

One Anothering
SERVE One Another
Gal 5:13-16;

INTRODUCTION

The One Anothering Commands are NOT About What God wants FROM US, But What He Wants FOR US.

At some point in your life you've probably considered the question, "If I had to lose sight or hearing, which would you choose?"

It's a horrible choice because BOTH ARE IMPORTANT.

What about "a hand or a foot?" SAME – Both are important.

Scripture tells us that all the parts of the body have a unique function, and so it is in the church body.

We are called to serve one another because we are a part of each other and each member has a special function.

It is fitting to talk about serving one another today because we will have our Deaconess commissioning. These are Ladies who have been recognized for their willingness to serve the body of Christ.

1 Cor 12

12 For even as the body is one and yet has many members, and all the members of the body, though they are many, are one body, so also is Christ

The church is a body, and good health individually, or as a church body requires intentionality.

The One Another commands to the church give us the guidelines of intentionality. Let's review the commands we've seen:

Love one another; Welcome, Don't impute negative motives to one another; Submit to, Forgive, Confess to, and Encourage one another.

All the commands we've seen require intentional engagement on our part. We don't drift into these habits and behaviors.

These commands move us beyond "just getting along" so that we actually are engaged with each other in a way that builds up the body of Christ for His glory and our good.

Today we come to "serve one another."

More than just work together, but serve Gal 5:13 in humility and love.

13 For you were called to freedom, brethren; only do not turn your freedom into an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. 14 For the whole Law is fulfilled in one word, in the statement, "YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF." 15 But if you bite and devour one another, take care that you are not consumed by one another. 16 But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh.

Douleuo – "to be a slave; serve"

Most of the time that word is used it refers to serving the Lord. Several times it refers to how we were in bondage and slavery to sin.

Here it shows that we, who are free from the penalty of the law and the dominion of sin, should use our freedom to serve one another.

We must always remember that Jesus is the Key to our connection with each other. We are the BODY OF Christ. Those who are united to Him by faith are united to one another.

John 14:6 He is the way to God, the Truth and the Life, but now he has ascended to the Father and is replaced by

The Word – Truth. It is truer than any audible voice we think we may hear or any feeling or experience that we may have. We are people of the Book.

The Holy Spirit is his life, comforter, in us. God’s presence is in us to make change from the inside out. The Word is the external truth that comes to us, but the Holy Spirit, who inspired the Word, bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and as such we are united to each other.

The Church – The Way – Jesus has gone physically, but he left His church as the Body of Christ. We are His ambassadors in this world. People look to us to know what Jesus is like.

To reflect Jesus, we need to be a healthy body, and part of that health is to serve one another. Here are some guiding principles: **Individual parts need the body, and the body needs each individual part.**

1. **Individual parts need the body**- 1 Cor 12:15 we tend to compare with others and forget that we need the body. No individual part can be healthy apart from the body.
EX: if I were to cut my arm off, and put it right here on this chair, it would be useless. An arm doesn’t function apart from a body.

Simply coming and going on Sunday morning won’t really get you connected to the body. It will keep you in touch, and that’s better than nothing, but to get the full health we need deeper closer connection.

If we disconnect to hide our hurts or trials, it’s not healthy. The parts need to be connected. When you feel the most disconnected is when you need to be connected the most. That is the time to run toward, not away from the body.

We really have to fight the tendency to move away from the body when we have experienced trials. It is all too common for an individual, couple or family to go through some difficult trial, be cared for by the church body, and then they pull away. We tend to feel vulnerable and uncomfortable when we are the recipients of the care and service of others.

Serve one another implies that we must be willing to be served. Pride is a two-way street when it comes to service. It keeps us from serving and it keeps us from being served.

Ex: Stephens Ministry in 3 large churches in Gainesville – they had plenty of helpers who were trained. They lacked people who were vulnerable enough to be served.

- a. **The body forces us to value those who are DIFFERENT.** “I think people ought to be like me” I know that’s my MO, and I know that we all tend to think that. But we need the diversity of the body.

EX: different gifts and strengths Grace people vs Truth people. We have to appreciate and value all the giftedness that God puts in the body;

- b. **The body forces us to submit to God’s authority** – we have to learn to accept authority and learn from it. To lead, we must first be under authority. We live in a day where it is so easy to “be spiritual” without being connected to a body and the structure that comes with it.

People find it easy to “stream” church – “I don’t need to go, I can just watch at home.” (We actually had this conversation with someone last week; she heard that from her older sister who for years was a very engaged church member, but has drifted into “streaming” church.

