdens, and deliberately seeks another person’s good.

The church is not simply a group of people whom we receive. It’s a people whom we have been called to serve.

So let’s look at the themes that run through these verses:



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A. We Are to Serve One Another in Love

Galatians 5:13 says:

“For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.”

The freedom Christ gives us is not freedom to live for ourselves. It's freedom from the rule of sin so that we can love God and serve others.

Our flesh asks, **“What do I want?”** Love asks, **“What would serve this person?”**

Our flesh looks at our time, energy, possessions, and abilities and says, “These belong to me.”

The gospel teaches us that everything we possess has been given to us by God and can be offered back to Him in service to others.

Paul tells us to **“serve one another.”**

The word he uses carries the idea of serving as a slave. That would have sounded surprising to people who understood freedom as escaping servitude.

But Paul says that Christians have been set free from slavery to sin so that, through love, we can willingly become servants of one another.

That doesn't mean allowing ourselves to be controlled or manipulated by every demand. Biblical service is not doing everything another person wants. It's seeking what is truly good for them according to God's Word.

Sometimes serving means providing practical help, listening patiently. Sometimes it means speaking a difficult truth or saying no to something harmful.

But Christian service always asks:

“What would genuinely serve this person's spiritual and practical good?”

Self-focused behavior wants others to make *life easier for us*.

Christ-focused love looks for ways to make *another person's burden lighter*.



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b. We Are to Bear One Another’s Burdens

Galatians 6:2 says:

“Bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.”

First of all, a burden is something heavy.

It’s a weight that has become difficult for someone to carry alone.

Those burdens may include grief, sickness, financial hardship, family struggles, discouragement, temptation, fear, loneliness, or the consequences of sin.

To bear another person’s burden does not mean we can solve every problem.

We cannot remove every sorrow, provide every answer, or take responsibility for choices that belong to someone else.

But we can refuse to let people suffer unnoticed and alone.

We can listen, pray, provide a meal.

Give practical assistance, sit with someone in grief.

Encourage someone who is growing weary.

Walk patiently beside a person who is struggling to obey Christ.

1 Corinthians 12:25 says “that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another.”

That means another believer’s burden should matter to us, even when it does not directly affect us.

When one part of your physical body is injured, the rest of your body does not say, “*That is not my problem.*” The whole body responds because every part belongs together.

The same should be true in the church.

We may not all carry the same burden, but we should care that the burden is being carried.



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c. We Are to Actively Seek One Another’s Good

1 Thessalonians 5:15 says:

“See that no one repays anyone evil for evil, but always seek to do good to one another and to everyone.”

Notice the word **seek**.

Paul does not just tell us to do good when an obvious opportunity happens to appear. He tells us to look for another person’s good and actively pursue it.

That requires attentiveness.

Self-focused thinking tends to notice what others have failed to do for us.

We notice when no one called.
when we were not thanked.
when our effort went unrecognized.
when someone failed to meet our expectations.

But Christ-focused love learns to notice something different.

It notices the person standing alone.
the family carrying a heavy burden.
the discouraged believer who has become quiet.
the new person who does not yet feel connected.
the exhausted parent, the grieving widow, the struggling teenager,
or the elderly member whose world has become increasingly small.

Seeking good means we don’t just think, ***“Wow, someone should help...”***

We ask, ***“Is there something God has placed before me to do?”***

This is where kindness, hospitality, and prayer become practical expressions of love.

Kindness does not require a major ministry program.

It’s often shown through ordinary words, patient attention, and small acts of care.



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Hospitality means making room in our lives. We open our homes, schedules, tables, and conversations so that others are not left on the outside.

Prayer means bringing another person’s needs before God. It says, “Your burden matters enough to me that I will carry it into the presence of the Lord.”

Putting This into Practice (Serve One Another by Seeking Their Good)

Perhaps there is someone who needs your time, encouragement, hospitality, or practical help. Don’t simply *wish* the church were more caring. Ask what burden God may be placing before you.

Ask yourself:

Whose burden have I avoided because helping would interrupt my comfort?

We serve one another *because Christ first served us*.

3. Build Up One Another with Truth and Grace

Key Scripture: Ephesians 4:25, 29; Colossians 3:16; and 1 Thessalonians 5:11.

The third group of “one another” commands concerns the way Christians speak to and about each other. Scripture commands us to:

- Speak truthfully to one another. (Ephesians 4:25)
- Instruct and admonish one another. (Colossians 3:16)
- Encourage one another. (Hebrews 3:13)
- Build one another up. (1 Thessalonians 5:11)
- Stir one another toward love and good works. (Hebrews 10:24)
- Do not lie to one another. (Colossians 3:9)
- Do not speak against one another. (James 4:11)
- Do not grumble against one another. (James 5:9)

These commands teach us that our words are not just tools for expressing our own thoughts and feelings. God has given us speech so that we can communicate truth, give grace, and seek the good of others.

