

Weekly Devotions: LOVE FOR ONE ANOTHER 4

Abide in Christ to Love One Another

The love Jesus expects of us for one another is possible only when our sinful, self-centered nature is transformed by God's love for us. It is only when we come to realize how much God loves us and how undeserving we are of His love that we are able to love others. The experience of His love gives us the strength and motivation to love others, especially those who are difficult to love.

The closer we draw near to God and abide in Him, the more loving we will become. Inability to love fellow believers may be the symptom of a more serious spiritual problem; that we have yet to appreciate God's amazing love for you and me.

The relationships between fellow believers in the church community depend on their personal relationship with God. There can be no strong horizontal relationships if the members' vertical relationship with God is weak.

Read John 15: 9-17

Jesus urged the disciples to abide in His love and to love one another. Jesus assured them of His love, that He did not see them as His servants but as His friends. And the greatest expression of love is to lay down one's life for our friends, which He was about to do.

If we truly appreciate God's love and the sacrifice Christ had made for the forgiveness of our sins and that we may have eternal life, there should be nothing too hard for us to do for Him. Just as Christ sacrificed His life for sinners, we too should be able to make sacrifices, of time, of energy, of money, of comfort, even of life, for others in the church community.

Questions to ponder

1. What did Jesus urge His disciples to do (9) and what is the purpose of His final teachings on the night of His arrest (11, 17)?
2. How is the relationship between a master and his servant different from those between friends (14-16)? Would Jesus see you as His friend, an acquaintance, or a stranger?
3. Jesus said that we will abide in His love and are His friends when we keep His commandments (10, 14). What specific actions can you take and what sacrifices you will make to obey Jesus' mandate to love others in the church just as He has loved you (12)?

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