Or there are so many options that it's easy to hop around from church to church. In doing so, you miss out on the way that God has structured and designed the church – a place where there is a call to submit to “those in authority” and to serve one another. It is impossible to “serve, love, encourage, submit to, and confess to one another” by streaming or podcasting church, or hopping from place to place.

2. THE BODY NEEDS EACH INDIVIDUAL PART

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each part should have equal concern for the other. We need each other. If body parts don't function, then the body is not healthy.

Every part serves a unique function.

Don't fall into the trap of just noticing the parts that are the most visible and up front. A lot happens behind the scenes to make the service happen, or to make any event happen.

Don't fall into the trap of comparing with others.

Some have the gift of service and may fill too many roles

We don't need some people to do more, but everybody to do something.

Every part is equally important

The small jobs are vital.

The music can be great; the sermon can go well, but what people will remember is “I walked into that church and somebody cared about me. Somebody made my child feel welcome. It was obvious that they were expecting guests because the facility was clean and attractive. Somebody did a good job with that.”

Will you be one of those “somebodies”?

Snellville, GA – “Everybody is Somebody in Snellville”.

WARNING – be careful about how we criticize other parts of the body

The way you communicate needs to display love and respect for the efforts of those who are serving in an area where you don't serve.

Don't use your personal worship or ministry preferences to slay another part of the body.

Don't use your freedom to sin, but use your freedom to serve one another.

“Public support creates private influence” – that's just the way life works.

Think about how you talk about church in private

EX: Sunday dinner table was often negative about the church or about its members. Think about the example you are setting for your kids. If you model that, then don't be surprised when one day they model the same behavior when talking about you.

When a body is healthy, its members serve one another naturally.

Ex: coughing – your hand automatically covers your nose

Service comes naturally to us when we walk according to the Spirit of Christ.

Jesus taught on the value of being a servant and He was the perfect model of a servant. He is called the Suffering Servant.

Christ Himself taught that “If you want to be great, be the servant of all. “

He was the perfect example of service, and as believers we have His spirit within us.

Lesson from a Third Grade Dropout: Dr. Rick Rigsby

How would your influence as a leader grow if you increased helping others just 10 % of the time?
How would your reputation be enhanced as an employee if you were known as the one who helped others before helping yourself?

We've all heard of Billy Graham, right? How many have heard of T.W. Wilson? He was Graham's childhood friend who became his right-hand man. He was the behind the scenes guy who put it all together and made it happen.

As one person put it, "Wilson was a number one man who was content with a number two position. He realized that there was no higher calling than that of a servant."

EX: Josh McDowell – up and coming speaker in Campus Crusade who at staff training was assigned the job of cleaning toilets. He wasn't happy and then God convicted him and he realized his attitude was one of, "I don't mind you calling me a servant, as long as you don't treat me like one."

HOW TO SERVE:

Fill a need- you'll find what you like or don't like. You can also learn some life skills from others, even in an area of service that isn't "your thing". Here at Highlands, we don't ask folks to do anything for life, so it's easy to jump in and jump out when your commitment is over.

Find a Passion – where does your passion intersect the needs of others?

Learn to be Faithful – integrity is faithfulness when no one is looking.

Be faithful in the small things;

EX: my first "service" as a Christian was passing out songbooks at CCC weekly meetings.

"One less thing" approach is a way to serve.

When it comes to service, ARE YOU A GIVER OR A TAKER? We need to know how to do both.

Lessons from a 3rd grade dropout:

"Let your servant towel be bigger than your ego. Ego is the anesthesia that deadens the pain of stupidity." Rick Rigsby

Ego may also be what keeps us from being a servant.

Areas to serve: Some of these may be a more natural fit for you than others

-Facilities- if you have skills and a good sense for keeping things running, then this may be your area. Talk with a Deacon

-Children- If you HAVE children, then your service is needed and expected. If you enjoy kids or are good with kids, this could be a place for you.

-Students – that may be your gig. Again, if you have students, then look for a way to contribute.

-Hospitality/ Greeters – You are good at welcoming others

-Technical – the skill set or willingness to learn

-Music – gifted and able to work well with others.

Don't know ?? Pray about it.

The bottom line is, be involved somewhere. Don't be like the arm that is cut off from the body and is useless.

Serving one another is someone you meet before it is something you do.

We have been served by the King of Kings, and Jesus wants to use you to serve His Body and a needy world in some way.

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