

Instructions for Body Life Relationships

Three vital relationships within the fellowship of the Lord's church

Introduction: Priming the pump for tonight's discussion.

- Let's begin with our own observations. Was there a moment where God spoke to you, showed you something new, or reminded you of a familiar truth through the message this week?

Exploration: Questions to guide our group discussion.

- We learned that an others-centered frame of mind that considers other believers as more important than ourselves is a vital attitude for each of us in a healthy church. Jesus said that unless we love one another, that we're not even true Christians. Why is it so important to work towards unity, peace among the saints, brotherly love, and selflessness that puts others first in church life? What happens when there's a breakdown of these vital attitudes? How does Proverbs 6:19 speak into this?
- We learned that Christians should treat older men and women like spiritual fathers and mothers, and younger ones like spiritual brothers and sisters. That implies that elders should treat us like spiritual sons and daughters too! We should never rebuke an older person, but should talk to them so as to appeal to them with love. Likewise, we should never talk down to a younger saint, but should help to guide them into Christian maturity. How do these things show honor and respect to everyone, and why does that matter?
- In the early church there wasn't a social network like social security, retirement investments, life insurance, or pension payments. At times, a destitute person, such as a widow in tremendous need, would petition the church for financial help, but only if her family was not able to provide for the need. What did this say to us about the concern and care of those elders in our own families and how we ought to view our responsibility to them?
- A Pastor, especially one who labors in teaching and preaching, was to be counted worthy of double honor. Paul wrote that the church should not muzzle the ox while he is on the threshing floor. Often, Pastors are provoked if they show up at church in a new car, or if the pastor's wife has a new purse or a new Sunday dress. What would you say to someone who expected a Pastor to live in poverty for the sake of the ministry...or viewed poverty in ministry as a spiritual virtue? Is that Biblical?

Additional Scriptures for Deeper Study:

- Phil 2:3-4
- Rom 12:10
- 1 Cor 10:24
- 1 Jn 4:7-8
- Eph 4:1-3
- Mk 12:30-31
- 1 Jn 4:20

Application: How can I apply this to my life this week?

- It's honesty time...in my heart of hearts, do I consider myself more important than others around me? Am I a self-centered person more than an others-centered person? How has this Bible study convicted me to flip the script...and what specific action steps do I need to take right now?
- This Bible study hit on the idea of giving honor to other Christians in a big way. That's easy to do when we're all liking each other, but harder when we don't always see things eye to eye. Is God bringing someone to mind who He wants you to start treating with respect and honor?