So let’s look at some of the themes presented in this group.



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a. We Are to Speak Truth to One Another

Ephesians 4:25

Therefore, having put away falsehood, let each one of you speak the truth with his neighbor, for we are members one of another.

Colossians 3:9

Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old self with its practices

These verses teach us to put away falsehood and speak truthfully to one another. Christian relationships **must be built upon honesty.**

We should not deceive one another, hide important truths, manipulate facts, or present ourselves as something we are not. Trust cannot flourish where dishonesty is protected.

But speaking truth means more than avoiding direct lies. It means that our words should accurately represent another person, especially when that person is not present.

We can technically tell the truth while still creating a false impression. We can leave out important context. We can exaggerate someone’s failure, assign motives we cannot actually know, or tell only the part of the story that makes us appear reasonable and the other person appear foolish.

Truthful speech does not distort reality to protect our reputation or strengthen our position.

At the same time, the command to speak truth does not give us permission to say everything we think.

Sometimes people excuse careless or hurtful words by saying, ***“I was only being honest.”***

But biblical honesty is **governed by love.**

Truth should not be used as a weapon to embarrass, punish, or control another person. We speak truth because we desire that person’s good.



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b. We Are to Speak Words that Build Up

Ephesians 4:29 gives us a clear standard for our speech.

Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear.

Our words should fit the need of the moment and give grace to those who hear.

Before speaking, we should ask not only, “Is this true?” but also:

- Is it necessary? Is it helpful?
- Is this the right time?
- Am I the right person to say it?
- Am I seeking restoration or simply expressing frustration?
- *Will the way I say this help the person hear it?*

This does not mean avoiding correction or difficult conversations.

Colossians 3:16 teaches that believers are to teach and admonish one another:

¹⁶ Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.

There are times when love requires us to warn, correct, or confront.
But the goal is always **restoration and growth**.

Self-focused speech asks:

How can I prove that I am right? How can I make sure my side is heard?

Christ-focused speech asks:

What does this person need to hear? How can I speak in a way that honors Christ?

We should never confuse speaking **forcefully** with **speaking faithfully**.

A person can be **doctrinally correct** and **relationally destructive**.

We may be right about the issue while being wrong in our timing, tone, attitude, or purpose.



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c. We Are to Encourage One Another

1 Thessalonians 5:11

Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing.

This verse commands believers to **encourage** and **build one another up**.

Many Christians are carrying burdens that are not immediately visible.

They may be discouraged by slow spiritual growth, family difficulties, grief, temptation, loneliness, or a sense that their service does not matter.

Encouragement helps another believer keep walking with Christ.

Biblical encouragement is not empty flattery. It's not simply telling people whatever will make them feel good.

It notices evidence of God's grace, and reminds people of God's promises.
It strengthens weary faith and acknowledges faithful service.
It speaks hope when obedience feels difficult, and may be as simple as saying:

- I see how patiently you have handled this.
- I am grateful for the way you serve.
- I have seen God grow you in this area.
- I am praying for you.
- Don't give up. Christ is faithful.

Encouragement requires **attentiveness**.

We cannot encourage people well if we are always focused on ourselves.

Self-focused thinking naturally notices what others are doing wrong.

Christ-focused thinking learns to notice where God is working
and where someone needs strength.



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Putting This into Practice (Build Up One Another with Truth and Grace)

Perhaps there is someone you have criticized more often than you have encouraged, a complaint you need to stop repeating, or a weary believer who needs to hear that you see God’s grace at work.

Ask yourself: **After people speak with me, are they strengthened toward Christ or burdened by my criticism and complaints?**

We use our words to build others up
because Christ has spoken grace and truth to us.

4. Walk in the Light with One Another through Grace

Key Scripture: James 5:16; 1 John 1:7-9; Ephesians 4:32; and Colossians 3:13.

The fourth group of “one another” commands concerns how Christians respond to sin, both our own sin and the sins of others.

Scripture commands us to:

- **Confess our sins to one another.** (James 5:16)
- **Forgive one another.** (Ephesians 4:32)
- **Bear with one another.** (Colossians 3:13)
- **Restore one another gently.** (Galatians 6:1)
- **Walk in the light with one another.** (1 John 1:7)
- **Refuse to condemn one another.** (Romans 14:13)

These commands require humility because sin naturally makes us hide, defend, blame, and protect ourselves.

But the gospel calls us out of darkness and into the light.

