



Life Group: *ic*

SG #11

Week of 12 5 17

Theme: Threefold Theme of 1 John

Connect to Community

Build Community

Protect Community

Note how the Apostle Paul highlights Connecting, Building and Protecting Community in **Ephesians 4**

Ephesians 4:11-16 *And He (God) Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, ¹² for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, ¹³ till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect (mature) man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; ¹⁴ that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, ¹⁵ but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ—¹⁶ from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.*

Spiritual maturity of every believer is the desire of God for His church, that is the primary purpose of God providing pastors. **God gave gifts of leaders to the church** to equip the membership for service to **edify the body towards unity and maturity**.

Connect Through Commitment to Community

Build through acts of obedience (love on another)

Protect by knowing Biblical truth and defending it

1John 1:1-4 *That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, concerning the Word of life—² the life was manifested, and we have seen, and bear witness, and declare to you that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested to us—³ that which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ. ⁴ And these things we write to you that your joy may be full.*

1:1-3 Historical Context for Christianity

Does my church preach the same gospel message as presented in the first church?

The warning against those who used the name Jesus Christ but preach another gospel.

***Galatians 1:6-9** I marvel that you are turning away so soon from Him who called you in the grace of Christ, to a different gospel, ⁷ which is not another; but there are some who trouble you and want to pervert the gospel of Christ. ⁸ But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed. ⁹ As we have said before, so now I say again, if anyone preaches any other gospel to you than what you have received, let him be accursed.*

1:4 Clarification as to the purpose of the Letter that your joy would be full

Sermons can sound like a list of do's and don'ts. In one sense there is some truth to that...but it goes much deeper than commands. Commandments are only signs, pointers to the gracious and loving Command giver – God...

Our primary and ultimate joy is to be in Christ

***1John 4:7-11** Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. ⁸ He who does not love does not know God, for God is love. ⁹ In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. ¹⁰ In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. ¹¹ Beloved, if God so loved us, **we also ought to love one another**.*

If 'love' was only an emotion or a feeling how could it be commanded?

You can't command a person to 'feel' a certain way.

I cannot 'will' my emotions, but I can 'will' my actions regardless of my feelings.

Biblical love is far beyond mere feelings; imagine what our marriage, family, and spiritual community would look like if we allowed God to create with our hearts and minds this truth...

Biblical love is how we treat people and supersedes how we feel about them.

Love is to want the very best for the other person regardless of my feelings. The very best for another is that they KNOW GOD!

Not just KNOW about GOD, but KNOW GOD! Re: John 17:3

We might live through Him... 'Live' covers all areas of our life

Forgive through Christ; Serve others through Christ; ...LOVE through CHRIST!

God's love produces within us a desire to deeply care for those within the body of Christ in spite of their struggles and problems.

WHEN WE LIVE THROUGH CHRIST, we have a genuine desire and a deep concern for others and will fight against our natural tendency to look to ourselves and respond to our feelings.