

How Should We Treat One Another?

THE OPENER

How do you believe God feels about how you treat others? How important might this be to God? How important should this be to you?

THE LESSON

Romans 12:10, 12 says, "Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves. ... Live in harmony with one another." Do you honor others over yourself? Do you put them first? Do you live in harmony or discord?

Romans 14:13 says, "Stop passing judgment on one another." When you accuse another of something, isn't that passing judgment on them?

James 5:9 says, "Don't grumble against each other..." This means to not complain about each other. Do you ever complain about someone else?

Romans 16:16 says, "Greet one another with a holy kiss." This means be affectionate toward one another. Are you affectionate?

1 Thessalonians 5:15 says, "Make sure that nobody pays back wrong for wrong, but always try to be kind to each other and to everyone else." Do you ever feel like you need pay another back for what they did to you? Proverbs 20:22 says, "Do not say, 'I'll pay you back for this wrong!' Wait for the LORD, and he will avenge you." 1 Peter 3:9 says, "Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult. On the contrary, repay evil with blessing..." Jesus said, "Bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you." Luke 6:28

Romans 14:19 says, "Let us make every effort to do what leads to peace and to mutual edification." What is mutual edification? It is when both sides are built up and encouraged. Saying negative or hurtful things to another and judging or nagging another does not edify them. Instead it tears them down.

Ephesians 4:2, 32 says, "Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. ... Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you."

Ephesians 5:21 says, "Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ." Do you cooperate with others or do you try to have your own way? If someone asks you for something, are you quick to give it or do you do your own thing?

1 Thessalonians 5:11 says, "Encourage one another and build each other up," and Hebrews 3:13 says, "Encourage one another daily." How do you encourage others and build others up? Do you say kind and positive things or mean and negative things to them?

Jesus said, "Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me" (Matthew 25:40). In other words, we should treat everyone if they were Jesus Himself.

Jesus said, "Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet." (John 13:14) What does it mean to wash one another's feet? It means to care for each other personally. Help them keep a clean walk.

Jesus said, "A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another." John 13:34-35 This means that we are known who we are and whose we are by our love for others.

1 John 4:7 says, "Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God."

But what does it mean to love someone?

1 Corinthians 13:4-6 says, "Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth."

Look at each part carefully. Love is patient. Are you patient? Love is kind. Are you kind? Love does not envy. Do you feel cheated or upset because you don't have what others have? Love does not dishonor others. Do you dishonor or rather disrespect others? Love is not self-seeking. Are you trying to get your own way? Love is not easily angered. Are you hard to upset? Love keeps no record of wrongs. Are you hard to offend? Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. Do you hate wrongdoing and rejoice with the truth?

THE APPLICATION

How would you apply all of this to your life? For instance, if you are being unkind or rude or disrespectful, what would that mean? It means you're actually being unloving and hurtful.

Look at your life and ask, where am I in line and where am I out of line? What steps can I take to improve here?

THE PRAYER

Father God, thank You for this lesson from Your Word. We now recognize that how we treat one another is very important to you, that it reflects how we feel about ourselves and that however we treat another is how we are treating Jesus. In the name of Jesus, bring conviction to our hearts about those areas where we need to improve and help us make the necessary changes. Remind us often of what we learned today. Teach us what love really is and how to love. Teach us to be patient with others, kind and compassionate toward others, contented with what we have, to honor others, even over ourselves, to submit to others out of love, and to seek what benefits others. Teach us to avoid being easily angered or offended, to be forgiving, to keeping no record of wrongs. Teach us to be completely humble and gentle, and even affectionate. Teach us to aim for peace and what brings mutual edification. Thank You Father!