



“When Church Becomes Family”
Romans 12:10
Romans 12: Devoted to Service

“Be devoted to one another in brotherly love; give preference to one another in honor...”
(Romans 12:10)

I. Family Love

- “Be devoted” – *philóstorgos*: pertaining to the love, affection, devotion, connection and commitment that members of a family have for one another (e.g. parents for their children.)
- “to one another” – specifically fellow believers in the church.
- “in brotherly love” – *philadelphía*: in secular Greek usage it refers to loving one’s brother or sibling in a literal sense; in the NT it’s used 6 times and always refers to love between fellows Christians united by their common status as children of God (e.g. 1Thes 4:9; 1Pet 1:22).

All true Christians are spiritually born into God’s family and are brothers and sisters related to each other by the blood of Christ (Jn 1:12-13; Eph 2:18-19; 1Jn 3:1).

Therefore, Christians ought to love one another the way Christ has loved them (1Jn 5:1, 3:10, 4:20-21; Jn 15:12).

God wants every local church to be a loving family!

II. Family Honor

- “Give preference” – *proēgéomai*: literally to lead or go before someone; figuratively to lead by example, excel, or outdo.
- “to one another” – second “one another” in this verse; also refers to believers.
- “in honor” - *timé*: the worth or value ascribed to a person or thing; honor, respect, reverence, esteem.

What would happen if everyone in a local church took initiative and tried to outdo one another in showing honor? (Phil 2:3)

III. How A Church Becomes Family

1. Get involved.
2. Be friendly.
3. Take the initiative in building relationships.
4. Look for opportunities to serve and use your spiritual gifts.
5. Join the prayer chain.
6. Become a member.
7. Give regularly.
8. Pray daily for the leaders of the church.
9. Don't leave the church unless the Holy Spirit *clearly* directs you.
10. Make it your ambition to be a blessing.
11. Make it your ambition to give more than you receive.
12. Practice the "one another" commands.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Have you ever been hurt or had a really bad experience in a local church? Please elaborate if you feel comfortable sharing.
2. How much does your church feel like a family to you? Please explain.
3. Why do you think it's hard for some people to feel like they belong in a church family, while it seems easy for others?
4. What are some ways you could honor others in your church family above yourself?
5. Look at the twelve suggestions for helping your church become a closer family. Which ones do you need to prioritize and start working on?