Confess Rather Than Conceal

James 5:16 tells believers to confess their sins to one another and pray for one another.

Confession means bringing sin into the light and calling it what God calls it. It says:



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- I was wrong.
- What I did was sinful.
- I hurt you.
- I have no excuse.
- Will you forgive me?

That sounds simple, but it’s difficult because our natural instinct is to guard our sin.

We minimize it or explain it.

We compare it to what someone else did.

We confess only the portion that makes us appear reasonable.

We say, “I am sorry you were hurt,”

rather than, “I sinned against you.”

We say, “I should not have reacted that way,

but you need to understand what you did first.”

An explanation may provide helpful context, *but it does not remove responsibility.*

Confession is not managing the story so that we still appear righteous.

It’s agreeing with God about our sin.

a. We Are to Stop Trying to Justify Ourselves

One of the reasons confession is so difficult is that we are constantly trying to justify ourselves. And it’s exhausting.

We want others to understand why our behavior made sense.

We want to prove that we were not entirely wrong.

We want to preserve our reputation as the reasonable person in the conflict.

But the Christian doesn’t need to build a case for his own righteousness.

Romans 5:1 teaches that we have been justified by faith.

*Therefore, since we have been justified by faith,
we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Romans 8:1 teaches that there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.



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Our standing before God does not rest upon always being right.
It rests upon the righteousness of Christ.

That means we are free to admit when we are wrong.

The person who knows he is justified in Christ can stop trying to justify himself before everyone else.

We don't have to hide our sin to preserve our identity.
We don't have to win every disagreement to maintain our worth.
We don't have to control how everyone sees us.

Our righteousness is not found in our explanations.
It's found in Christ.

We can either take refuge in our excuses or take refuge in Christ,
but we cannot do both.

b. We Are to Forgive as We Have Been Forgiven

Ephesians 4:32

*Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another,
as God in Christ forgave you.*

Colossians 3:13

*bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another,
forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive.*

These two verses connect our forgiveness of others directly to
the forgiveness we have received in Christ.

Forgiveness **does not mean** pretending ***sin did not matter***.

It **does not mean** refusing to address ***serious wrongdoing***.

It **does not always remove consequences**, rebuild trust immediately,
or restore a relationship to exactly what it was before.



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Forgiveness means that we refuse to hold another person’s sin over them **as a weapon.**

We give up the right to punish them through bitterness, coldness, gossip, humiliation, or repeated reminders of their failure.

Self-focused behavior keeps a record.

It rehearses the offense.

It retells the story.

It wants the other person to continue feeling guilty.

Christ-focused grace remembers **how much we have been forgiven.**

That does not make another person’s sin small.

It makes the mercy of Christ large.

We forgive not because the other person deserves grace,
but *because grace is the only reason we stand before God ourselves.*

c. We Are to Bear with One Another

Colossians 3:13

bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive.

This verse also commands us to bear with one another.

Some relational difficulties involve **direct sin** that must be confessed and forgiven. Others involve weakness, immaturity, personality differences, irritating habits, or ordinary human limitations.

Not every frustration requires confrontation.

Sometimes love covers.

patience waits.

maturity means deciding that our preference
does not need to become an issue.



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Bearing with one another does not mean ***ignoring destructive behavior***.

It means recognizing that life in the church requires having ***patience with imperfect people***.

And we should remember that while we are bearing with others, they are often bearing with us.

The church is not a community of people who have already reached perfection. It's a community of people being changed by grace.

Putting This into Practice (Walk in the Light with One Another through Grace)

Perhaps you need to confess without excuses, forgive an offense you continue to rehearse, or patiently bear with an imperfect brother or sister.

Ask yourself: **Is there any sin I am guarding, minimizing, explaining, or blaming on someone else?**

We can confess, forgive, and bear with one another *because our righteousness is found in Christ*.

[Application]

1. Examine Your Relationships in the Light of God's Grace

The purpose of these commands is not to leave us discouraged or wondering whether we have loved others well enough to earn God's favor.

We have not loved perfectly. But **Christ has**.

Because our righteousness is found in Him, we can examine ourselves honestly without hiding, defending, or despairing. We can bring our failures into the light, confess them, receive His forgiveness, and ask Him to continue changing us.

So place your relationships under the Word of God. Ask yourself:

- Am I honoring others or competing with them?
- Am I welcoming others or avoiding them?



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- Am I serving or expecting to be served?
- Am I building up or tearing down?
- Am I confessing or defending?
- Am I forgiving or keeping a record?

Don't ask only, *“Do I love people?”* Ask, *“Where is Christ teaching me to love more faithfully?”*

And when the Lord reveals an area of failure, do not run from Him.

