

Following Jesus Together

"LOVE ONE ANOTHER"

It was the day of Passover. Throughout Jerusalem many were preparing for the feast. In a large, upstairs guest room a group of thirteen men had gathered for the evening celebration of Israel's deliverance from the bondage of Egypt about twenty-five hundred years earlier. This gathering was unique, Jesus and His twelve disciples. Later that evening Jesus would be betrayed. But here at the feast Jesus had important teaching and directions for the disciples. Among His words to His followers was a prominent command.

"A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another." John 13:34-35

This command to the twelve to love one another has ever been a call to His church.

It is just as pertinent today as it was when first given on that Passover evening. It is our calling and blessing to obey Him ***as we follow Jesus together*** in our church family.

The triune God loves us with an everlasting love.

- **God the Father loves us.** *"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son"* John 3:16
- **God the Son loves us.** *"...walk in love, just as Christ also loved us and gave Himself up for us, an offering and sacrifice to God"* Ephesians 5:2
- **God the Holy Spirit loves us.** *"...the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit"* Romans 5:5

Loving one another starts in the heart and is expressed in practical ways:

1. Having an attitude of goodwill for one another.

God's love in our hearts produces a genuine desire to see His blessing in the lives of our brothers and sisters in Christ.

2. Be ready to forgive one another.

In our interactions and involvement with one another, offenses may arise. Paul teaches us to ***"be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you."*** Ephesians 4:32

3. Be ready to help in practical ways.

There are different gifts and talents in our church family. Use them to meet pressing needs of others as you see those needs arise.

4. Pray for one another.

Praying for others is something everyone can do.

5. Seek to edify one another.

To edify is to build up. An encouraging word, a gracious gesture, a helping hand goes a long way in building up another. ***"Therefore encourage one another, just as you also are doing."*** 1 Thessalonians 4:11

Finally, let us take to heart Paul's encouragement to the Colossians; ***"Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds us all together in perfect harmony."***

Colossians 3:14 NLT



Bill Bretz
Elder

SEPTEMBER 2025