Run to Him. The same Savior who exposes our selfishness **also forgives** our sin, gives us His Spirit, and teaches us to walk in a new way.

2. Practice One-Another Love Deliberately

None of us will leave here and obey every “one another” command perfectly this week. But by God's grace, each of us can take one faithful step. Choose:

One person. One command. One concrete action.

Encourage someone specifically.

Invite someone into your home.

Pray with someone who is burdened.

Initiate a needed conversation.

Welcome someone who remains on the margins.

Confess without making excuses.

Forgive someone whose offense you have continued to rehearse.

And remember, you are not being sent to do this in your own strength.

Christ has already welcomed you, served you, carried your burden, spoken grace to you, and forgiven your sin.

His love for us is not merely the example we are trying to follow.

His love is the source from which our love for one another grows.

So take the next faithful step, trusting that the One who loved you and gave Himself for you is still at work within you.



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[CONCLUSION]

Let's return to [John 13:34-35](#).

*³⁴ A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. ³⁵ By this all people will know that you are my disciples, **if you have love for one another.***

The “one another” commands are not a checklist by which we earn the love of Christ. They are the **fruit** produced when the love of Christ takes hold of us.

Notice that before Jesus commands us to love one another, He reminds us of His love for us: ***“Just as I have loved you.”***

Christ didn't wait for us to become worthy of His love. He came to us in our sin, carried our guilt to the cross, brought us near to God, and joined us to His people. His love is not merely the example we are trying to imitate. His love is the source from which our love for one another *grows*.

The real question is, *“Lord, where are You teaching **me** to love as I have been loved?”*

And when the Lord reveals where we have failed, we don't need to hide, defend ourselves, or despair. There is forgiveness in Christ. There is grace to repent. There is help from the Holy Spirit. The Savior who loved us and gave Himself for us is still patiently at work within us.

None of us loves perfectly, but we belong to the One who does. And because He has loved us, we can move toward one another with humility, truth, service, patience, and grace.

Christ's love turns us away from ourselves and toward one another. And when the church lives together in that love, the world sees something that can't be explained apart from Jesus Christ.

So let us leave encouraged and resting in the love of Christ, trusting the work of His Spirit, and ready to love one another as He has loved us.

[LET'S PRAY]



Being a “One Another” Christian

By Pastor Bill Alderson – 07/26/2026

[COMMUNION]

1 Corinthians 10:16-17.

¹⁶ The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a participation in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ? ¹⁷ Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread.

As we come to the Lord's Table, we are reminded that Christ did not save us just as individuals.

Jesus united us to Himself, and *in Him*, **He united us to one another.**

The bread reminds us of the **body of Christ given for us.**

The cup reminds us of His **blood shed for the forgiveness of our sins.**

We come to this table with nothing to defend and nothing to prove.
Our righteousness is not found in our goodness, our explanations, or our ability to justify ourselves. Our righteousness is found in Jesus Christ alone.

But Paul also reminds us that because we partake of one bread, we are one body.

That means we should come examining both our relationship with the Lord and our relationships with one another.

We don't come because we have loved one another perfectly.
We come because **Christ has loved us perfectly.**

So let's come with humility, repentance, and faith, remembering that the Savior who gave Himself for us is also teaching us to give ourselves in love to one another.



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[CONGREGATIONAL READING]

Congregation - recites the LBCF 1689 Chapter 27.

Of the Communion of Saints 2. Believers Have Obligations to Other Believers
Elder – “Christians, what do you believe?”

Saints by profession are obligated to maintain holy fellowship and communion in the worship of God and in performing other spiritual services that promote their mutual edification. 4 They should also help each other in outward things according to their various abilities and needs. 5 This communion should be especially shared in family and local church relationships. 6 & 7 At the same time, according to the rule of the gospel, as God provides opportunity, this communion should be extended to all believers, to everyone in every place who calls upon the name of the Lord Jesus...

4. *Hebrews 10:24-25, 3:12-13.* 5. *Acts 11:29-30* 6. *Ephesians 6:4*
7. *1 Corinthians 12:14-27.* 8. *Acts 5:4; Ephesians 4:28*

[SONG – GOD OF WONDERS]

Psalms 19:1 (ESV) states, “The heavens declare the glory of God,
and the sky above proclaims his handiwork.”

[BENEDICTION]

Go now in the name of the Father, who has gathered us into one family
and called us to love one another;

in the name of the Son, who welcomed us by grace, carried our burden,
forgave our sin, and gave Himself for us;

and in the name of the Holy Spirit, who is at work within us, teaching us
to walk in humility, truth, service, and love.

Go in peace, and live together as the people of Christ. You are dismissed.